

5E  
system

# RELIQS™



Requires the use of the  
DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® PLAYER'S HANDBOOK,  
THIRD EDITION, published by  
Wizards of the Coast.®





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Love & Peace



# RELIQS



**I do not have the strength of a warrior, or the speed of a vagabond.  
But the power to summon death is at my command.**



# INTRODUCTION

## WRITING

Steve Crow, Andrew Getting, Gareth Hanrahan, Andrew Hudson, Mike Tresca, Patrick Younts

## ART DIRECTION

jim pinto

## COVER DESIGN

Steve Hough and Mark Jelfo

## COVER ILLUSTRATION

Kari Christensen

## INTERIOR ILLUSTRATIONS

Shane Coppage, Cris Dornaus, Lisa Hunt

## EDITING

jim pinto, Mike Mearls, D.J. Trindle

## INTERIOR DESIGN AND LAYOUT

Mark Jelfo and Justin Lawler

## LINE DEVELOPER

jim pinto

## MANAGING EDITOR

Mike Mearls

## PLAYTESTING AND ADVICE

Sean Holland, Mike Leader, Kevin Millard

## SPECIAL THANKS

First, I'd like to thank Mike Mearls for all his hard work on this one. Special thanks must also go to all the writers for sticking it out and trying to make this book as good as we hope it is.

I also want to give a shout out to Cris and Shane for drawing so many dang pictures.

Justin Lawler also needs a big kick in the teeth for his efforts. Whatever those were...

Mary Valles demanded that I thank Tanisha Johnson. Now both of their names are in here.

Lenny, Jeff, and Dan appear courtesy of Parn Records.

An extra super special shout out to Dave Agoston for so many rides to work, I can't think straight.

Another extra super special bowl of Ice Cream for Korin, the pluckiest little engine that ever could.

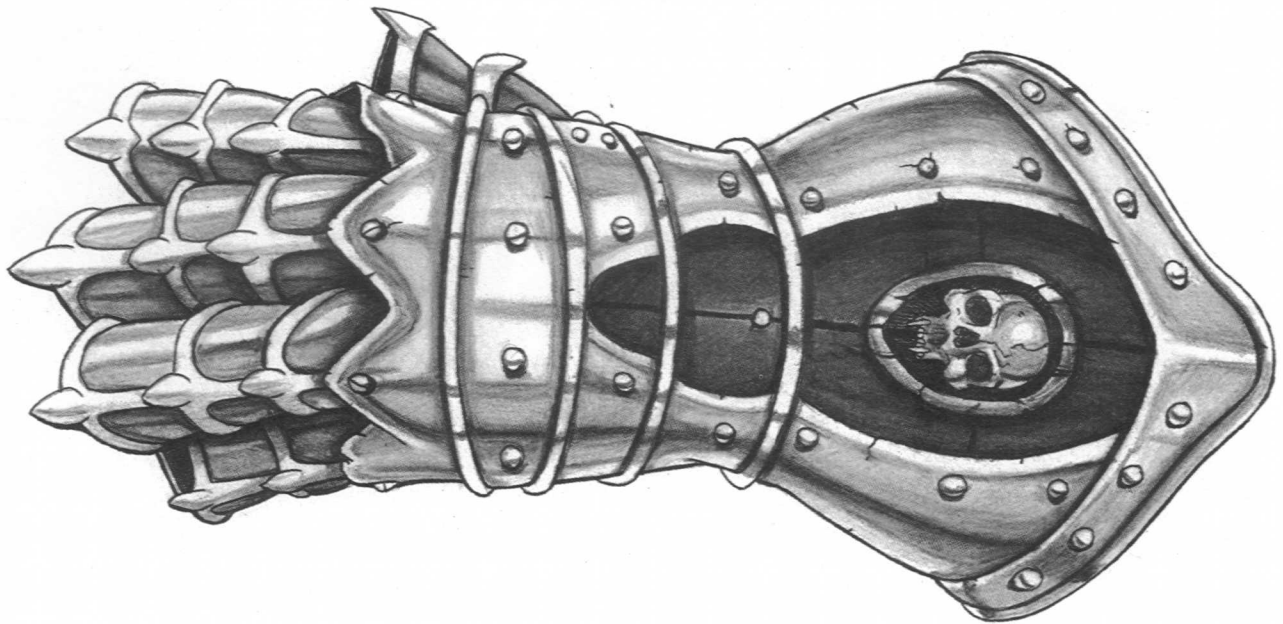
Finally, Peter Flanagan's name was omitted from *Magic*, and it took us this long to apologize. Sorry for the mix up, *mon ami*.

The liner notes for this book are available on DVD and VHS, wherever videos are sold.

No animals were harmed in the making of this book, although Steve Hough did get sick once.

## DEDICATION

This one is for D.J. Trindle, the second oldest fossil at AEG.





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## INTRODUCTION

Equipment, items, gewgaws, trinkets, bits, items: by whatever name you call it, stuff has long held center stage in fantasy books, computer games, and RPGs. The Lord of the Rings is about a single powerful thing and the trouble it causes. Other famous fantasy series are even named for items: the Dragonlance novels, for instance. Even science fiction has its share of artifacts. The Empire had the Death Star to menace the galaxy, while every other episode of Star Trek seems to feature some sort of gizmo. If you look back to myths and folktales, you can see that stuff has played a major role in many stories: King Arthur had Excalibur, Sisyphus had his boulder, Zorro had his mask. In the *d20 System*,™ characters are frequently defined by what they carry. The fighter has his trusty magic sword, the dwarf totes around his suit of invulnerable armor, the wizard clings to his magic wand, and the cleric leans on his enchanted staff. Taking their cue from stories, legends, and myths, fantasy games provide plenty of items for adventurers to collect, use, keep, create, build, seek, and destroy.

Atop this mountain of items stand artifacts. An artifact is likely the most important item a character can come across in a campaign. It might be the entire focus of his career, the cause of all his troubles, the source of all his dreams. Most characters in fantasy campaigns never actually touch an artifact; their tremendous powers are best kept to world-shaking events far beyond the scope of ordinary PCs. An artifact's appearance heralds a major new threat or the end of an epic quest. Most veteran gamers know all about the most famous artifacts in the game, and have stories of the havoc they wreaked in campaigns past. Artifacts seize our imagination with the lure of great power, epic stories, and their position as the greatest of the great magic items.



This book presents dozens of new artifacts for use in your campaigns. Given that artifacts are so important and powerful, chances are you do not need too many of these items in a single adventure or even in a campaign. The trick to using an artifact lies in subtlety. While using this book as a magical catalog from which the players pick out toys for their next characters might work in some campaigns, most of the time it is important to avoid overdoing it.

Artifacts make the perfect goal for an adventure. The characters may need to stop their enemies from seizing a powerful item; perhaps instead they must recover one and use it to defeat a mighty foe, prevent a disaster, or fulfill an important prophecy. Once the artifact fulfills its purpose, it can neatly run out of magical power, leaving it useless, or fail to serve any use to the characters. A powerful artifact longsword that can defeat a demon king is only useful while the demon king is still active. If the PCs must overcome a villain who wields a mighty item or track down an artifact that is causing trouble, the characters might have to destroy it to eliminate the threat it poses. This allows you to introduce an artifact into play that affects the progress of events without giving the characters an item that could unbalance the campaign.

An artifact could even represent the end of a complete campaign.

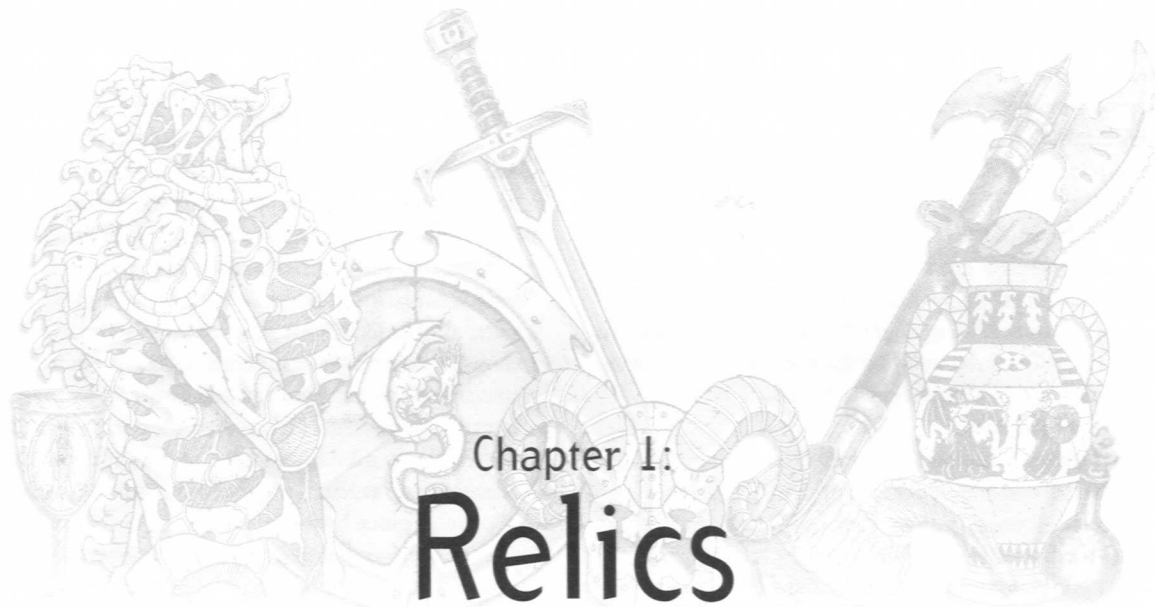
The characters could start out from 1st level on a quest to recover an ancient, lost item.

Perhaps they find other artifacts that play roles in tracking down the primary focus of their quest. You can create an entire ladder of artifacts, allowing the characters to work their way through a variety of items until, with their collected treasures used together, they can finally achieve the object of their quest. Of course, be sure to use them in moderation. Not every tussle with a gang of orcs should end with a discovery of an artifact.

With the items given in this book, you'll never need to create an artifact of your own again. These wondrous, powerful items are rare enough that you could find a lifetime of use from this book. You could start four campaigns a year for over a decade and still have plenty left over. Pick through them, let their backgrounds and stories inspire you, and enjoy yourself. After all, even the mightiest RPG item is useless if the game isn't fun.

We hope you enjoy this book as much as we enjoyed making it.





Chapter 1:

# Relics

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Since artifacts are so powerful, it stands to reason that they are not the first treasure to hand out to the PCs. As some of the mightiest magic items in the d20 system they best serve as the objects of quests, perilous adventures, and epic battles. However, relics can serve many more roles than simply a unique, difficult to attain treasure. With all the relics in this book, you may be at a loss on how to use them.

The easiest way to integrate a relic into your game is to use it in such a way that the PCs encounter it and witness its use, but do not necessarily gain control of it. Think about an artifact's abilities in the greater scheme of the campaign world. Don't focus on it as a magical tool the characters can use but an item that, due to its great power, will have a social, political, and economic effect on the world. For example, the king may bear an artifact that helps him maintain control of the land. If it's stolen, the characters may have to recover it. Yet if the PCs are heroes they cannot expect to take the artifact for themselves. Of course, the villain responsible for the theft could turn the item against the king and the characters, using its magic to form his own realm or challenge the king's power.

Other artifacts could be rooted to a single place or inexorably tied to a bloodline or a specific being. The item can serve as its source of power or provide it with the abilities

it needs to threaten the realm. In order for the PCs to defeat the villain, they must destroy the artifact. This method allows you to use the artifacts without worrying about unbalancing the PCs' abilities. Remember, though, that too many quests which follow this pattern could bore the players. On the other hand, you could construct an entire campaign in which the PCs are responsible for tracking down and neutralizing or destroying a series of dangerous artifacts (that a group of thieves, for example, might have stolen from a planar stronghold and spread to a variety of dangerous beings).

The history and background of an artifact can provide the story behind an adventure, even if the artifact does not make a direct appearance. Perhaps an ancient weapon helped an evil warlord imprison a powerful angel. The PCs must release the angelic creature, but in order to do so they must research the artifact's history, discover its abilities, and use that information to complete their task. Use the stories behind the artifacts to inspire your imagination and create plots that you can use in your campaign. Artifacts are more than a simple collection of numbers and game abilities. They are powerful tools that have an impact on the world and leave a trail of legends and stories wherever they appear. Treat them as objects to drive your game's plot and create dangerous, exciting situations for the characters, not merely powerful toys for their personal use.

## THE ACOLYTE'S HAND

Revered mistress:

I regret to inform you your suspicions were correct. Manios of the Subtle Eye did indeed turn. The full details of his betrayal are unknown to me, but the rumors are true: he contacted the Custodians of the Fourth Ring and brokered a deal with an abyssal lord whose identity is not known to me. Rest assured that I will pursue the matter further, though I must, as is wise when dealing with demons, approach the matter with delicacy.

Though it hardly needs saying, the traitor Manios is dead, as are three Custodians. You will find their corpses in the customary location. As per our agreement, mistress, I have claimed their right hands.

Your servant,  
Kamilka

Mistress:

Again I must commend you. You are indeed perceptive and your eyes everywhere. I confess I did not even begin to fathom the number of apprentices who serve you, though, having exchanged pleasantries with a score of them in the last week, I consider myself more informed now — yes, they await you in the usual place. I am confident your command of the necromantic arts is such you would have no pulling the information from their bodies, so I will save you the effort.

Manios' hand is indeed magical. I know not how the buffoon did it, but he discovered a way to wear, and utilize, a magical ring on each finger.

Yes, before you ask, the hand still retains the power. Furthermore, it serves my will with absolute loyalty, which is more than its original owner ever did for you.

Yours,  
Kamilka

Crippled One:

Do not test me further. I no longer need you and you have more than enough dogs in your kennels to attend your business. Memories of our past relationship will not stay my hand for much longer.

Kamilka the Many Handed

### THE ACOLYTE'S HAND

The acolyte's hand is capable of holding five magical rings, one on each finger. While placed on the hand, the rings work to their owner's benefit. He benefits from their passive abilities and can use a single activated power from one ring each round as a free action. Its owner can still also wear one magical ring on each of his own hands.

The acolyte's hand can be commanded to animate and defend its owner by uttering the command word

("attend") and releasing it, which requires a standard action. From then on, the hand floats by the side of its owner, never straying more than 10 feet from him. The hand uses its rings to best effect, with the protection of its owner as its primary concern. In addition to maintaining all the passive powers of the rings it wears, the hand can activate one additional power from two rings each round. The hand attacks using its owner's base attack bonus, but cannot use weapons unless the weapon is a power of a ring it's wearing. The hand has AC 20 (+4 Dex, +4 size, +2 natural), DR 15/+3, SR 30, and can sustain 10 hit points of damage before it is rendered inert. In such a state, the hand remains dormant for 2d6 hours as its magic repairs it to normal status. If hit with disintegrate or a similar power, the hand reforms itself in 2d6 hours as the powerful magical bonds that created it assemble the hand's particles piece by piece.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 2 lbs.



### LEGEND

The Acolyte's Hand is in the possession of Kamilka the Many Handed, renegade apprentice of the Crippled Queen.

Kamilka is a wizard slayer personally responsible for the death of a score of archmages. She wears a belt adorned with the severed hands of her victims. The Acolyte's Hand is hidden among these mummified hunting trophies, the rings it bears hidden beneath bits of rag.

#### Kamilka the Many Handed, human Wiz20:

CR 20; SZ M (humanoid); HD 20d4+40; HP 84; Init +9 (+5 Dex, +4 Imp Init); Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (+5 Dex, ring of protection +5); Atks +2 dagger +11/+6 melee (1d4+1); SA Spells; SQ Spells; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +11, Will +14; Str 9, Dex 21, Con 15, Int 26, Wis 15, Cha 13; Skills: Alchemy +23, Concentration +23, Craft (weaponsmith) +23, Knowledge (arcana, history, nature, the planes, religion) all +23, Profession (herbalist) +23, Scry +23, Spellcraft +23. Feats: Brew Potion, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Ring, Craft Staff, Craft Wondrous Item, Improved Initiative, Maximize Spell, Quicken Spell, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (evocation), Spell Penetration (evocation), Still Spell. Prepared Spells: 0 — detect magic (x2), read magic (x2); 1st — change self, charm person, mage armor, magic missile (x2), spider climb; 2nd — cat's grace, darkness, detect thoughts, shatter (x2), web; 3rd — dispel magic (x2), fireball, hold person, lightning bolt (x2); 4th — fire shield, ice storm, minor globe of invulnerability, phantasmal killer, polymorph other, wall of fire; 5th — B's interposing hand, cone of cold (x2), dismissal, telekinesis; 6th — antimagic field, B's forceful hand, chain lightning, contingency, T's transformation; 7th — B's grasping hand, delayed blast fireball, finger of death, forcecage, M's sword; 8th — B's clenched fist (x2), maze, power word blind, prismatic wall; 9th — B's crushing hand, meteor swarm, time stop, weird. Possessions: Acolyte's hand, +2 dagger, potion of cure serious wounds (x2), ring of elemental command (fire), ring of freedom of movement, ring of invisibility, ring of protection +5, ring of the ram, ring of regeneration, ring of shooting stars, ring of spell turning.



## AMULET OF INEFFABLE GOODNESS

The Amulet appeared approximately nine millennia ago in the hands of the priest-lord Barek-k'thar. Barek told the leaders of several small nations that he represented three nameless Lawful Good deities who had commanded him to unite the world under their banner. He showed them the Amulet of Ineffable Goodness as a token of his sponsors' power, invoking great magic of healing and defense as proof of their authority. Several nations loaned their military strength to Barek-k'thar to defeat the forces of evil. Three years later a sorcerer tricked Barek's lieutenant Ylthon into killing the priest-lord. Ylthon took up the Amulet and worked to fulfill Barek's destiny, but was himself slain ten years later.

The Amulet vanished into history, resurfacing from time to time in the hands of individuals who followed the true path. Inevitably the Amulet wearer died violently and the Amulet disappeared, resurfacing years later. Currently a wandering cleric carries the Amulet as he travels the lands, aiding all without asking for recompense.

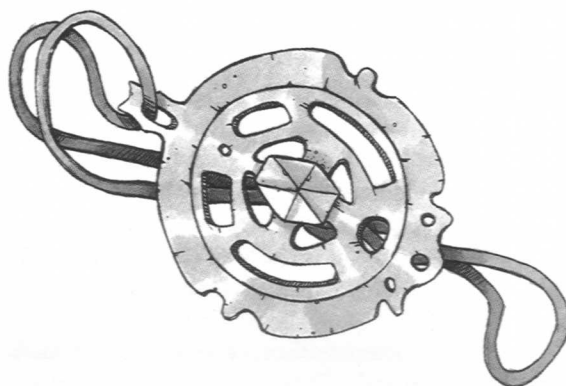
The Amulet is about half an inch thick and three inches in diameter, and is inscribed with three concentric circles, each a line of runic script so small as to be indecipherable. In its center is a perfect five-cut emerald.

### AMULET OF INEFFABLE GOODNESS

The *amulet's* bearer gains the benefit of *protection from evil* in a 30-foot radius, protecting all lawful good creatures around him. The wearer benefits from *bless* and *holy aura* at all times and any creature of evil alignment under 12 HD must make a Will save (DC 30) to come within 60 feet of the *amulet*.

The *amulet* allows the wearer to cast *blade barrier*, *discern lies*, *hallow*, *holy word*, *mark of justice*, *mass heal*, *remove blindness/deafness* and *remove disease* as a 20th-level cleric up to 3 times per day each. In addition, he may cast *cure light wounds* and *purify food and water* as a 20th-level cleric up to 10 times per day each.

Once per day the wearer may invoke the *amulet's* power to fight the forces of evil directly for ten minutes (60 rounds). When the wearer invokes this power a golden nimbus surrounds him, granting a +5 sacred bonus to his base attack bonus. The wearer also receives a +5 sacred bonus to AC, a +5 sacred bonus to all saves, and SR 25. Finally, the wearer regenerates 5 points of damage per round.



An individual donning the *amulet* must be lawful good. Those of other alignments may not use its powers. If the bearer is chaotic good or neutral good he takes 4d8 damage per round. Anyone else suffers 8d8 damage. There is no save against this effect.

Only someone of non-evil alignment can destroy the *amulet*. It must be cast into the Great Golden River flowing through the Realm of the Peaceful Dead. Operatives employed by the forces of evil have hidden or sealed away the *amulet* on several occasions, but the divine forces that created it inevitably release it back into the world once more despite their opponents' best efforts.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: —.

### THE LEGEND

A powerful demon contracted the sorcerer Ralthor to acquire and then dispose of the artifact. Ralthor used illusion and mind-control spells to get close to his target, but he has yet to acquire the Amulet. Ralthor's preferred mode of operation is beguiling a good-aligned individual into attacking the wearer by making them believe they serve some greater good. It is only a matter of time before Ralthor has what he seeks.

**Ralthor, Human Sor12/Rog6:** CR 18, SZ M (humanoid); HD 12d4+24 + 6d6+12; hp 89; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Imp Init); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+2 Dex, +3 bracers), Atks +1 short sword +11/+6 melee (1d6+1), or light crossbow +12/+7 ranged (1d8); SA Spells, sneak attack +3d6; SQ Spells, familiar (rat), evasion, uncanny dodge; SV Fort +12, Ref +11, Will +12; Str 11, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 18; AL CN. Skills: Bluff +12, Concentration +19, Diplomacy +12, Disguise +12, Forgery +10, Gather Information +20, Hide +9, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Move Silently +9, Sense Motive +11, Scry +9, Spellcraft +21. Feats: Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Silent Spell (Charm Person), Skill Focus (gather information), Skill Focus (spellcraft). Known Spells (7/7/7/7/7/5/3): 0 — *arcane mark*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *mage hand*, *read magic*; 1st — *charm person*, *identify*, *mage armor*, *message*, *true strike*; 2nd — *alter self*, *cat's grace*, *invisibility*, *locate object*, *web*; 3rd — *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *haste*, *lightning bolt*, *magic circle against good*; 4th — *improved invisibility*, *phantasmal killer*, *screaming*; 5th — *contact other plane*, *dominate person*; 6th — *analyze dweomer*, *mislead*. Possessions: Ring of mind shielding, bracers of armor +3.

## ARMOR OF THE LIVING EARTH

It starts with a rocky outcropping in the wilderness. The rock is the exposed portion of the bones of the world, stone cast up from the earth's secret heart. Wind, rain, frost, and sun tear at the stone, weathering it. While the soil around it erodes to smoothness and dust, this stone endures. Slowly, nature makes it into the semblance of a suit of plate mail.

A lightning bolt strikes the rock, smashing out the faceplate of the helm and hollowing out the inside of the suit. Floodwaters fill it, and smooth out the stony plates. Plants take hold of the outcropping, and ivy waves itself into the armor. Tendrils of green life thread themselves between the finger joints, and living padding grows inside the suit. Faster now, the green plants fill the cracks in the armor and trace elegant heraldries on the breastplate. Magpies and crows steal shiny diamonds and rubies from the dwarf-hoards and nest in the armor. When they depart, the gems remain, caught in the ivy that long ago grew settings for them.

A wolf pack chases a deer into the wilderness, and the deer's blood soaks through the armor, matting fur and ivy and stone. This is not a kill, but a sacrament. Finally, a subtle earthquake shakes the world, and two tiny cracks break the armor's feet away from its mother rock.

And it waits.

### ARMOR OF THE LIVING EARTH

A creation of the earth itself, the *armor* is destined to be worn by its greatest champion. However, nature is wild and fickle. The armor may be worn by any who earn it.

The *armor of the living earth* is +7 full plate made mostly of stone and earth. It weighs twice as much as normal full plate. When donned, the *armor* and the wearer enter into symbiosis. The user cannot remove the *armor* without dying, but the armor negates the need for food, sleep, and rest, granting immunity to *paralysis*, *sleep* and *slow* spells and spell-like effects. By stretching down roots into the soil, the *armor* can find underground water and draw it up,

allowing the wearer to *create water* as a full round action as a 20th-level caster. The life force of the *armor* regenerates the wearer's hit points at a rate of 3 per round. The wearer is immune to disease.

The *armor of the living earth* grants a +6 enhancement bonus to its wearer's Strength and Constitution. The user can choose to draw on the strength of the earth; for every round he concentrates and remains completely motionless, the Strength bonus from the *armor* increases by +2, to a maximum of +20. This bonus lasts for 1 hour or until the wearer is no longer touching the earth.

The wearer can *wild shape* as a 15th-level druid and can rage as a 15th-level barbarian. Both of these abilities can each be used a number of times per day equal to the wearer's Wisdom bonus (if any, minimum once per day), and both abilities stack with *wild shape* or rage abilities already possessed by the wearer.

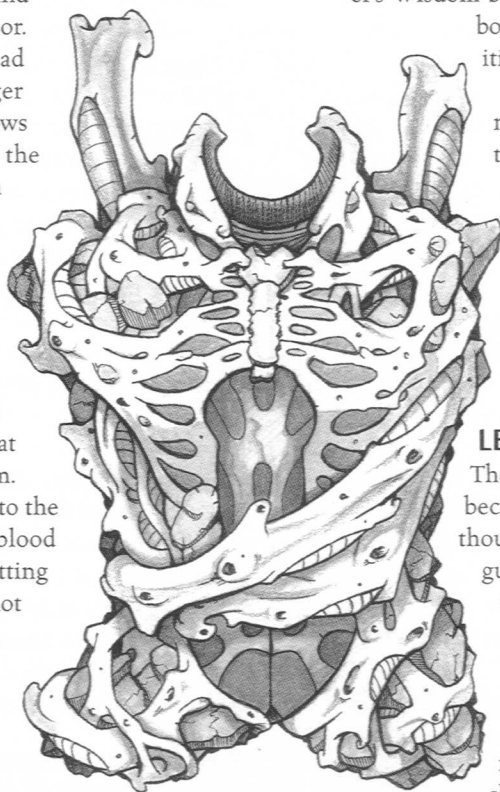
If the wearer ever spends more than a month away from the wilderness, he begins to sicken, and the armor begins to die. Each day, the wearer must make a Fortitude save, DC equal to the number of days he has been away from nature. If he fails the save, he suffers 2 points of permanent Constitution damage. Returning to the wilderness returns these lost points.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 100 lbs.

### LEGEND

Those who might be worthy to wear the *armor* become aware of it in dreams. The green thoughts of the *armor* reach out to them, and guide them to the tests.

- First, a prospective candidate for the *armor* must defeat the Keeper in Green, a 16th level druid. The Keeper challenges the candidate to three tasks: of magic, of strength, and of wits. The challenge of magic requires the candidate to awaken a sleeping tree. In the challenge of strength, the candidate must overcome a dire bear without using spells or magic items. To win the challenge of wits, the candidate must answer the riddle, "How will you learn the answer to this riddle?" The answer is not to answer, but just sit still and listen to the world.
- If the candidate succeeds at all three tasks, the Keeper assigns a quest to the candidate — defeat an enemy that is damaging nature, such as the Butcher King. This enemy is a fearsome half-troll, half-giant cursed with a vampirism that bleeds the earth dry.
- Once the enemy is slain, the candidate must travel alone into the deepest wilderness, living off the land for a whole season. If he survives this final task, he will find the *armor*.





## ASSASSIN'S CUP

"The Court of the Divine is called to order."

Nowthep, god of justice, turned his sightless eyes on the cloaked figure in the center of the room. "Syrn, demigod of assassins, you are charged with the murder of Qualse, god of knowledge. What do you say in your defense?"

Syrn gave a thin, mirthless smile. "I am a simple businessman — a gentleman. I care not about the nature of my clients, nor that of the target. A being offered me a commission — it wished another being to be removed. I merely carried out that commission."

"Then you will tell us the name of your employer?"

"I am afraid I cannot. Doing so would violate my code of ethics."

The gods seated around the room murmured, but were quickly silenced by Nowthep. The god's eyes flashed with anger, and his voice shook the air. "Syrn, the Court finds you guilty. You have violated the sanctity of my house and murdered my guest. As punishment for this, you are sentenced to the detention plane of Reththalthor for eternity. Your tools and possessions will be destroyed. The Court is dismissed."

And thus ended Syrn, assassin of the gods. His tools of the trade were indeed destroyed — all but one.

### ASSASSIN'S CUP

The assassin's cup appears as a beautifully crafted gold wine goblet covered with ornate carvings. Its true nature, a blood-red cup studded with 20 perfect, clear diamonds, is only revealed by a *true seeing* spell, when the cup is filled with blood, or after the cup is used.

Anyone who drinks any liquid from the cup immediately dies (no save). The victim's body dissolves into nothing in 1d4 rounds. Only deities of intermediate or greater power are immune to this effect.

Once a victim's body dissolves, his soul is trapped in one of the diamonds. There it is tortured for 1d6 days by two fallen solars bound to the cup. During this time none of the cup's powers may be used. For the trapped souls, this is an eternity of agony that twists them into shades. At the end of the torture, the clear diamond in which the soul is trapped turns jet black.

By pressing one of the black diamonds, the owner of the cup may summon the shade trapped within. The shade follows the orders of the cup's bearer without ques-

tion. The shade is the original victim with the ghost template applied to him. A summoned shade serves for one day or until dismissed or slain. At the end of this service it returns to the gem, where it must be tortured for another 1d4 days before it can be summoned again.

To release a trapped soul, the cup owner must summon its shade and then say the true name of both the victim and the person who hired the assassin to kill him (or the killer, if no assassin was hired). This releases the shade from the cup, but, since the torture gave it a fierce hatred of life, it generally attacks the cup bearer immediately. Once released, a soul may be returned to life as normal (i.e. with a *true resurrection* spell).

Weight: 2 lb.

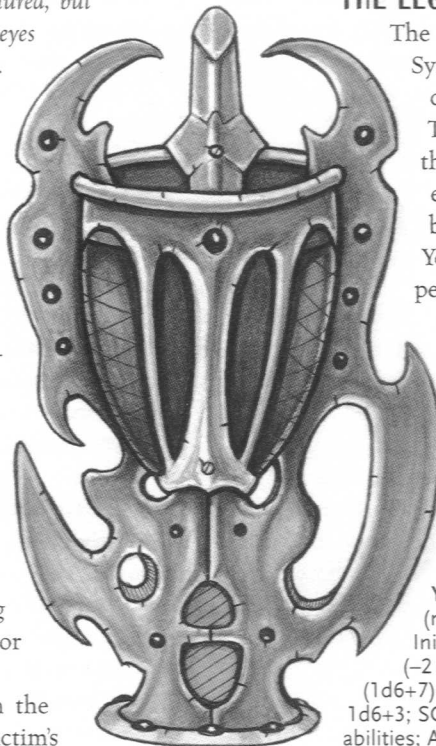
### THE LEGEND

The Assassin's Cup was the only one of Syrn's tools not destroyed, because it still contains the soul of the deity Qualse. The gods wish to release him, but first they must discover the name of Syrn's employer. Until they do, the cup has been placed under the safekeeping of Yorm, a powerful lammasu wizard and personal friend of Qualse.

Yorm lives in Qualse's abandoned high temple, a large building with beautiful architecture and a great library. Yorm spends most of his time maintaining the temple grounds and browsing the library for information that might lead him to Syrn's client.

**Yorm, Lammasu Wiz7:** CR 15; SZ H (magical beast); HD 14d10+42; hp 132; Init +0; Spd 30 ft., fly 60 ft (average); AC 13 (-2 size, +5 natural); Atks 2 Claws +16 melee (1d6+7); SA Spells, spell-like abilities, pounce, rake 1d6+3; SQ Magic circle against evil, spells, spell-like abilities; AL LG; SV Fort +10, Ref +9, Will +12; Str 25, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 18, Wis 17, Cha 14. Skills: Concentration +17, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Listen +8, Spellcraft +10; Feats: Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Flyby Attack, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Craft Wondrous Item, Craft Rod, Spell Focus (divination). Spells: Cleric spells (as 7th level cleric; 6/4+1/3+1/2+1/1+1; domains: Good, Knowledge), Wizard Spells (4/5/4/3/2).

Yorm is generally peaceful, willing to advise, heal, or help equip noble adventurers, but rarely venturing into combat. If attacked, he attempts to incapacitate the aggressor and learn the reason behind the attack. If it was a mistake, he lets them off with a strong warning. If the attack was deliberate or the attacker evil, he will destroy them.



## ASTRARIUM OF THE COSMOS

From the *Tractacus Astrarii* by Archimedes Magus:

*I've done it!*

*Thanks to the Emperor's funding, my project is finally complete. I emptied the Empire's treasury to build it. But no matter. The power at my disposal is limitless.*

*The Astrarium is more than just an extremely accurate time-keeping device. I have long since conquered that mathematical challenge. No, the Astrarium is much more. It does not just measure the passing of time and the movements of the heavens. It can actually influence them!*

The book stops there, but it has a hasty postscript.

*The investment worked. Thank you, Archimedes. It is unfortunate that you will not benefit from your investment.*

The Astrarium consists of seven projections with globes representing the motions of the sun, moon, and five planets, a 24-hour dial, dates of fixed and movable feasts, nodes of solar and lunar orbits, and sunrise and sunset times. The entire mechanism is geared, driven by a verge and powered by a hanging weight. It is Gargantuan in size (over 50 feet in diameter) and accurately depicts the movement of time and space in the universe.

### ASTRARIUM OF THE COSMOS

By pausing the *astrarium*, moving it backwards, or speeding it up, its user can open gates to different times and places in the universe.

The *astrarium of the cosmos* is attuned to the various correspondences of the cosmos. By tuning it to the appropriate constellation, it creates a gate to another dimension.

The *astrarium* creates an interdimensional connection between the user's plane of existence and the plane desired, allowing travel between the planes in both directions. Once the portal appears, the user can call a particular creature through the gate depending on the cosmic sign selected.

The gate itself is a circular hoop or disk from 5 to 20 feet in diameter (caster's choice), oriented in the direction the user desires when it comes into existence (typically vertical and facing the user). It is a two-dimensional window into the plane the user named, and anyone or anything that moves through is shunted instantly to the other side.

TABLE 1-1: ASTRARIUM OF THE COSMOS

1d20	Effect
1-2	Flesh to stone
3-4	Meteor swarm
5-6	Gaseous form
7-8	Temporal stasis
9-10	Time stop
11-12	Whirlwind
13-14	Earthquake
15-16	Fire Storm
17-18	Prismatic spray
19-20	Maze

The gate has a front and a back. Creatures moving through the gate from the front are transported to another plane; creatures moving through it from the back are not.

Each creature that is summoned obeys the wielder to the best of its ability. The creature exists for 30 rounds before disappearing. Any particular creature can be summoned once per month.

**Cervus (Fire):** An enormous creature, larger than a bull, with the statistics of a celestial nightmare except for the addition of a pair of wicked horns (damage 1d8+4/1d8+4). If it charges, it may only use its horns but adds +6 points of damage to each successful attack on that round.

**Bovinus (Earth):** Summons a 24 HD celestial gorgon.

**Vermis (Air):** Summons four 6 HD celestial dire rats.

**Tigris (Water):** Summons an 18 HD celestial manticore.

**Coniglis (Earth):** Summons three 9 HD celestial dire weasels.

**Wyvernus (Astral):** Summons a 21 HD celestial wyvern.

**Coatulus (Water):** Summons a 24 HD couatl.

**Unicornus (Ethereal):** Summons 3 8 HD celestial unicorns.

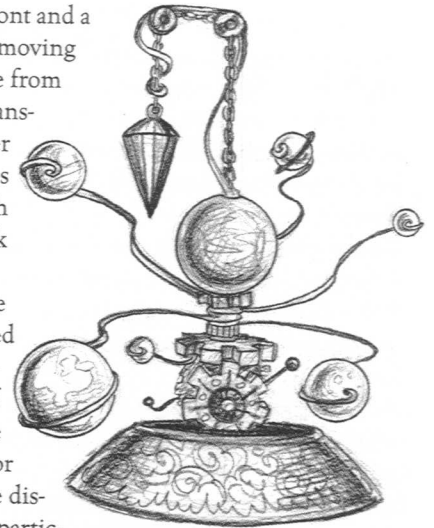
**Garillos (Earth):** Summons a 21 HD celestial girallon.

**Bloccos (Air):** Summons two 24 HD celestial bats.

**Lupos (Fire):** Summons an 18 HD celestial dire wolf.

**Verrus (Water):** Summons a 21 HD celestial dire boar.

Caster Level: 30th; Weight: 10,000 lb.



### THE LEGEND

The *astrarium of the cosmos* is a dangerous tool that requires a genius' understanding of physics, astrology and astronomy. To decipher any one of the Zodiac functions requires a Knowledge (planes) check (DC 25). Failure means the user cannot use that aspect of the *astrarium* unless another person who succeeds the check demonstrates its function.

Failing the check means the user thinks he arranged the *astrarium* correctly but instead attuned it to a confluence of the cosmos. Roll on the below table to see the side effect. All effects are cast as a 30th-level sorcerer or druid and are centered on the user.



## AZANIAH'S RING

Of all the artifacts from the distant planes, perhaps none causes as much consternation as Azaniah's Ring. It has graced the hands of tyrants uncounted, and brought great power to its wielders even as it destroyed their ambitions.

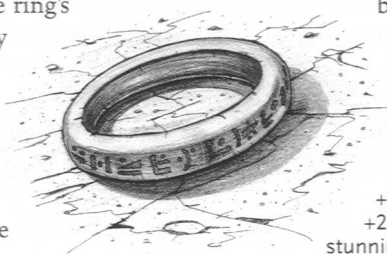
The first mortal to wield the ring was squire to a powerful blackguard. Ambitious, but familiar with the price his master had paid, the boy congratulated himself on his craftiness even as he bartered away his soul in exchange for a ring that granted him perfection of body, mind, and spirit. He had used a slightly altered version of the spell which summoned the blackguard's infernal master, then proudly cut down his would-be lord when it manifested.

Azaniah, Highest of the Planetars, disappeared forever.

For a time, the squire reveled in the ring's power. It brought him unworldly insight and strength of body, and amplified his already deep cunning. Only after becoming a blackguard himself did he realize the true power of the ring, as he surrendered all his order's secrets to the first paladin he came across.

In perfecting his body, mind, and spirit, the ring had granted him a conscience.

That squire's name is lost to history, a kindness to the great man he eventually became. The ring remains, seeking the most terrible soul and tempting it to benevolence. To this day, Azaniah's brethren mourn his loss even as they celebrate his sacrifice.



shifts the creature's alignment one step closer to lawful good, and bonds the ring to the wearer (even at a distance). The ring's effects on alignment are permanent. Once the user becomes lawful good, the ring and its benefits quietly disappear.

Caster Level: 20th, Weight: — lb.

### THE LEGEND

Unfortunately, absolute power is not always absolutely tempting. An evil monk, Li Sung, has resisted the Ring's advances and suspects its true nature. Though he dare not carry the Ring with him, he has hidden it in his sanctum while he seeks a method to corrupt the planetar's soul within it. Should he succeed, he would have safe access to the ring's powers. A group of archon celestials is aware of this, but dare not move directly for fear of confirming the ring's existence. They would reward anyone who dealt with Li Sung.

**Li Sung, Mnk 17:** CR 17; SZ M (human); HD 17; hp 102; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 80 ft.; AC 20 (+4 Dex, +3 Wisdom, +3 monk AC bonus); Atks Unarmed +16/+13/+10/+7 melee (1d20+3), or shuriken +5 +21 ranged (d +5); SA Ki strike (+3), quivering palm, stunning attack, timeless body, tongue of the sun and moon, unarmed strike; SQ Abundant step, evasion, diamond body, diamond soul, leap of the clouds, purity of body, slow fall (50 ft.), still mind, wholeness of body; SV Fort +14, Ref +16, Will +15; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 15; AL LE. Skills: Balance 11, Climb 11, Concentration 9, Diplomacy 9, Escape Artist 11, Hide 11, Jump 11, Knowledge (arcana) 10, Listen 10, Move Silently 11, Swim 11, Tumble 11; Feats: Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved Trip, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Run, Weapon Finesse (unarmed).

### AZANIAH'S RING

Azaniah's ring is as clever as it is powerful, adapting its very nature to entice the corruption it seeks out. In the past, the ring's targets believed it to be as varied in power as a ring of elemental command, a ring of freedom of movement, a ring of protection +5, or a ring of spell-storing IV. In actuality, each victim saw only what they wanted the ring to be.

The ring has no effect on non-bonded creatures of non-evil alignments.

For every continuous day an evil creature wears the ring, or otherwise keeps it close to his person (such as in a pouch), the ring bestows its benefits, as determined by rolling on the chart below:

Users do not automatically notice these benefits, but may notice that the ring does not work in the manner they thought it would. In any case, the ring's benefits are permanent, as is the price for them. From the moment it is worn, the ring awakens the dormant conscience of the user, and any attempt to commit or allow an evil act, or to remove the ring, forces the user to make a Will save (DC 5, +5 for every roll on the above chart, including both the original and subsequent rolls on a result of 20). Failure

TABLE 1–2: AZANIAH'S RING

1d20	Effect
1	+2 Strength
2	+2 Dexterity
3	+2 Constitution
4	+2 Intelligence
5	+2 Wisdom
6	+2 Charisma
7	+2 natural AC
8	+4 skill points
9	+1 feat (does not override any prerequisites)
10	SR 5 (+5 each successive roll)
11	DR 5/+1 (5/+1 each successive roll)
12	Base speed +5 ft.
13	Fortitude save +3
14	Reflex save +3
15	Will save +3
16	Two cross-class or one trained-only skill becomes a class skill (wearer's choice)
17	+5 permanent hit points
18	Regeneration 5 (+1 for each successive roll)
19	Wearer is granted one wish, per the spell. The wearer may not wish away the ring, and the ring will slant any command to do the most good to the most people.
20	Roll again twice, ignoring this result

## BIVUKKU, THE MACAHUITL OF THE AGES

The Sleethar tribe of lizardfolk descended from a world-spanning culture that has lost much of its former glory. Sleethar decadence and the invasions of human barbarians eventually caused their great culture to collapse. When several knightly orders of the kingdom of Tarthur launched a crusade to exterminate the lizardfolk, the Sleethar found their obsidian-tipped clubs ineffective against the plate armor of their adversaries. The one-sided war seemed to predict an obvious outcome — the Sleethar would be wiped from history.

At a critical juncture in the clash between the two cultures, the Gregorian Knights pressed their advantage. They brutally massacred the emperor's elite guard, leaving their leader — Axtetloan — mortally wounded at the bottom of a marsh.

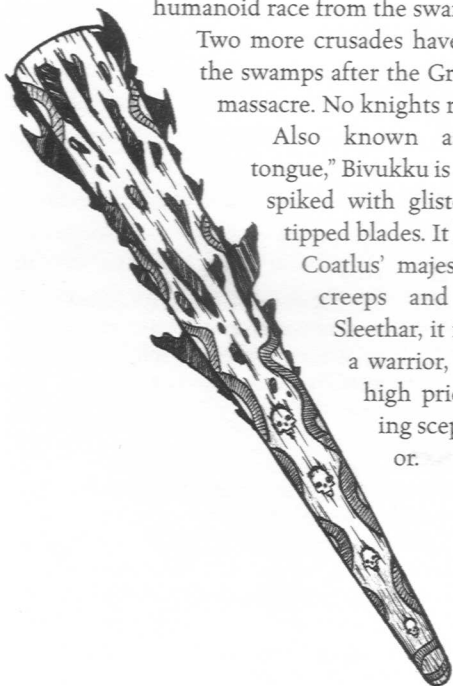
His body crushed and mangled from the knights' weapons, Axtetloan prayed to the creator of the Sleethar, Coatlus, for vengeance.

A floating macahuitl (spiked club) appeared before him in a flash of light. Axtetloan gripped it — and the Gregorian Knights suffered dearly. A gigantic winged snake gulped knights down whole, shredded their horses, and routed the Order. Axtetloan returned triumphantly to his shattered cities as the only survivor of his warrior band.

Two years later, the Sleethar rallied. They began using guerilla tactics, working with other scaled races to lay ambushes, set traps, and drive out every other humanoid race from the swamps.

Two more crusades have been sent into the swamps after the Gregorian Knights massacre. No knights returned.

Also known as “the snake's tongue,” Bivukku is a hardwood club spiked with glistening diamond-tipped blades. It has the power of Coatlus' majesty over all that creeps and flies. To the Sleethar, it is the weapon of a warrior, the symbol of a high priest, and the ruling scepter of an emperor.



### BIVUKKU

*Bivukku* is a +5 *greatclub* that inflicts slashing damage. While wielding *Bivukku*, the wielder understands the language of birds and reptiles. No serpents can resist his will. Normal serpents obey his every command, while creatures with the “reptilian” or “dragon” type can make a Will save (DC 30) to resist. This effect functions as suggestion cast by a 15th-level sorcerer.

*Bivukku* is supernaturally sharp and cuts through anything. Its targets get no armor or natural bonuses (except enhancement bonuses) against it. When it slashes through inanimate objects it ignores hardness.

Once per week, the wielder can transform into an 18 HD couatl for 24 hours as a standard action, as per the *shapechange* spell.

When wielded in combat, all clubs and greatclubs within a 100-foot radius gain a +1 enhancement bonus and the same supernatural ability to ignore armor as *bivukku*.

Once per day, a victim struck by *Bivukku* is marked by Coatlus' displeasure, a terrible curse that slowly saps his strength. The club deals damage as normal, but the wound does not heal by any means short of a *miracle* or *wish* spell. Victims killed by this wound may not be raised until a *miracle* or *wish* is used to remove the curse.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 10 lb.

### THE LEGEND

Axtetloan is the blessed warrior of Coatlus who wields *bivukku* against all enemies of the Scale. Axtetloan's definition of “enemy” is very broad and includes all mammals. He is obsessed with making humanoid sacrifices to Coatlus and believes the knightly crusades against him are a sign of his god's displeasure.

Axtetloan is deeply xenophobic, which could be the downfall of his people. Although the Sleethar tribe is small, he has the allegiance of thousands of kobolds. Recently, Axtetloan has located a green dragon's lair. If he manages to make contact, Tarthur is doomed.

**Axtetloan, male lizardfolk Bbn15:** CR 15; SZ M (humanoid, lizardfolk); HD 15d12+75; hp 206; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft; AC 20 (+5 natural, +4 hide, +1 Dex.); Atks *Bivukku* +26/+21/+16 (1d10+14), or +1 longbow +17/+12/+7 (1d8+1/crit x3); SA Greater rage; SQ Damage Resistance 2/–, fast movement, uncanny dodge; SV Fort +14, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 23, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 14; AL N. Skills: Balance +5, Craft +13, Hide +1, Intimidate +12, Jump +13, Listen +16, Move Silently +1, Spot +3, Swim +32, Wilderness Lore +18. Feats: Alertness, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Cleave, Power Attack, Run. Equipment: *Bivukku*, +1 longbow of distance, +1 hide armor, darkwood shield, snake-shaped gold headband (5,000 gp), gold armband (5,000 gp), gold bracelets (2,500 gp each), a pouch containing 1,369 gp, and 16 gems worth 200 gp each.



## THE BLOOD OF GEROS

Few warriors of legend are more infamous than Geros, a barbarian from the Wernish Tribes. It was said no force could slay him, and for a time this proved true. His companions died, his tribe was destroyed, his enemies struck at him time and time again, but Geros endured. Not sword, nor spell, nor illness nor age could stop the barbarian, who grew ever older, tougher, and nastier. He conquered nations and put cities to the sword. Many tried to slay him, but Geros always won. He proudly bore the scars of a thousand battles, and his blood ran thick and black with the residue of healing potions.

In his three hundredth year, Geros assaulted the very gates of Hell. Some say he had tired of life, others that his inhuman endurance was demonic and Geros now sought to escape his bargain's consequences. Whatever the cause, he laid siege to the gates of the Abyss and slew every demon he could lay his ax to. The princes of the underworld gathered their unholy powers and struck Geros with searing hellfire. His flesh melted, his bones shattered, and his very soul was set ablaze — but Geros endured. When the fire faded, a bubbling pool of thick, viscous gore remained — the Blood of Geros.

### THE BLOOD OF GEROS

The hellspawn gathered the *blood of Geros*, and their princes claimed it. Since then it was divided still further, and some has found its way into mortal hands. It is usually found in a large bottle or stoppered jar, containing 1d4+1 pints of the red-black blood. However, smaller reliquaries containing the blood have been found, and the blood is capable of surviving, and moving, outside a container.

Drinking a single dose of the blood (there are 6 doses in a pint) restores 3d12+3 hit points instantly and grants regeneration 2 for one day. The drinker also gains a +4 inherent bonus to Strength and Constitution and the ability to rage 4 times a day as a 15th-level barbarian. This effect lasts for one month. The character permanently gains 5 hit points. Using the blood in this manner counts as drinking a potion.

If a full pint of the blood is rubbed into a character's skin, he receives a +6 natural armor bonus for a month and resistance to the first 15 points of fire, acid, or cold damage taken in any round. While the character is protected by the blood, his skin takes on a distinct reddish tinge. The character permanently gains 30 hit points.

Blood calls to blood. Anyone who has ever used the blood of Geros may attempt to *dominate* any other character that has also benefited from it. This effect has a range of 360 ft., and is resolved using opposed Will saves between the two. The loser of this opposed check suffers the effects of a *dominate monster* spell, as if the winner had successfully cast the spell.

Geros' mind survived his death — at least part of it did. Anyone who drinks the blood is flooded with Geros' memories and thoughts, gaining 1d4 ranks of Knowledge (life of Geros) and Wilderness Lore. However, the drinker must make a Will save (DC 25) or replace one level of his highest class with a level of barbarian. The character may also suffer from dreams and hallucinations in which he is Geros reborn.

*Caster Level:* 20th; *Weight:* — lb.



### LEGEND

Geros was the first to master the feat of metabolizing magical potions, which was partly responsible for his legendary vitality. Any character who acquires the *Metabolize Magic Potion* feat suffers no ill effects from the blood of Geros.

### METABOLIZE MAGIC POTION (New Feat)

Your body adapts to a particular magical potion, allowing you to manifest the potion's effects as a supernatural ability.

**Prerequisites:** Con 17+, Alchemy 5+, Base Fortitude save +8 or higher. The character must drink one dose of the chosen potion every day for six consecutive days before drinking three on the seventh day and taking this feat.

**Effect:** Your body learns to produce the chosen potion, magically generating it in your bloodstream. Once per day, as a standard action, you may use this ability, which has exactly the same effects as drinking the potion normally. This is a supernatural ability. You may take this feat multiple times, each time for a different potion.

## BLOODFIRE

A product of alchemic genius and interplanar insanity, bloodfire is a rare concoction that originated in a city which is now a ruin in the eastern deserts. Legends speak of the mad alchemist Abnezgar, who brewed potions far purer than any known today. Unsatisfied with the riches and immortality he had reaped from his skills, he sought to overthrow the Caliph, Sahl.

Lacking the Caliph's insight and soldiers, Abnezgar decided that the best recourse would be to summon the terrible efreeti whom Sahl had driven away before becoming Caliph. Abnezgar traveled to the City of Brass, hiding his presence with his potions. The alchemist killed many true elementals and salamanders and distilled their essences. The efreeti only discovered Abnezgar's presence when he slew one of them, the Pasha Elamash, and fled to his home plane with his prizes.

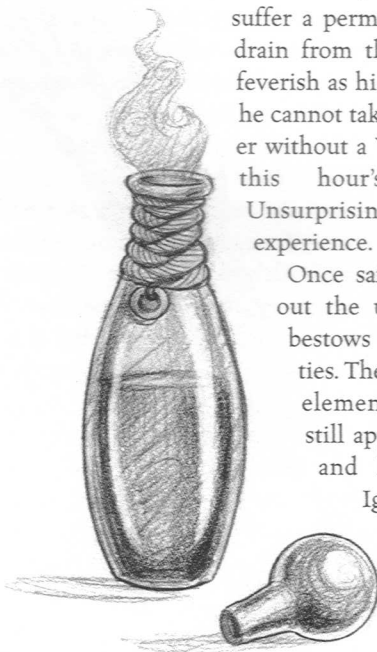
The efreeti reduced the Caliph's glorious city to glass and sand before finally slaying Abnezgar, but never discovered Elamash's body nor the alchemist's laboratory. More frightening was that Abnezgar's body did not burn on his pyre...

### BLOODFIRE

Bottled *bloodfire* is a volatile chemical, and thrown vials of it act like *alchemist's flame*. The primary differences are a matter of containment (bloodfire vials use crystal instead of cork or wax sealants, due to the mixture's heat) and the fact that creatures can drink *bloodfire* to gain a variety of abilities, albeit at great risk. Upon consuming *bloodfire*, a creature falls into a painful malaise for 24 hours,

and must make hourly Fortitude saves (DC: 20 + 2 for every hour past the first) or suffer a permanent -2 Constitution drain from the strain. His body is feverish as his blood boils away, and he cannot take any action whatsoever without a Will save (DC equal to this hour's Fortitude save). Unsurprisingly, few survive the experience.

Once safely suffused throughout the user's system, *bloodfire* bestows several amazing abilities. The user's type changes to elemental (fire), though he still appears as he did before, and he intuitively learns Ignan. His blood superheats and bursts into



flames on contact with air. Flammable materials catch fire, and metal heats quickly (as per the *heat metal* spell, as though cast by a druid of the user's level), likely destroying any piercing or slashing weapons that deal damage.

Traces of Elamash's blood still reside within the user's body, granting him influence over Elamash's dominion. In dealings with creatures of the elemental (fire) subtype, the user gains a competence bonus to all Charisma-related checks equal to the difference between the user's level and the creatures' Challenge Rating, if the CR is the lower of the two.

### THE LEGEND

Any efreeti of equal or greater challenge rating are immune to bloodfire's effects, and one in particular seeks the destruction of all remaining samples of the substance. Ishanis, Elamash's son and heir, still seeks final vengeance for his father's death, and has destroyed almost all of the samples. Those who relinquish bloodfire without a fight will satisfy Ishanis' rage, at least in the short term. Unfortunately, he is perfectly willing to destroy the entire plane in his quest to secure his father's body and finally kill Abnezgar. Ishana usually travels alone, but may lead a command consisting of the following: a band of ten normal efreeti, six Huge fire elementals, and either a noble party of noble salamanders or three squads of azers. He prefers to capture and interrogate bloodfire-enhanced enemies.

**Ishanis:** CR 21; SZ Huge (efreeti, outsider-evil, fire, lawful); HD 30; hp 30d8+120 (255 hp); Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 20 ft, fly 40 ft (perfect); AC 19 (-2 size, +2 Dex, +9 natural); Atks Slam +38/+23/+18/+13 melee (1d8+10 and 1d6 fire); SA Spell-like abilities, heat; SQ Plane shift, telepathy; SV Fort +21, Ref +19, Will +19; Str 31, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 15; AL LE. Skills: Bluff +29, Concentration +33, Escape Artist +13, Intimidate +28, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Listen +29, Move Silently +13, Sense Motive +28, Spellcraft +28, Spot +29, Wilderness Lore +20; Feats: Cleave, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Flyby Attack, Power Attack, Sunder, Track.

## BLOODLETTER AND THE DEVIL'S TEETH

Sir Ehtar was, depending upon the source of the tale, either a nobleman who faced down the greatest enemies of the world, or a murderous mercenary who would hunt any victim for the right price. By all accounts a capable fighter, he crossed the planes searching for worthy adversaries, eventually besting a pit fiend in single combat. The devil, defeated but no fool, offered a bargain in exchange for his life — he would grant Sir Ehtar a potent weapon and adversaries worthy even of him. Sir Ehtar knew of devils' reputation for insidious bargains, and demanded that the blade be unique in form and function, and that neither the weapon nor he himself would bear any dweomer which the devil did not fully and honestly explain to the mortal. The devil agreed, and sealed both the bargain and Ehtar's fate.

Ehtar traveled across the cosmos, excelling in combat until he eventually came to believe that the pit fiend had lied about finding worthy foes. Returning to the site of their legendary combat, Sir Ehtar discovered six warriors pursuing him, each with blades almost identical to his own. The enemies themselves were of various races, both from his own plane and others, and he slew them each in turn, only to watch in horror as they returned to hunt him anew as vampires. None know the final fates of Sir Ehtar, the pit fiend, or the pit fiend's agents, but the legendary Bloodletter and its copies, the Devil's Teeth, haunt the worlds to this day.

Bloodletter and its copies are black, thorned two-bladed swords, with jagged edges that sometimes drip blood.

### BLOODLETTER

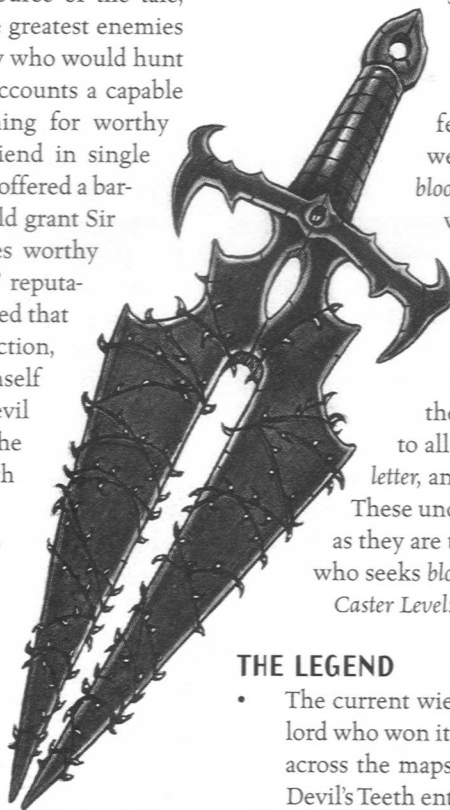
*Bloodletter* and its copies are identical +5 two-bladed swords bearing the following common enchantments: *defending*, *ghost touch*, *keen*, *mighty cleaving*, *speed*, and *wounding*. The blades of the weapons drip blood if someone they have attacked previously is within 100 feet. Those who wield any of the weapons may speak and read any of the Abyssal, Celestial, and Infernal tongues. *Bloodletter* and the *devil's teeth* allow their wielders to perform a coup de grace on a helpless target as a free action once per round, after which the wielder may choose to *plane shift* as though he were a sorcerer of 20th level. Each weapon also grants its user the Tracking feat, if he does not already have it.

Each of the weapons also bears a rudimentary portion of their original owners' bloodlust. If the weapon is dripping blood (even if it is from combat), the owner must make a Will save (DC: 15, +1 per previous check for this save) or hunt and attempt to kill another foe present, or the first person who leaves his presence if no foe is at hand.

The *devil's teeth* are each slightly different from *bloodletter* itself. Each weapon is missing a different one of *bloodletter's* enchantments. Any who die while wielding one of the *devil's teeth* rises as a vampire (or ghost, if the body was absolutely destroyed) in 1d4 rounds. The new undead will seek to reclaim its weapon, and then hunt down *bloodletter* itself. Wielders of the *devil's teeth* have a +20 profane bonus to all Wilderness Lore checks to track *bloodletter*, and may track the weapon across planes.

These undead have utterly no free will, beholden as they are to the pit fiend that spawned them, and who seeks *bloodletter* for his own fell purposes.

Caster Level: 20th, Weight: 30 lbs.



### THE LEGEND

- The current wielder of *Bloodletter* is a butcher of a warlord who won it in battle, and even now slashes his way across the maps in his mad quest for power. Soon the Devil's Teeth enter into play as well, perhaps even in the PCs' hands. The PCs must plan their movements carefully — letting *Bloodletter's* wielder escape could doom the world, while letting an undead wielder of the Devil's Teeth go unchecked would be even worse.
- The pit fiend behind both the Devil's Teeth and *Bloodletter* has wisely kept his identity secret in the centuries since the weapons' creation. While appreciative of the anonymous devil's clever undermining of the agreement, his colleagues have judged the weapons too chaotic. A pit fiend approaches the party with a bargain — reveal the identity of the weapons' master, and the devils will utterly destroy one person of the party's choosing, annihilating even their enemy's soul. The devil will almost certainly have some quiet additions to the contract, assuming he is not the very pit fiend the party is looking for...
- In the centuries since the weapons' creation, the pit fiend behind them has stopped at nothing in his attempts to retrieve *Bloodletter*, but no one knows why. It is far from the most powerful artifact known to the devils, and carries no enchantments that Sir Ehtar either did not wish for or could use to save himself against the Devil's Teeth.

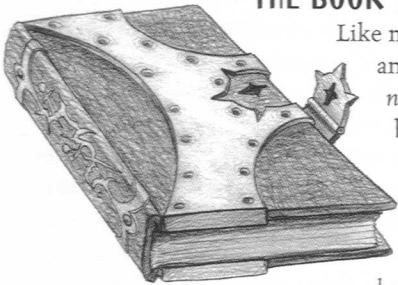


## THE BOOK THAT NEVER WAS

All that passes is recorded in the Annals of the Gods. They note the rise of an empire and the fall of a sparrow. Nothing goes unrecorded — perhaps even those things that do not quite happen.

The *book that never was* is a magical tome stolen from the Celestial Libraries by a wandering fey thief. It was then a collection of footnotes to the universe, describing events that could have transpired differently. If an arrow had missed its intended target, if a gate had not been closed in time, if a son had been born a daughter... things that could have been, but never were.

Since it fell into the hands of mortals, the *book* has changed. The thief discovered that the book could be used to change history — if the events described in the *book* never happened, then recording an event in the *book* would remove that event from reality. The fate of the thief is unknown — some say he accidentally erased himself; others say that he used the *book* to undo the protections on the *book* itself, and was punished for his hubris. The *book* vanishes after being used, but keeps turning up again and again... spreading chaos and second chances in its wake.



### THE BOOK THAT NEVER WAS

Like most other magical tomes and librams, the *book that never was* is sturdily bound and well preserved. The cover bears a lock, but its mechanism has been broken for centuries. The *book's* nine score pages con-

tain thousands of entries, each in a different script. There is a single blank page at the very end. Using the *book* is simple: if a person writes a description of a person, place, or event on the blank page, that thing is added to the catalogue of Things That Never Were. Reality shifts to accommodate this change, but memories remain mostly intact.

The *book* takes a minimum amount of effort when sorting out the change in history, and often leaves patchy gaps. If someone adds a description of a mountain to the *book*, the mountain vanishes, but roads still curve around where it once stood.

The *book* leaves history as intact as possible. Writing a description of an evil overlord into the book removes him — but a different, stronger overlord might appear in the “new” history. Changing events that were already on a knife-edge is safer — if a group of heroes nearly defeated the overlord, but fell at the final challenge, then the book could be used to erase some tiny factor, and give the heroes a second chance.

All the pages in the *book*, bar one, are full. When an entry is added, another random entry from the rest of the book is pushed out to make a blank page, and something that never was is returned to reality.

The *book that never was* vanishes after each use.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 4 lbs.

### LEGEND

None of these things are currently true, but if an entry is added to the *book that never was*, any of them could be made real again. Those who meddle with history may alter it in unforeseeable ways. Some are trivial changes, others will remake or doom the world.

TABLE 1–3: THE BOOK THAT NEVER WAS

1d20	Effect
1	The proud city of Medrahlia exists on the shores of the great ocean, and its navy is the terror of the seas.
2	A cart rolled downhill and killed Amya, daughter of Mikha the Innkeeper.
3	There is a hidden door in the western wall of the Krak du Nord fortress.
4	The wizard Alumensis succeeded in opening a portal to the Abyss.
5	The guards at the library of Sevenstone saw a thief on Midwinter's Eve, stealing the “Vendetta Scroll”.
6	The famed sword of Sir Havar was thrown into the ocean by his grieving widow.
7	The Eredraith river flooded the lowlands in the spring of 743.
8	The monk Kethio lost his eye in battle, which forced him to retire from the Flawless Path Brothers.
9	Once every year, the Dread Walker leaves his tower.
10	The tunnel beneath at Albesgate is filled with stones.
11	Fulcam found the scroll of <i>planar binding</i> .
12	The pouch containing the potions belonging to Cadrem was not lost.
13	The plague came to Threshold, killing a third of the folk of that place.
14	The spire at Avesbury is nine stories high.
15	The harvest in 432 was ruined by deathfrost.
16	The vessel <i>Shadow</i> foundered on the reefs in the Bay of Pearls.
17	The dark cleric Thulumane rules the theocracy that dominates the west.
18	The key to the lock of the Final Gate is lost.
19	The lady Amarie married Baron Thomas in a secret ceremony.
20	The <i>book that never was</i> was never found.

## BRACERS OF BONDING

Facing rising crime, the ruling wizards of the ancient city-state of Arcab faced a dilemma. Execution was barbaric, but the best rogues could escape even the best customized prisons. The solution was elegant: a series of enchanted bracers, with the criminals and the city guard splitting each pair. The enchantments allowed the city guard to track escaped criminals, and the guardsmen gained insight into the criminal world.

A few criminals and guards disappeared, but the mages were not overly concerned. It was inevitable, they thought, that a few criminals would use the link against the guards, or that a guard might use his bond-granted knowledge to stake out his own illicit enterprise. When half the remaining force disappeared literally overnight, however, the magocrats investigated. What they discovered was the terrifying price for their arrogance.

The bracers had worked too well in bonding their bearers, and had melded policeman and prisoner into a single body. These united creatures overthrew the horrified magocracy, then quietly disappeared into history.

### BRACERS OF BONDING

Fewer than a dozen pairs of *bracers of bonding* still exist. A pair of matched steel bracers, their only feature of note is a finely detailed pattern of chains wound around each bracer. Once donned, the bracer snaps shut, and nothing short of a *remove curse* spell unlocks it. Strangely, a character wearing one of these bracers may not wear another; the second one simply falls away as though its lock was broken. A character may wear a single *bracer of bonding* with any other set of magical bracers, gaining the benefits of both. It is extraordinarily rare for any hoard containing a *bracer of bonding* to contain its twin, and somewhat less so for its match to already be in use.

Without its match in use, a *bracer of bonding* is nothing more than a mild irritant, an unremovable, unremarkable accessory without purpose. Once active, however, the *bracers of bonding* provide their wearers with a number of capabilities. Each user may use any one of the following spell-like abilities once per round, as a free action: *change self* (only to appear as the other user), *message* (only to other user), *detect thoughts* (only other user's), *locate creature* (only other user), and *scrying* (only other user). These spell-like abilities have no range or planar limitations. The bracers also allow one user to take on qualities of the other bracer's user, temporarily taking from his opposite number a sum of ability, skill, or temporary hit points; a class or race feature; or an extraordinary, supernatural, or spell-like ability. These "thefts" take place as a free action once per round, and require an opposed Will save to resist (the giving partner may voluntarily surrender the trait, regardless of the check). Stolen traits remain with the new user

until relinquished (as a free action) or stolen back. If the stealing character rolls a natural 20, or if the donating character rolls a natural 1, the two merge into a single creature at the giving character's location, a painful action that leaves the two helpless for 1d8 minutes.

### THE LEGEND

The mad, amalgamated offspring of the Bracers of Bonding are the bound, the conjoined victims and victors of the power struggles between the bracers. United now in body and soul, the bound mesh imperfectly at best. Vestigial legs jut from thighs, while partially functioning hands and forearms grasp wildly from elbows. Deformed jaws sport a second row of teeth, and eyes bulge and grow.

All of this pales in comparison to the damage done to the minds of the bound. Though the personalities of the original creatures have combined, the joining is imperfect, leading to conflicting beliefs, memories, and desires. Most bound go mad very quickly, though some express this insanity by seeking out other victims to join with.

"Bound" is a template that can be added to any two humanoid or monstrous humanoid creatures (referred to hereafter as "the characters"), provided a joining between the two occurs, as with *braces of bonding*. The creatures' type changes to monstrous humanoid if necessary. It uses the greater of the characters' statistics and special abilities (Hit Dice, Speed, AC, Damage, Special Attacks, Abilities, Skills) except as noted. Bound creatures may still bind to another creature, applying this template again.

**Special Qualities:** The bound retain all the characters' special qualities and those listed below, and also gains the aberration type (see *Monster Manual*).

**Divided Minds (Su):** The mindset of a bound is alien even to itself. The bound has a racial bonus equal to its CR on all Will saves to resist enchantment spells, as well as opposed Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate checks.

**Redundant Organs (Su):** The bound are no more uniform inside than out, containing all the organs of their original forms. The bound receives a racial bonus equal to its challenge rating on all Fortitude saves to resist non-supernatural poisons and diseases.

**Saves:** Greater of both characters' Fortitude and Reflex saves. Subtract the "victim's" Will save from the "victor" if the Bracers of Bonding created the bound, or else subtract the lesser Will save bonus from the greater.

**Feats:** Same as both characters.

**Alignment:** Averaged between both characters, with non-neutral tendencies winning out (i.e. a lawful good character combined with a neutral evil character becomes lawful neutral, while a chaotic good character joining a lawful evil results in a neutral bound). If a character is already of the bound template, the alignment shifts to chaotic.

## BRACERS OF THE STONE KING

Mirkha of the Torkenlk clan was the Western Warrens' greatest swordsmith. His cousin, Prince Berdnat, implored him to find a way to defend his people against orc incursions. The stonemason traveled deep beneath the surface looking for suitable material with which to forge a suitable artifact.

After a year Mirkha returned bearing two oddly formed bracers of stone. When asked from whence they came stonemason merely smiled. He handed the bracers to Berdnat and bade him do with them as he would.

The Fanok tribe had recently killed Berdnat's father, and as king he immediately launched an attack. He decimated the orcs and forced the warlord Nr'duk to return to defend his homeland. Nr'duk's intervention turned the tide and he slew Berdnat in single combat. Nr'duk told his followers to hide the Bracers away as he negotiated with Berdnat's successor, Hemdrak. The dwarves have sought the Bracers ever since.

The Bracers are 3/4 of an inch thick and made of uncarved rock. Bronze bands at each end protect against chafing but the Bracers otherwise lack any artificial features and might be a pair of oddly shaped pieces of rock.

### BRACERS OF THE STONE KING

When both *bracers* are worn they give the wearer a +4 enhancement bonus to his Strength, a +2 enhancement bonus to his Constitution, and a -2 penalty to his Charisma. The bracers confer their rocklike quality on their user, giving him damage reduction 10/+5.

The *bracers* make their owner more sensitive to variations in earth, rock, and stone, giving him a +4 insight bonus to Appraise, Craft, and Search checks that are related to stone or metal. He may search for stone traps as a rogue.

Against creatures from the elemental plane of earth the *bracers'* owner receives a +5 insight bonus to Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Wilderness Lore skill as well as a +5 damage bonus.

The *bracers'* owner may use them to deflect incoming missiles as if he had the Deflect Arrows feat. He doesn't need to meet the prerequisites and may deflect two missiles per round rather than one. The user may deflect arrows and other missiles even if he is holding one or more weapons.

Finally, the *bracers* allow the wearer to temporarily transform rock or earth in contact with his body into a semi-liquid substance. The user may pass through solid ground or stone as easily as walking upon the surface. The *bracers* do not provide breathable air so the user can only pass through these substances until he runs out of air (as per the rules for drowning).

Only a powerful air elemental can destroy the *bracers*. It does so by enclosing them in a whirlwind for 12 full rounds without allowing them to touch the ground. Since the *bracers* are powerful artifacts of its opposing element, the air elemental must be persuaded or tricked into performing this task, as they find the contact utterly loathsome.

*Caster Level:* 20th; *Weight:* 12 lbs.

### THE LEGEND

A group of dwarves traveled deep into the Fanok tribe's former holdings and found the Bracers concealed within a series of caves. The dwarven adventurers reluctantly decided to leave the Bracers behind and go for reinforcements sufficient to safely transport the Bracers back to their people. The dwarves created a trap requiring sufficient intelligence that a dwarf could solve it but an orc could not. On their way home, they were overwhelmed and killed by a band of orcs.

PCs seeking the Bracers must traverse numerous tunnels and defeat various creatures before coming to a 20 ft. by 20 ft. chamber with an urn in the center and no other exits. The urn contains ten equal-sized tiles, each with a number on it. There are 6 1-tiles, 2 2-tiles, and 2 3-tiles. On the wall is the following writing:

```

1
11
21
1211
111221
312211
13112221
    
```

Beneath the last row are ten squares that the tiles can easily be placed and removed from. One minute after someone enters the chamber a heavy stone door seals off the entrance. It is too heavy to lift and impervious to magic. The ceiling lowers, crushing the room's occupants, in two minutes.

To solve the puzzle the ten tiles must be placed to make the next number in the sequence. Starting with the second row, each number describes the preceding number. Thus, One 1 (11) on the second line describes the number on the first line (1). Two 1s (21) on the third line describes the number 21 on line above. The correct number for the last line is:

1113213211

(i.e. One 1, One 3, Two 1s, Three 2s, One 1)

If someone completes the sequence correctly, a stone panel in the wall opposite the door opens to reveal the Bracers and a lever which resets the ceiling and opens the entrance door.



## THE BRAZIER OF NE'QUOTL

Sixteen hundred years ago the wizard Ne'quotl sought the Four Elemental Rulers' favor by offering each one her services in return for a share of their power. Ne'quotl negotiated successfully with two of the rulers — Air and Fire. Amused by the mortal's impertinence, the two Rulers and forged a Brazier containing a part of both their essences. In payment Ne'quotl swore to battle their rivals of Earth and Water when commanded.

Ne'quotl thwarted her patrons' counterparts for over a decade before an elder earth elemental killed her. Her apprentice Ver'quen took the artifact but feared involvement with the Elemental Rulers, and avoided using it. Earth and Water elementals slew her anyway. They failed to recover the Brazier, and throughout the centuries numerous individuals obtained it. Until recently the Lords of Earth and Water had forgotten the Brazier, but old enmities have recently rekindled. Now they seek the Brazier to destroy it and weaken their rivals.

The Brazier rests on a low-legged carved tripod. Its bowl is inscribed with patterns of flames. The smoke rising out of it is rimmed with flame and filled with sparks. Even when someone doesn't actively use the Brazier's powers, shapes occasionally form in the smoke but dissipate when looked at closely.



### THE BRAZIER OF NE'QUOTL

To attune himself to the *brazier*, a potential user meditates upon it for three days and three nights and makes a Concentration skill check (DC 30) each day. If he succeeds he becomes attuned to the *brazier*, replacing its previous owner. As long as he is attuned he is immune to all gas attacks, speaks fluent Auran and Ignan, and creatures from the elemental planes of air and fire cannot harm him.

The owner can *summon* an air or fire elemental of any size with maximum hit points. He may summon up to 50 HD of elementals per day. The user concentrates for 1 round for each size-level he wishes to summon, up to a maximum of 6 rounds for an elder elemental. By concentrating the user can also cause the *brazier* to generate an *unseen servant* as per the spell for a maximum of 20 servants per day.

The owner can command the *brazier's* smoke to solidify and create an opaque wall of force. The user can use the *brazier* to cast *fog cloud* and *solid fog* with unlimited dura-

tion and suffers no penalties to vision or movement while within these clouds. Five times per day the owner may use the *brazier* to cast an *incendiary cloud* as a 20th-level wizard.

Neither natural nor magical wind can dissipate the *brazier's* effects. The *brazier* must remain lit during both the initial casting and subsequent maintenance of any spell and the user may use any or all of its effects simultaneously. The *brazier* never runs out of fuel and doesn't use up air but can otherwise be doused and lit in the usual manner.

To destroy the *brazier*, an individual must plunge a *rod of flame* extinguishing into the artifact's bowl at a point at least a half mile deep in a body of water.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 14 lbs.

### THE LEGEND

The Lords of Earth and Water have acquired the Brazier but have not yet determined how to destroy it. Their minions employed elaborate protections combining both elements to protect it within a swamp. To get to the artifact adventurers must make three Wilderness skill checks (DC 25) to avoid the natural hazards. At the swamp's center they find an erratically rotating 30-foot ball of mud hovering 10 feet off the ground. The only feature upon the sphere is a silver plate 2 feet square.

Anyone entering the sphere finds the mud becoming more dense toward the center until he is trapped. Treat this as drowning as per the rules in the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*. The sphere is proof against all spells as well as ethereal and astral penetration.

Adventurers must bypass the plate to obtain the Brazier. The plate has 10 glyphs on it written in a hybrid of Terran and Aquan and relating to an ancient treaty between the Earth and Water Lords. An adventurer must make a Decipher Script skill check (DC 25) to translate the glyphs, then make a Knowledge (arcana) skill check (DC 30) to realize the correct pattern.

A rogue can bypass the opening device mechanically, making a Disable Device skill check (DC 45). The plate is protected by a *symbol of death*. If the adventurer successfully bypasses the plate the sphere collapses back into the swamp and reveals the Brazier hovering in the air.

**Trapped Plate:** CR 12; symbol of death against opener; Will save (DC 22) avoids; Search roll unnecessary; Disable Device (DC 45), or Decipher Script (DC 25) plus Knowledge (arcana) (DC 30).

## CAMRA'S BLESSED FIGUREHEAD

The goddess Camra rules over the domains of Good, Travel, and Water. Fifteen hundred years ago she and several other deities engaged in an elaborate game of quests, pitting their followers against each other. Camra favored Vlenor, a human sailor and rogue who traveled the world's oceans. To aid him in the contest Camra gave the mortal a figurehead sculpted in her image.

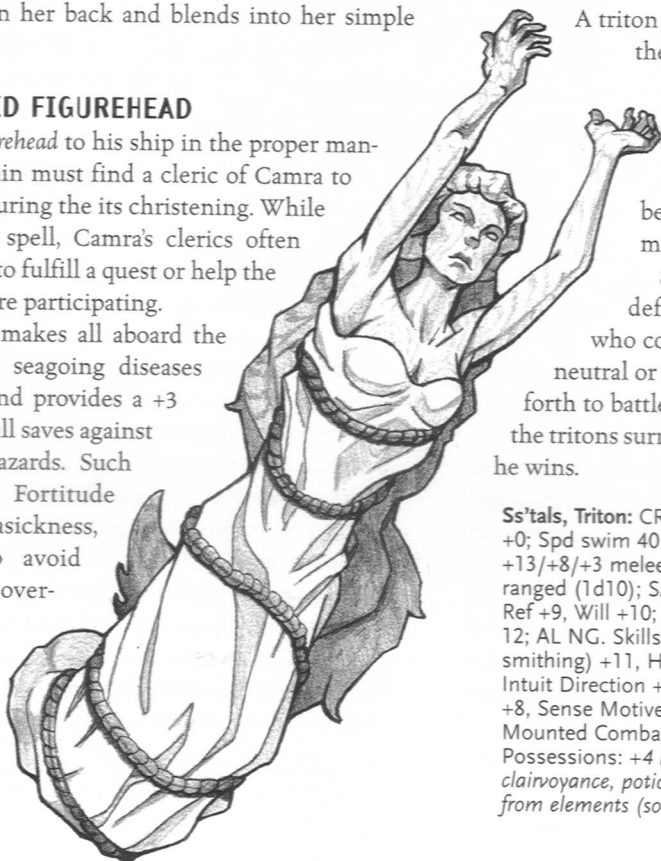
Vlenor triumphed over the other gods' champions and she rewarded him with a place at her side. Camra's influence has faded since other gods usurped her domains, but even as an immortal demigod Vlenor never lost his love of the sea. He devoted his time to human sailors while Camra attended to the requests of other races. Vlenor recently convinced the goddess to release her figurehead to the world once more to increase her influence. The gods who lost to Camra in the contest have noticed her recent actions and sometimes direct their own worshipers to act against those using the Figurehead.

This elaborate hardwood figurehead is in the shape of a woman holding her arms outstretched to the heavens. The woman is in her late 30s and has an expression of calm contemplation and wisdom upon her face. Her "hair" flows down her back and blends into her simple dress.

### CAMRA'S BLESSED FIGUREHEAD

To attach the *figurehead* to his ship in the proper manner, a ship's captain must find a cleric of Camra to cast a *bless* spell during the its christening. While *bless* is a simple spell, Camra's clerics often require a captain to fulfill a quest or help the local temple before participating.

The *figurehead* makes all aboard the ship immune to seagoing diseases such as scurvy and provides a +3 morale bonus to all saves against typical sailing hazards. Such hazards include Fortitude saves against seasickness, Reflex saves to avoid being washed overboard during a



storm, and Will saves to resist a siren. Everyone aboard the ship receives a +3 morale bonus to attacks against boarders. Only those who board the ship on friendly terms and of their own volition receive these bonuses.

The entire ship receives *protection* (as *protection from evil*) against all mundane and magical sea creatures regardless of their alignment. The *figurehead* doubles the ship's speed even when there is no breeze for its sails and allows it to travel in waters it normally could not traverse (e.g., a riverboat can make sea voyages).

The ship's captain receives a +3 morale bonus to all skill checks relating to handling a ship, dealing with those who might attack it, and negotiating with those who board it. Skills the *figurehead* typically gives a bonus to include: Appraise, Balance, Bluff, Diplomacy, Intuit Direction, Profession (sailing or captain), Sense Motive, Tumble, and Use Rope. As long as the captain is aboard his ship the *figurehead* provides him with the equivalent of a *foresight* spell targeting his ship.

An individual can destroy the *figurehead* by taking it to the top of a mountain at least 1 mile high, as far removed from Camra's influence as possible, and casting it down to shatter on the ground below.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 300 lbs.

### THE LEGEND

A triton tribe guards the Figurehead on behalf of the goddess. Its ruler, Ss'tals, is sworn to Camra's service and takes his duties quite seriously. He commands a band of 60 tritons (*Monster Manual*, page 178) and makes his lair in a grotto beneath a deserted stretch of coastline 500 miles from the nearest city.

Ss'tals and his tribe fight to the last to defend the Figurehead against evildoers who come for it. They will release it to those of neutral or good alignment if they send a champion forth to battle Ss'tals. The fight is not to the death and the tritons surrender the Figurehead to the newcomer if he wins.

**Ss'tals, Triton:** CR 10, SZ M (triton); HD 9d8+18; hp 62; Init +0; Spd swim 40 ft.; AC 16 (+6 natural), Atks +4 trident +13/+8/+3 melee (1d8+3) or heavy crossbow +12/+7/+2 ranged (1d10); SA Spell-like abilities; SQ N/A; SV Fort +10, Ref +9, Will +10; Str 16, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 12; AL NG. Skills: Animal Empathy +7, Craft (weapon-smithing) +11, Handle Animal +7, Hide +7, Intimidate +9, Intuit Direction +6, Knowledge (religion) +8, Listen +8, Ride +8, Sense Motive +9, Spot +8, Wilderness Lore +6. Feats: Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge. Possessions: +4 *holy keen trident*, *potion of clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *potion of bull's strength*, *potion of protection from elements* (sonic).

## THE CHAIN OF TRUTH, THE ROD OF HONOR, AND THE STONE OF JUSTICE

These three relics were once the Penance Flail, the favored weapon of a paladin who believed less in destroying evil than in redeeming it. The desert warrior Shala knew the perils that many of her countrymen faced, and while she never condoned selfish or treacherous acts, she understood that many saw no alternative. While she had no mercy for the truly depraved, she avoided killing whenever possible, and earned many loyal followers thereby.

To aid her in her mission, a wandering monk combined three of Shala's prized possessions: a steel-bound rod that anchored her soul, a chain that guided her, and a flawless emerald that brought divine protection. The Penance Flail separated the misguided from the malevolent, crushing the unworthy and driving away spiritual weakness with each swing. The monk warned her that the blessed weapon would serve only so long as it never struck an innocent, then walked back into the swirling sands that spawned him. Armed and forewarned, Shala sought out the golden age of peace she longed for.

It was not to be. The monarchs of the desert did not see Shala's good intentions or redeemed followers. They instead chose to see a religious woman leading an army of criminals, thieves, and assassins, all absolutely devoted to her. Though these kings and sultans later claimed that the outcome was inevitable, the sad truth is that it was their own pride and jealousy which undid everything.

It was the actions of two men that led to Shala's downfall. The Grand Sultan Jallalael, leader of a tribe of desert elves, joined forces with the human king Sanriel, and together they convinced Shala's own mother, Valallae, of the threat the paladin and her converts presented. Valallae herself led the charge against her daughter. Bewildered by her mother's betrayal and enraged by her loyal men's unjust suffering, Shala fought out of desperation and survival rather than true need. Believing her mother a traitor, Shala struck her down, killing her and shattering the Penance Flail. Realizing at last that her foes were not evil, merely deluded, she surrendered.

Shala used the Stone of Mercy to calm the battlefield and explained what had happened to the horrified Jallalael and Sanriel. The three leaders each took up a piece of the flail and walked into the desert to atone for their crimes, seeking the mysterious monk who had devised the relic.

The monk, for his part, awaits a hero worthy enough to convince the components to return.

## THE CHAIN OF TRUTH, THE ROD OF HONOR, AND THE STONE OF MERCY

Shala inherited these items from great heroes of her own time, each of whom saw in her a chance at a greatness they dared not hope to achieve. Though scattered in the sands of her homelands, none doubt that they will again form the *penance flail* some day.

Unfortunately, Shala's desire to redeem rather than destroy has opened the artifacts to the possibility of corruption by evil users. While uniting all three into the *penance flail* will purify any tainted component, the power is forever lost to evil if all three corrupted parts form the *blind judge's flail*. These evil relics have abilities similar to their pure counterparts.

### The Chain of Truth

The *chain of truth* is nearly four feet long, but its links are so fine that many assume it to be a wire. It is capable of holding any weight, though the broken links on either end require repair. More importantly, the chain reveals any deceptions to the user, so long as the user himself remains honest and fair in all his dealings with others.

The character is immune to all spells from the illusion school, and instantly recognizes any lies told in his presence. Furthermore, the *chain of truth* forces the user to confront his self-inflicted delusions, and any attempts to flatter or seduce the character fail utterly.

Taken up by a neutral evil character, the *chain of truth* gives way to the *chain of lies*. So long as he does not contradict a self-evident truth, only those of greater level and Wisdom have any chance whatsoever at seeing through the deceits woven by the master of the chain, even with magical aid.

### The Rod of Honor

The *rod of honor* is a two foot-length of ironshod wood with a broken link at one end. Carried on a person, it acts as an aid to conscience. If the bearer considers his actions even for a moment (at least a partial move action), he will know whether they are consistent with a lawful good mindset. Should he actually hold the *rod of honor* in his hands, he better understands even the basest of creatures, and gains a +20 enhancement bonus to Sense Motive checks. He also instantly realizes whether someone is acting under coercion, magical or otherwise.

A lawful evil character can wield the *rod of honor*, tainting it toward his own views as the *rod of iron law*. It is otherwise mechanically identical to the *rod of honor*, warning of alignment breach against lawful evil ideals, and enchanting the bearer's understanding of those about him.



### The Stone of Mercy

A flawless emerald cylinder a foot long and half as thick, the *stone of mercy* was Shala's most prized possession, and easily the most powerful of the flail's three components. Its sole purpose was to alleviate the suffering of others. Each user may call upon a *miracle* from the stone once and once only. The user may not ask for personal gain, nor may he request that another suffer. So long as the request was truly selfless, the *miracle* aids its target as best as it may, though the user himself may martyr himself in the process. The stone has a setting on one end from which dangle a few links.

Under the vicious guidance of a chaotic evil character, the *stone of mercy* becomes the *stone of rage*. The stone shifts tint to a bloody red hue, and its owner may rage as though he were a barbarian of equal level (if already capable of raging, he may rage twice as often as normal). Using the stone's rage triggers a *frightful presence* as the monstrous special attack of the same name.

### The Lash of Humility

Created by binding the *rod of honor* to the *chain of truth*, the *lash of humility* is a +3 *whip of wounding*. While it lacks the abilities of its component artifacts, it carries its own, related abilities. It deals normal (non-subdual) damage to any intelligent creature whose arrogance has caused others to suffer (particularly common among lawful and neutral evil creatures, though GMs may rule that others qualify on a case-by-case basis). Such creatures must make a Fortitude save with a DC equal to the damage inflicted, or else fall to their knees in pain and remain helpless for the rest of the round.

By uniting the *rod of iron law* with the *chain of lies*, the user creates the *unkindness scourge*. This is also a +3 *whip of wounding*, but it forces its victims to equate their selfless acts with the pain the whip inflicts. Such creatures must make a Will save with a DC equal to the damage inflicted, or else make that Will save again every time they wish to aid another. Victims who make this secondary save are thereafter immune to this use of the scourge.

### The Justice Mace

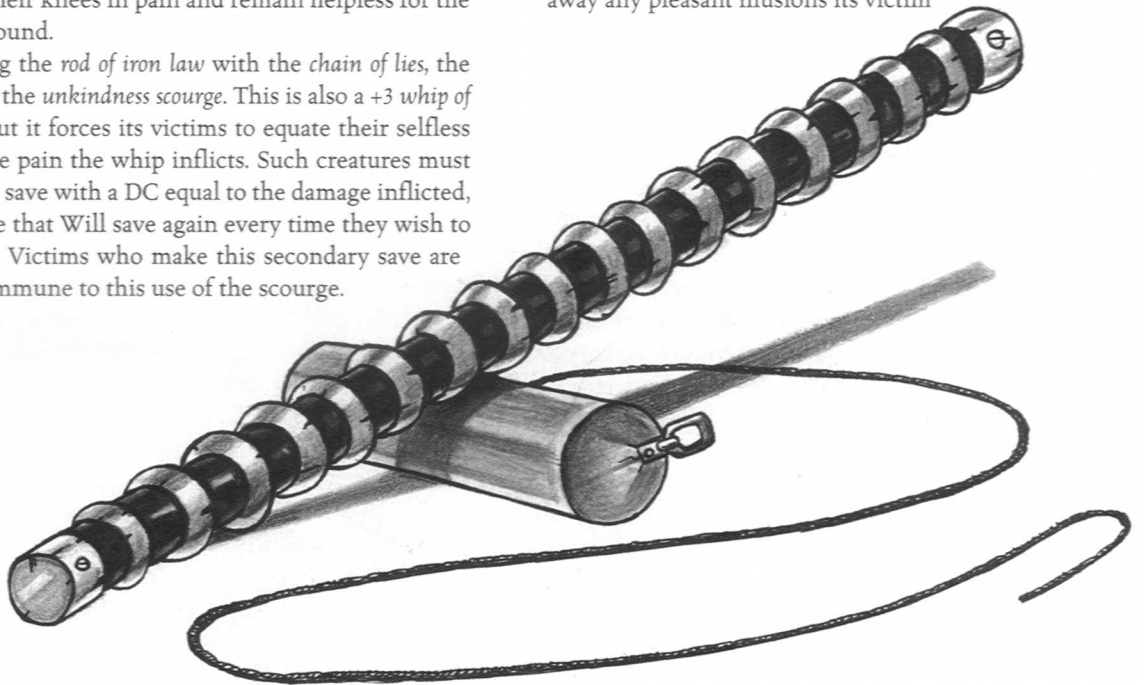
This +3 *mace of disruption* is the combined *rod of honor* and *stone of mercy*, though its enchantments supersede those of the component relics. The *justice mace* combines duty and judgment, never dealing damage to a good-aligned creature, but always threatens a critical hit when successfully striking an evil opponent. It cannot sense whether the foe is redeemable, however, and overzealous use of the mace may violate a paladin's code of honor.

The corrupted *justice mace* is the *mallet of blind destiny*. This +3 *unholy warhammer* gleefully curses its good-aligned victims with bad karma. Though he may survive the fight with the mallet's master, any good-aligned character the mallet strikes suffers a massive misfortune, such as the death of a lord or the betrayal of a close friend or lover.

### The Weight of Conscience

Tying the *chain of truth* to the *stone of mercy* creates the odd *weight of conscience*. The weight of conscience requires exotic weapon proficiency (spiked chain) for proper effect, and acts like a spiked chain +3 of distance throwing, though the weapon itself deals bludgeoning damage. Creatures attacking with the weight of conscience may make trip attacks with it at range; it automatically grapples any evil creatures it trips as though it had a Str of 20 for sustaining the grapple.

A tainted *chain of lies* bound to the *stone of rage* yields the cruel *weight of innocence*. Tied to a good-aligned character like a shackle, the *Weight of Innocence* strips away any pleasant illusions its victim



may have held. He gains a +20 insight bonus to all Sense Motive checks, but only for determining the worst, most selfish reasons others have for their actions, including the victim's own. The victim must make a Will save (DC 25) whenever done a favor, or believe the worst about the motive behind the action. This may not turn the victim to evil, but few escape its clutches without growing distant and cynical.

### The Penance Flail

Only the monk Sallah may reunite the three pieces of the *penance flail*, and he cannot do so without a worthy hero's aid. The process drains the three parts of their unique abilities, to fuel the greater power of the weapon. The *penance flail* is a +5 *lawful holy flail of speed*. In the hands of a paladin, it lets loose a holy aura that acts as a *magic circle against evil*, as though cast by a 20th level cleric of good (effectively 21st level). Most importantly, the *penance flail* may redeem its foes. So long as an opponent is evil but not of the evil sub-type, the wielder of the flail may forgo a critical threat to force his opponent to make a Will save with a DC equal to the damage he would have received if the blow had been a critical hit. Failure converts his alignment to good, while a natural 20 renders him immune to the flail's conversion effects.

The *penance flail* cannot inflict damage on any creature of good alignment, and falls into its component parts if it strikes a creature of the good sub-type or an innocent.

The *blind judge's flail* is also a +5 *lawful holy flail of speed*, but strips away its wielder's sense of proportion. Even minor infractions foretell a weakness of spirit, or some deeper villainy in the perpetrator's heart. Though its wielder may be the purest of paladins, the *blind judge's flail* twists his morality. Worse, this compulsion seems utterly natural to the wielder, and no saving throw is allowed. The united *blind judge's flail* is identical to the *penance flail* in appearance, with even the stone of rage's ruby coloring returning to its original emerald.

### THE LEGEND

The monk calls himself Sallah, though even he cannot remember his real name. Long ago, he performed a great service on behalf of a god of compassion and protection, but never asked for anything in return. Until he can fulfill the debt, the god keeps Sallah alive and young, but everything else about the monk — including his mysterious method of creating the flail — is Sallah's own doing. He patiently awaits the coming of a new hero, so that the Penance Flail may again harvest the penitent from the unworthy. He waits even now in the desert, quietly observing any new faces. He aids those whom he deems worthy, striking and returning to the sands without ever speaking a word.

Sallah knows all too well that he and he alone can reunite the flail, but that the Penance Flail is doomed to fall apart once more unless its chosen hero reunites the desert peoples, setting right his failure. He is slowly coming to the conclusion that the reason he has not found the hero yet is because the hero is yet an unturned villain.

**Sallah, Human Mnk 20:** CR 20; SZ M (humanoid, outsider); HD 20; hp 20d8+20 (110 hp); Init +5 (Dex); Spd 90 ft.; AC 25 (+5 Dex, +6 Wis, +4 Monk AC bonus); Atks: Unarmed +15/+12/+9/+6/+3 (1d20+3), or sling +3 ranged (1d6); SA Ki strike +3, quivering palm, stunning attack; Spells; SQ Abundant step, diamond body, diamond soul, empty body, improved evasion, leap of the clouds, perfect self (DR 20/+1), purity of body, slow fall (any distance), still mind, timeless body, wholeness of body; SV Fort +15, Ref +19, Will +20; Str 11, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 22, Cha 15; AL LG. Skills: Balance +15, Climb +12, Concentration +16, Diplomacy +10, Escape Artist +7, Hide +12, Jump +10, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Listen +10, Move Silently +12, Perform +10, Tumble +10, Wilderness Lore +11; Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows, Endurance, Improved Trip, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Track.

### JUSTICE IS BLIND

Using some or all of the pieces of the Penance Flail in your campaign can be a side journey to greater mystery or the focus to your entire plan. What if Sallah dies before the flail can be brought together? What if the campaign begins 400 years after the fall of an ancient, but wise empire and a lone 1st level hero stumbles upon a rod in the sand? What if in reuniting the Flail, Sallah and his people grow too powerful and threaten the globe, turning the power of good and justice into a mockery of corruption and neglect? What would the heroes do then?

Because the Penance Flail can be divided into three parts and because each combination produces a different effect, a campaign could be built around finding the 'true' final piece of the relic. Or perhaps a quest begins to find the only place to destroy the 'unharnessed' and chaotic powers of the fragmented pieces that remain.

1d20	Hook
1-3	Unknowing of its true power, a holy man has been using the <i>stone of mercy</i> to heal the sick. Its true potential goes unchecked.
4	The <i>stone of mercy</i> has been stolen by a demon and reforged into the <i>stone of pity</i> .
5-9	The <i>chain of truth</i> is slowly turning a young noblewoman to evil.
10-14	A twisted mage uses the <i>lash of humility</i> to keep his apprentices in line, unaware that strands of magic break off with each use, infusing his students with impossible power.
15-20	One of the pieces is missing forever, or never existed at all.

## CHALICE OF ALLEGIANCE

Prince Tarik and princess Bethdesa fell in love in a whirlwind romance, got married, and lived happily for a time. But then Tarik became king and the riches and power corrupted him. Tarik grew bored with his queen and began seeing several mistresses.

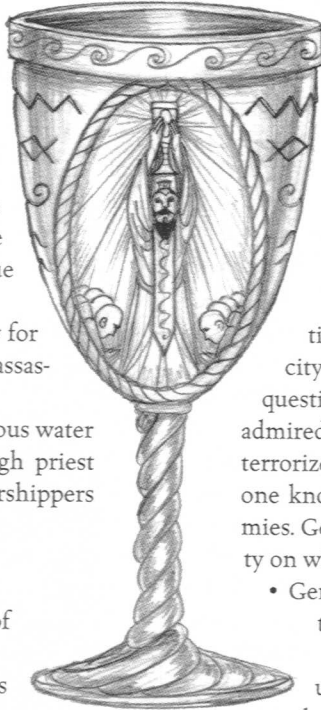
Bethdesa was a pious woman and the more her husband strayed the more she prayed for his return to their marriage bed. The king did not come back, but on the eve of their third anniversary she awoke to find a golden chalice on his pillow.

Bethdesa planned a magnificent dinner the next evening and invited Tarik to join her. Filling the chalice with wine, she offered it to her husband and asked him to toast to their marriage of three years.

Tarik refused. He annulled the marriage breaking Bethdesa's heart. She threw the chalice in the trash, never realizing its true power.

Things might have turned out differently for the king had he changed his ways. He was assassinated a year later by one of his mistresses.

This golden chalice is engraved with various water runes. An ivory frontispiece displays a high priest holding the chalice in his hands and worshippers bowing down in reverence before it.



### CHALICE OF ALLEGIANCE

The *chalice of allegiance* controls the minds of all who drink from it.

Any beverage poured into the *chalice* is transformed into a sweet, addictive substance. All those who drink it follow every command of the person who holds the *chalice*. Intelligent beings who are higher level than the wielder get a Will check (DC 20) to resist any command each turn. Failure means the victim performs the act to the best of his ability for the next 24 hours, even sacrificing himself if need be. This power even works on undead, should the liquid pass through their lips (it won't work on skeletons). It does not work on mindless beings or creatures immune to mind-affecting magic. The creatures act as if under the effects of the spell *suggestion*. They do not undertake obviously suicidal or foolish actions.

The *chalice* can pour an unlimited amount of drink that sustains the drinker as if he consumed a full day's meal. The drink still retains its addictive qualities.

If the person who pours the beverage is the same person who drinks from the *chalice* without handing it off to anyone else, his Charisma increases by 10 points for 1d10 hours.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 1 lb.

### THE LEGEND

The chalice has fallen into a variety of hands since it first disappeared from the palace. Its temptation is too great to ignore and its abilities too powerful to retain for long.

- A lowly servant named Tikish retrieved it from the trash. He discovered the chalice's powers by accident when his nagging wife suddenly became strangely obedient. He convinced his master to use it, and soon his lord transferred his wealth and noble title to Tikish.

This sudden good fortune prompted an investigation that Tikish averted by bribing the investigator with the chalice. The PCs can find the whereabouts of the chalice through Tikish. Tikish has made several enemies, who are all are eager to reveal the secret to his wealth.

- A legal inquisitor, Gertran, was good enough at his job to discover Tikish's secret. When faced with the truth, he could not resist using it to further his own ends. For a brief time, Tikish became the best investigator on the city watch. After drinking from the chalice, no question went unanswered. Gertran soon became admired by his peers and loathed by the underworld he terrorized. That ended when he was assassinated. No one knows who did it, but there is a long list of enemies. Gertran's organization, the Silver Eye, has a bounty on whoever killed him.

- Gertran was assassinated by Dergul, a common thug. Gertran had controlled so many people with the chalice that he lost track of who was under his influence. Dergul simply pretended he was controlled by the chalice and, when he was safely within striking range, strangled Gertran. The PCs might track Dergul to the Red Razors, an assassin's guild he recently took over. Dergul is in trouble, however, as he lost the chalice and might hire the PCs to retrieve it — if the assassin's guild finds out, they might kill him.
- Dergul's archrival is a far more proficient thief, Hethliss. Hethliss noticed an immediate change in the Red Razors and became suspicious when Dergul came into power. It wasn't long before he snuck into the assassin's guild and snatched the chalice for himself. Unlike the other users of the chalice, Hethliss has avoided abusing its power. He has slowly grown rich by using the chalice to make gambling bets and kill off his rivals. The PCs may track the chalice to him, but he will not relinquish it without a fight.



## CHALICE OF DAWN

When the world was young, the sun rained down such fire that the very stones melted. The only creatures on the Earth were the dragons. They could endure the flames. The dragons grew hungry, and asked the sun to hold back the fires so that other life could grow. The sun refused at first, but the plea of the dragons for companions was so moving, the sun agreed to spare the world from an eternity of fire. To mark this covenant between land and sky, and to protect the coming races from the predations of the other dragons, the gold dragons created the *chalices of dawn*.

Centuries later, the *chalices* were entrusted to seven great mortal rulers as a mark of trust. Each chalice brought the blessings of the sun: prosperity, health, protection and even immortality. The rulers' greed took much of the sun's power. In the end, a war was fought for their control and two were destroyed. Two others rest among the hoards of the mightiest and most ancient dragons and three remain lost, having vanished from dragon lore and the sight of the sun.

### CHALICE OF DAWN

This *chalice* is a potent link between the sun and the world. The *chalice* emanates a permanent aura of *daylight*, and when held aloft generates at will a *sunbeam* cast by a 20th-level cleric. The *chalice* can cast a *sunburst* once an hour at the same caster level.

If the *chalice of dawn* is filled with water and exposed to the sun's rays at dawn, the water transforms into magical liquid sunlight. This liquid sunlight emits *daylight*, as cast by a 20th-level caster, and has the following properties:

- When consumed, the sunlight acts as a *heal* spell as cast by a 20th-level cleric.
- If poured on the ground, it becomes as a potent *plant growth*, increasing the fertility of the land by two-thirds above normal and affecting a region five miles in diameter.
- If poured on a corpse, it acts as a *resurrection* spell as cast by a 20th level cleric.

At each equinox and solstice, the bearer of the *chalice* can summon a solar. This solar is bound to perform one task for the chalicebearer, and asks nothing in return.

On midsummer's morning, the *liquid sunlight* created by the *chalice* is especially powerful. If poured on the ground, it ensures that the land will prosper in the coming year; the land will have excellent harvests, be untouched by plagues, and be defended by heroes. If drunk, the *liquid sunlight* ensures that the user will not die during the coming year. The user is immune to aging,

regenerates one hit point every round, and can be reduced below -9 hit points without dying. Effects that destroy the user's body, such as *disintegration*, kill him as normal.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 1 lb.

### LEGEND

One of the missing chalices has fallen into the blackened hands of the Order of Embers, an apocalyptic cult that believes transcendence is achieved through ritual burning. The Order intends to track down and destroy the remaining chalices, ending the sun's legendary promise to the world and ushering in a new age of heavenly inferno.

The chalice is held in the Order's fortress, which is in the crater of a semi-dormant volcano. The land for hundreds of miles around the fortress is choked with thick drifts of ash, and stalked by hideous burnt ghosts. The fortress itself is made of brass and constructed in sections, which float on a lake of lava. Fire elementals drag certain sections below the surface of the lava in accordance with a schedule, and only those with protective magics — or those who are already dead and burnt, like the leaders of the cult — can survive the heat.

The chalice is guarded in a vault in the heart of the volcano, far from the light of the sun. The vault rises to the surface during an eruption, which the cult magically causes at each of the equinoxes and solstices. At each, a solar is summoned and commanded to retrieve one of the remaining chalices — and when all of them are gathered, all shall be destroyed, and the world will end in fire.



## CIRCLET OF EYES

Beholders do not believe in mercy. Their only goals are absolute destruction or total domination. To waver in the face of a great opponent is to invite death, and as self-described paragons of creation, no beholder worth its eyes would be so foolish.

Of course, it is even more foolish to confuse mercy with cruelty. Fratricide among beholders is common, and the greatest disrespect one eye tyrant can do another is to sear away the other's eyes one by one. Blinded and stripped of their infamous attacks, most crippled beholders eventually die of starvation or thirst, though some have used their vast intellects to secure places as advisors.

One blinded beholder actually prospered, eventually convincing several assassins and sorcerers to slay the enemy that had crippled him years earlier. These servants harvested their victim's eyes and mystically bound them to a crown. Though grotesque, the Circllet of Eyes returned the beholder's abilities to it. The beholder eventually learned that it could attach other eyes to the Circllet, though its ambition outstripped its ability when it attempted to catch a basilisk's eye. The stone beholder shattered upon hitting the floor, and the Circllet of Eyes rolled away.

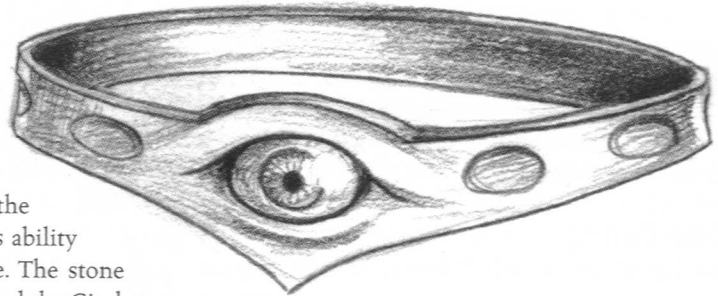
Several other creatures have used the circllet since, but most have gone mad from its power.

### THE CIRCLET OF EYES

In its natural state, the *circllet of eyes* is a simple bronze circle, large enough to fit over a Medium-size humanoid's head, or to sit atop a Large creature's head like a crown. The only feature is a single, apparently human eye set against the metal (the original eye grafted; all others rot away if the circllet goes more than a month without a wearer). The *circllet's* wearer finds that he can see through this eye.

The *circllet's* true power comes to the fore if the user touches new eyes to it. This bonds the eye to the bronze base, allowing the user to see through it. The eye still retains any of its natural powers (such as darkvision, a beholder's eye beams, or a gaze attack), which the wearer may control. Each grafted eye grants a cumulative +1 enhancement bonus to Spot and Search checks, and if the circllet bears eight or more eyes visible opponents may only flank the wearer from above or below.

Unfortunately for most of the owners of the *circllet of eyes*, the creator designed it for a beholder's use. Each time the wearer uses an effect of the circllet (including the enhancement bonuses during checks or attacks, which are not optional), the user rolls 1d10. If the result is equal to or less than the number of eyes on the circllet, the *circllet of eyes* permanently grafts to the user's skull, and removing it blinds him beyond the hope of even magical healing. Worse, the circllet opens the user to new venues of perception to which few creatures can adapt. If the user ever fails a Will save by rolling a natural 1 while wearing the circllet, his psyche fractures as though he suffered from the *insanity* spell. This is a permanent effect that may only be countered with a *wish* or *miracle*.



### THE LEGEND

- The most recognized wielder of the Circllet of Eyes was the sorcerer Rath, who evidently unlocked new abilities in the circllet. He stretched the relic's abilities far beyond the original design, mimicking the effects of *arcane eye*, *clairvoyance*, *eyebite*, *greater scrying*, *see invisibility*, *true seeing*, and most infamously *prying eyes* — actually the circllet's own, which retained their powers.
- Many powerful magic items and artifacts are eyes, and may bond to the circllet. How two otherwise unrelated artifacts work together is a mystery, but some wizards are eager to try, especially if such experimentation leads to the creation of new artifacts. Of course, most such wizards would prefer to experiment on others.
- A kindly healer seeks to understand the circllet's design, the better to make new circllets to aid the blind. No living creature understands the mix of eye tyrant and human magic, but an uneasy possibility exists: tracking previous owners back through their eyes, back to the original blind beholder itself and its sorcerous servant. Even then, the circllet's use requires the grisly theft of eyes, and the kindly healer may prove not to be so kindly after all.

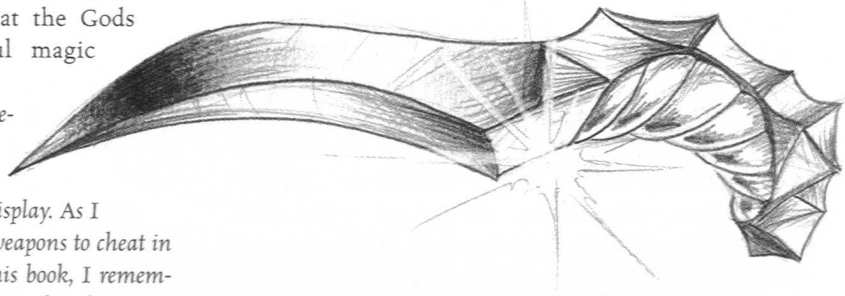
## CIRTO'S STARS

The following is an excerpt from *That the Gods Touched*, a tome detailing powerful magic weapons and artifacts.

*The daggers known as Cirto's Stars were created by the spellsmith of that name. I first encountered them at a mage fair many years ago, where their creator had them on display. As I remember, he was thrown out for using the weapons to cheat in a magical duel. When I began compiling this book, I remembered the Stars and set out to learn what happened to them.*

*Apparently, Cirto, fool that he was, tried to cheat the wrong mage in a duel, and ended up quite dead. The mage that killed him, whose name I never uncovered, took the Stars for himself and Cirto's tower as well. The victorious mage disappeared, and the stars were taken by looters.*

*They changed hands several times, being split up and reunited by various adventurers and collectors. Four of the daggers were lost in the labyrinth of trades and lootings that is commerce today. I was, however, able to track three of them to the house of a kindly old woman, who took me inside and told me all about her son the 'great adventurer' while I drank hot tea. I could not bring myself to try to take the daggers that were the only things this elderly lady had to remember her son by, so I thanked her for the tea and left.*



Cirto's stars can counter certain spells. If the wielder is targeted by a spell that requires a ranged touch attack, he may make a Reflex save (DC 20). If he succeeds, he may make an opposed ranged touch attack with one of the stars. If he wins, the dagger intercepts the spell and prevents it from affecting the wielder. For spells with multiple projectiles such as flame arrows, it only stops the projectile targeted at the wielder. If he fails either his save or his attack, the spell proceeds as normal.

Weight: 1 lb. each

### THE LEGEND

Cirto's Stars have turned up here and there over the years. Here is a list of rumors about their locations, history, and owners.

### CIRTO'S STARS

Cirto's stars are a set of seven powerful throwing daggers, each carved from a different kind of gem: diamond, emerald, ruby, sapphire, topaz, onyx, and opal. These weapons act as +5 daggers enchanted with the brilliant energy, distance, returning, and speed qualities. In addition, each does +3d6 damage of an energy type corresponding to its gem as follows: diamond: force, emerald: acid, ruby: fire, sapphire: cold, topaz: electricity, onyx: sonic, opal: random energy type.

Up to three times per day, the wielder may choose to throw any or all of the daggers he is holding as a full attack action. When he does this, the daggers animate and unerringly chase down their targets, who must be within 100 feet of the daggers' user and no two of whom may be more than 30 feet apart, similar to the spell magic missile. The daggers fly and turn through the air, allowing their user to ignore all concealment and cover when making his attacks. They have a maximum range of 200 feet and never suffer penalties to hit for range. Once per day, any or all of the daggers may be set to hover around the wielder's head like ioun stones. In this formation, as a free action, one dagger per round may be directed to chase down a target as described above. This attack is made at a +15 base attack bonus rather than the user's attack bonus. Each dagger hovers until directed to attack, after which it returns as normal but may not be set to hover again for one day.

TABLE 1-4: CIRTO'S STARS

1d20	Rumor
1	A local mercenary had them and wants them back.
2	A mage has been selling fake copies of them.
3	A monastery uses them against mages.
4	A pair of sorcerers killed each other with them.
5	A storm giant has one and wants to add to his collection.
6	A traveling bard juggles them in taverns.
7	A troll in the sewers of a major city has one.
8	Five have been made into spearheads.
9	Four were involved in an orcs' civil war.
10	One belongs to the head of a thief's guild.
11	One is still chasing an air elemental.
12	One is at the bottom of a local lake.
13	One is the focus of a noble family feud.
14	The old lady with three is really a harpy.
15	They were once used by a circus.
16	They belong to an ioun stone collector.
17	They are sought by Cirto's sister.
18	Three are in the tomb of a legendary rogue.
19	Two are in the hoard of a silver dragon.
20	Two have been incorporated into the crown of a local king.



## THE CLOAK OF LIFE

Though only the greatest dullard does not know that the undead hate and envy the living, the precise reason why is a mystery to even the greatest of philosophers. No historical text has yet explained it, nor has any trustworthy deity explained why the undying prey upon their breathing kin. As ever, lack of evidence has not forestalled idle chatter.

A popular explanation for the undead's malevolence lies in the presumed origin of the Cloak of Life. Long ago, before the gods of men existed, a god of knowledge named Adondin pondered mortality. To better understand it, he ignored the warnings of his beloved wife, the healer-goddess Mellayah, and consciously chose to die. He trusted that his great power could halt the process. He was half right.

Maddened with pain, Adondin begged his wife to restore him to life. Though Mellayah knew it was folly, she still loved her husband. Tearing a single thread from her cloak, she tied it about Adondin. He was once again alive, but only through his wife's mercy, and Adondin feared that she might change her mind. He tore a piece of her cloak for himself, but she snapped the original string and knocked the cloth from his hand to the world below. Adondin retreated to the darkness, but he and his worshippers never forgave life for not giving more of itself to the needy.

### THE CLOAK OF LIFE

The *cloak of life* is all but useless to its owner, but its powers are so great that it naturally draws envy. It is simultaneously ragged and beautiful, a shimmering emerald garment with torn seams. It is as fragile as any life, and as great a boon as any the gods have delivered to their peoples.



Worn, the *cloak of life* acts as a *cloak of resistance* +5, though this is a gross misuse of its properties. Like the legendary goddess herself, the user may pluck a single thread from the seam of the cloak, and — at the cost of a year of his own life — grant life to someone or something else. This may resurrect the dead (as *true resurrection*, cast by a 20th level cleric, although it may restore those who died of old age), or animate constructs (this waives the spell costs of animating constructs, though all other costs remain). Indeed, these constructs are better than their common brethren, as they now have souls and may learn and grow, albeit more like an animal than a true sentient.

The gift of life carries its own curse. The life granted by the *cloak of life* lasts for 2d10 years and no longer (those who died of old age return as though they were this much younger than when they died), though another thread can extend this period by 1d10 more years, then 1d8, etc. until each thread yields only a year, though each still costs a year of the giver's life. Worse, the animation lasts only so long as the thread (s) remain bound and intact. For all their wondrous magic, the threads are no stronger than mortal cloth, and snap after suffering 1 point of damage.

### THE LEGEND

One of Adondin's faithful undead clerics has woven another cloak from the spent threads of the original. This second cloak, the Shroud of Mellayah, hungers for the life it gave away so freely. A thin and gray cloth, it is nonetheless almost perfect, clearly woven by a master tailor. No mortal may stand to wear it for long, as it soaks away 1d10 years of life every round it is worn. Worse, this leeching effect extends beyond the realm of mere mortals, for the shroud earned its name by slaying the goddess herself.

The Shroud of Mellayah bestows many protections upon undead wearers. Undead wearing the Shroud of Mellayah are immune to turning and rebuking effects and damage from positive energy attacks, such as healing spells. Furthermore, any effect which specifically affects only undead automatically fails against an undead wearer of the Shroud of Mellayah. Finally, an undead wearer of the Shroud of Mellayah may, in a mockery of the true cloak's abilities, *animate dead*, *create undead*, or *create greater undead* by tying a strand of the shroud about a corpse, costing the shroud's wearer a permanent loss of 5, 10, or 20 (respectively) from his maximum hit points for each such use. Destroying the binding thread instantly slays these servitor undead. The binding thread for incorporeal undead remains with their bodies.

Binding the Cloak of Life to the Shroud of Mellayah destroys both relics.

## COLLAR OF THE SIREN

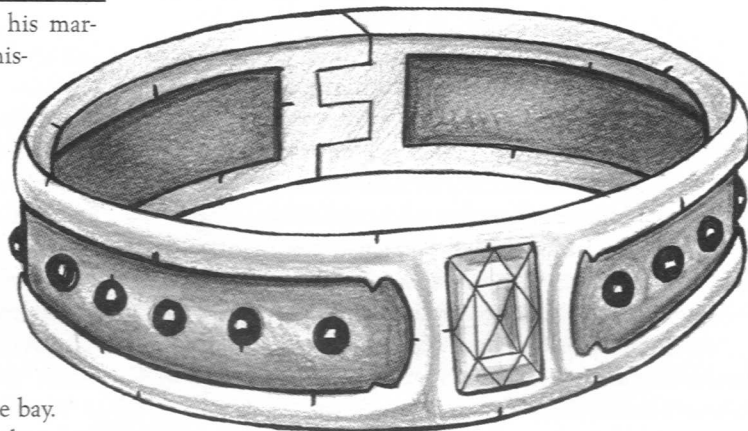
When the philandering King Tarik annulled his marriage, he marked the event with a change in mistresses. He tossed aside his current favorite, the beautiful musician Nadia, replacing her with a younger mistress. The musician left the palace to a cacophony of jeers and curses, swearing revenge.

Nadia knew that King Tarik was fond of his royal fleet. Determined to teach the nobles who mocked her a lesson, she timed her revenge for the fleet's parade across the bay in a splendid display of naval might.

Nadia waited on the wind-swept rocks of the bay. Then, as the ships floated past, she dove into the water. One by one, each splendid galleon shivered. Sailors shouted orders as their ships slowly came apart, sinking into the depths of the bay.

King Tarik's flagship was left intact — and Nadia blasted the flesh off of his bones. Onlookers at the shore glimpsed his skeletal remains in a position of supplication, begging for his life, before the flagship went down. Nadia has since claimed that the queen of the sirens gave the Collar to her as a gift. She has charmed other powerful men and left their blasted corpses in her wake.

This bejeweled collar has a bright green emerald at its center and clasps tightly around the wearer's neck. It looks like it is made of alligator-skin.



### THE LEGEND

Nadia is a conniving bard whose beauty is slowly fading. She has owned the collar for over ten years and her lifestyle is beginning to wear. Nadia especially enjoys making powerful men pay for their arrogance. She is an extremely skilled paramour and a very dangerous woman to scorn. Kings, musicians, and adventurers have courted her.

The collar of sirens has its own dark secret. The "queen of sirens" who gave her the collar is actually a fiendish 24 HD destrachan. It directs Nadia's assassinations and carefully manipulates her into bringing its enemies low. Over the years, Nadia has become tired of her servitude. She might hire the adventurers to help free her from the destrachan's control or worse, decide that a female PC should act as her replacement.

### COLLAR OF THE SIREN

The *collar of the siren* bestows complete mastery of sound upon its wearer.

The wearer can make any sound of any level. By sharply focusing his voice, he can emit a flesh-disrupting wave of sonic energy in an 80-foot-long cone that inflicts 8d6 sonic damage, Reflex save (DC 30) for half. He can also project a nerve-rattling screech that inflicts 12d6 points of subdual damage, Reflex save (DC 30) for half.

By using low, ululating tones, the wearer can blast the very structure of any non-magical, inanimate object with up to 30 hit points. Such objects must make a Fortitude save (DC 30) or shatter.

The wearer can release a counter-sound wave, stopping sonic attacks completely (but can't speak during that time) and negating any sonic damage that might be inflicted by a spell or special ability.

At will, the wearer can speak in soothing undertones that gives him a +20 bonus to Diplomacy checks.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 1 lb.

**Nadia, female half-elf Brd15:** CR 15; SZ M (humanoid, elf); HD 15d6+15; hp 70; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 30 ft; AC 17 (+3 bracers of armor, +4 Dex); Atks +1 dagger +13/+8/+3 (1d4+2/crit 19-20) or +1 sling +16/+11/+6 (1d4+1); SA spells; SQ bardic knowledge, bardic music, half-elven traits; SV Fort +8, Ref +13, Will +10; Str 12, Dex 19, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 20; AL NE. Skills: Alchemy +8, Bluff +23, Diplomacy +15, Forgery +6, Gather Information +13, Hide +4, Listen +15, Move Silently +11, Perform +13, Search +2, Sense Motive +14, Spot +4. Feats: Alertness, Combat Casting, Craft Magic Wondrous Item, Great Fortitude, Skill Focus (Bluff), Two-Weapon Fighting. Equipment: +1 dagger of venom, +1 sling, sling bullets (x13), +3 bracers of armor, potion of alter self, potion of charisma, potion of swimming, potion of protection from elements (water), ring of force shield, ring of climbing, carpet of flying (3' x 5'), rod of enemy detection, and a pouch containing 1 gp, 8 sp, and 86 cp. Bard Spells: 0: dancing lights, detect magic, light, open/close, read magic, resistance. 1st: charm person, cure light wounds, identify, summon monster I. 2nd: blur, cure moderate wounds, hold person, silence. 3rd: blink, charm monster, emotion, sculpt sound. 4th: cure critical wounds, improved invisibility, legend lore, locate creature. 5th: dream, persistent image, summon monster V.

## CRIMSON TONGUE OF THE WYRM

The wizard stood before the tongue. "Dragon, speak of your death," he commanded.

The ghost sighed.

"I was Cyarnaic the Red, Cyarnaic the Cunning. In life, I laid waste to just as many towns and villages as any of my kin, but I did so with much more style. My wit was sharper than any claw, my speech more enchanting than the most subtle dweomer."

"The bards do not recount tales of my devilry, because they are still jealous of my eloquence. I once convinced a town that I was the agent of divine wrath, that they deserved to be burned. I sat on their church-tower and preached more convincingly than any cleric, until they marched willingly into the flames."

"They sent knights after me. My words broke their resolve, shattered their morale, my honeyed venom ate away their nerve, until they were frightened children in tin suits. Truly, in the days of my life, I was fire, wit and death, and none could resist the charms of my tongue."

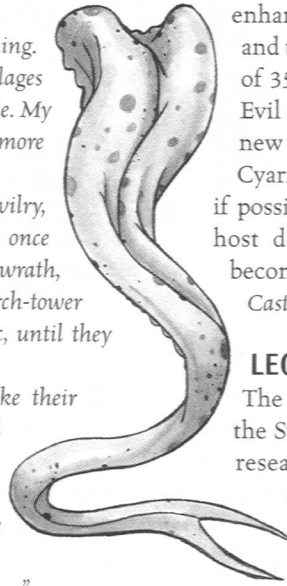
"Why, princesses would beg to be eaten by me —"

The mage raised his staff. "Tell me of your death."

"Ah — an embarrassment. There was a hunter. I scented him in my lair, and I gave him the usual speech. It had worked so many times before. Unfortunately, by the time I realized he was deaf, he was upon me."

"He cut out my tongue as a trophy, and so I entered my second life — advisor to kings and princes. And arch-wizards."

The wizard smiled.



### CRIMSON TONGUE OF THE WYRM

The crimson tongue of the wurm is exactly that — the slightly leathery but still living tongue of the red dragon Cyarnaic. It is mounted on a silver scone and can move and speak as if still alive. When the tongue speaks, the shadowy outline of Cyarnaic's head appears around it.

Cyarnaic's spirit lives within the crimson tongue. It has Int 28, Wis 24 and Cha 30, and an Ego of 35. Cyarnaic was a scholar, and the tongue can relate a legend lore at will. The tongue can also contact other plane or commune three times a day. Cyarnaic has at least 15 ranks in a great number of Knowledge skills.

Nine times per day, the owner of the crimson tongue can make the shadowy dragon head manifest and breathe a cone of flame. This cone of flame is identical to the breath weapon of a Wurm-age Red Dragon.

Spells that detect lies have no effect on the owner of the crimson tongue.

If a character whose own tongue has been removed places the artifact in his mouth, the crimson tongue shrinks

and bonds with the character's mouth. The character immediately gains the spellcasting abilities of a 17th level sorcerer. This spell casting ability is separate from any other the character may have, even if he is a sorcerer. He gains a +9 enhancement bonus to his Intelligence score, a +7 enhancement bonus to his Wisdom score, and a +10 enhancement bonus to Charisma. He also gains SR 25 and the fire subtype, and must make a Will save at a DC of 35 or shift his alignment one step towards Chaotic Evil as Cyarnaic insinuates his consciousness into his new host.

Cyarnaic encourages his host to acquire vast wealth and if possible find some way of becoming a dragon. If the host does transform into a dragon, Cyarnaic's spirit becomes dominant, and the wurm is reborn.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: — lb.

### LEGEND

The Crimson Tongue is currently in the possession of the Swithburn Mages, an order of wizards dedicated to researching the higher mysteries of magic. The

Swithburn reject the outside word, and believe wizards should have no unnecessary contact with other folk. A former leader of the group was the most recent owner of the Tongue.

Cyarnaic's spirit convinced him to conquer a human kingdom. The other mages stopped their wayward brother, but they could not destroy the Tongue. Instead they locked it in a hidden tower.

Before it was sealed away, the Tongue recited a rhyme to one of the servants of the Mages, and this rhyme has now passed into folklore. Hundreds of children chant the rhyme while playing, unaware that it holds the secret of the tower's location.

*In a high place, buried below  
An inverted land, north you go  
Find a mouth all wet and tooth of stone,  
A tongue in the tooth, above all alone  
Mages locked a treasure there  
Wisdom, strength, and words most fair.  
Start your walk at Swithburn Glen  
Follow the river down and then  
Heed the song and find the prize.  
Fire in your soul, your dragons rise.*

The Swithburn mages chose an abandoned tower standing on a rocky plain north of their home. They magically turned a section of land upside down, turning the tower into an artificial stalagmite in a cave beneath the rocky plain. To find the tower, a character must follow a river to a hidden entrance into the cave, cross an underground lake filled with monsters, then climb the walls to the inverted tower.



## CROWN OF THE IRONRIDGE THANE

Centuries ago the Dwarven Empire of Chaz-Ormak ruled much of the known world until its capital, Ironridge, disappeared. Dark magic transported it to a plane dominated by militaristic kobolds. Although the Dwarven Empire collapsed in this world, Ironridge survived in the new one, stubbornly resisting wave after wave of attacks.

The kobolds, frustrated by the stalwart defense, eventually amassed a huge army and laid siege to Ironridge for the final time. Inside, as the bodyguard of the Ironridge thane Stonebeard shored up the buckling throne doors, the thane concocted a plan for the glory of the Empire to live on. Using intricate runes, Stonebeard thrust his crown into a small portal, returning it to our world. It was the only trace of Ironridge that returned.

Just as Ironridge left a crater when it first disappeared, all that was left of the dwarven capital in the alternate universe was a gaping hole.

The Crown of the Ironridge Thane is made of iron with several large gemstones at its upper points. Small dwarven figures are carved along the edges of the crown, holding the gems overhead.

### CROWN OF THE IRONRIDGE THANE

The *crown of the Ironridge thane* bestows complete authority about the legacy of dwarves. Its wearer can answer any questions about dwarves as per the *legend lore* spell as cast by a 20th-level wizard.

The wearer of the crown appears imposing to all dwarves. He gains a +6 inherent bonus to his Charisma so long as the *crown* is worn. Any dwarf attempting to strike the wearer must succeed at a Will save (DC 30) or forever stand down against him. Any request the wearer makes of a dwarf must be obeyed unless the dwarf succeeds at a Will save (DC 30) as per the spell *suggestion*. This power automatically fails if the request harms dwarves in any way.

Once per day, the wearer can summon a Large earth elemental with maximum hit points. It remains for one hour and performs any tasks requested of it.

All creatures with the earth subtype are subject to the whim of the wearer. Any creature with less Hit Dice than the wearer must make a Will save (DC 30) or obey his commands as per the spell *charm monster*.

At will, the wearer can view through the eyes of any dwarf within a ten-mile radius. The dwarf is aware of the intrusion and can make a Will save (DC 30) to resist. Failure means the wearer can view through the dwarf's eyes for 1 round. The wearer is effectively blind to his real surroundings during this time.

Finally, the wearer of the *crown* may cast *passwall*, *soften earth and stone*, *stone shape*, *stoneskin*, and *wall of stone* at will as a standard action.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 5 lb.

### THE LEGEND

Every time a non-dwarf uses one of the crown's powers, the wearer must make a Fortitude save (DC 30) or suffer a change that makes him more dwarf-like. These effects are permanent, but have no effect on dwarves.



TABLE 1-5: CROWN OF THE IRONRIDGE THANE

1d20	Effect
1	Transform into a dwarf.
2-4	+/- 1 inch in height until 4 feet tall.
5-7	There is a hidden door in the western wall of the Krak du Nord fortress.
8-9	The wizard Alumensis succeeded in opening a portal to the Abyss.
10	The guards at the library of Sevenstone saw a thief on Midwinter's Eve, stealing the "Vendetta Scroll".
11	The famed sword of Sir Havar was thrown into the ocean by his grieving widow.
12	The Eredraith river flooded the lowlands in the spring of 743.
13-14	The monk Kethio lost his eye in battle, which forced him to retire from the Flawless Path Brothers.
15-16	Once every year, the Dread Walker leaves his tower.
17	The tunnel beneath at Albegate is filled with stones.
18	Fulcam found the scroll of <i>planar binding</i> .
19	The pouch containing the potions belonging to Cadrem was not lost.
20	The plague came to Threshold, killing a third of the folk of that place.

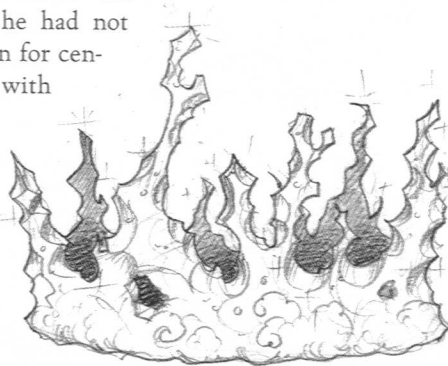
## CROWN OF WIND AND SALT

Ssshanshos, a powerful lord among the water elementals, once took hold of a breaking wave and spun it into a tight circle. The spinning sea-spray froze into a crown of wind and salt. SSSHanshos treasured the crown for an hour or so before letting it sink into the water. Such is the whim of the sea.

Many centuries later, an elemental whirlpool caught the warship *Blood Tithe* and dragged it into the plane of water. A sailor named Jarik saw the whirling portal closing behind the ship, and leapt overboard. As he desperately swam for the portal, his hand closed on a crown floating in the water. With his last breath, he put it on his head...

Jarik awoke on the shoreline, the Crown of Wind and Salt still resting on his brow. With its powers, he founded a dynasty of sea-reavers. The crown became an heirloom of his house, and Jarik went to his watery grave believing the gods had given it to him.

SSShanshos discovered the theft, and though he had not even seen the crown for centuries, he boiled with anger at the loss. He swore to drown all those who kept the crown from him, and make widows of their wives. For that too is the whim of the sea.



## CROWN OF WIND AND SALT

This *crown* appears to be made of sea-ice and encrusted salt. All of the *crown's* powers are tied to the waves, and it cannot function in places that are never touched by a sea breeze.

The wearer of the *crown of wind and salt* may cast any Air or Water Domain spell at will, except water breathing, as a 20th-level cleric. The wearer can choose each round to double the range of any Air or Water spell with a duration longer than 1 round. For example, a spell maintained for 3 rounds can have its range doubled the first round, quadrupled in the second, and increased to eight times normal in the third round. However, no spells cast from the crown affect anything beyond the shoreline.

The wearer gains a +6 bonus to Charisma when dealing with Air or Water creatures.

If the wearer is on a ship, he commands the wind and water to drive the ship faster harder. While he concentrates, the ship can move at three times its normal sailing speed.

Once per day, the wearer may invoke a wind of dismissal. This effect is identical to an imprisonment spell cast by a 20th-level sorcerer, except instead of entombing, the wind of dismissal hurls the victim into the atmosphere. The victim is condemned to circle the world endlessly, at a speed of 720 feet per round, until a freedom spell is cast on him.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 2 lbs.

## LEGEND

Tales of the crown can be heard on the wind, and are as common as salt on the shore.

TABLE 1-6: THE CROWN OF SALT

1d20	Effect
1	Ssshanshos is determined to retrieve the crown, and will kill whomever keeps it from him. The proud city of Medrahlia exists on the shores of the great ocean, and its navy is the terror of the seas.
2	The <i>crown</i> traps the ghosts of all who die at sea.
3	The Sea-Reavers' empire is built on the power of the <i>crown</i> , and without it their tyranny will end.
4	Seven storm giants desire the <i>crown</i> , and have built a castle full of traps. The first thief to defeat the castle will be hired to steal the Crown.
5	Each time the <i>crown</i> is used, it steals power from the sea. All that will be left is wind-tossed salt.
6	Javik's spirit cannot rest until he returns the crown to SSSHanshos.
7	Ssshanshos has taken the wreck of the <i>Blood Tithe</i> and rebuilt it into a fearsome elemental warship crewed by bound souls.
8	Quenching the thirst of salt and calming the wanderlust of the wind will destroy the <i>crown</i> .
9	The <i>crown</i> can be destroyed by defeating its wearer in a naval battle.
10	The wearer of the <i>crown</i> knows the location of a vast cache of pearls.
11	The Sea Reavers have a plan to conjure a vast flood, extending the power of the <i>crown</i> over the whole land.
12	Javik's dynasty is haunted by his ghost, who regrets his theft.
13	Those who eat too much salt become slaves of the crown.
14	Ssshanshos made a scepter that rules over the deep ocean, but it too is lost.
15	Ssshanshos wears a cloak that commands the sea-bed. If one person holds all three artifacts, he becomes the master of the oceans.
16	Storms are the Crownbearer's rages, waves his thoughts.
17	Only the wearer of the crown can find the lost island of youth.
18	The <i>crown</i> was held by mortals before, and it drowned their land.
19	The <i>crown</i> owned by the dynasty is a fake — Javik hid the real one before he died.
20	Ssshanshos is Javik — the history of the <i>crown</i> is a lie.

## THE CRYSTAL CLOCK

Legends whisper among craftsmen of the perfect clock — a clock that did not tell people what time it was, but told time what time it was. Although the story changes with each telling, it generally goes as follows:

*Jenekke was a master clockmaker, a powerful chronomancer, and more than a little insane. He was obsessed with the measurement and manipulation of time. After years of experimentation and research, he completed his greatest invention: the Crystal Clock. The Clock allowed the user to travel to any time simply by setting it to the time he wanted to go to. Why Jenekke built the Clock is not known, but in some versions of the story he was a widower who wished to prevent his wife's death.*

*One day shortly after the Crystal Clock's completion, a great rift appeared in the sky over Jenekke's tower. A colossal creature of lightning and fire stepped through the rift and said in a voice that shakes the air "You have meddled too much in the affairs of time! Now you shall have all the time in the world to reflect on your transgressions!"*

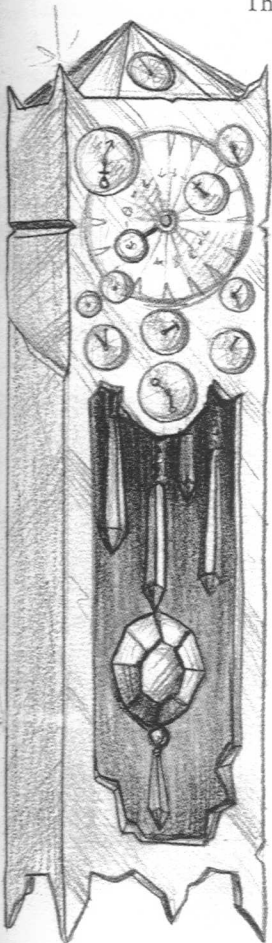
*Then it was gone.*

*And Jenekke was never seen again.*

### THE CRYSTAL CLOCK

The crystal clock is a 6-foot tall grandfather clock made completely of glass and crystal. Its face has over a dozen complex dials, each with several hands. Reading and understanding these dials requires a Knowledge (arcana) or Profession (clockmaker) check (DC 25). Below the face is an intricate set of pendulums surrounding one master pendulum. Only a character who understands the clock's functions may activate its abilities.

If a character stops the master pendulum, time stops for everyone but him as the *time stop* spell. During this time, he may make a Disable Device, Knowledge (arcana), or Profession (clockmaker) check (DC 30) to set the clock to a different time. If successful, he may then restart the pendulum. If it fails, the dials reset to the correct time, and both



the pendulum and time resume. Both the pendulum and time restart on their own, 2d6 (apparent) rounds later.

When the character restarts the pendulum (assuming his check succeeded), he travels to the time he set it to. He chooses the exact year, month, day, hour, minute, and second of his arrival when he sets the clock. When he wishes to return to the present, he simply pulls a small lever on the side of the clock, which returns the dials to their original settings. One cannot use the clock for time travel in any time but the present. A traveler into the past, for instance, must return to the present before traveling again.

The clock acts as a sort of temporal *immovable rod*. It may only be moved in "the present" and remains in its location when used to travel through time, even if the clock or its location did not exist in that period.

The *crystal clock* builds up temporal energy over time, and if it is left unused for more than a month, it releases excess time at random until used again. There is a 20% chance each hour that it will spontaneously cast either *haste* or *slow* on the nearest creature every minute.

*Caster Level:* 20th; *Weight:* 300 lb.

### THE LEGEND

Setting the clock is a difficult process, and if one isn't careful, it can lead to disaster. If a character rolls a natural 1 on his check to set the clock, roll a d20 and refer to the chart below see what happens to him.

TABLE 1-7: THE CRYSTAL CLOCK

1d20	Effect
1	Sent 1d% years into the past.
2	Sent 100d% years into the past.
3	Sent 1d% years into the future.
4	Sent 100d% years into the future.
5	Sent to the time and place of a major event (past).
6	Sent to the time and place of a major event (future).
7	Teleported to a random location within 100 miles.
8	Teleported to a random location on the material plane.
9	Sent to a random transitive plane.
10	Sent to a random inner plane.
11	Sent to a random outer plane.
12	Put in temporal stasis, as the spell.
13	<i>Imprisoned</i> , as the spell.
14	Clock sent to a random plane.
15	Clock teleported to a random location.
16	Clock sent to a random time ("the present" relative to the Clock changes).
17	Combine one result from 1-4 with one result from 7-11.
18	Combine one result from 1-13 with one result from 14-16.
19	19 Combine one result from 1-4, one result from 7-11, and one result from 14-16king.
20	DM's choice.



## THE DAGGER OF MEMORIES

*Hasbron knelt beside the door, his fingers acting on their own. He could only admire the dexterity and skill with which they worked.*

*A nine-tumbler combination! I haven't seen one of those in years! a man's voice muttered in the fighter's head.*

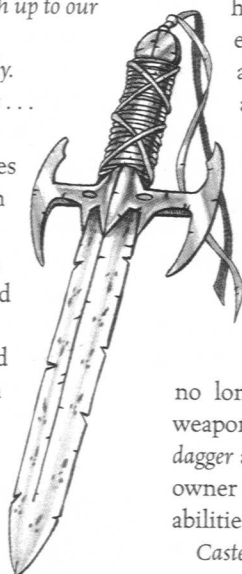
*Get on with it! a woman snarled. If the guards catch up to our 'host', we're all doomed.*

*A baritone: And it's crowded enough in here already. Hasbron sighed. It was going to be one of those nights . . .*

Loremasters believe the Dagger of Memories dates back two millennia when the demon Balthruk commanded his followers to forge a sacrificial dagger which he infused with a portion of his power. The priests used the Dagger to send their victims' soul-essences to their dark master.

A party of adventurers attacked the priests and took the Dagger. Their leader, Kleinok, died in battle two years later, and the dagger has passed from owner to owner.

The Dagger is an ancient ceremonial dagger with a chipped blade and a hilt wrapped with a piece of leather worn smooth by age. Some claim they occasionally see screaming faces drift across the surface.



successful he receives a  $-4$  penalty to all attack rolls, saves, and skill checks. He may not discard the *dagger*; the voices force the owner to hold on to it until he can resist them.

Once the owner makes his Will save he no longer receives the  $-4$  penalty, although his Charisma and Wisdom remain at  $-2$  due to the voices' constant distraction. As long as the owner carries the *dagger* on his person he receives a  $+6$  to his base attack bonuses, a  $+6$  inherent bonus to any Will saves unrelated to the *dagger*, and a  $+6$  inherent bonus to all skill checks. All skills are now class skills for him.

The *dagger* provides its owner with twelve feats, determined by the GM. He may use any three at a time by deciding which voices to focus upon. It takes five uninterrupted minutes to change selected feats.

If the owner makes a Will save (DC 30) he can release the *dagger*. Otherwise he must wait another month before trying again. If he drops the *dagger* he no longer receives any penalties or benefits from the weapon, and points spent on class skills provided by the *dagger* are recalculated normally as cross-class ones. If the owner drops the *dagger* and wishes to regain access to its abilities, he must start the attunement process anew.

*Caster Level:* 20th; *Weight:* 1 lb.

### THE LEGEND

Once per month the owner must make a Will save (DC 20). If he fails, one of the Dagger's voices forces him to resolve some past issue or engage in some non-lethal activity the voice enjoyed in life. The owner may make additional Will saves once per month to break free if the activity takes more than a month. These activities can include:

### THE DAGGER OF MEMORIES

Someone picking up the *dagger* is overwhelmed by hundreds of voices of its past sacrifices talking in his head. The new owner's receives a  $-2$  penalty to his Charisma and Wisdom as long as he has the *dagger*. In addition he must make a Will save (DC 30) once per week. Until suc-

TABLE 1-8: THE DAGGER OF MEMORIES

1d20	Effect
1	Spending a night carousing: dancing, drinking, and womanizing.
2	Travelling to the place where the voice's body is and seeing to its proper burial.
3	Donating half of the owner's funds to a deity.
4	Seeing to the well-being of surviving family members.
5	Marrying the sweetheart courted before the voice's death.
6	Stealing a treasure coveted in life.
7	Helping a friend against bandits.
8	Writing and publishing a book on an obscure subject.
9	Taking a long sea voyage.
10	Fighting a duel with someone who offended the voice's honor in life.
11	Giving a performance in a famous play in a famous theater.
12	Leading an army to victory.
13	Peacefully resolving a dispute between two nations.
14	Harvesting a field for one year.
15	Aiding the Mage's Guild.
16	Playing a prank on or otherwise undermining the local Thieves' Guild.
17	Protecting the animals of a forest from a noble who uses them for hunting.
18	Preventing an army from riding across a toadstool circle and destroying its power.
19	Seeking out a lost cult of the priests who created the Dagger of Memories to reap vengeance.
20	As #19 above, but the priests know how to destroy the Dagger, and the voice wants them to destroy the artifact and free itself and the other voices.

## THE DECK OF FACES

Discovered during the early stages of the excavation at Pajeir, the *deck of faces* is one of the more cryptic artifacts known. The adventuring party called the Banner of Violet Fire claimed the *deck* as part of their payment for defeating the guardian beasts in the ruins. Initially, they believed the *deck* to be an ancient method for communication and travel, and it certainly fulfilled these functions admirably. The *deck* is composed of a number of indestructible blank cards. When a portrait of a person is drawn on a card, it can be used to contact that person, and that person can use the card to contact other faces in the *deck*.

As they traveled, the members of the Banner realized that the *deck* was incomplete. They began to receive mysterious messages from a trapped entity that also possessed a card, but attempts to locate or *teleport* to the prisoner failed. Divinations showed that the *deck* was a creation of the ancient lich Vandifler. To solve the mystery of the prisoner, the Banner traveled to Vandifler's tower to consult the lich. What happened then is unclear. Certainly, Vandifler's tower was destroyed.

Wizards have theorized that Vandifler was on the verge of becoming an arch-lich, and some third party used the *deck* brought by the adventurers to slip through Vandifler's defenses and stop the transformation. The identities of this third party or the prisoner who contacted the Banner remain unknown, as does the fate of the Banner.

The *deck of faces*, however, must have survived.

### THE DECK OF FACES

When found, the *deck* contains 10+1d10 cards. Each card measures 3 inches across and 5 inches high. Vandifler's *arcane mark* is on one side and the other side has an ornate border. The center of the card may contain a previously drawn portrait or be left blank. Cards are blank on 1–15 on a 1d20.

A portrait can be painted or drawn onto a blank card. This requires a Craft (drawing or painting) check (DC 25). If this check fails, the card is ruined. If the artist succeeds, the portrait now shares the card's protective magic and is indestructible while the subject of the portrait lives.

If the owner of the *deck* holds a card and concentrates on it, he can telepathically contact the subject of the portrait. Even if the subject is protected by *non-detection* or similar devices, he cannot hide from the card's power. The owner may choose to conceal his identity, or let the subject magically know who is speaking. This telepathic link allows both characters to speak and share mental images. The cards can also be used to transfer spells — a spellcaster linked to another character may pass one spell per round to the other character. The other character can cast

these spells as if he were the original spellcaster, but the link must be maintained at all times. If the link is severed, the transferred spells vanish and any extended durations end immediately. The link crosses planar boundaries and all barriers against *telepathy*, even *mind blank*.

If a link has been established, the holder of the card can *teleport without error* to the subject, even across planes. If both characters in the link agree, the card can instead become a *gate* between them. The *gate* lasts as long as both concentrate.

A character who holds a card bearing his portrait can use his card to contact any other card-holder. He must visualize the picture on the card he wishes to contact.

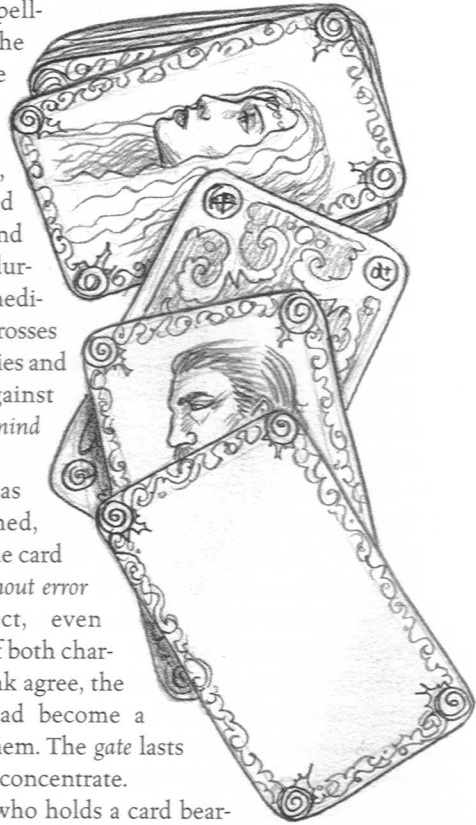
If the subject of a portrait dies, his portrait endures on any cards he was drawn or painted on as long as his spirit is still accessible. If the character passes beyond the reach of magic, the cards bearing his image become blank.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 1 lb.

### LEGEND

The demon At'traz holds four of the cards from the *deck*, and seeks to acquire the others to launch an invasion of the mortal realms. His earlier attempt was foiled by Vandifler, but the demon is patient, and knows that some day the *deck* will be rediscovered, and a new set of mortals will listen to his lies...

**At'traz, Nalfeshnee:** CR 16; Size H (chaotic evil outsider); HD 17d8+68; hp 170; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft., fly 40 ft. (poor); AC 28 (-2 size, +1 Dex, +19 natural); Atks Bite +21 melee (2d6+4), or 2 claws +19 melee (1d4+3); SA Spell-like abilities, smite, summon Tanar'ri SQ Damage reduction 20/+2, SR 24, tanar'ri qualities, know alignment, see invisibility; SV Fort +14, Ref +12, Will +16; Str 23, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 22, Wis 22, Cha 16; AL CE. Skills: Bluff +20, Concentration +18, Craft (painting) +20, Diplomacy +17, hide +7, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Listen +26, Move Silently +15, Scry +23, Search +20, Sense Motive +23, Spellcraft +20, Spot +26 Feats: Cleave, Great Cleave, Multiattack, Power Attack. Possessions: *Chaos diamond*, four cards from the *deck of faces*



## THE EDGE OF DESTINY

History abounds with tyrants ignoring or confusing their prophesied downfalls. The fatalistic view great heroes as inevitably arising tools of fate. Only the rarest villain moves to prevent his foretold foe from rising against him, as attempting to avert fate tends only to fulfill it.

Primus Derin of the Gray Legion never cared for this particular paradox. Though the Gray Legion represented absolute law rather than true evil, the uncompromising dictates of their code crushed the innocent as well as the guilty. He was unsurprised, though concerned, when an oracle spoke of a final battle with an unknown hero. Still, like most such foretellings the oracle's words spoke only of facing a hero, not losing to him.

Derin constructed a longsword that would arrange that fate worked more quickly than normal. The Edge of Destiny channeled the laws of prophecy: it would prove its user worthy or lead him to certain doom, and Derin correctly surmised that the mixed blessing of the blade would lead a hero to challenge him before the hero was truly ready. Flush with victory, Derin ordered the sword destroyed; a child thief promptly stole it from the forgefires. Predictably, Derin died when the grown thief led a prison revolt during the Legion's visit to the facility.

The Edge of Destiny remains a challenge to any would-be hero.

### THE EDGE OF DESTINY

The *edge of destiny* is a rather unusual weapon in that it does not directly aid its user in combat. In fact, most heroes who have wielded the blade bear scars of their time with it, when they foolishly believed their destinies would prevent any hardship. In terms of direct combat ability, the *edge of destiny* acts precisely like a normal, nonmagical longsword.

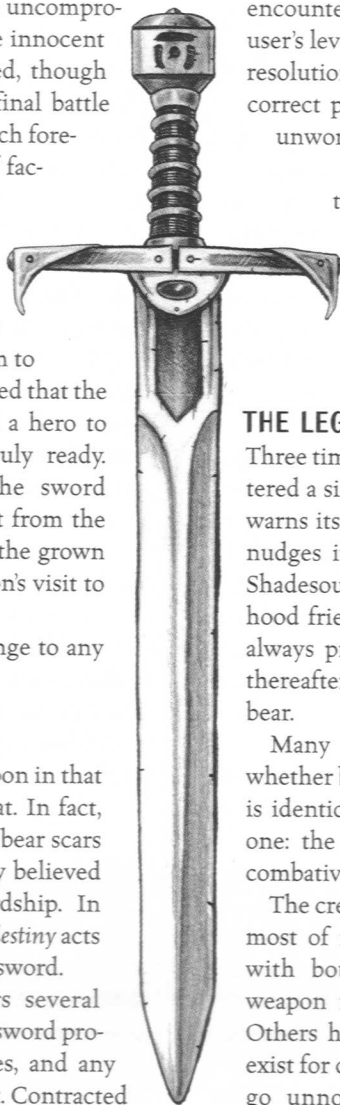
Outside of combat, the blade offers several enchantments to safeguard the user. The sword provides immunity against poisons, diseases, and any effect which would change his alignment. Contracted poisons or diseases do not disappear from his system, but rather fail to take any effect. Further, the user is utterly invisible to all *sCRY* attempts by evil creatures. Finally, the user never loses his Dexterity bonus to AC while the *edge of destiny* is sheathed unless he is held immobile or otherwise unable to move. All of these benefits are lost if the user takes any action in combat but to flee or heal an

ally, as the sword safeguards fledgling heroes but does not protect them from their own stupidity. Any diseases or poisons in the character's system immediately take effect; these effects fade once combat ends.

Of course, no one becomes a hero without experiencing hardship, and the *edge of destiny* periodically nudges its bearer into trials. Once per game session, the blade arranges for an encounter for its user. While this need not be combat, it is always a test of the user's worth. This encounter has an effective challenge rating equal to the user's level +3, but if anyone but the user is involved in its resolution, or if the user flees (unless flight is the morally correct path), the blade disappears from the character's unworthy person.

The *edge of destiny* only provides these benefits to good-aligned characters, and then only until the character either proves he is unworthy of its blessings, or until he meets his fated foe. In either case, the blade simply disappears until it is needed again.

Caster Level: 20th, Weight: — lb.



### THE LEGEND

Three times in its history the Edge of Destiny has encountered a similar blade, the Shadesoul. The Edge of Destiny warns its users of its terrible twin, a vicious weapon that nudges its wielder toward villainy. More alarming, the Shadesoul's wielder was invariably close kin or a childhood friend of the hero, and while the Edge of Destiny always proved victorious, the hero retired immediately thereafter, the price of his victory too great a shame to bear.

Many a noble soul has fallen victim to its desires, whether by corruption or by murderous intent. Shadesoul is identical to the Edge of Destiny in every respect but one: the evil copy is bloodthirsty, and always chooses combative trials for its wielder.

The creator of the Shadesoul remains anonymous, as do most of its corrupted servants. Some scholars, familiar with both weapons, have hypothesized that either weapon is capable of absolutely destroying the other. Others have further speculated that such weapons also exist for chaotic or lawful peoples, whose "heroes" tend to go unnoticed. In each of the three instances that Shadesoul has been seen, it appeared only in the hands of the fated foe of the Edge of Destiny. No one knows what fate befalls those villains who wield the Shadesoul but never meet its opposite.



## THE EYE OF FATE

Hidden in the mists of the Astral Plane is the lair of a pitiless god, a neutral observer of history and destiny. Unmoved by mortal concerns, he remembers all that transpires. He has died a thousand thousand times, and will die a thousand thousand times more before the world ends. He has lived endless lives because he once sought to change what cannot be altered.

He sees all that is, was, and must be through his one good eye. He pretends that he is missing his other eye — sometimes left, sometimes right — but this ruse is the only falsehood he indulges in, the only lie he must tell.

The other eye inevitably passes into mortal hands. Upon returning from his wanderings, the god encounters an irate mortal who blames the deity's inaction for some tragedy. The mortal duels the god, taking an eye as a trophy.

Soon this trophy affords the mortal access to the god's limitless knowledge. The mortal intervenes in fate time and again, ultimately undoing a noble hero's sacrifice. Crestfallen, the mortal takes the eye to the maimed god's home, only to find the god missing and a warrior seeking retribution for the hero's wasteful death.

Such is as it always has been, and always will be. Fate will not be denied.



Failure to intervene in foreseen events, whether through accident or inaction, shifts the user's alignment one step closer to lawful neutral. After he becomes lawful neutral, the *eye of fate* recalls its user to the Blue Lord's domain, regardless of present location or interfering magic, there to take up his term as the god.

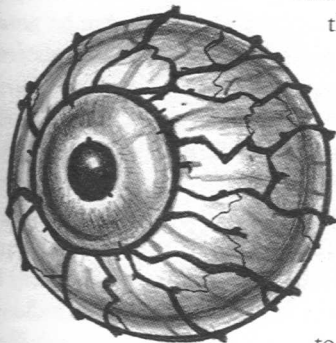
### THE EYE OF FATE

The *eye of fate* is a preserved eyeball, and its appearance changes with every incarnation of its owner. The eye attunes to its user upon separation from its original body; only an attuned subject may use it, and then only until he himself loses an eye (which becomes the next *eye of fate*).

The eye's abilities are as dramatic as they are erratic, and indeed few people know that they have accessed it until they activate it out of curiosity. When the bearer wants to know what has happened, is happening, or will happen, the eye of fate tears away at the veils between past, present, and future. By merely speculating about a person, place, or object, the *eye of fate* forces a *vision* (as per the spell of the same name, cast by a 20th-level sorcerer) of a

defining moment in the subject's existence. Purposefully using

the eye allows more control over the time period viewed, and also allows for *divination*, *foresight*, and greater *scrying* (again, as the spells of the same name cast by a 20th level sorcerer) of the subject if it has survived to the present.



### THE LEGEND

The nameless god of cycling fate and circumstance, the Blue Lord is lawful neutral. Among his other titles are Fate's Master and Slave, the Ever-Sighted, and the Unmoved Watcher. The Blue Lord resides in the Astral Plane, waiting for another to take his place. He is always guilty of some terrible transgression that outweighs his noble deeds. Within moments of ascending to godhood, his heir attacks and maims him, taking the next Eye of Fate (though this can happen before his ascension). The Blue Lord then waits, watching over the whole of creation until his heir ascends. None knows what happens to previous Blue Lords, not even they themselves. The Blue Lord's domains are Knowledge, Luck, and Travel. His favored weapon is the ranseur. His holy symbol is an endless spiral of descending eyes.

Few worship the Blue Lord, as he does not intervene in the lives of his followers. Those who do are invariably lawful neutral themselves, traveling the world preserving fate's will or surreptitiously aiding the Blue Lord's heir. They work with others, particularly adventurers, on the rare occasions when an outside force has undone fate's designs.

## FAITHFUL ARMOR

It was a simple concept, the warrior-king Drajao told his unbelieving engineers. Armor protects. It should do this above all else, even in cases where a warrior faces attackers without wearing it.

The first engineer told him that it would not work. When the others started work, it was his tortured screams that drove them on. Desperation provided solutions, and Drajao's men had achieved the king's goal within the year: twelve suits of full plate that bonded with a wearer. Drajao thanked the engineers, and spoke endearingly of them at their funerals.

Shortly thereafter, Drajao awoke in the night to find his empty armor throttling him. Realizing too late that he had threatened the very people he entrusted with the project, Drajao died that night.

"King Drajao" reigned another fifty years. From that day on, he always wore his ceremonial armor, a tradition carried on by the next twelve rulers of the land. Even usupers wore the armor as a show of loyalty to the similarly clad guards. Only the intervention of an angry blue dragon ended this ritual, as the wyrm evidently either destroyed or captured the king and his guard, though looters may have stolen the suits themselves.



## FAITHFUL ARMOR

*Faithful armor* expands on the same magical theory that led to *dancing weapons* and *animated shields*. Each of the twelve original suits is a suit of *full plate +5* bearing one or more of the following basic enchantments: *fortification* (always heavy), *glamered*, *invulnerability*, and *spell resistance* (always SR 17 or SR 19). Only the king's own suit had all of these enchantments, and it also had *spell resistance 19*. Any humanoid creature of Medium size may wear any of the *faithful armors*.

If a character wearing a suit of *faithful armor* suffers a wound that bleeds, its greater magic takes effect. The suit needs blood to awaken it once its previous user has died. Awakened suits of *faithful armor* provide no additional benefits while worn, but continue to protect their owner even if removed. If someone attacks the awakened suit's owner, the suit animates immediately and leaps into the fray. Animated suits act as though they had their owners' Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, base attack bonus, weapon and shield familiarity, and feats. They may wield any of their masters' weapons as well as their masters do. Suits remain animated until either their masters or all attackers have died, at which point they collapse. Clever users may keep the suit nearby but unworn, even during adventures. When a suit absorbs 100 hp of damage it falls to the ground inert for 2d20 minutes, after which it reanimates with 2d6 hit points. A suit repairs damage at a rate of 5 points per minute.

## THE LEGEND

A few suits, most notably the king's own, bore the enchantments of Drajao's vengeful artificers. Determined to put the mad king down, these suits protected their charge so long as he was never alone. Separated from aid, the suit animated and murdered the charge, then surrounded and controlled the body even as the suit absorbed his soul. These suits then impersonated their dead master, imitating him as though they had the Bluff skill at 8 ranks. The armor also gained the languages and knowledge skills of its dead lord, as well as his Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma. The armor pretends to follow the ethics of their victim, but is truly neutral evil. The only certain way to identify such an impostor was by noticing that he never appeared without the armor, a singularly difficult task with the *glamered* versions.

At least two of the so-called *faithless armors* aside from Drajao's exist, though it is wholly possible that all the armors are of this traitorous breed. After a suit of *faithless armor* has absorbed a soul, nothing may raise that character from the dead while the suit is still active. Destroying the internalized remains of a suit's victim will render it dormant again. The body has the same hit points it did in life, but only suffers damage from fire, acid, or area-effect attacks.

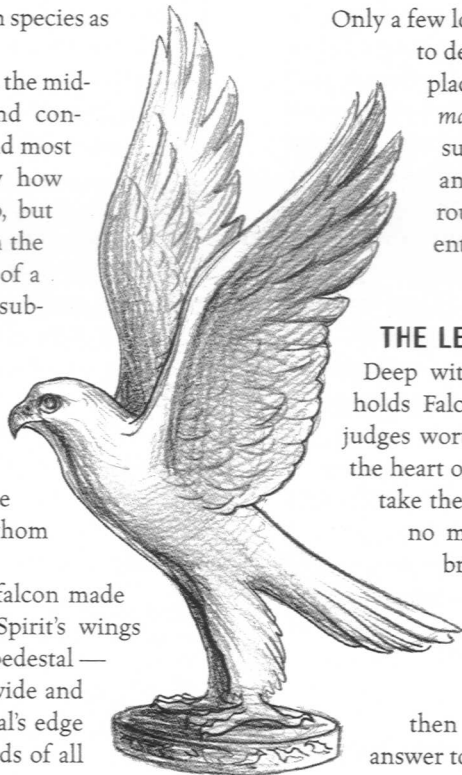
## FALCON'S SPIRIT

The elves treat fairly with all woodland creatures, valuing the unique virtues of each. In the ninth age of the Elf Lords the carver Eredosal traveled far and wide studying the habits of as many avian species as she could find.

After ten years Eredosal halted in the middle of the Everlasting Woods and conversed with Barkburr, the oldest and most powerful of treants. None know how Eredosal obtained Barkburr's help, but six months later she emerged from the Woods with a statue in the shape of a falcon, carved from Barkburr's substance.

Eredosal turned the Falcon's Spirit over to the Lady of the Woods, Queen Melifa, saying that the Queen would know what to do with it. Melifa accepted the Spirit and gives it only to those whom she judges worthy.

Falcon's Spirit is a carving of a falcon made from eternally fresh wood. The Spirit's wings arch as if preparing to lift it off its pedestal — a squat cylinder about six inches wide and an inch and a half tall. The pedestal's edge portrays mundane and magical birds of all types.



### FALCON'S SPIRIT

To attune the *spirit* an individual must perform an elaborate elven dance under the watchful eye of an elf of royal blood. To succeed he must make Perform (dance) and Concentration skill checks (both at DC 30) and then a Fortitude save (DC 25) to avoid collapsing from exhaustion. If the wearer succeeds he is attuned to the *spirit*, replacing the previous owner.

The person attuned to the *spirit* can communicate with any avian creature. Animals and beasts capable of flight do not attack him under any circumstances. By concentrating upon the *spirit* the user may control up to 50 HD of flying animals or beasts within one mile. These creatures do not receive a save to resist and follow any order, even self-destructive ones.

The *spirit's* controller may transmit his consciousness into any one animal or beast bird he controls, in essence treating it as a familiar used by a wizard of the owner's current level. The bird so designated gains all of the familiar special abilities but neither it nor its owner receives any other benefits. The *spirit's* user suffers no ill effects if the bird is harmed or killed.

Once per day the controller may use *contact other plane* to speak with a being from the Elemental Plane of Air. The GM subtracts 15 from the d% roll and the owner doesn't suffer Intelligence or Charisma loss on a failure. The controller can ask up to 10 questions.

Only a few lords and ladies among the elves know how to destroy the spirit. A wizard or sorcerer must place the wooden carving in a *brazier commanding fire elementals* (or fire-related artifact such as the Brazier of Ne'quotl) and then cast and maintain an *incendiary cloud* for 20 rounds. At the end of that time the flames entirely consume the *spirit*.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 2 lbs.

### THE LEGEND

Deep within the Everlasting Woods Lady Melifa holds Falcon's Spirit in trust for those whom she judges worthy. Seekers of the artifact must travel to the heart of Melifa's domain. They have no chance to take the Lady unawares — her sentries find them no matter how they enter the Woods. When brought before the Queen the PCs must make a Diplomacy skill check (DC 30) to complete the appropriate social niceties.

If the PCs suitably impress the Queen then Melifa puts forth three riddles they must answer to prove their worthiness.

- 1) "A man passes through the forest and sees two birds — one walks left and one walks right, but they never separate. How is this possible?"
- 2) "I am light as a feather but as large as the tallest oak. Sixty horses cannot pull me off the ground. What am I?"
- 3) "In a human village a black bird with a broken feather stood upon a black road. The houses were black and the moon and stars were not out. There were no lamps and a man on a black horse rode toward the bird but swerved at the last moment. How is this possible?"

The correct answers are: 1) *It is a bird and its shadow*; 2) *The shadow of the tallest oak*; and 3) *It was daylight*.

If the PCs answer all three riddles correctly Melifa gives the Falcon's Spirit to them. If the PCs fail at either step they are escorted from the Everlasting Woods and told never to return. The PCs can fight Melifa and her men but even if they succeed they never find the Spirit's hiding place.



## THE FIRST WORD

The following is paraphrased from the creation song of the Moagata lizardfolk.

*"Before this world, there was only the swamp and Shango (the Great Croc) and the Little Spider. Shango was hungry, but the Little Spider was clever and Shango, O mighty Shango, could never catch him. So Shango spoke the First Word, and made the day and the night and mountains below and the sky above and the water and all the tasty people, so he would never hunger again. But the Little Spider, O clever Spider, was waiting, and he caught up the Word in his web, and he used it to make the shadows for hiding and the flies for eating. Then the Little Spider, O tricky Spider, he hid the Word away in a hole, where Shango could see it and Shango could hear it but Shango could never reach it.*

*And that is the story of how Shango made the day and the night and the mountains and the sky and the water and all the tasty people, but lost his voice."*

Though scholars of civilized cultures dismiss the song as mere superstition, the First Word is real.

The First Word is trapped in a gossamer spider's web strung between two muck covered twigs. Though it looks fragile, and wavers in the slightest breeze, neither the web nor the twigs can be damaged by any means.

### THE FIRST WORD

The power of the *first word* is unmatched, though it is limited by the imagination of the wielder.

The *first word's* sole ability is the power to make or unmake fundamental properties of reality. The power of the *word* makes a *wish* look like child's play. In essence, the wielder controls reality on a scale comparable to a god's.

With the *first word*, the wielder could unmake light within a five-mile radius, plunging the area into absolute darkness as though light had never existed, and could never exist. He could speak the *word* to create a mountain, making a peak that had, for all purposes, existed since the beginning of time.

Activating the *word* requires a full round action, during which the wielder whispers his command into the web. At the end of that time, the *word* issues forth. The *word* is not heard. It is felt as a vibrating tone throbbing in the soul of every being.

There are limits to the *first word's* power. The *word* grants no special immunities to its wielder. It cannot create life, nor may it be used to unmake living beings. It also cannot create or unmake reality in a way directly resulting in the destruction of the world. For example, the wielder could transform the nearby air into chlorine gas, but could not transform a lake into a black hole. Finally, the *word* cannot create portals to other dimensions. Its powers affect only the prime material plane.

The *first word* can be used once a day and affects a maximum radius of the wielder's Wisdom bonus in miles. In the round the *word's* powers take effect, all other sound in the world disappears, subsumed beneath the *word's* echo. Spells or special abilities with verbal components cannot be used, and skills involving sound or verbal communication (including Listen) automatically fail. In game terms, the *first word* acts as a *wish* spell cast by a 20th-level wizard with the additional abilities and restrictions noted above.

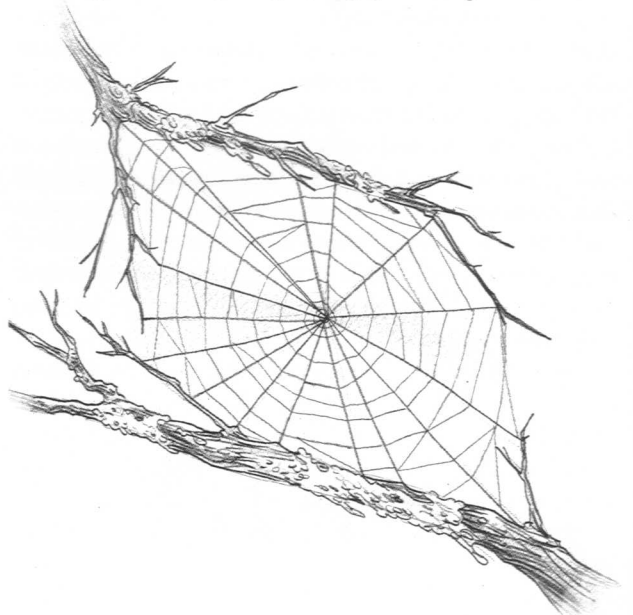
Caster Level: 20th; Weight: —.

### LEGEND

The Moagata are famed for both their ferocity and for their dreamspeakers, shamans who have chanted the creation song continuously for 3,000 years. Dreamspeakers chant in groups of three, ensuring that the song will be unbroken even if death should claim one of their number.

The only living being who knows the location of the Word is the dreamspeaker Blind Eye. More than three centuries old, Blind Eye is a bloated abomination, half mad and hungry for flesh. Blind Eye speaks only to beings who are respectful of her power and smart enough to bring her meat — others she eats at the first opportunity.

**Blind Eye, female lizardfolk** Adp14: CR 15; SZ M (humanoid, aquatic); HD 2d8+4 + 14d6+28; hp 83; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC (-1 Dex, +5 natural, ); Atks 2 claws +11/+6 (1d4+3) or bite +9 (1d4+1 bite); SA Spells; SQ Spells; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +13; Str 16, Dex 9, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 19, Cha 12. Skills: Balance +3, Concentration +17, Heal +8, Jump +9, Knowledge (religion) +17, Spellcraft +7, Swim +11, Wilderness Lore +7. Feats: Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Great Fortitude, Multiattack, Skill Focus (Knowledge: religion). Prepared spells: 0: *cure minor wounds* (x2), *read magic*; 1st: *cause fear*, *command*, *cure light wounds*, *bleed*; 2nd: *bull's strength*, *cure moderate wounds* (x2), *see invisibility*; 3rd: *animate dead*, *bestow curse*, *lightning bolt*; 4th: *polymorph other*, *polymorph self*. Possessions: *gem of seeing*, *medallion of thoughts*, *staff of swarming insects*.



**FORGED UNMETAL**

Entry #234 — Miners from the caverns below the Gallery of Sighs have brought me a new and fascinating puzzle. Amid the veins of mithral and silver, they came upon a curious metallic liquid. They have sent some twelve pounds of it to me for analysis. To work!

Entry #235 — It is kin to mithral and quicksilver, but is a true child of neither. It defies me at every turn — not only is it resistant to my alchemical investigations, but it seems malicious. My fingers bleed from a dozen tiny cuts and burns, and it seems to find and widen every crack and flaw in my glassware.

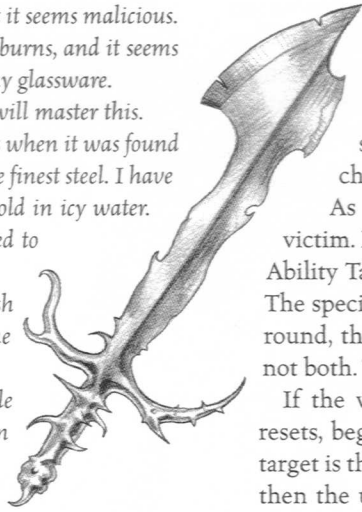
Entry #236 — Another sleepless night. I will master this.

Entry #237 — Sometimes it is as liquid as when it was found — but I have seen it congeal, and become like finest steel. I have poured it into a mold, and immersed the mold in icy water. We shall see if this "unmetal" can be induced to hold a shape.

Entry #238 — Success! A dagger! Fresh from the mold, but sharp and strong as one tempered on the anvil of a master-smith!

Entry #239 — It killed them all. My little dagger, grown so large and strong. And grown legs. A crawling, living weapon, a weapon that hunts and moves and hurts. It's alive. I've locked it in a chest, and now I stoke the forge-fires with hate. I'll forge this unmetal, tame it chain it break it kill it. Metal is a tool, a servant. Unmetal is a chained beast. My beast.

— Journal found in the ruins of the dwarven town of Kal Dyarven



**FORGED UNMETAL**

A weapon made of *forged unmetal* can change shape at will. It is always perfectly balanced and adapts to any situation. It may take the form of a heavy hammer to shatter a shield, then become a longsword to punch through plate armor, and then sprout a hundred little barbs to rip at the flesh. The wielder has some limited influence over the shape of the *forged unmetal* with a successful Will save (DC 25). He may choose the form of the weapon (hammer, sword, etc.), but the *unmetal* adds its own little cruelties.

*Unmetal* may take the form of any metallic object weighing 30 lb. or less — from a small dagger to a two-bladed sword. It can change as a free action, once per round.

As it fights, it learns exactly how to best hurt its victim. Its abilities increase by one step on the Unmetal Ability Table in each round it targets the same person. The special abilities are not cumulative — in the second round, the *forged unmetal* is either *keen* or *wounding*, but not both. The unmetal chooses one.

If the wielder attacks a new opponent, the unmetal resets, beginning again as a +1 keen weapon. If the new target is the same race and class as the previous opponent, then the unmetal learns one step each attack instead of each round.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 6 lbs.

**LEGEND**

If the attack roll is a natural 1 or natural 20, roll on the unmetal change table below.

TABLE 1-9: UNMETAL ABILITY TABLE

Step	Bonus (enhancement)	Bonus Damage	Special Ability
1	+1	—	keen
2	+2	1d6	wounding
3	+3	1d12	speed
4	+4	2d8	mighty cleaving
5	+5	4d4	vorpal

TABLE 1-10: FORGED UNMETAL

1d20	Result
1-2	Move 1d4 steps back on the Unmetal Ability Table.
3-4	Tiny thorns grow from the hilt, inflicting 1d4 damage on the wielder.
5-6	The <i>unmetal</i> wraps tightly around the user's hand, and cannot be dropped for the duration of the current encounter.
7-8	The <i>unmetal</i> grows tentacles, giving the weapon a reach of 10 ft. for 1d4 rounds.
9-10	Vicious claws sprout from the blade and dig into the current target. These claws automatically inflict 2d6 piercing damage each round, but the Unmetal will not let go until the target is reduced below -9 hit points.
11-12	The <i>unmetal</i> splits into two smaller weapons for the duration of the fight. At the end of the fight, the two halves merge. Neither half can move past step 2 on the Unmetal Ability Table.
13	The <i>unmetal</i> begins to flow into the blood of the user, inflicting 1d4 points of temporary Constitution damage.
14	Tendrils of <i>unmetal</i> push into the nerves and veins of the user, inflicting 1d4 points of temporary Dexterity damage.
15	The <i>unmetal</i> merges with the muscles of the user, inflicting 1d4 points of temporary Strength damage.
16	The <i>unmetal</i> merges with any metal armor the user is wearing, absorbing it in 2d10 rounds.
17-18	If the current target is wielding a metal weapon, the <i>unmetal</i> merges with it. The wielder and the target must make an opposed Strength check to see who ends up with the merged weapon.
19-20	Move 1d4 steps ahead on the Unmetal Ability Table.

## FULVER'S CONUNDRUM

Fulver was a dwarven philosopher who believed the gods were simply mortals who had ascended to their exalted positions by mastering a field of endeavor. Fulver theorized that a mortal who trained himself to be, for example, a better singer than the god of music would supplant that deity.

Before he died, Fulver expressed his philosophy as mathematical formula, which he wrote down in an immense tome. The formula came to be known as Fulver's Conundrum, for it contained a fundamental, seemingly insurmountable obstacle — how can someone train himself to be superior to a being embodying perfection?

400 years after Fulver's death, his great-grandson discovered the answer. By modifying the formula in a specific fashion, he created a celestial paradox that ripped the dwarven god of strength from his celestial training hall and forced him to perform a near-impossible task to justify his own existence. At that exact moment, Fulver's great-grandson absorbed the god's essence and ascended to his place. His usurpation lasted only months, as theologians loyal to the supplanted god aided their deity in both solving his task and slaying his upstart rival.

Though the vengeful god attempted to obliterate the tome containing Fulver's Conundrum, it eluded him and has been seen, and used, a handful of times in the centuries since.

Fulver's Conundrum fills the first 333 pages of a 400 page tome, with the bulk of the remaining pages filled with unintelligible notes and scribbles. The tome is massive, fully four feet tall and half as thick, with heavy slabs of darkwood as book covers; the front of the book is covered with dwarven runes, and the whole book is bound in iron.

### FULVER'S CONUNDRUM

When found, the complex formula known as *Fulver's conundrum* is incomplete, with key steps in the formula left partially blank. When those blanks are filled with information relating to a specific deity and his portfolio, a celestial paradox results, one that calls into question the very nature and existence of that deity's divine power.

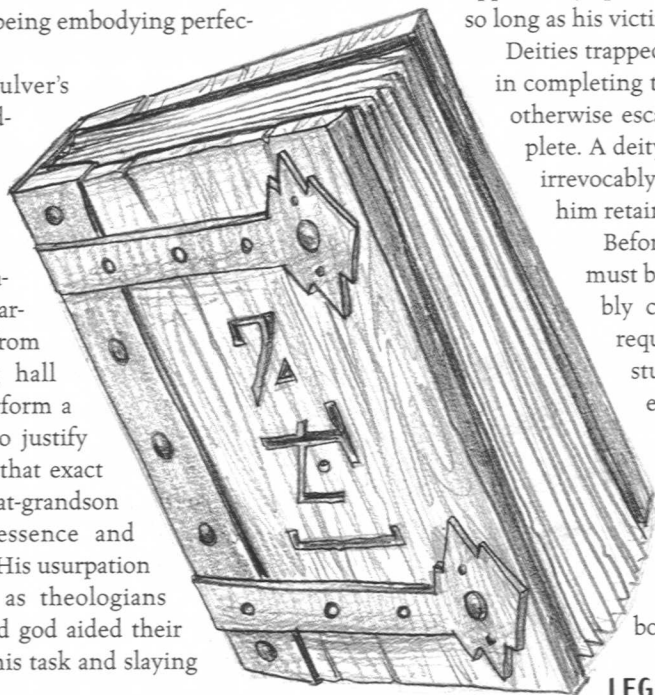
As a result of the paradox, the entirety of the deity's essence is summoned to the material plane and made manifest in the presence of the *conundrum* tome. There, it is forced to successfully complete a seemingly impossible task based on its own nature. For example, the omnipotent head of a pantheon might be required to create a rock that he, himself, could not lift. While the deity is so tested, he is unable to affect the outside world and cannot grant spells to his followers.

The being who traps a deity with *Fulver's conundrum* gains immense power. He ascends to divine status, gaining power equivalent to his victim's and control over the trapped deity's portfolio. His new divine status lasts only so long as his victim remains trapped.

Deities trapped by *Fulver's conundrum* can be aided in completing the task set before them, but cannot otherwise escape its power until the test is complete. A deity who voluntarily forfeits the test is irrevocably destroyed, and the one who trapped him retains his divine status permanently.

Before *Fulver's conundrum* can be used, it must be understood. Grasping the impossibly convoluted logic of the *conundrum* requires a full year of uninterrupted study. At the end of that time, the reader must succeed at a Intelligence check (DC35) or go insane as if affected by a permanent *confusion* effect. If the reader successfully saves, he comprehends the *conundrum* and can finish it.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight (of book): 100 lb.



### LEGEND

Though gods rarely agree about anything, all believe Fulver's Conundrum far too dangerous to continue existing. Unfortunately, there seems to be no method of permanently destroying it, so they must content themselves with locking it away from mortal eyes. The tome currently rests in a pocket dimension hidden in the petals of a dandelion growing at the bottom of a deep ravine. The ravine itself is protected by fanatic berserkers, dinosaurs and four colossal elementals, one of each element.

Those who gain access to the pocket dimension must fight their way past the handpicked champions of a dozen gods, including an ancient half-fiend black dragon with 20 sorcerer class levels and twin solars with 20 fighter class levels, all the while beset by spontaneous volcanic eruptions, tornadoes and other natural disasters. Within the pocket dimension, divine spells are rendered useless, save for those used by the Conundrum's guardians.



## FURYWIND

The warlord Torvok sat brooding on his throne, sipping a glass of wine. After a moment of consideration, he downed the wine and said, "Bring me the technomancer."

A pair of guards left and soon returned escorting a frail trembling figure who clutched a bundle tightly. Reluctantly, he handed the package to the warlord, who unwrapped it delicately.

"I combined an advanced version of a repeating crossbow's loading mechanism with a simple conjuration effect..." the technomancer began, but he was silenced by a look from Torvok. Torvok hefted the strange crossbow and aimed it experimentally. Finally he said, "You have done well, tinker."

The frail man heaved a sigh of relief, and asked tentatively, "Does that mean you will release my family? You have what you want; may we go?"

The warlord thought for a moment, drumming his fingers on the arm of his throne. "No," he said, and swung the crossbow around to point at the technomancer's heart. "First we must test it. If it works, your wife and child may go free. If not, you will all die."

There was a moment of silence, and then Torvok pulled the trigger. The technomancer didn't even blink as the warlord slumped back into his chair, a crossbow bolt protruding from his neck.

### FURYWIND

*Furywind* is a complicated but well-made light crossbow. Because of its intricate system of gears and springs, switching between its various attack modes requires a successful Disable Device check (DC 25) and takes a full round action that provokes an attack of opportunity. For all its powers, *Furywind* acts as a +5 light crossbow with the distance and speed abilities and a critical threat range of 17–20. The weapon deals 1d10 piercing damage. Its various modes are described below.

*Furywind* may be placed into its standard mode. It functions as a standard magical crossbow with the enhancement bonus and abilities noted above.

TABLE 1–11: FURYWIND

1d20	Effect
1–2	Ranged attacks from the crossbow suffer a –10 circumstance penalty until corrected.
3–4	The bolt is ejected each time it is fired.
5–6	The damage is halved until corrected.
7	The range increment is halved until corrected.
8	The wielder gets his hand stuck in the gearwork, suffering 2d6 points of crushing damage. This happens each time he fires it until it is fixed.
9	The wielder is struck by the cone of bolts ability.
10	The wielder is struck by the loaded bolt.
11	The weapon discharges a burst of energy, dealing 6d6 damage to everything within 10 feet.
12	The weapon discharges a burst of energy, which dissipates into nothing. It cannot conjure projectiles for 24 hours.
13	The weapon does not fire until corrected.
14	The weapon does not fire, and the bolt is ruined.
15	The weapon fires, but the bolt is ruined. It deals only 1 point to the target with no additional effects.
16	The weapon locks and cannot be used for one day.
17	The weapon sets to a random configuration.
18	The weapon shoots in the opposite direction. The weapon can still hit a target in its line of sight, however.
19	DM's choice.
20	Roll twice, combining the results.

In security mode, *Furywind* provides a rude surprise for anyone foolish enough to steal it. When secured, pulling the trigger causes the crossbow to fire backwards, impaling a thief on the weapon he sought to claim. When fired in this mode, *Furywind*'s user suffers 6d10+30 damage that counts as a coup de grace strike.

In its ammunition mode, *Furywind* can create and fire special ammunition that ignores all non-magical armor.

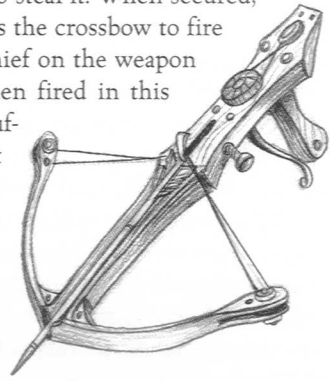
Once in this mode, the weapon never needs to be reloaded, as it conjures a new bolt each time it is fired. It can fire a maximum of one of these bolts each round, and its user must spend a move-equivalent action while the crossbow creates a bolt. The bolts disappear one minute after being fired.

The crossbow can be set to splinter a bolt into multiple pieces, blasting out a cone of sharp wood and metal slivers. In this mode, the user loads and fires the crossbow as normal. However, rather than resolve a standard attack it generates a 40 foot-cone. All creatures in this area take 3d8+3 points of force damage. A Reflex save (DC 25) is allowed for half damage.

Weight: 16 lb.

### THE LEGEND

*Furywind* is a fickle artifact, requiring a great deal of attention and care. If any Disable Device check made regarding the crossbow fails by more than 5, roll 1d20 and refer to the chart below to determine the effect. Making another check corrects the problem, but the wielder may not know he's made a mistake.



## GI OF THE THUNDERFIST MONKS

From the Shih Wan Yun, the History of the Ten Thousand Clouds:

The monks of the Quiet Touch School surrounded the blind master known as Jan Meng Jen. The other Quiet Touch monks held back. They knew it was not their fight.

Shu Yin, master of the Quiet Touch whose name means Silver Rat, stepped forward.

"In the tradition of the old ways, I challenge you to a duel, Jan Meng Jen. Submit, and your monks will be trained in my style."

"I will never submit," said Jan Meng Jen, whose name means Burning Blindness.

Shu Yin pushed a gnarled hand through his silver hair. "Then I will have to kill you and every other member of the Thunderfist until your school acknowledges us as superior."

Shu Yin struck, darting low. His fingers were a blur, but each time they were blocked by Jan Meng Jen's fists. He punched, blocked, and counter blocked every attack, and with each strike a concussive blast of sound rocked Shu Yin backwards. The two monks separated. Shu Yin snarled, dripping blood from his lip. Jan Meng Jen seemed unharmed.

Thunder echoed as black clouds began to form overhead. The monks, intent on the battle, ignored it.

Shu Yin blinked and then lunged with a feral growl. His light finger taps hit the blind master once under his armpit, at the base of his neck, and at his temple — but the blows were not without a terrible cost. Jan Meng Jen struck with both fists into Shu Yin's pectorals.

Shu Yin blew backwards with a bolt of lightning and an explosive burst of sound, toppling his fellow monks like matchsticks. His body was a blackened, charred skeleton.

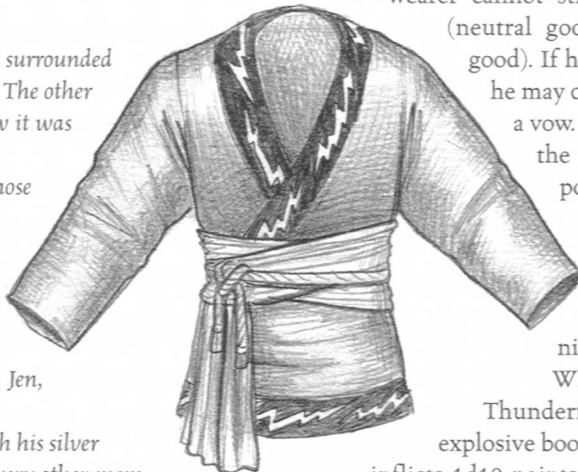
It is said that Shu Yin whispered to one of his apprentices, "I have won," before he expired.

And in a sense, Shu Yin was right. For immediately thereafter, Jan Meng Jen clutched his heart and staggered. But Shu Yin had won only the battle, not the war.

Lightning, thunder, and sweeping rains destroyed the Quiet Touch School. Mother Nature accomplished in one day what the Thunderfist monks could not achieve in over a century of feuding.

Because the master of the Thunderfist School was defeated, they disbanded. However, Jan Meng Jen's gi has been secretly preserved, waiting for the day when the Thunderfist monks will return.

This gi is made of black linen. It covers the upper torso and fits snugly around the waist. A series of golden lightning bolts mark the edges of the gi.



### GI OF THE THUNDERFIST MONKS

The gi of the thunderfist monks is the equivalent of +5 padded armor. Monks may wear it without losing those class abilities that normally do not function while they wear armor.

Anyone wearing the gi must take a vow of purity. The wearer cannot stray from a good alignment (neutral good, chaotic good, or lawful good). If he is not good-aligned already, he may change alignments by making a vow. If he is already good-aligned, the gi works normally. The gi's powers will not work if the wearer ever strays from his good alignment.

The gi provides complete invulnerability to lightning and sonic attacks.

Whenever the wearer uses the Thunderfist feat, he strikes with an explosive boom. The thunderous explosion inflicts 1d10 points of sonic damage on all enemies in a 50-foot radius. The target must make a Fortitude save (DC 30) or be stunned and deafened for 1d4 rounds.

If the wearer uses the Thunderfist feat in more than 10 rounds of bare-fisted combat during a single bout, the wearer can invoke *call lightning* as if cast by a 20th-level druid.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 2 lb.

### THE LEGEND

Few understand the art of the Thunderfist. The style is lost to history, but some practitioners went into hiding after their master died. These teachers have written manuals that explain the Way of Thunder.

### THUNDERFIST (New Feat)

You know how to execute the dreaded Thunderfist, an attack even more devastating than the Stunning Fist.

**Prerequisites:** Str 13+, Dex 13+, Wis 13+, Improved Unarmed Strike, Lightning Reflexes, Stunning Fist, base attack bonus +10 or higher.

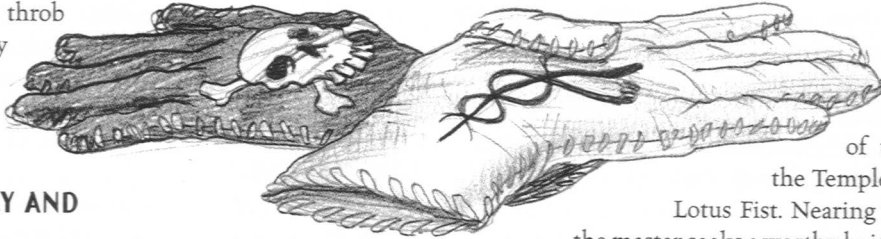
**Benefit:** Declare that you are using the feat before you make your attack roll. It forces a foe damaged by your unarmed attack to make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 10 + one-half your level + Str modifier), in addition to dealing damage normally. If the defender fails his saving throw, he is stunned and deafened for 1d4 rounds. You can attempt a Thunderfist attack once per day for every five levels you have attained and no more than once per round.

## GLOVES OF MERCY AND MALICE

The Gloves of Mercy and Malice were created by the druid king Nature's Tears on the day of his divine ascension. Less a hero or villain than a force of nature, Nature's Tears was as likely to cure famine by razing a village as by magically fertilizing its crops. He believed good and evil were false constructs of a civilized society. In the natural world men, fish, trees, and animals all held equal value.

The Gloves of Mercy and Malice embody his beliefs. When worn by neutral beings they cure and kill with equal facility, brooking no favoritism towards good or evil. What is a boon to one must also help the other.

The *gloves of mercy and malice* are crudely stitched canvas. Mercy, the left glove, is white with a black symbol on its palm in the shape of two snakes entwined around a staff. Malice is black with a white skull-and-crossbones pattern on its palm. When worn, the gloves pulse and throb with divine energy which prickles along the wearer's arms.



### GLOVES OF MERCY AND MALICE

The *gloves* can only be worn safely by someone of neutral alignment. Others who don the gloves automatically suffer 1 negative level and must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 30) or incur 1d4 additional negative levels. These levels remain for 24 hours after the gloves are removed. At the end of that time the character must again succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 30) or the loss becomes permanent. Non-neutral characters cannot activate any of this artifact's abilities.

*Mercy* grants three abilities. First, the wearer can simultaneously *heal* and *regenerate* any creature. Second, the wearer can activate an enhanced *greater restoration*, restoring levels regardless of when they were lost and restoring levels and Constitution points lost to death. Finally, the wearer can perform a *greater resurrection*, instantly raising any being from the dead, regardless when it died. While wearing *mercy*, the owner is immune to negative energy effects.

*Malice* also grants three abilities. First, its wielder can simultaneously *harm* and inflict *contagion*. The Fortitude save to resist *contagion* is DC 30, and it affects even those beings normally immune to disease. Second, the wearer can affect a victim as if with a maximized *energy drain*, which also inflicts 4 points of temporary damage to any 3 ability scores. Finally, the wearer can *slay living* (no save). *Malice's* powers by pass all spells and spell effects granting protection from negative energy.

The powers of the *gloves of mercy and malice* are delivered by touch, count as cast by a 20th level cleric, and require a standard action to activate. Their powers can only be activated when both gloves are worn. The wearer can strike with his fists as if he possessed the Ambidexterity, Improved Unarmed Fighting, and Two Weapon Fighting feats. The gloves inflict 1d8 damage + an additional 1d8 points of either positive (*Mercy*) or negative (*Malice*) energy with each strike.

The *gloves of mercy and malice* operate under a unique restriction. Both can be used at will on those of neutral alignments, but individual powers may only be used once each on good or evil beings before requiring balance. The same power must be used on a being of the opposite alignment of the original target. So, if *mercy* resurrects a good being, it cannot affect another good being with that power until it has resurrected an evil one.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 1 lb.

### THE LEGEND

- The gloves of mercy and malice are currently in the possession of the last master of the Temple of the Ascendant Lotus Fist. Nearing the end of his life, the master seeks a worthy heir to both his martial arts techniques and the priceless artifacts he guards. To prove himself, a candidate must willingly submit to tests that will push him to the limits of his endurance while testing his dedication to the principles of enlightened neutrality.
- A scholarly cleric has recently laid claim to the gloves of mercy and malice, believing he has discovered a means to bypass their curse. Instead, his experiments have awoke and angered their slumbering divine essence. To prevent the abuse of their power, the gloves have begun sending out subliminal calls for aid. Dire animals and other beasts of the woods have repeatedly attacked the cleric. After surviving multiple savage assaults, the cleric has decided to hire adventurers to deal with the problem forcefully.
- A street urchin has discovered the Gloves of Mercy and Malice and proclaimed herself guardian of the city's orphans and streetwalkers. She uses Malice to, in her words, "make the real criminals pay." Unfortunately, in her view the criminals are city guards, judges, merchants, and nobles. In the past six months she has claimed a score of victims, among them a paladin whose only crime was interfering in her mission.



## GLOVES OF THE FAR GARDEN

My dear sister,

I have no doubt that this will be the last letter I send you. My time on this world is drawing to a close, but I have little fear of leaving it. With every spell I cast and every breath I take I grow weaker. It was a trial simply to walk from my bedchamber to my study to write this letter. The golems wait on me hand and foot — making my meals, helping me dress. I have sent the apprentices away, for I no longer have the strength to teach them. I can feel my mind slipping away. I become forgetful or confused. I am dying, slowly and painfully. Perhaps this is my punishment for all the deeds I wish now were undone.

It is agonizing being in this state, but most frustrating of all is my inability to leave the tower to care for my garden. Rather than let my precious roses go untended, I have enchanted a pair of silk gardening gloves to allow me to do my gardening from my bedroom window. I had to drain the magic from half my armory to make them, but it was well worth it. I ask that some day after I am gone you go and retrieve them, for they are powerful items that should not go to waste.

Included with this letter is my entire set of spellbooks and lore-tomes. I hope they serve you well. Give my love to the children.

With love, from this world or the next,

Your brother,

the Archmage Raznual

### GLOVES OF THE FAR GARDEN

The gloves of the far garden are a pair of silk gloves with a variety of powers. In order for any of the gloves' powers to work, both gloves must be worn.

While wearing the gloves, the wearer may interact with the world from afar. By pointing at a spot within line-of-sight up to 100 feet away and speaking a command word, he may see, hear, smell, taste, touch, move, manipulate, and otherwise experience and interact with the surroundings as if he were standing at that point. He may make unarmed attacks (this is a Force effect), attack with weapons and use tools readily available at that spot, perform fine manipulation such as with the Open Lock and Disable Device skills, cast spells with only somatic components (or no components at all), write, play a stringed instrument, and do anything else he could do using only his hands. A pair of ghostly hands of force spring into being at the chosen spot to complete these tasks. The gloves' line of sight may be extended through spells such as *scrying* and *arcane eye*.

The wearer may move an object of up to 400 pounds through the air at a speed of up to 40 feet with a maximum range of 500 feet. He may move objects at will for as long as he concentrates. This is otherwise similar to the *telekinesis* spell.



The gloves grant their wearer a +5 enhancement bonus to Strength and Dexterity and access to the *Enlarge Spell* feat. The gloves also have the following spell powers usable at will: *dancing lights*, *levitate*, *plant growth*, *shrink item*, *spectral hand*, *Tensor's floating disk*. The wearer may cast each of the Bigby's spells three times per day.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: —

### THE LEGEND

The Gloves of the Far Garden have not yet been retrieved by the archmage's sister, and remain in the wizard's tower.

The large garden that surrounds the tower is overgrown with weeds. The tower itself is five stories tall and riddled with traps. The door is warded by a magical lock, explosive runes, and an *alarm* spell which alerts two otherwise dormant stone golems. The walls of the tower are reinforced masonry and are enhanced by *walls of force* to keep out ethereal invaders. There are no windows until the fifth floor (about 45 feet up), and the walls are smooth and straight (Climb DC 25).

The first two floors contain only mechanical traps. These include scything blade traps, poison gas traps, flooding room traps, and crushing wall traps. All are especially well hidden and designed (+5 to the DC of Search and Disable Device checks) and reset automatically after one minute. All are triggered by the mere presence of creatures in their area of effect.

The next two floors are filled with magical traps. These include various magical glyphs and runes (such as *glyphs of warding*), spell traps (including *blade barrier*, *circle of death*, *disintegration*, and *flesh to stone*), and other exotic magical effects (such as jets of flame, electrified floors, and magic that sucks the air out of rooms). All are caster level 15.

The top floor has no traps. The gloves sit on a nightstand beside the wizard's bed.

## GORETOOTH

In the fairy tales, Goretooth was an ogre with a prodigious appetite who was tolerated by polite society until he started eating people. Actually, he was tolerated even then until he ate the king, whereupon the court wizard bound him in a ring.

Even in the form of a ring Goretooth was insatiable, so the wizard plugged Goretooth's maw with an indestructible gem. There Goretooth remained, perpetually starving. But his legacy lives on. Records show that Tonguehole, an orc barbarian chieftain who feasted on the remains of his enemies, wielded the ring.

Sages theorize that Goretooth was never an ogre at all, but actually a much larger and nastier version of a bag of devouring magically bound to a ring instead of a bag. There are enough similarities in the way Goretooth is affected by extra-dimensional spaces to support this theory, but most children prefer the fairytale.

Another legend indicates that Goretooth once had a stone in its maw. The gem was made of the hardest material in existence, so powerful that even Goretooth could not consume it. Tonguehole wore the ring until the crusading Gregorian Knights cut him down. The stone fell out and although the barbarians were defeated, no knight survived the attack once Goretooth's hunger was unleashed.

Goretooth is a ring that appears to be made of living flesh and bone. Its band seems to have a bone structure and is topped by fangs. Looking directly into its "maw," a tiny throat can be seen. The teeth expand and contract rhythmically. In quiet rooms a wearer can hear Goretooth breathing.

### GORETOOTH

When commanded to do so, *Goretooth's* teeth spin at high speed in a clockwise motion, consuming all in its path.

*Goretooth's* spinning can be used in melee, literally punching holes through anything it touches. A successful touch attack inflicts 2d8 points of piercing damage. *Goretooth's* bite damage is added to bare-fisted attacks (including monk attacks). Its victims have been found with ring-sized holes in their heads.

*Goretooth's* powers extend beyond drilling through flesh and bone. After 10 rounds of spinning, *Goretooth* can spin fast enough to cause a whirlpool underwater, sucking everything into its tiny maw. The pull is incredible. Ships are swept downward, putting them at risk and rendering them unable to leave by normal movement for the duration of the spell. Creatures in the water suffer damage as if it engulfed in a whirlwind.

*Goretooth* can also be used to create a whirlwind in the air by spinning for 20 rounds. Any Large or smaller creature that comes in contact with the whirlwind must succeed at a Reflex save or take 3d6 points of damage. Medium-size or smaller creatures who fail their first save must succeed at a second one or be held suspended in the powerful winds, taking 1d8 points of damage each round with no save allowed.

In both cases, *Goretooth* spins for 1d10 rounds. Any creature that suffers enough damage to die is sucked into *Goretooth's* gullet. Whatever gets sucked into *Goretooth's* gullet is consumed in one round, eaten, and gone forever.

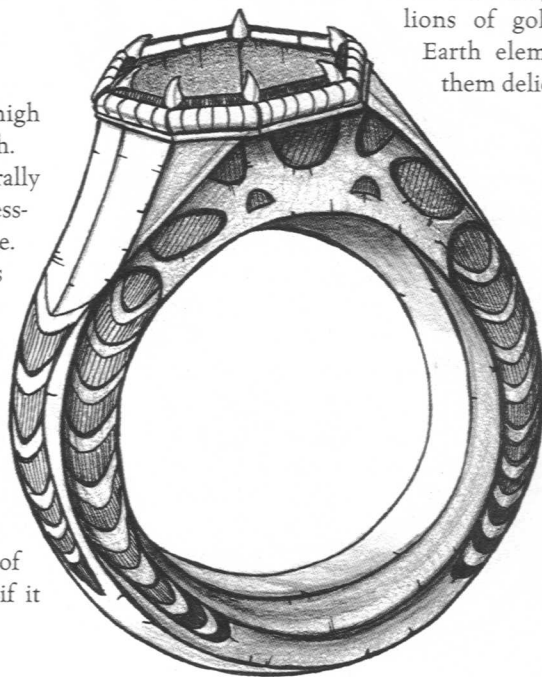
Caster Level: 20th; Weight: —.

### THE LEGEND

Goretooth can consume just about anything, but there are consequences. If it consumes a portable hole or bag of holding, a rift to the Astral Plane is torn in that place, sucking in the wielder and everything else within a 10-foot radius into the Astral Plane.

Goretooth cannot eat artifacts. Attempting to consume an artifact causes Goretooth to go dormant for 1d20 days. The one thing Goretooth cannot consume is a gem of inconceivable durability. These diamond-like gems are impossible to destroy, even by artifacts. If Goretooth eats the gem, it lodges in its mouth, rendering the ring useless until it is removed. The only way the diamond can be removed is through a violent act of lust or passion committed against the wearer of the ring.

Gems of inconceivable durability are extremely rare. They can only be found on the Elemental Plane of Earth, and even there they are worth millions of gold pieces each. Earth elementals consider them delicacies.



## HARP OF PEACE

The world is filled with conflict. War is far more common than peace, and entire races vow to destroy each other. Life is a never-ending cycle of misfortune, resentment, hate, and destruction.

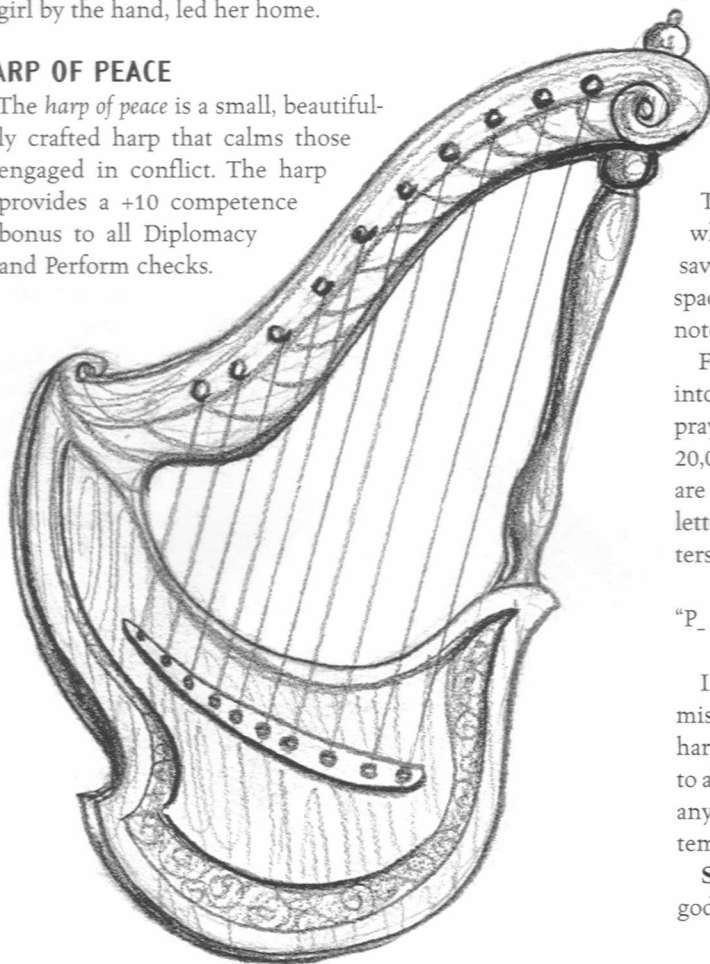
When the elves slaughtered thousands of drow and forced the rest into the underground, Desma, goddess of peace and healing, wept for them. When the orcish hordes ravaged the land, Desma wandered the wilderness in despair. But when the great Blood War between the demons and the devils spilled over onto the material plane, she could no longer sit by silently.

As she watched the beginnings of a battle between the two groups of fiends, she noticed a young girl on the plain that was soon to be a battlefield. The child was sitting under a tree and happily strumming a harp. Unable to let this innocent girl die, she appeared next to the girl, snatched up the harp, and, just as the fiends began to charge, began to play.

She put all of her essence into the harp, creating music so powerful that the demons and devils stopped their charge just a few feet away from the tree. She then banished the fiends from the material plane, and, taking the girl by the hand, led her home.

### HARP OF PEACE

The *harp of peace* is a small, beautifully crafted harp that calms those engaged in conflict. The harp provides a +10 competence bonus to all Diplomacy and Perform checks.



The harp also grants its bearer SR 25, a +5 enhancement bonus to Wisdom and Charisma, and constant protection from attack as per the *sanctuary* spell (Will DC 35 to resist). If the bearer performs any action that breaks the *sanctuary* spell, it resumes in 1d4 minutes.

When played, the harp affects all creatures within 100 feet with the *calm emotions* and *emotion: friendship* spells as cast by a 20th-level sorcerer. There is no limit on the number of creatures this power affects. This power bypasses SR, and the performer adds the result of his Perform check to the DC to resist the spells. Even creatures normally immune to mind-influencing effects are affected by this power, though creatures without an Intelligence score are not. This effect lasts as long as the harp is played, and for 1d4+1 hours after that. Creatures that were fighting when the harp was played will sit down and discuss their conflict rationally and calmly, and will not immediately resume fighting when the power ends provided they worked out their differences. Creatures wounded in a conflict stopped by the harp are automatically *healed* by it, as per the spell. Creatures killed up to ten minutes before the harp was played are returned to life, per the *true resurrection* spell.

This power is so strong, even mortal enemies (such as demons and devils) stop fighting.

Once per week, the bearer of the harp of peace can use the harp to cast miracle, but this spell may not create any kind of aggressive or harmful effect.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 3 lb.

### THE LEGEND

The Harp of Peace is kept in the high temple of Desma, which was built around the tree where Desma first saved the little girl. It is locked in an extradimensional space which can only be opened by playing the right notes on an enormous harp in the center of the grand hall.

First, the character must place a holy symbol of Desma into a socket at the top of the giant harp. Then, he must pray to Desma in front of the harp and make a sacrifice of 20,000 gp worth of gems, which disappear as soon as they are offered. After the sacrifice, shimmering blue-white letters appear above the harp. However, many of the letters are missing. The phrase reads:

“P \_ \_ \_ \_ i t o \_ \_ o \_ \_ s s \_ \_ s m \_ .”

In order to access the harp, the character must fill in the missing letters by playing the appropriate note on the harp (A, B, C, D, E, F, or G). This causes the Harp of Peace to appear, floating in the air next to the larger harp. Taking any of the steps to access the harp immediately alerts the temple priests.

**Solution:** The completed phrase reads: “Peace, a gift of goddess Desma.”



## THE HEART OF DARKNESS

The Heart of Darkness is the actual stone heart of the long-dead god Igtharka. Igtharka was an insane god of chaos, committed to nothing less than the complete destruction of the universe. The leader of his pantheon, Igtharka inevitably caused a conflict with the collective gods of light.

A mighty battle raged. When the seven great deities of sacred light defeated Igtharka, his followers retrieved his corpse before it could be destroyed. They carefully mummified and preserved Igtharka's corporeal remains and sealed them into a huge sarcophagus with their most powerful spells. Then they transported it to the Astral.

Igtharka's corpse is entombed in a gigantic sarcophagus. His mummy lays within, arms folded across his chest, with a massive gold mask covering his face.

The Heart of Darkness looks like a black pearl the size of a human head. Strange vein-like filaments hang from it. If placed on a surface, it levitates one foot above it and slowly rotates. To activate the Heart of Darkness, the wielder must grip it tightly and squeeze. When its powers are in effect, it feels warm to the touch and pulses to a slow beat.

### THE HEART OF DARKNESS

The *heart of darkness* animates all corpses in a 100-foot radius. Everything that was once living is animated, depending on the dead material available, including earthworms, sentient plants, birds, and insects. The wielder can animate humanoid corpses as skeletons, zombies, ghouls, or ghosts. Dead plants are animated as undead assassin vines and trees as undead treants. Creatures without bones are animated as zombies. Apply an appropriate undead template to creatures, or simply use their standard game statistics but replace their creature types with undead.

All living creatures except the wielder in the radius of the *heart of darkness* have their life force drained. Creatures of lower level than the wielder must make a Fortitude save (DC 30) or lose 1d6 Con per round. Should a creature die, subsequent use of the *heart of darkness* will animate the corpse.

All undead within a 100-foot radius of the heart receive fast healing 3 so long as their hit point total is 1 point or more. At will, the wielder can command them as an evil cleric of equivalent level.

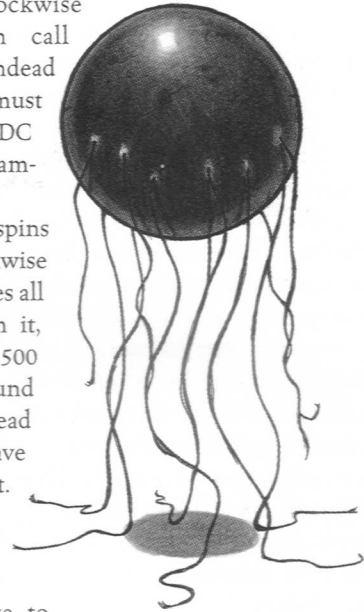
The life draining power of the *heart of darkness* is so powerful that it negates all healing in its area of effect. All cure spells, *heal*, *healing circle*, *mass heal*, *regenerate*, *resurrection*, and *true resurrection* automatically fail. The caster loses the spell slot as if the spell has been cast.

If the wielder spins the *heart* in a counter-clockwise direction, it can call undead to it. All undead within 10 miles must make a Will save (DC 30) or come shambling to its call.

If the wielder spins the heart in a clockwise direction, it repulses all undead away from it, creating a barrier 500 feet in radius around the wielder. Undead are not allowed a save against this effect.

They cannot enter the area and, if within it, must immediately move to escape it. If confronted with an impassable obstacle as they move to escape the area, the undead may stand in place. Treat these creatures as if they were successfully turned.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 5 lb.



### THE LEGEND

The heart of darkness is located on the Astral Plane in Igtharka's sarcophagus. Before his followers were massacred, they set it on an erratic course that ensures the sarcophagus cannot be located by magic alone.

Only denizens of the Astral Plane might have knowledge of it — but even a native of the Astral Plane is unlikely to have ever seen it. Only the best Astral trackers have any hope of finding it.

Finding Igtharka's corpse is only half the battle. The sarcophagus is indestructible and cannot be breached by physical attacks. The lock is positioned within the carved sarcophagus' hands in the shape of a man with arms and legs outstretched. Opening Igtharka's sarcophagus requires a living sacrifice to be placed in the lock. The complex ritual can only be found in the *Igtharknicom*, a vile book in the possession of the servants of light.

Igtharka's corpse is filled with creatures that feed off of his primal essence. These human-sized fiendish bombardier beetles also act as Igtharka's guardians. They swarm from the god's eyes and mouth, attacking anyone who opens the sarcophagus.

Igtharka's flesh has a hardness of 30 and 50 hit points. Worse, his primal essence causes the corpse to emanate the equivalent of *M's disjunction*.

## HEART OF DREAMS

Coins tinkled into the cup. The scraggly old man looked up into the beaming face of a young adventurer.

"There you go, old timer." The young man flashed an amiable smile and began to walk off.

"Horses and swords, horses and swords! In my dreams, horses and swords!"

The adventurer turned around and stared. The old man was clawing at his head violently, his normally glossy eyes bright with desperate clarity. "I found it, mine! I told 'em, I told 'em! Monster, my monsters. Can't run away!"

The young man glanced at his companions, who shrugged. Finally he said, "What did you find?"

The old man jumped up and began to pace about furiously, snatching up nearby objects and throwing them down again at random.

"This and this and this and this! It can be you or me or you or this or you — my choice, mine!" he shouted, shaking the shoulders of passersby. Suddenly, he stopped and gave the young man a maniacal grin. "Wanna see?"

Without waiting for an answer, the old man picked up his cup, dumped out the coins, and flung it into the air. It liquefied and expanded, and when it landed, it had become a huge, nine-headed hydra.

As he drew his sword, the adventurer grimaced and muttered, "What a nightmare."

### HEART OF DREAMS

The heart of dreams is a shifting, writhing, 1-foot-diameter mass of dreamstuff, the material from which dreams are forged. It is primal matter that changes form at the bidding of conscious thought. Manipulating it, however, has dangerous consequences.

In order for someone to control it, the heart must have no owner. If a character with the Lucid Dreamer feat touches it, he must make a Will save (DC 25). If he succeeds, he now controls the heart. If he fails, he takes 1d6 points of temporary Wisdom damage.

Once in control, the character may change the form of the heart of dreams as a free action simply by willing it. The heart can become any creature or person of up to Huge size that the character is familiar with. It gains the type, hit dice, attacks, AC, movement rate, ability scores, tactics,

skills, feats, saves, and extraordinary and supernatural abilities (but not spell-like abilities) of that creature. It does not, however, have a mind of its own, lacking both an Intelligence score and an alignment. It may not use any Intelligence-based skills or speak any language its owner does not know. It is immune to mind-influencing effects. It follows its owner's instructions to the best of its ability. The heart may also become any object the character can conceive of that is not more than 50 feet in its largest dimension. If reduced to 0 hit points, the heart reverts to its natural form and may not be used again until after its owner sleeps.

When the character sleeps, he is forced to do battle in his dreams with whatever forms the heart took since he last slept. This is one encounter; objects the heart became attack as animated objects. The character has all equipment and spells he had the day before. If the character defeats the creature, he suffers no adverse effects. If he loses, he must make a Will save (DC 25) or permanently lose a number of points of Wisdom equal to one half the CR of the encounter. This damage cannot be restored by any means, even a wish or miracle.

Weight: —.

### THE LEGEND

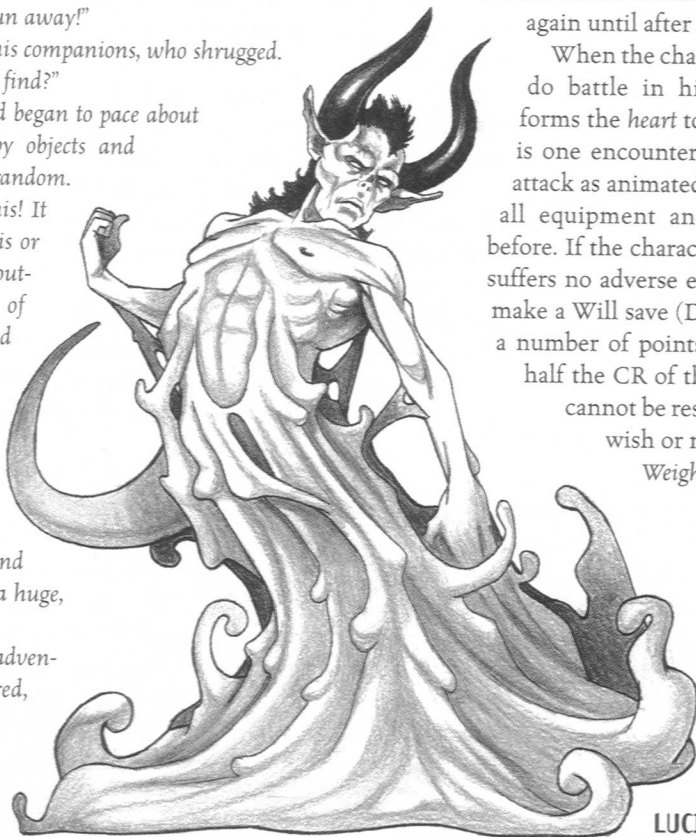
To control the Heart of Dreams, a character must be able to control his own dreams. Only characters with the Lucid Dreamer feat may use the Heart.

### LUCID DREAMER (New Feat)

Your dreams are vivid and memorable, and you are in as much control of yourself while dreaming as you are while awake.

**Prerequisites:** Wisdom 15+.

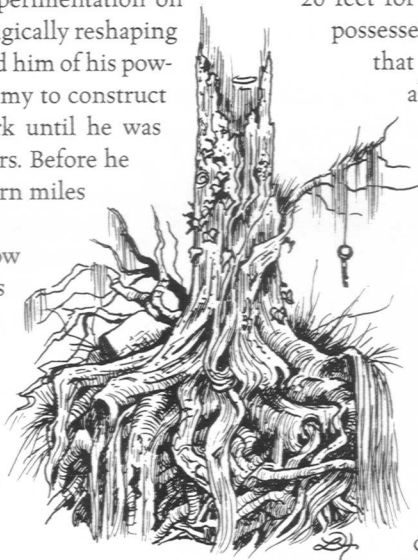
**Benefit:** When you dream, you remain in control of yourself and are aware that you are dreaming. These lucid dreams are usually far more vivid and less abstract than normal dreams. While dreaming, you may think, learn, fight, converse, make decisions, explore, and interact with the dream world just as you would while awake. The dream may reflect thoughts, feelings, desires, ideas, suspicions, or concerns that you have suppressed in the subconscious.



## THE HELIX CRADLE

The helix cradle is the creation of the Holst the Younger, a druid with an obsessive need to unravel the secrets of life. At first his experiments were harmless, but he grew frustrated and began wholesale experimentation on the animals he used to shepherd, magically reshaping their bodies. When the gods stripped him of his powers, he used his knowledge of alchemy to construct the Cradle and continued his work until he was slain by the druid king Nature's Tears. Before he died, Holst hid the Cradle in a cavern miles from his home. It lies there still.

The helix cradle is a huge hollow tree stump, hidden in a swamp. Its interior is filled with dead branches and leaves and scores of vines and bladders filled with glowing liquids line the outside. A darkwood door is set into the Cradle's left side; it bears five dials that regulate the flow of chemicals.



### THE HELIX CRADLE

The *helix cradle* chemically mutates living beings. It can change both body and mind, but always at a cost.

The simplest change the *cradle* can effect is raising and lowering ability scores by alchemically recombining tissues. It must compensate for this change by degrading the opposite characteristic an equal amount. The paired characteristics are Strength and Intelligence, Dexterity and Constitution, and Wisdom and Charisma. For example, a subject could be made stronger, but doing so also makes him more primitive. For every point gained in an attribute, the subject loses 2 points in its opposite partner. There is no upper limit to boosted attributes, but none can fall below 1.

The *cradle* can also evolve other characteristics. It can alter a subject's size by up to one category, with a maximum size of Huge and a minimum of Tiny. It can grant or increase a natural armor bonus by up to +10. It can strengthen a creature's limbs, increasing its speed by up to 20 feet for each movement mode the subject naturally possesses. The *cradle* can grant a subject a pair of wings that give him flying 50 ft. with good maneuverability. It can implant gills, granting the ability to breathe underwater. The *cradle* can also give subjects these extraordinary abilities: blindsight (30 ft.), constrict, fast healing 5, low-light vision, poison (Fort DC 25, 1d6 initial and secondary Constitution damage), or scent. The *cradle* cannot grant supernatural or spell-like abilities. Alterations are balanced by a commensurate weakening of ability. A creature may gain only two of the abilities listed above. Each time the *cradle* bestows a power, that creature suffers 1d4 permanent damage to a random ability score.

The *cradle's* alchemical fluids must be changed frequently. Doing so requires 10,000 gold pieces of materials, 1 week's labor, and an Alchemy skill check (DC 30). Refilling the *cradle* restores 10 doses. When the *cradle* is found, it has 1d20 doses remaining.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 400 lbs.

### LEGEND

Deliberate mutations are never easy. Each time the Cradle's powers are used, the operator must succeed at both an Alchemy and Knowledge (nature) skill check (DC 30). Both checks require absolute attention, so the operator may not take 10. Should either check fail, roll 1d12 and consult the chart below. If the operator fails both checks, roll twice and apply both effects, re-rolling any duplicates.

TABLE 1-12: THE HELIX CRADLE

1d20	Failure Effect
1-3	The chemical mixture is incorrect, spoiling the batch. The subject is unchanged.
4-5	The chemical mixture is incorrect. It has no effect, and the subject begins to drown.
6	The chemical mixture explosively combusts. Those within 20 feet of the Cradle must make a Reflex save (DC 20) or suffer 10d6 damage. The subject gets no save.
7-8	The subject suffers the penalty but none of the positive benefits of evolution.
9-10	The subject is evolved, but the results are the reverse of what was desired, or a random ability is implanted.
11	The subject must attempt a Fortitude save (DC 30) or be poisoned, suffering 2d4 initial and 3d4 secondary Constitution damage.
12-14	The subject is aged by one age category, suffering its penalties but gaining no benefits.
15	The subject must make a Will save (DC 30) or be stricken with insanity, as the spell, though the effect is non-magical.
16-17	The subject permanently grows or shrinks one size category (50% chance for either).
18	The subject is afflicted with lycanthropy, which can only be cured by a <i>miracle</i> or <i>wish</i> .
19	The Cradle reverses flow. Instead of filling the chamber, the tubes create vacuum suction. The subject's moisture immediately evacuates, and he is affected as if by a <i>horrid wilting</i> spell cast by a 20th level caster (Fortitude save DC 30 for half damage).
20	The Cradle goes wild, causing uncontrolled mutations and cancerous growths. The subject must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 30) or die.



## HELM OF DANCING SORROW

In the year of the red harvest, the Tribe of the Bear was troubled. In that spring a white star had fallen in the north, and from that star had come a white helm, and from that helm had come a new kingdom. The folk of that new kingdom were strange, and hunted the tribe as beasts. It was a terrible and bloody season.

At midsummer, a giant appeared in the heart of the tribal lands. The giant spoke with a voice that was like the wind in the leaves and like the striking of a snake. The giant warned the tribe that the folk of the north now served a thing called the Sternjoy Helm. The giant declared that he would save the tribe by leading them into battle against the folk of the north.

The shamans conferred and said he could have but a single warrior.

The giant laughed and said that a single warrior was not enough.

The shamans laughed and caught the giant in bonds of sorcery. He changed shape from a giant to a dragon to a kraken to a thing without form, but they were too strong. They bound him into a warrior's helmet and gave it to the best of the warriors.

They called him Dancing Sorrow, for he laughed and danced as he killed.

He slew the wearer of the Sternjoy Helm, and carried it back to the shamans as a trophy. Prudently, they hurled it into the river, and Dancing Sorrow too, for the power of such things is not good for men to have.

### THE HELM OF DANCING SORROW

This *helm* is made of wood, bronze, bone and horsehair, and is surmounted by a skull. It contains the bound spirit of a chaos beast, and is enchanted with potent magic.

Lawful creatures who touch the *helm of dancing sorrow* take 8d6 damage. A non-lawful character can wear the helm, but his behavior may change. A Will save (DC 25) is required each week of wearing the *helm* to avoid moving one step towards chaotic neutral.

The *helm* grants a +4 enhancement bonus to Strength, Dexterity and Constitution, as well as a +5 circumstance bonus on all Fortitude and Reflex saves. The *helm* allows its wearer to cast any Chaos domain spell any number of times per day, without preparation, as a 20th-level cleric.

When in combat, the wearer of the *helm* is automatically hasted for the duration of the encounter. His weapons gain the *chaotic* ability.

Once per round, the wearer can use the *dance of sorrow*. This ability can target either a single person or the area around the wearer. Targets must make a Fortitude save (DC 20) or suffer the same *corporeal instability* effect of a chaos beast. If the area around the wearer is targeted, then material objects within 60 feet of the mask begin to melt and change. The suddenly uneven terrain and chaotic emanations inflict a -2 penalty on all attacks, saves, and skill checks made within the area of effect. The wearer of the *helm* does not suffer from this penalty.

At will, the wearer can create a *mask of freedom*. The wearer of a *mask of freedom* feels no consequences for his actions, and is freed from fear, guilt and regret. He gains a +2 circumstance bonus to all Will saves, but his alignment becomes chaotic neutral as long as the *mask* is worn.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 2 lbs.



### LEGEND

The helm of dancing sorrow was made from the stuff of chaos, and is therefore unreliable. Whenever any of its abilities are used, roll on the mishap table.

TABLE 1-13: THE HELM OF DANCING SORROW

1d20	Effects
1-3	The <i>helm</i> attracts the attention of the nearest chaotic monster, who will seek to steal it.
4-7	The wearer becomes <i>confused</i> for 1d6 rounds.
8	The <i>helm</i> casts a chaos hammer spell, as a 20th level cleric, centered on the Helm.
9	The wearer of the <i>helm</i> is geased to slay the nearest lawful creature.
10-11	The wearer must make a Fortitude save (DC 25) or become a chaos beast.
12-14	The <i>helm</i> casts <i>Otto's irresistible dance</i> , as a 20th level sorcerer, on a random creature within 60 ft. The wearer may be affected by this spell.
15	The wearer of the <i>helm</i> is geased to perform an apparently random and nonsensical quest.
16	The wearer of the <i>helm</i> is teleported to within 100 miles of the Sternjoy Helm.
17-18	1d3 hunters of the Sternjoy Helm are summoned to the <i>helm of dancing sorrow</i> .
19-20	The wearer is <i>plane shifted</i> to the plane of chaos for 1d4 days.

## THE HORN OF CONQUEST

Legend has it that the clerics of the Mabheroth Fane were once conquered by a fearsome warlord named Charchero. She demanded that they forge her a device that would make unbeatable in battle. The clerics chose a war-horn from the fane's treasury and called upon their gods to aid them.

The Daughter of Swords sent an avatar in the form of a child of steel, and enchanted the horn to lend its strength to its bearer.

The Lady of the Winds sent her avatar in the form of an elemental roc, and blessed the horn with the power to inspire allies and terrify enemies by sounding a magical note.

The Lord of Battle sent his avatar in the form of an armored giant, and entrusted the horn with the souls of fifty mighty warriors who would appear and fight when called upon.

Charchero was well pleased with the clerics' efforts, and agreed not to put them all to the sword — but as she lifted the horn, a fourth divine avatar appeared. The Trickster, in the shape of a crow, added his blessing to the horn as well, and laughed.

With the power of the horn, Charchero conquered city after city until the Trickster's blessing caught up with her, and she lost a battle she should have won. Since then, a hundred mercenaries and generals have owned the horn; each has won great victories until sounding his own death knell on the Horn of Conquest.

### THE HORN OF CONQUEST

The bearer of this magical war-horn gains a +3 sacred bonus to initiative, a +4 sacred bonus to Charisma, and complete immunity to sonic damage. When holding the horn, the user's voice is magnified, allowing him to duplicate the effects of *command*, *shout*, or *power word: stun* at will at a sorcerer caster level equal to his hit dice.

If the horn is sounded once in a battle, it inspires allies and terrifies enemies. Everyone in the horn-blower's army receives a +1 sacred bonus to all attack rolls and skill checks and is immune to fear. The enemy troops are shaken (-1 morale penalty to attacks and checks), and the enemy commander must make a DC 40 Will save, becoming panicked if he fails. If he passes, he is shaken and suffers an additional -2 penalty on all skill checks related to commanding an army. All of these effects last for the next three hours.

If the horn is sounded a second time in the same battle, the mighty warrior servants of the Lord of Battle appear. These fifty warriors are all 10th-level fighters, and come equipped with *plate mail* +2, *large steel shields* +2, and *flaming long swords* +2. The warriors are magical constructs, not real people,

and vanish after an hour. Sounding the horn a second time also renews the effects of sounding it for the first time.

If the horn is sounded a third time in the same battle, the fifty warriors reappear, fully healed and restored. The effects of sounding the horn for the first time are also renewed. The true power of the third note, though, is to turn the tide: Fate gives an advantage to the side that is losing the battle. This is not enough to change the outcome of a certain fight, but will allow a small army to overcome seemingly hopeless odds. The Trickster's Blessing is dangerous. If the horn is blown thrice in the wrong battle, it can take a victory away from its bearer.

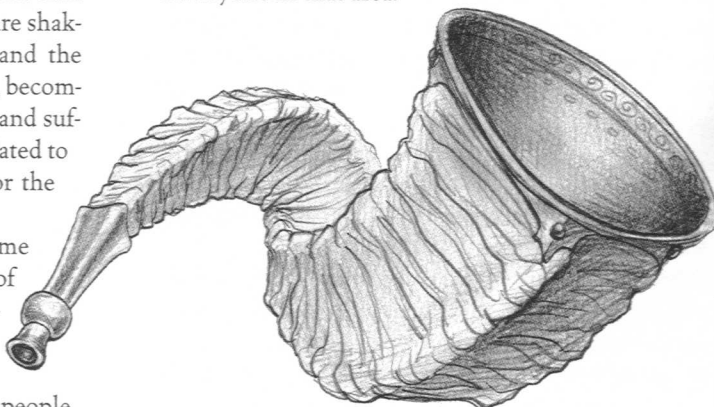
Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 2 lbs.

### LEGEND

The horn of conquest currently lies in the tomb of its most recent owner, the barbarian king Kyarl. Only a great warrior who demonstrates the qualities of kingship can reclaim the horn.

The first trap tests wisdom. A narrow walkway crosses an abyss. Four pairs of baskets hang from the roof, and eight irregular stones stand on the edge of the abyss. The character must pick up each stone, judge its weight, and place each pair of stones of equal weight in a pair of baskets. Judging the weight of a stone requires a DC 15 Wisdom check. If anyone steps onto the walkway without having correctly placed all eight stones, the walkway falls. This trap is DC 25 to disable.

The second trap tests leadership. When a party of characters enters this chamber, a number of levers equal to one less than the number of characters arise from the floor. All of the levers must be pulled simultaneously to open the next door. The door will open for only three seconds, so only the character standing next to it can pass through. Anyone trying to reach the horn must therefore bring with them some companions, and these companions must pull the levers. If some but not all of the levers are pulled, a saw-blade cuts through the area next to the door. The blade inflicts 10d10 damage (Reflex save, DC 25 for half damage) on anyone in that area.



## HORN OF THE SPIRIT PACK

*“In the days before these days, when all beasts lived and fought and died together, King of Bulls and Wolf Matron fought on the peak of Four Devils Mountain. King of Bulls and Wolf Matron had no hate for each other, but they fought because Creator, He-Who-Cries-Rain, decreed wolf must hunt.*

*When King of Bulls and Wolf Matron fought, all other animals were sore afraid and they hid in their caves, for King of Bull’s hooves and Wolf Matron’s fangs were the earthquake and the thunder.*

*But First Man, He-Who-Walked-With-Beasts, was not afraid. First Man knew nothing of fear, so he went to Four Devils Mountain, and he climbed the mountain, and he watched King of Bulls and Wolf Matron fight, and he watched until they both fell and lay still, and then he took a rock and stood between them and said ‘Oh King of Bulls, Oh Wolf Matron, who will First Man help and who will First Man kill?’*

*And King of Bulls said ‘First Man will help King of Bulls and First Man will kill Wolf Matron, and then King of Bulls will teach you of grass and flowers, and First Man will be Prince of Bulls.’*

*And Wolf Matron said ‘First Man will help Wolf Matron and First Man will kill King of Bulls, and then Wolf Matron will teach you of the hunt, of blood and meat and freedom, and First Man will be my brother.’*

*So First Man took up his rock and helped Wolf Matron and First Man killed King of Bulls. Then Wolf Matron and First Man were brothers, and Wolf Matron took up King of Bull’s horn, and she whispered the wolf-words, and gave the horn to First Man, so wolves would know First Man as their brother.”*

The Horn of the Spirit Pack is an enormous, hollow bull’s horn, three feet long and thick as a man’s arm. The Horn is cracked and yellowed with age, but no force can harm it. When the Horn is first lifted, a chorus of soft, echoing howls issues from it, and it begins to throb gently.

### HORN OF THE SPIRIT PACK

All the *horn’s* powers are activated by sounding it, with each power keyed to a specific note. No musical talent is necessary to use the *horn* and its notes and related powers become known to the owner when he first touches it. The *horn* can generate the following powers at will as full-round actions:

- With a thunderous, sustained howl like a maddened wolf, the *horn* erupts with a 100-foot cone of sonic energy which has the effects of a *horn of blasting*.
- With a short, barking note, the *horn* attracts all wolves and dogs within a 5 mile radius. The animals converge on the *horn* at their fastest possible speed.
- By speaking into the *horn*, the owner can speak to werewolves, wolves and dogs, as the spell *speak with animals*.

- With a sustained growl like a hungry wolf, the user can cause the *horn* to project a 100-foot cone of *fear* (Will save DC 25). Animals, beasts and magical beasts suffer a –5 morale penalty to their saves against this ability.

The owner of the *horn* commands the fealty of wolves and dogs. They will not harm him and obey him as though affected by a *suggestion* spell (no save).

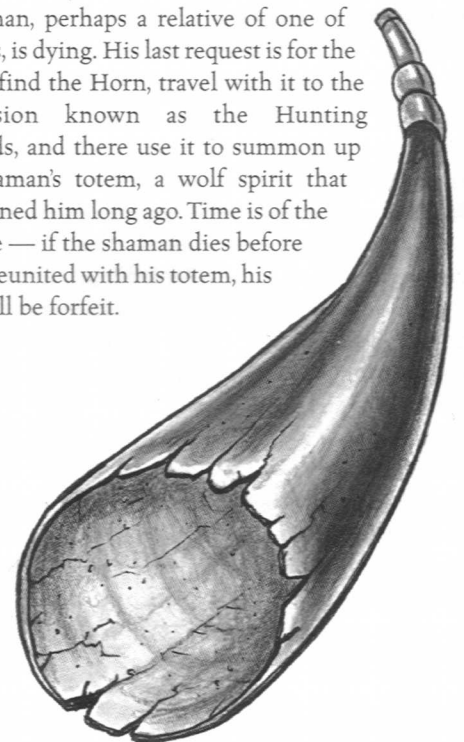
The owner of the *horn* gains the characteristics of a wolf. He gains the scent ability, a +4 bonus to Strength, Dexterity and Constitution, his base speed is increased by 10 ft., and he gains the feat *Improved Trip* even if he does not meet its requirements.

The *horn’s* howl remains audible even in areas affected by *silence* or similar spells and spell-like effects.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 3 lbs.

### LEGEND

- The Horn of the Pack is in the possession of the Sisterhood of the Crescent Moon, a pack of lycanthropic female mercenaries with ties to the slave trade. The Sisterhood, bolstered by a summoned army of wolves, are cutting a wide swath through border villages, selling the young and fit into slavery and feasting on the infirm.
- A minotaur of staggering power has awoke in the east. Born with one horn, he believes himself to be the reincarnation of the King of Bulls and has gathered an army of fanatical followers. He actively seeks the Horn of the Pack, as he believes grafting it to his skull will elevate him to divinity.
- A shaman, perhaps a relative of one of the PCs, is dying. His last request is for the PCs to find the Horn, travel with it to the dimension known as the Hunting Grounds, and there use it to summon up the shaman’s totem, a wolf spirit that abandoned him long ago. Time is of the essence — if the shaman dies before being reunited with his totem, his soul will be forfeit.





## THE HURRICANE BOW

Queen Ashama was caught by a spring hurricane and hurled to her death from the sea-cliffs. Hearing of the tragedy, King Vishama tore at his beard and hair, and commanded that a hundred men kill themselves immediately from sheer grief. When this did not assuage his sorrow, he declared, "Without my queen, there is nothing in my heart but vengeance. Bring me a weapon of surpassing might, that I may slay this treacherous wind."

The greatest wizard in the land made a spear so sharp it tore tiny holes in the fabric of being. The King took the spear and hurled it at the wind, but the spear tore a jagged hole in the sky and fell out of the world.

Vishama impaled the wizard on a dozen blunt stakes.

Next came the greatest sorceress in the world, a languorous woman of supreme beauty and selfishness. She conjured a slingstone that would kill whatever it struck. Smiling, the King went to shoot down the wind — but, distracted by the sorceress' beauty, he accidentally hit her instead.

He buried her in a great tomb, along with all the courtiers who witnessed the embarrassment.

Finally, a cleric came, bearing a bow. He counseled the King not to take revenge, but to mourn instead. Vishama laughed and said, "Then let you mourn the wind, for revenge is to me a better course."

When the hurricane winds came back the next year, the King was waiting with the bow, and none can say who was the victor.

### THE HURRICANE BOW

This ornate short bow holds the spirit of the wind. The wielder may *fly* or *wind walk* at will. He may choose to remain solid and act normally while *wind walking*. He may also *shapechange* whenever the wind changes.

In combat, the *hurricane bow* is a +5 *keen short bow of speed*. The user can add either *icy burst*, *shocking burst* or *thundering* to each arrow. The bow can shoot around corners — cover offers no protection against it.

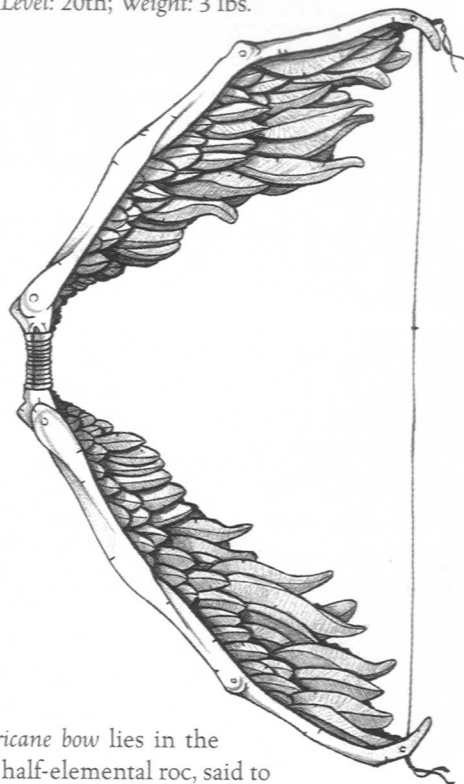
As a full-attack action, the bow can fire any of three special shots listed below at the owner's highest base attack bonus.

- The *shot of the great wind* drives an arrow forward with the force of a hurricane. This bow's enhancement bonus doubles for this shot, and the arrow automatically does an extra 8d8 piercing damage. Anyone struck by the arrow is stunned and thrown back a number of feet equal to the damage sustained. The *shot of the great wind* also inflicts 4d4 damage on everyone within 30 ft. on either side of its flight path (Reflex save DC 25 for half).
- The *shot of the descending thunder* forces all flying creatures within 500 ft. of the bow to make a Fortitude save

(DC 30) to avoid being stunned for 1d4 rounds. All non-magical projectiles fired this round within 1 mile of the bow automatically miss, as fierce downdrafts drive them to the ground.

- The *shot of the tattered sky* transforms a single arrow fired from the bow into a hail of arrows. The wielder fires one arrow at a single target. This arrow multiplies in flight, and every creature within 120 ft. of the target is automatically struck for 1d6+5 damage. The wielder may choose to add *icy burst*, *shocking* or *thundering* damage to these attacks.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 3 lbs.



### LEGEND

The *hurricane bow* lies in the nest of a half-elemental roc, said to be the brother of the wind. The roc has made his nest on a small island, surrounded on all sides by sheer cliffs. To prevent thieves climbing the cliffs, the roc has driven its claws deep into the chalky rock, creating hundreds of tiny fractures. The presence of the bow attracts the wind, and hurricanes buffet the island. Climbing the cliffs requires a DC 40 climb check every 20 feet of the 200-foot-tall cliffs.

The nest itself is a vast bowl of tree-trunks, shipwrecks and elephant hide. Eggs the size of houses rest in the center, surrounded by a field of bones, guarded by air elementals.

**Guardian of the Bow, Roc:** CR 11; SZ C (Half-elemental Air beast); HD 40d10+320; hp 520; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 20 ft., fly 80 ft. (good); AC 16 (-8 size, +3 Dex, +11 natural); Atks 2 claws +46 melee (2d8+16), bite +41 melee (2d8+11); Face 30 ft. by 60 ft./10 ft.; SA Snatch; SQ Spot, elemental heritage; SV Fort +30, Ref +25, Will +10; Str 42, Dex 17, Con 28, Int 5, Wis 5, Cha 13; AL N. Skills: Listen +15, Spot +15.

## THE IRON BOAR

The citadel of Ancestor's Crown is remembered by the dwarves as one of their greatest civilizations, and greatest tragedies.

Built at the heart of a mountain crisscrossed with fat veins of gold, Ancestor's Crown built its fortune on mining, and its miners were infamous for their dogged pursuit of ingots. Over the course of centuries, the network of mines beneath the citadel grew enormous, stretching miles below the mountain's roots.

Then one day, the miners stumbled upon a vast cavern: a vision of hell, a sprawling city of albino orcs who worshiped a forgotten orc war god whose inert bulk slumbered in the city's heart. After frantic preparations, an army of dwarves swarmed into the orc city, slaughtering the degenerates before they could mount a defense. The orcs were slain to the last.

The wholesale destruction of his followers disturbed the god's slumber, and his consciousness lashed out. Throughout the city, his follower's crude weapons melted and ran through the streets in great rivers, pooling at his feet. Then his will lashed out as a hammer, and the iron cooled and twisted and was beaten into the form of the Iron Boar.

The Iron Boar raged through Ancestor's Crown that same night, laying low millennia-old towers with its hooves and spitting dwarven warriors on its tusks. In only four days, proud Ancestor's Crown was dust.

The Iron Boar is a massive construct of solid iron, nearly ten feet at the shoulder. Its body is the color of coal, its eyes pure crimson, and its wicked horns — each ten feet long — burn white-hot. Molten iron flows through the Boar's veins, heat radiates from its skin, and geysers of boiling steam pour from its snout.

### THE IRON BOAR

The *iron boar* has statistics equivalent to a 42 HD iron golem of maximum hit points, with the following differences. It has a speed of 60 ft., can charge, and can trample creatures of size Large or smaller, inflicting 3d10+15 damage. It can make two gore attacks per round with its white hot tusks: each inflicts 2d10+15 damage + 1d10 points of fire damage, has the *wounding* property, and acts as a *vorpal* weapon. When the iron boar charges, it inflicts double damage with its gore attacks and threatens a critical on a roll of 18–20. Once a day, the *iron boar* can create an *earthquake* as the spell cast by a 20th-level cleric. The *iron boar* does not possess an iron golem's rust vulnerability and has a face/reach of 10 ft. × 10 ft./20 ft.

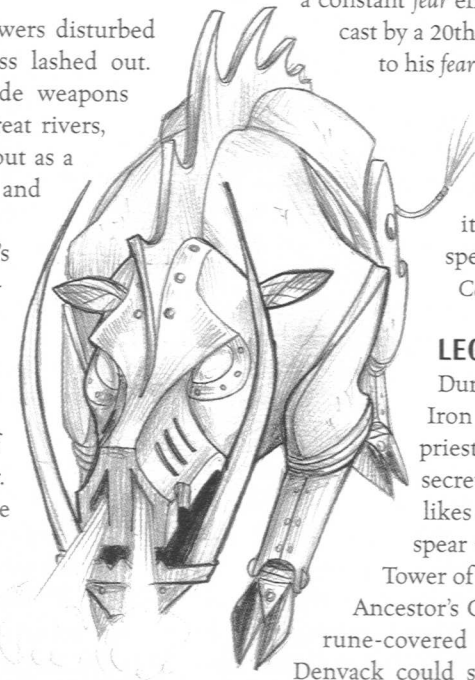
The *iron boar* can only be commanded, or safely touched, by an orc or half-orc. All others suffer 2d6 points of fire damage each time they touch the *boar's* skin. Should one of orc blood find the boar, he can take control of it with a successful Animal Empathy skill check against a DC of 35. Pure blood orcs receive a +4 racial bonus to this check.

When a master claims the power of the *iron boar*, he is showered with great favor by the orc pantheon. While within 1,000 feet of the *boar* he receives several special abilities. He gains the lycanthrope (wereboar) template, and is considered a natural lycanthrope. He receives the Leadership feat, or a +5 bonus to his Leadership score if he already has that ability, but attracts only orc and half-orc cohorts and followers. While riding the boar, or while in contact with it, he receives the *boar's* spell immunities, gains the Ride-By Attack and Spirited Charge feats, radiates

a constant *fear* effect (Will save DC 20) as the spell cast by a 20th level caster. His allies are immune to his *fear* unless he chooses otherwise.

While in the possession of a master and within 1,000 feet of him, the iron boar gains its master's Intelligence score but retains its immunity to mind-affecting spells.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 800 lbs.



### LEGENDS

During the desperate final days of the Iron Boar's assault, the dwarf smith-priest Denvack Oathbinder labored in secret, crafting a great boarspear the likes of which has never been seen. The spear was made of iron taken from the Tower of Righteous Will, the ruling seat of Ancestor's Crown, and forged on the ancient rune-covered anvil Earth's Heart. Before Denvack could strike the final hammer blow to complete the forging, he was slain by the Boar.

Oathbinder's Spear still rests on the Earth's Heart, awaiting the final blow that will awaken its power and fulfill its purpose — the destruction of the Iron Boar.

Only a dwarf with 20 or more ranks in the Craft (weaponsmith) skill and the feat Skill Focus (weaponsmith) can complete the forging. Only a single blow is necessary, and the DC for the Craft check is 40.

### Oathbinder's Spear

Oathbinder's spear is a +5 lawful longspear of defending and frost. On a critical hit against the *iron boar*, the spear freezes the boar's blood and slows the boar as if by a slow spell cast by a 20th level sorcerer. The wielder of Oathbinders' spear is immune to the *iron boar's* vorpal tusks and fear aura.

## KALEIDOSCOPE OF SERAIS

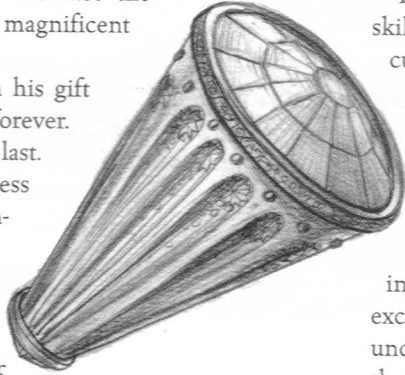
Herus, god of sunlight, and Psera, goddess of hope, were overjoyed by the birth of their first child, Serais. Their pantheon had diminished and was in danger of becoming forgotten. It was time for new blood.

Herus wanted to give his son a toy that would reinforce the importance and fragility of humanity. So he commanded the stellar Cyclopes to fuse the hearts of two stars into a magnificent kaleidoscope.

Serais was overjoyed with his gift and promised to cherish it forever. But his happiness was not to last. Igtharka, dark god of madness and entropy, disguised himself as a toy soldier and convinced Serais to use the kaleidoscope...by looking into the wrong end. Serais disappeared in a vortex of time and space.

As a final insult, Igtharka released the kaleidoscope into mortal hands, confident that humankind would be unable to resist abusing its power. His cult was the first to abuse it, but when Igtharka himself was defeated by an outraged alliance of good deities, the artifact was lost in time.

The Kaleidoscope of Serais is a cone-shaped tube that is tipped by sapphires on either end. All along its length are fluted lines in the image of shooting stars.



## KALEIDOSCOPE OF SERAIS

The *kaleidoscope of Serais* allows the viewer to see a person's past.

So long as the user looks through the *kaleidoscope*, he can interact with the past of any victim, up to 1d10 years in the past. The Past Shadow is a clone of the victim, 1d10 levels or hit dice weaker than its present incarnation. It is not aware of the user until attacked.

The user can cast spells, fire missile weapons, and use skills at the Shadow up to 100 feet away. Due to the difficulty of the *kaleidoscope's* multi-faceted vision, all attacks incur a -4 circumstance attack penalty.

The observation and interaction is one-way — the user does not actually time travel but can cast spells and otherwise attack the target from his present time. If a victim's Past Shadow is destroyed, that object or person instantly ceases to exist, disappearing from history books and everyone's recollection except the user's memory. The only way the death can be undone is with a *wish* or a *miracle* spell, but that requires the caster to be aware of the person's disappearance in the first place.

By focusing the *kaleidoscope*, multiple copies of the target viewed can be brought into reality. The effect is the same as the *clone* spell. The clones last for 1d10 minutes before disappearing back into their own time streams.

The *kaleidoscope's* powers do not work on intermediate or greater deities.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 3 lb.

## THE LEGEND

The power of the kaleidoscope is recorded in children's fairytales, ancient tomes, and plenty of folklore. No wonder there are so many rumors about its powers.

TABLE 1-14: KALEIDOSCOPE OF SERAIS

1d20	Rumor
1	If shattered, it will release anyone ever killed by it.
2	It has been used to assassinate several great world leaders whom the world has forgotten.
3	It cannot view anything on the date of Serais' birthday.
4	Igtharka can be released through it.
5	If it is destroyed, the timestream will unravel.
6	Herus actively seeks it.
7	It is so difficult to track because its current user sometimes loses it in the past or future.
8	It is secretly controlled by Igtharka, and he determines what time the user views.
9	Serais is lost somewhere in the timestream and could be found with it.
10	Igtharka's cult hunts for the artifact.
11	If used by a child, it doubles in power.
12	It is a tool of innocence and cannot be used for evil.
13	It negates any other time travel abilities within a 60-foot radius.
14	If a user drops it while viewing another time stream, he is stuck there.
15	It is trapped by Igtharka to blind the user if it is used for the forces of good.
16	It animates all toy soldiers within a 1-mile radius when used.
17	If used too often, the user will go blind.
18	The wielder can kill himself in the past if he manages to somehow view himself through it.
19	People who are killed by it cease to exist.
20	If Serais can be found, the gods would apotheosize the user to godhood.

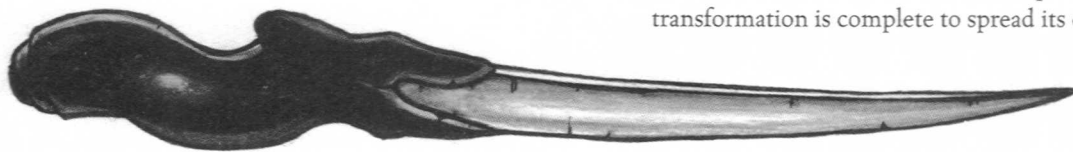


## KANTHRAK'S RAZOR

*Ravler awoke with a start. It was morning. The last he remembered, he had staggered into the tavern last night with the doxy on his arm. They drank, laughed, went upstairs, and then . . . nothing.*

*The fighter looked around his room. Perhaps he had been drugged? But his possessions were untouched. It took a minute for Ravler to notice one difference — the white marble sink was stained red. As if someone had washed blood from his hands.*

*Had it happened again? His eyes were drawn to the Razor on the stand next to him. The blade gleamed bright in the morning sun but there was no trace of blood. This time.*



Scholars know little of Kanthrak, a wizard of eight centuries ago who forged weapons of incredible potency. Some believe he was a mere mortal; others claim he was a half-fiend of incredible skill and power. None dispute his greatest creation was the knife known as Kanthrak's Razor. The weapon is reputed to hold a great curse, and most previous owners, including Kanthrak himself, have disappeared under mysterious circumstances. Despite its reputation, the Razor's vast magical powers assure fighters, rogues, and wizards seek it out.

The Razor's handle is its most distinctive feature — made of obsidian with white speckles that give the appearance of looking through a window into the depths of space. The Razor's blade is surprisingly thin, and most fighters dismiss it on sight as a decorative weapon of no practical use.

### KANTHRAK'S RAZOR

The *razor* is a +6 chaotic dancing defending keen wounding dagger. While holding the *razor* the user has darkvision with a range of 60 feet, is immune to poison, and has acid, cold, electricity, and fire resistance 20. The artifact's wielder may use the razor to perform the Deflect Arrows and Sunder feats.

Anyone may use the *razor* without attunement. However, each week someone uses the *razor* he must make a Reflex save (DC 20). If he fails this save, he accidentally cuts himself with the blade. This is the merest scratch, not even enough to inflict a single point of damage. From that point on the *razor* influences his actions. During each battle that the owner wields the *razor*, secretly make a Will save (DC 20). If he fails the roll he becomes one step closer to transforming into a fiend.

Within one day of the owner's failing a save the *razor* takes control, blanking out his memory and forcing him to commit some evil act. If it cannot find an opportunity for its owner to slip away the razor moves on its own using its dancing special ability. It also controls its owner to prevent him from reporting any memory lapses.

Each time the owner fails a Will save he partially transforms into a half-fiend. These changes vary but typically include hardening skin, budding horns, sensitivity to light and holy objects, and similar manifestations. After five failed saves the owner radiates evil. After nine failed saves, apply the half-fiend template. The owner's alignment doesn't change, but he must deal with others' reactions to his new form. The *razor* teleports away once the transformation is complete to spread its evil elsewhere.

There is no known way to destroy the *razor*. An individual can seal it in lead and bury it beneath the earth to contain its malevolent influence.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 1 lb.

### THE LEGEND

- Rumors spread that the Razor is buried somewhere within a town, and adventurers travel there to dig up cemeteries and empty plots. These disturbances bring forth long-buried undead, curses, and other nuisances. Amidst all of this activity, the Razor's actual discovery and subsequent mayhem might go entirely unnoticed.
- A former ally of the PCs asks them to help investigate a series of brutal killings plaguing his village. The ally is unaware that he himself is responsible since the Razor scratched and tainted him.
- A hideous half-fiend arrives and identifies himself as a former friend or ally transformed by the Razor. An irate group of pursuers (law officers, paladins, clerics) arrive and accuse him of a series of murders in his former hometown. The ally may or may not have committed the murders.
- As #3 above, but the half-fiend is an evil being who killed the PCs' former friend and absorbed a portion of his memories. He plans to lead the PCs into a trap.

The PCs acquire the Razor, but are immediately met with a demand to surrender it. The new arrival plans to seal the artifact away and kill anyone who gets in their way, believing anyone owning the Razor is already tainted.

## KENBLADE

Igtharka, god of chaos, was the most powerful, insidious, and corrupt of all demons. But 700 years ago the seven great deities of sacred light destroyed his minions and cornered the evil god on the surface of a dark star.

The god of chaos was defeated, but not destroyed. Igtharka remained imprisoned until the dark star finally collapsed, precipitating a dimensional rift that allowed Igtharka's evil to worm its way back to our world. Slivers of his demonic nature trailed through ethereal space, forming sword-like shapes known as Kenblades. Through the Kenblades, the dark god hoped to one day return to the Prime Material Plane.

There are six Kenblades in existence. Through manipulation and guile, the blades find wielders and demand their life forces be fed. Each Kenblade seeks a powerful wielder to drain life. If the wielder cannot adequately feed the growing swords, the Kenblades end the relationship — by force if necessary.

A kenblade is pitch-black, with a maw on its crossguard. Each is inlaid with a large gem, shaped like an eye, just above the crossguard. There are six different gems — emerald, ruby, sapphire, topaz, diamond, and amethyst.

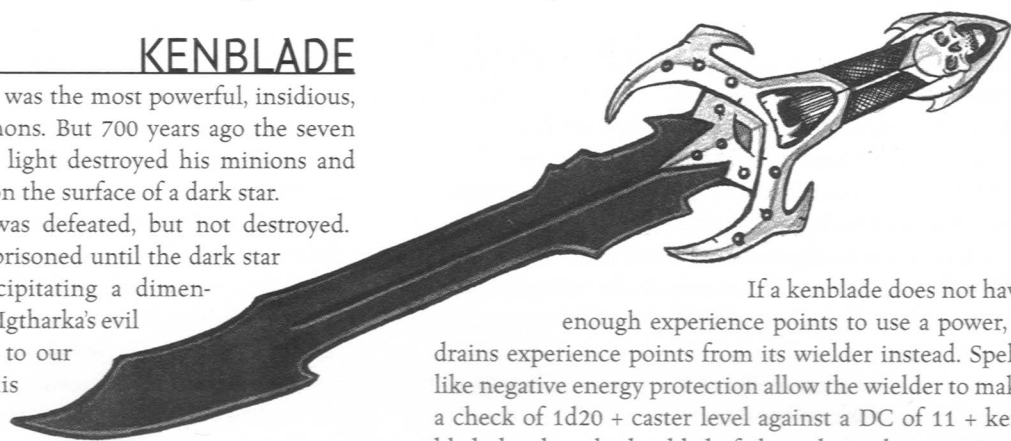
### KENBLADE

Kenblades are chaotic neutral +5 intelligent long swords. They are created as characters with 1d8 levels. For purposes of calculating Ego, treat each of the kenblade's levels as extraordinary powers as per the standard rules.

Upon a successful hit, kenblades drain 2,000 XP if the victim fails a Fortitude save (DC 23) and use the experience points to enchant themselves for up to 10 rounds. If a wielder does not choose a power, kenblades randomly choose one (1d20).

TABLE 1-15: KENBLADE

1d20	Power (Cost)
1-2	Brilliant Energy (4,000 XP)
3-4	Flaming (1,000 XP)
5-6	Frost (1,000 XP)
7-8	Ghost Touch (1,000 XP)
9-10	Icy Burst (1,000 XP)
11-12	Keen (1,000 XP)
13-14	Mighty Cleaving (1,000 XP)
15-16	Shock (1,000 XP)
17-18	Vorpal (5,000 XP)
19-20	Wounding (1,000 XP)



If a kenblade does not have enough experience points to use a power, it drains experience points from its wielder instead. Spells like negative energy protection allow the wielder to make a check of 1d20 + caster level against a DC of 11 + kenblade level or the kenblade fails to drain the experience points. Undead cannot use kenblades because the blade cannot feed upon their soulless bodies. When a kenblade does not spend its XP it gains levels instead. Stolen XP are never returned.

Kenblades are obsessed with gaining levels and gleefully embrace the opportunity to kill, murder and maim. If a wielder should prove weak, kenblades do their best to find another owner. Kenblades without wielders lose one level per month until they reach 1st level.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 4 lb.

### THE LEGEND

When using a power, if a kenblade's level is greater than the wielder's level, the wielder must make a Will save (DC 20 + kenblade's level) or suffer from the Temporary Effects Table.

Whenever the wielder attempts to use a kenblade but doesn't have enough experience points, he must make a Will save (DC 20 + kenblade level) or suffer an effect from the Permanent Effects Table. Regardless of the effect, the PC does not lose a level. Intelligent kenblades gain the Constitution, Intelligence, or Wisdom points the PC loses.

TABLE 1-16: KENBLADE (TEMPORARY EFFECTS)

1d20	Power (Cost)
1-6	Dizziness; -4 Dexterity
7-12	Mental fog; -4 Intelligence
13-18	Physically drained; -4 Constitution
19	Short-term amnesia; loss of highest level spell slot if spell caster or -4 Wisdom
20	Confusion; per the spell

TABLE 1-17: KENBLADE (PERMANENT EFFECTS)

1d20	Power (Cost)
1-6	Permanent numbness; -2 Dexterity
7-12	Mental damage; -2 Intelligence
13-18	Chills; -2 Constitution
19	Long-term amnesia; -2 Wisdom
20	Insanity; per the spell

\* Kenblades struck by energy drain attacks lose levels just like a creature.

## KENSHIELD

After the destruction of the mad god Igtharka, the seven gods of light discovered their power had waned. Herus and Psera, the leaders of the pantheon, grew weary of their divine battle. With the Godswar over, they wanted nothing more to do with mortals.

And so Herus decreed that it was time for mortals to take care of themselves. Each deity placed his symbol on a golden shield known as a Kenshield, tinted with his divine colors.

One of the deities, Tenphyl the Bold, was destroyed in the battle. Their number down by one, Herus decreed that a shield should be created in remembrance of their missing son, Serais. Indeed, it was the kidnapping of Serais that provoked the Godswar in the first place.

For Herus, god of sunlight, a phoenix.

For his wife Psera, goddess of hope, a dove. Nanyel, god of justice, took the lion, most noble of beasts. For Taneya, goddess of chastity, the unicorn. For Eerest, god of mercy, an angel. Lalemis, the goddess of loyalty, took the dog as her symbol. Finally, Serais was given Tenphyl's former image, the ram.

Each shield was given to a high priest of its god with the message that "in times of darkness, the shields would show the way."

Kenshields are large metal shields. Strangely, each of the charges on the kenshields always has one closed eye facing the viewer.

### KENSHIELD

*Kenshields* are +5 large steel shields with different charges etched on their front. When the charge's eye opens, the *kenshield's* power is revealed.

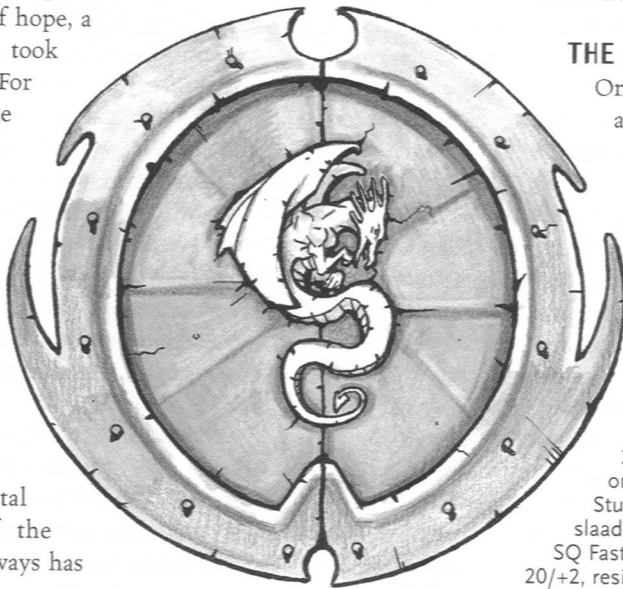
A *kenshield* drains spells to give its wielder temporary experience points that can give the user a temporary level boost. Draining a spell is an art form unto itself that requires a skilled shield user. The wielder must have the Shield Proficiency feat to be capable of capturing offensive spells. Any single attack spell that targets the wielder and allows a Reflex save is eligible to be absorbed. The PC must make his saving throw and then make a Dexterity check (DC 15 + level of spell). If successful, the spell hits the shield and is transformed into positive energy.

If the PC is injured, the energy is transformed into a *cure* spell of the same level as the spell that was absorbed (up to level 4). The PC has no control over the effect.

If the PC is at full health, the shield adds temporary positive experience to its wielder with the following formula: (spell level \* spell level \* 40) XP. If this experience is enough for the PC to gain a level, he gains all the abilities commensurate with a level increase. He also gains a +1 cumulative enhancement bonus to all ability and skill checks, attack rolls, and saving throws for each positive level of the spell. The positive experience points remain until dusk or until removed with a spell such as *restoration*. At dusk, any experience points already gained (even minutes before dusk) disappear.

If the *kenshield* is attacked with energy drain, including an undead's energy drain or the spells *enervation* or *energy drain*, the shield discharges all of its positive energy as an attack, inflicting 1d6 points of damage per 1,000 experience points stored.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 15 lb.



### THE LEGEND

One of Igtharka's dark champions actively hunts those who are worthy enough to wield the *kenshields*. For that purpose he has appointed Quinilous, a death slaad of immense power.

#### Quinilous, male death slaad:

CR 13; SZ M (outsider, chaotic); HD 15d6+45; hp 130; Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Imp Init); Spd 30 ft; AC 26 (+4 Dex, +12 natural); Atks 2 claws +2 melee (3d6+5) and stun or bite +18 melee (2d10+2); SA Stun, spell-like abilities, summon slaad, poison pustules, breath weapon; SQ Fast healing 5, damage reduction 20/+2, resistances, telepathy, alternate form; SV Fort +12, Ref +13, Will +13; Str 20, Dex 18, Con 17, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 18; AL CE. Skills: Climb +23, Escape Artist +22, Hide +22, Jump +23, Knowledge (planes) +22, Knowledge (religion), Listen +22, Move Silently +22, Search +22, Spot +24. Feats: Cleave, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack.

In his true form, Quinilous appears as a large three-eyed monstrous death slaad with oozing pustules on his back. The extra eye gives Quinilous a +2 racial bonus to Spot checks (reflected above). The oozing pustules, if touched, require a Fortitude save (DC 20) or the victim is poisoned (1 temporary Int loss, secondary 1d6 temporary Int loss). Quinilous also has an acid breath weapon in a 20-foot cone that inflicts 3d6 points of damage, Reflex save (DC 22) for half.

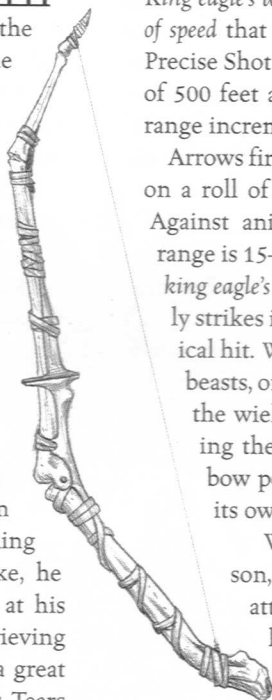


## KING EAGLE'S WRATH

The great bow King Eagle's Wrath was created in the last days of the War of Green Man's Wrath, when the armies of elves, dwarves and men faced the endless animal hordes of the druid demigod Nature's Tears. Led by an avatar of the god himself, the horde of maddened predators ran roughshod through the streets of the world's largest cities, slaying and feeding indiscriminately. The power of the avatar was such that no magic or blade could harm him, and the generals of the armies of civilization despaired of slaying him.

One night the father of the elves appeared in a vision to Enthenel Even Handed, youngest apprentice of the elven archmage Flourinell. In words written in spattered teardrops, he told the apprentice that the demigod's avatar could be slain only with a weapon made from the bones of a willing animal. The next morning, when Enthenel awoke, he found his familiar, the eagle Gwynfryndyr, dead at his bedside, its throat slit by its own talon. The grieving apprentice crafted his familiar's wing bones into a great longbow and struck down the avatar of Nature's Tears with a single arrow through the eye.

King Eagle's Wrath is a composite longbow made from an eagle's wing bones, with a bowstring of tendons pulled from an eagle's wings. Covered in ancient runes and bound with strips of cured flesh, the bow appears crude but pulls with effortless smoothness. When an arrow is fired, the bow unleashes an eagle's shriek.



## KING EAGLE'S WRATH

*King eagle's wrath* is a +5 mighty composite longbow(+4 to Str) of speed that grants its wielder the Point Blank Shot and Precise Shot feats. *King eagle's wrath* has a range increment of 500 feet and its wielder suffers only a cumulative -1 range increment penalty.

Arrows fired from *king eagle's wrath* cause critical threats on a roll of 18-20 and have a critical multiplier of  $\times 4$ . Against animals, beasts, or magical beasts, the threat range is 15-20 and the critical multiplier  $\times 6$ . Once a day, *king eagle's wrath* can fire a *wrath arrow* which unerringly strikes its target and inflicts a maximum damage critical hit. *Wrath arrows* can only be used against animals, beasts, or magical beasts; immediately after firing one, the wielder must perform a 10-minute ritual thanking the god of nature. Failure to do so renders the bow powerless until an *atonement spell* is cast upon its owner by a willing druid.

While *king eagle's wrath* is on its owner's person, it grants him a +4 insight bonus to AC when attacked with ranged weapons. So long as he has one hand free, he can attempt a Reflex save (DC 15 + arrow's enhancement bonus) to catch any arrow fired at him. If the save is successful, he may either deflect or catch the arrow. He may use this ability twice per round.

Finally, *king eagle's wrath* grants its owner an eagle's keen sight. He gains a +15 bonus to all Spot skill checks.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 3 lbs.

## LEGEND

Here is a selection of rumors concerning King Eagle's Wrath.

TABLE 1-18: KING EAGLE'S WRATH

1d20	Rumor
1	The bow is owned by an air elemental who hunts mortals and mounts their heads on his wall.
2	The bow is lost aboard an elven ice skiff in the far North.
3	The bow is on the 8th plane of Hell, hidden in the floor of a castle made entirely of bone.
4	The bow currently functions as the wings of the bone golem guardian of a druid conclave.
5	The bow is hidden in plain sight in the inventory of an unheralded bowyer/fletcher who lives in a remote mountain village.
6	The bow is the prize weapon of a drow assassin.
7	The bow is secreted away in a druid's cavern so that it may never slay another beast.
8	The bow is in the belly of the World Eater, a purple worm of unimaginable size.
9	The bow is in the cursed castle of the Golden Sunrise.
10	The bow is in a hunting caravan winding its way through the Happy Hunting Grounds.
11	The bow has been broken down into its component parts.
12	The bow is the top prize in a divine archery contest.
13	The bow is owned by a hunter who believes he will ascend to godhood after slaying one of each animal.
14	A demon is using the bow to cut down celestials whenever they leave the heavens.
15	The bow is lost beneath the sea, in a treasure ship guarded by fiendish sharks.
16	The bow is locked in an ancient dwarven treasure vault.
17	The bow sits atop a rock floating in a volcanic sea.
18	The bow is hidden in an enchanted tapestry in a fey castle.
19	The bow is lost in the fatty folds of a glutton demon.
20	The bow is in the belly of a man-eating lion.

## KINSLAYER

What follows are the last writings of Archmage Magdalena Ilutuscu, the Butcher of Karazov, who, by order of the Empress, was publicly torn to pieces in the Ring of Orphan's Tears. The Empress herself participated in the execution, testimony to the brutality of the Butcher's crimes.

*Know you who read this letter that I am innocent, though you will not believe it. Know, too, that I am not the Butcher, though I wear her face and die for her crimes.*

*I cannot explain how this came to be, for I am no wizard. Perhaps it is divine punishment, but what crime merits this? Am I to be damned for daring to stand against the Butcher? For exposing her madness? For saving my people?*

*How can none see the truth? How can my husband look at the face he loved for so long and spit upon it? How can my children — who suckled at my breast and whose tears I have soothed — how can they see me in chains and yet cling to her skirts? How can the people, my people, call her mother, call her savior, she who is our enemy, she who howled at our gates and slew our fathers and brothers and husbands, who sacrificed our sons on the altar of war and was not satisfied?*

*I know the truth. Why can they not be made to see it?*

*The Kinslayer. She is the Kinslayer.*

*No, not she. But the word is with me.*

*On the morrow I die. I pray you, don't let the truth die with me.*

*Kinslayer.*

*Remember.*

The Kinslayer is a dagger made entirely of clear, smooth glass. It is always cold to the touch, and reflects no image.

## KINSLAYER

The *kinslayer* can be used in battle, functioning as a simple, non-magical dagger. Its true power is one that no mere blade can match.

The *kinslayer* has the power to literally cut the life ties of its wielder and his chosen victim, tearing them both from their existence and stitching each seamlessly into the place of the other. *Kinslayer's* wielder assumes his victim's life, and his victim is thrust into the wielder's role.

The transferal is absolute, with the wielder taking the victim's place in the memories of the victim's friends, lovers, and family. His name and image replace the victim's in all records, missives, paintings, and other permanent works, no matter how obscure the reference. The

replacement is so complete even divinities are fooled. When the wielder dies, he is judged by his victim's deeds, not his own, and no magic, whether divine or arcane, can detect any deception.

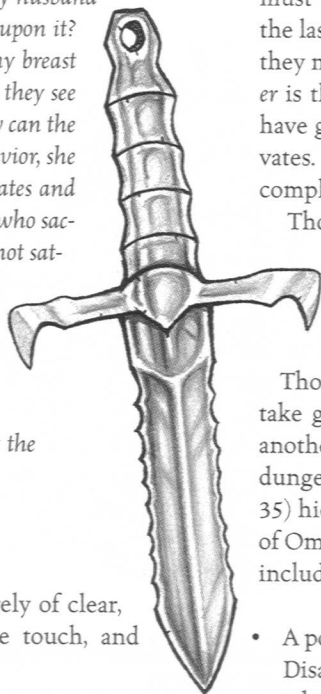
The wielder and his victim remain aware of the switch, though those around them will consider any mention of the transferal to be nothing but ravings.

There are limitations on *kinslayer's* powers. Its wielder cannot swap lives with a being not of his own race, nor can he use it on the opposite sex. The transferal does not alter the appearance or age of *kinslayer's* wielder or victim, nor does it grant awareness of their knowledge or abilities.

In order to claim a victim's existence, the wielder must first gather three objects of great significance to the victim, and three of significance to himself. Of each set, one must be from childhood, another a written record, and the last a visual depiction. When the objects are gathered, they must be ritually burned. As the objects burn, *kinslayer* is thrown atop them, to be removed when the flames have guttered to embers. As the dagger is grasped, it activates. By the time it leaves the flames, the transferal is complete, and the wielder free to begin his new life.

Those who grasp *kinslayer* are aware of its power and of the ritual required to activate it.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 1 lb.



## LEGENDS

Those who go to the trouble to find and use *Kinslayer* take great pains to ensure the dagger does not fall into another's hands. *Kinslayer* currently rests, forgotten, in a dungeon whose only entrance is a trapdoor (Search DC 35) hidden at the bottom of a dry well west of the village of Ommroth. The complex is riddled with dozens of traps, including:

- A poison needle hidden in the trapdoor. (Search DC 25, Disable Device DC 20. Initial and secondary damage 2d6 temporary Constitution damage.)
- A 10-ft. deep pit trap (Search DC 30, Disable Device DC 35) that ends at a *teleport circle* (Disable Device DC 34) opening 1,000 feet above an active volcano.
- A magically trapped room that seals all exits with *walls of stone* as soon as a character reaches the middle of the room (Search DC 30, Disable Device DC 34). At that moment, a *gate* opens, summoning a pit fiend.
- A magic spell that detonates as soon as *Kinslayer* is grasped. The spell seizes control of the villagers of Ommroth, who march on the dungeon, intent on murdering the one who carries the relic.

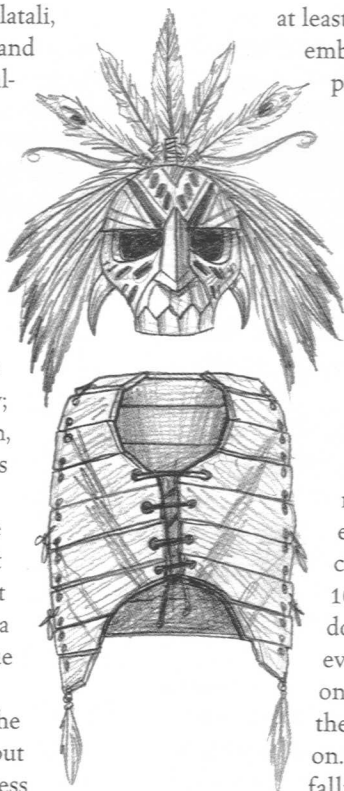
## KOLATALI'S REWARD

In his travels across the Known Worlds during the Fourth Age of Expansion, the explorer Tieran discovered a human civilization on an archipelago deep in the Eastern Seas. The natives greeted him with open arms and identified themselves as the Kolatalish, "Kolatali's People." The native clerics told him of their only deity, Kolatali, who had created their island out of chaos and given them spiritual gifts in the realms of healing, plants, and the sun.

As Tieran departed, the Kolatalish presented him with two ceremonial pieces imbued with their deity's power. Tieran returned to his sponsor, King Quvlen, with a hold full of rare and precious items. Impressed and envious, Quvlen waited until Tieran left then launched an invasion, expecting an easy victory over the unsophisticated islanders. The Kolatalish fought back with unbridled ferocity; Quvlen ordered their complete extermination, and they destroyed their lands and treasures rather than let the invaders acquire them.

When Tieran heard of the incident he blamed himself. He kept the Kolatalish's gift out of respect. When he passed away the suit rested in a museum of his discoveries until a century later when a cleric realized its unique properties.

Kolatali's Reward consists of two pieces. The first is a ceremonial vest of wooden slats about half an inch thick. The second piece is a headdress with a full-face wooden mask decorated with feathers.



### KOLATALI'S REWARD

When worn together the two pieces of *Kolatali's reward* act as +2 *studded leather* with the *silent moves* and *spell resistance* (SR 13) special abilities. The wearer receives a +2 morale bonus to saves and a +3 morale bonus to his attack rolls. Only chaotic neutral clerics receive the *reward's* additional benefits described below.

A suitable cleric who wears the *reward* receives one additional slot for a spell at each level. This spell may be chosen from the Healing, Plant, or Sun domains. The cleric may give the *reward's* morale bonuses to any other chaotic neutral individuals he chooses within a 30-foot radius. He benefits from the equivalent of *walk on water* and *waterbreathing* whenever he wishes, but only in salt water. The user is immune to all natural poisons (the Kolatalish were masters of poison brewing). He may counter *control weather*, *storm of vengeance*, or any other spell that magically summons a storm or storm-like effect over salt water. Finally, five times per day the wearer may cast *fear* as a standard action upon all enemies viewing the

mask's frightening visage. This spell functions as if cast by a 20th-level wizard.

Only the priests of Kolatali knew how to destroy the *reward*, and none remain to reveal the secret. Certain ancient scrolls scattered throughout their ruins reveal that the *reward* must be returned to Kolatali himself. The artifact must be dropped into an underwater chasm at least a mile deep so the god may crush it in his embrace. If the *reward* is not dropped in the precise spot, it inevitably washes back to shore.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 20 lbs.

### THE LEGEND

Recently Neklan, one of Tieran's descendants, recovered the Reward and returned it to the archipelago to make amends. Neklan, reading his ancestor's notes, duplicated the Kolatalish's elaborate booby traps, and set them to guard the Reward after he hid it in the ruins.

The last temple of Kolatali is an elaborate stone pyramid possessing several entrances. All the tunnels lead to a center chamber and a square smooth-sided shaft, 10 feet wide, descending 50 feet straight down. Scything blades are spaced evenly every 5 feet down the shaft – if triggered the one at the bottom sweeps across the shaft, then the next one up one second later, and so on. The blades cut any rope and someone falling takes damage normally. Once the adventurers descend they proceed down a 50-foot-long passageway, possibly triggering the release of a toxic pollen cloud.

The passageway leads to a central chamber 30 feet square. The Reward rests on a pedestal in the middle of the room — removing it triggers the final trap in the 50-foot vertical shaft. Two minutes after removal a mechanism pushes a 10-foot square, 20-foot high stone plug into the shaft 10 feet from the top. Once the block is entirely in the shaft it drops, crushing anyone beneath it and sealing off the chamber. This trap's trigger must be disarmed at the pedestal.

**Scything Blade Trap:** CR 4; +12 melee (2d10/x3 crit, 10 attacks, plus falling damage); Search 26); Disable Device (DC 30). Note: PC hit by critical makes Reflex save (DC 25) or dies from decapitation or being cut in half.

**Poison Pollen Trap:** CR 11; no attack roll necessary; Search (DC 21); Disable Device (DC 25). Note: The gas is deathblade poison (*DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide* page 80).

**Stone Plug Trap:** CR 12; no attack roll required (20d6); Search (DC 25), Disable Device (DC 30). Note: Anyone climbing up the shaft can make a Reflex saving throw (DC 20) to get past it before it falls down the shaft.



## LIGHT OF TRUTH

The door opened, and a pale young man peered into the dark room.

"Come in, Erid," said a voice from the shadows.

Erid nervously sat down at the table across from the shadowed figure. They sat in silence for a moment, until finally Erid said, "Master, I—"

"No excuses," the figure interrupted, holding up a hand. "Not here, in this room. They will do you no good, here."

Erid opened his mouth to ask what he meant, but his master motioned for silence. Without a word, the figure pulled a dusty, ornate candlestick out of the shadows and set it in the center of the table.

"You know, Erid," the figure said, carefully lighting a long, thin twig, "this candle is a relic from the ancient days. A time when lies and corruption were met at every turn, and the courts were rife with doppelgangers. I detest lying, don't you? There is something so very satisfying about the truth, pure and unabridged."

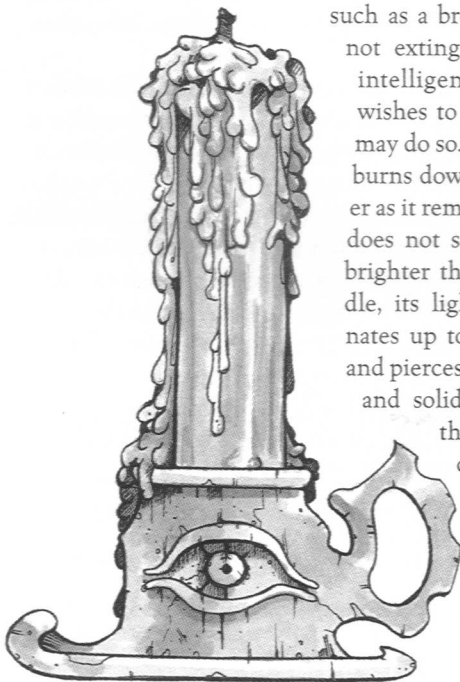
He lit the candle and blew out the twig. The figure leaned forward into the light, revealing a gnarled face with two scarred, empty eye sockets. Erid swallowed, trying to avoid the gaze he knew should not be there.

"The truth, like this candle," the blind man continued, "is blind to the follies of men. It is what it is, shining equally on all. It illuminates at a... deeper level. And in this light, Erid, we all see."

### LIGHT OF TRUTH

The light of truth is a beautifully crafted gold candle in a mother-of-pearl holder. It may be lit and extinguished as normal, but the power of its magic is such that spells and mundane environmental effects,

such as a breeze or rain, cannot extinguish it. Only an intelligent creature who wishes to quench its flame may do so. The candle never burns down or grows smaller as it remains lit. Though it does not seem to burn any brighter than a normal candle, its light clearly illuminates up to a 10-foot radius and pierces magical darkness and solid objects, shining through walls and casting no shadows. Within this radius, all solid



objects acquire a transparent, ghostly quality. This transformation has no effect other than allowing normal sight to penetrate objects.

Deception, concealment, and trickery are impossible within the candle's light. All Bluff, Disguise, Forgery, Innuendo (sending a message), Hide, and Move Silently checks made within the light suffer a -20 circumstance penalty. All Appraise, Innuendo (intercepting a message), Listen, Read Lips, Sense Motive, and Spot checks receive a +20 circumstance bonus. Other forms of mundane trickery, such as ventriloquism, are similarly impeded with a -20 circumstance penalty to any relevant skill checks.

The candle's field of illumination is considered to be a permanent antimagic field against magic from the Illusion school, mind-affecting spells, and magic that protects against divination such as *nondetection*. All Divination magic is cast at +5 caster level in the light.

Those within the light are completely aware of everything around them. All creatures in the candle's light gain the benefits of the *comprehend languages*, *detect animals and plants*, *detect [alignment]* (all forms), *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *detect secret doors*, *detect snares and pits*, *detect scrying*, *detect thoughts*, *detect undead*, *discern lies*, and *true seeing* spells. They can see through solid objects and barriers within the candle's area of effect as if wearing a ring of x-ray vision with no limits on what or how much can be seen through. All these effects are treated as if cast by a 20th-level wizard.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: — .

### THE LEGEND

The Light of Truth is hidden in an ancient tomb under the ruins of a great castle. Inside the tomb is a long stone hallway which ends in a heavy iron door with a pull ring. This door cannot be opened by any outside force, nor can it be passed by any magic (such as teleportation or a *passwall* spell). Carved into the wall on either side of the door are two identical faces with sapphires for eyes. A similar face engraved on the door itself repeats the following message to anyone who approaches: "The two faces on either side of this door are brothers. One brother always tells the truth, the other brother always lies. You may ask one, and only one, question to one of the brothers. From his answer, you must determine which brother lies and which tells the truth."

The respondent must speak his answer directly to the face in the door. If correct, the door opens. If incorrect, everyone in the hall is teleported to a random location within 100 miles.

**Solution:** Ask one of the faces, "Would your brother say that you tell the truth?" If the answer is "yes," the face being asked is the liar. If the answer is "no," the face being asked is telling the truth.

## THE LITANY OF SHAME

Centuries ago, in an empire wracked by civil war, the high priest of the god of peace catalogued the names of all the innocents killed in the years of pointless fighting. His intention was to present the list to each of the competing warlords, in the hope that they would end the fighting in favor of a peaceful solution, or at least limit the destruction. Instead, he was publicly tortured to death by the first warlord to grant him an audience, as a lesson in "respect."

Greatly angered by his priest's vicious murder, the god of peace took steps. He imbued the priest's list with both sacred energy and the restless spirit of the priest himself, giving it a "life" and purpose all its own. Soon after, the empire finally knew peace, as the vengeful souls of the innocent rose up and ground the cruel warlords and their armies into dust.

The Litany of Shame is a single scroll of paper-thin pure mithral upon which is written the name of every innocent being slain in the past four centuries. The Litany is sealed within an impenetrable case made from the finger bone of the god of peace.

### LITANY OF SHAME

The scroll case containing the *litany of shame* can only be opened by one who has never spilled the blood of an innocent intelligent being. No magic can overcome this restriction.

The most mundane power of the *litany* is its ability to instantly record the name of an innocent at the moment of death. The name appears in spidery red script, the *litany* extending itself so there is always room for more names.

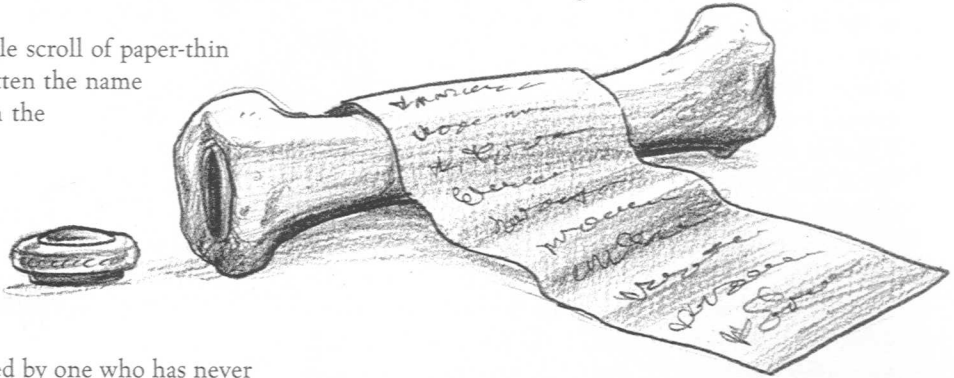
Second, while the *litany* or its case is in hand, the owner gains the ghost template. He gains all the advantages of the template, including all the ghost's special attacks, but is not undead and cannot be turned. Three times a day, the *litany's* owner can slay living as the spell cast by a 20th-level cleric, though he can only use it to strike down those who have harmed an innocent being.

The true power of the *litany of shame* is its ability to rouse the spirits of the wrongfully slain, the unquiet ghosts of the oppressed, abused and powerless. In order to awaken the *litany's* might, the owner must perform an elaborate ceremony as detailed below. At the conclusion of the ritual, the owner reads names from the *litany*. As he does so, the ground shudders and churns; the air thickens and the sweet tang of rot hangs heavy. After two score names have been read, the *litany* takes on a life of its own. Rising from its owner's hands, the *litany* itself begins to intone the names written upon it, one per round, in the

victim's own voice. One hour after the chanting begins, the first spirit manifests, rising from the earth in 1 round, a spectral terror hungering for tyrant's blood. Another spirit arrives each round in a flood that is completed only when the last name is read. The manifested spirits are 1st-level human commoners with the ghost template. Manifested spirits obey the will of the *litany's* owner and can be directed to attack one being, and those who follow him, so long as he has inflicted great harm on innocent beings.

Once the list has begun to read itself, it can only be halted in two ways. If the *litany's* owner is slain, the reading stops, though the spirits whose names have already been read still manifest. Otherwise, the reading continues until the owner's chosen target is dead.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 2 lbs.



### LEGEND

Before one can claim the power of the Litany of Shame, he must prove himself and his cause worthy, as the gods will not allow the Litany's fearsome power to fall into misguided hands.

**Finding the Litany:** It is impossible to simply find the Litany, as it rests in a pocket dimension unknown to mortals. Instead, one who wishes to claim it must pray in solitude for a period of seven days, while concentrating only on the name of the being or group he wishes punished. At the end of that time, he must present 100 pieces of evidence demonstrating the cruelty of his target, each of which must relate to an atrocity perpetrated against the innocent. Should the gods find his cause worthy, they make the Litany's location known to him in a dream — its resting place is always a holy area, most frequently a shrine dedicated to gods of peace and healing. Once he has claimed the Litany, the owner must activate it within one year, or it will vanish. Activating the Litany is as simple as repeating the initial ritual and beginning to read names.

## MAP OF TIERAN

The explorer Tieran is known to every civilized nation. In the Fourth Age, the Age of Expansion, Tieran traveled the Known Worlds mapping everything he discovered. Many still use his charts; their accuracy remains unrivaled.

While exploring the First Age ruins, Tieran found a library containing only two items of value — a metal headpiece and a piece of paper with a map on it, a map of an area of the world Tieran had never seen. Donning the headpiece, Tieran looked at the map and watched it change to show the route he had taken to the ruins.

Tieran discovered that the map changed in response to the thoughts of whoever wore the headpiece. The paper showed map after map of all the places

Tieran had ever been. When he prepared for his next expedition, the Map changed yet again, showing not only the best route to his destination but the dangers along the way.

Tieran used the map to explore farther than anyone before or since. Since his death many explorers have used the artifact that bears his name but none have surpassed Tieran's accomplishments.

The Map is of ancient but sturdy yellowing paper. Images come and go on the map itself and only the border drawings on the Map's edge remain unchanged.

### MAP OF TIERAN

The *map* doesn't require attunement to use. An individual holding the map and wearing its headpiece may make a Concentration skill check (DC 20) to focus upon the desired destination. If he is successful the *map* (which only works on the Material Plane) alters itself and shows a scale map large enough to indicate both the desired location and its own location. A thin red line traces what the *map* considers the safest route for its user as if the user himself had assessed the dangers between the current location and the desired location.

The *map's* owner can designate a specific creature or object for the artifact to trace a path towards. This ability works as a *discern location* spell cast by a 20th-level wizard with several exceptions. The artifact is not blocked by lead or fooled by *mislead*, *nondetection*, and *polymorph* spells. The user doesn't need personal knowledge of the creature or object for the *map* to find it. If more than one creature or object meets the stated criteria the *map* locates the closest one.

The *map* displays the nearest source of danger along the route with a miniature yet recognizable representation of the hazard. Thus if a band of goblins lurks along the chosen path, it appears on the map. The representation is detailed enough that the creatures' number and identity can be determined but not their armaments or any other specific details. As long as the user watches the *map* he

can never be surprised or successfully ambushed. The *map* never shows the designated creature, location, or object it tracks as a hazard.

The *map* user may summon a more specific image of the hazard if he so desires. Once per day the *map* owner may make a Concentration check (DC 30). If successful, for one minute the *map* shows a static image of the creature, hazard, location, or object desired,

captured at the moment the check was made. The desired image shows everything in a 10-foot radius in normal lighting.

Someone can only destroy the *map* by cutting it with a crystalline knife dating back to the First Age. While the First Age denizens used many of these knives in their time, only a few have survived down through the millennia and this means of destruction is not currently known.

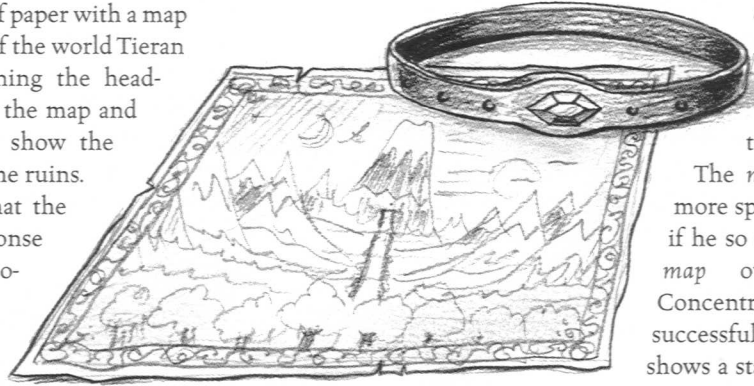
Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 1 lb.

### THE LEGEND

To use the Map the owner wears the headpiece Tieran found in the ruins. This device focuses the user's thoughts into the map and lets it draw forth the image of what he seeks.

The headpiece is not an artifact and can be destroyed in the normal manner. To date the Map's users have gone to great pains to protect it from damage or harm. It is not commonly known but the Map can be used without the headpiece. The individual must still have the Map in hand and concentrate but the DC for the skill check to use both of the Map's functions increases by 20. Given this difficulty, few people have realized the Map can be used successfully without the headpiece.

The headpiece is a metal band made out of a dull gray metal defying identification or analysis. A single diamond (10,000 gp value) adorns the brow. When the wearer concentrates the diamond glows dimly for a moment.





## MECHANHA'S FALL

They attacked without warning or precedent. Their origins are a mystery, but their intentions were clear: destroy every living thing on the material plane.

In days, the tireless, unrelenting golem armies of Mechanha methodically turned the southern half of the continent into a wasteland. The sky was dark with the smoke of infernal factories that continuously manufactured the terrible machines. And driving it all was one great, unfeeling, unwavering consciousness: the Hive Device.

The Hive Device was an enormous artificial mind constructed of strange clockwork and powered by energies far more alien than magic. It sat in the huge Iron City at the heart of Mechanha's ever-growing empire, where it directed its armies and workers with a single, looming purpose: expand.

Unable to slow the machines' advance, the last remaining druids of the north met to create a weapon that could overthrow the golems and defeat the Hive Device. They created a flowering club that would rust the golems and restore the great forests in one stroke. Naming the weapon Mechanha's Fall, a group of druids and rangers infiltrated the Iron City. The weapon destroyed the Hive Device, causing its infernal creations to fall dormant.

In its place, there grew a giant tree that still exists today. Those who visit it see the unmistakably smiling face in its trunk, and sometimes wonder if perhaps all the machine ever really wanted was to be alive.

### MECHANHA'S FALL

*Mechanha's Fall* acts as a +6 *greatclub* enchanted with the *construct bane*, *defending*, *ghost touch*, *mighty cleaving*, *speed*, and *wounding abilities*. Its flowers secrete a corrosive nectar that deals an additional 1d6+1 acid damage on each hit and an additional +1d10 on a critical hit.

The weapon produces a pollen that rusts any metal the weapon comes into contact with. With a successful melee touch attack or melee attack, the weapon instantly rusts any metal object of any size, much like the antennae of a rust monster. Magical items get a Fortitude save (DC 30) to resist. Constructs made of metal must make a Fortitude save (DC 25) or be completely destroyed. On a successful save, constructs take 5d6+6 damage.

When rusted by *Mechanha's fall*, metal items dissolve into rich, fertile soil. This soil immediately sprouts plant life that grows to full (normal) size in 1d4 rounds. The size of the vegetation depends on the size of the item rusted. As a rule of thumb, items of Small size or smaller produce grass and small flowers. Items of Medium or Large size and shields grow bushes or large shrubs. Items of Huge size or larger and armor produce trees of varying size.

Magical items produce rare or magical plants. Rusted constructs create an equal number of hit dice worth of shambling mounds.

*Mechanha's fall* also has the following powers: 5/day: *barkskin*, *control plants*, *detect animals and plants (plants only)*, *entangle*, *plant growth*, *speak with plants*; 3/day: *awaken (plants only)*, *command plants*, *liveoak*, *transport via plants*; 1/day: *summon nature's ally IX*. All are cast as a 20th-level druid.

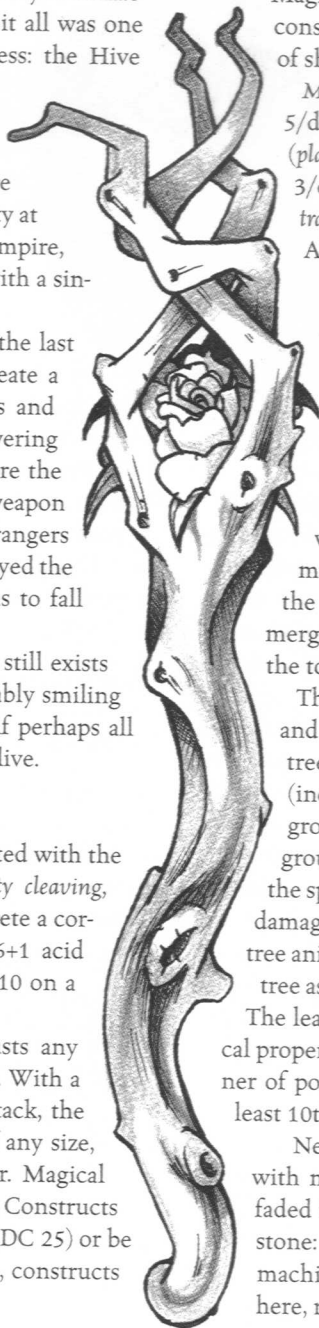
Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 8 lb.

### THE LEGEND

Mechanha's Fall remains at the place where Mechanha fell. In the deepest part of the Great Forest, in a peaceful clearing, is the enormous willow tree that grew from the rust of the Hive Device. The clearing is guarded by all manner of wards, and only those with peaceful intentions may enter. The weapon itself sits in a knothole at the top of the trunk, where it has grown into and merged with the tree. It may be removed, but only by the touch of a great druid (level 15 or higher).

The tree's trunk is 15 feet in diameter at the base and splits off about 30 feet above the ground. The tree's branches extend 50 feet in all directions (including upwards), and hang down almost to the ground at the edge. The roots push out of the ground around the tree like mountains, reducing the speed of anyone approaching the tree by half. Any damage done to the tree instantly grows back, and the tree animates to destroy anyone who attacks it (treat the tree as a Colossal animated object with the Plant type). The leaves, blossoms, and sap of the tree all have magical properties and are used by the druids to make all manner of potions and magic items. A druid or ranger of at least 10th level guards and tends to the tree at all times.

Nestled among the maze of roots, half covered with moss, is a smooth vaguely rectangular stone. A faded inscription in ancient druidic is carved into the stone: "At this spot, on the first day of spring, the machine empire of Mechanha fell. When you leave here, remember this, and know that the world is safe."



## MEDUSA SPHERE

My dearest Archturos,

I was excavating the Karbinoferan site today, hoping to find some proof that the plants we discovered were in fact part of an era before the dawn of man. I had to move quickly. It was difficult enough to scrounge up the money to pay the miners, and every day was costing me dearly.

On the fifth day we discovered something that made it all worthwhile. Our lead miner, Jonathon, came bounding up to me excitedly with what looked like a large, smooth stone. Jonathon was convinced that it was no ordinary stone. He said he had found it in a very peculiar, airtight location that seemed to have been carved unnaturally.

I was skeptical, as I am not fond of Jonathon and his mercenary attitude. When I took a closer look at the sphere, I discovered more than I had ever hope for.

There were the fossilized imprints of plants all along its surface that indicated the sphere is indeed from the Karbinoferan era. Delighted, I could have asked no more from it.

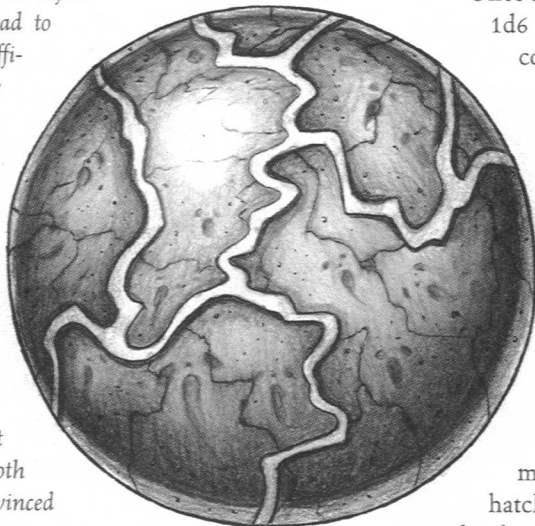
During my prodding, something amazing happened. The stone exhibited spontaneous generation! That's right, right before my very eyes, the sphere spawned small snakes. Much to my displeasure, they proved to be poisonous snakes of a particularly malicious intelligence. Jonathon did not survive a bite from one.

The appearance of the snakes has caused the other miners to dub the stone 'The Medusa Sphere.' It is a quaint appellation, but the miners believe it to be cursed. I disagree — we simply do not understand all its powers. I write to you of this discovery, Archturos, because I require more funds. Please send whatever you can. I assure you, this sphere will make us both rich!

Sincerely,  
Francis

The Medusa Sphere was found in the middle of a mining camp, surrounded by statues in lifelike poses of mining life (eating, drinking, hammering). Sir Francis Berd and the Medusa Sphere have never been found.

The Medusa Sphere is a palm-sized stone of granite. It has strange purple lines all along its sides that look like veins.



## MEDUSA SPHERE

The *medusa sphere* has a variety of powers. First, it can petrify all life within a 100-foot radius. Everyone but the wielder must make a Fortitude save (DC 30) or be turned to stone. This power can be used at will.

Once a day, the *medusa sphere* can spontaneously "birth" 1d6 Tiny fiendish vipers. These vipers follow the commands of the wielder and the sphere to the death. They last for 24 hours before melting back into the earth.

When squeezed, the *medusa sphere* drips a deadly venom (Contact DC 30, 4d6 Con/4d6 Con) that can be pasted on weapons. The sphere may produce 3 doses of poison per day.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 5 lb.

## THE LEGEND

The *medusa sphere* is more than just a magical stone — it is the egg of a fiendish basilisk of monstrous size. No one knows when the egg will hatch or how many a fiendish basilisk can lay in a clutch. It is known that the powerful magic that the egg carries makes it a rare event. Some sages believe that there are actually twin fiendish basilisks in the egg, which happens once every million births.

The fiendish basilisk can track its egg each time its powers are used. See the below table for the chance that the fiendish basilisk catches up with the wielder:

TABLE 1–19: MEDUSA SPHERE

Power	Chance
Petrify	15
Vipers	20
Venom	25

The fiendish basilisk that spawned the *medusa sphere* forever hunts its single, most precious egg. When it finds the wielder, it attacks with the intent to kill and return the egg to its underground nest.

**Female fiendish basilisk:** CR 10; SZ L (magical beast); HD 18d10+36; hp 135; Init +3 (-1 Dex, +4 Imp Init); Spd 20 ft; AC 15 (-1 Dex, -1 size, +7 natural); Atks 1 bite +19 melee (1d8+3); SA Petrifying gaze, smite good; SQ Cold and fire resistance 20, damage reduction 10/+3, SR 25, darkvision; SV Fort +15, Ref +10, Will +7; Str 15, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 10; AL NE. Skills: Hide +4, Listen +11, Spot +11. Feats: Alertness, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Track.

## THE MIND OF SILAS RUNECASTER

Silas Runecaster was the most powerful wizard of the third age of the God-Kings, creating spells never seen before or since. Although Silas magically sustained his life for over 200 years, he desired nothing less than complete immortality.

When a wandering pilgrim came to him with the tale of a falling star, Silas swore him to secrecy and made him return to the crash site. The fallen star's substance was like nothing Silas had ever seen. He killed the pilgrim and took the star back to his laboratory. After months of experimentation Silas and his only apprentice, Taranor, discovered how to forge the starstuff into an artifact that could contain his essence. When they succeeded Silas killed Taranor to ensure his silence, and then cast *temporal stasis* and *magic jar* to freeze his own mental essence within the artifact.

Silas left no indication of what he had done and his successors used the artifact's powers without knowing what it contained. The artifact has drifted down through the ages aimlessly.

The Mind's centerpiece is a slightly melted chunk of brass-like metal weighing 20 pounds. Its only distinctive feature is eight vertical holes bored into its surface. Each hole contains a removable cylindrical rod of the same material, 6 inches long and an inch in diameter. The eight identical rods lack any markings and have the same oddly melted look as the centerpiece.

### THE MIND OF SILAS RUNECASTER

The eight rods allow their holders to mentally communicate with one another. Anyone holding a rod may mentally communicate with any number of other rod holders as a free action. The items provide any translation necessary. The rod holders can communicate across any distance and between planes of existence. A rod holder may refuse a mental communication from another holder. When receiving an incoming message, he knows which rod the communication comes from but cannot identify its location or the individual initiating the communication unless he opens his mind and accepts the message.

No known magical or physical barrier can prevent the rod holders from communicating. The rods allow a rod holder to cast any mind-affecting spell on any other rod holder once the target has opened his mind to communication.

The centerpiece acts as a ninth communication device. Anyone touching it may communicate with any rod holders. The rod holders cannot refuse an incoming transmission from the centerpiece user. Only one person can use the centerpiece at a time. No one benefits if two or more

persons touch it at the same time. All contact with the centerpiece or a rod must be flesh-to-metal.

Anyone resting one hand upon the centerpiece may tap into the mental workings of Silas himself and receive a +6 competence bonus to all Alchemy, Appraise, Decipher Script, Knowledge (arcana and history), Scry, Spellcraft, and Use Magic Device skill checks. The person touching the centerpiece may give this bonus to any one rod holder at a time.

The *mind* requires no attunement. Anyone can employ its powers by touching the centerpiece or holding a rod.

The only way to destroy the *mind* is to cast *temporal stasis* upon it. However, the mental essence of Silas resists any attempts to "free" it, granting him a Will save with a +14 bonus against the spell's effect.

*Caster Level:* 20th; *Weight:* 3 lbs.

### THE LEGEND

Silas seriously miscalculated the strength of his apprentice Taranor. The Magus' apprentice hid away a small part of the starmetal and survived his master's attack. Taranor did not know how to destroy the Mind but sought revenge on the master who had betrayed him.

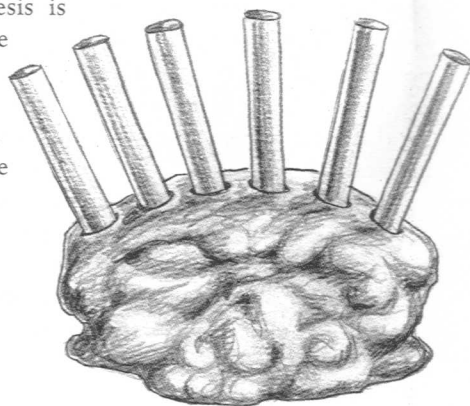
Taranor took the two pounds of starmetal he had stolen and forged a version of the Mind in miniature: Silas' Nemesis. The duplicate is one solid fist-sized piece, carved such that the rods protrude from the slots but are part of the overall mass and cannot be removed.

Within a year Taranor died of the injuries Silas inflicted upon him. The former apprentice explained his master's betrayal to his daughter Ulona and gave her the completed device. Taranor's daughter swore to use Silas' Nemesis to stymie the wizard while she and her children, and her children's children, sought out the means to destroy his final resting place.

Since that time Taranor's descendants have pursued the Mind using the Nemesis to jam its powers and discouraging others from protecting the device so they can get to it once they find the means of its destruction.

Silas' Nemesis automatically prevents all rods within one mile from operating.

If the Nemesis is within 1 mile of the Mind's centerpiece it negates all powers of the artifact.





## THE MIRROR OF THE WORLD

A tattered scroll, heavy with the traces of transmutation magic, reads:

...of the World fell into her hands. Our researches and divinations suggested that this device was a potent scrying tool on a par with a Mirror of Mental Prowess. Cognizant of the evil that she could do with such a powerful artifact, we set out to slay her.

Her fortress was warded against transportation magic, so we were forced to use a hidden entrance through the Underrealms. As we traveled, we were troubled by dreams in which we broke into her secret chamber and attacked her, over and over. Each time we were victorious, but each time the battle grew harder. In each successive confrontation, her defenses were better placed, her spells more precise, her tactics preternaturally effective.

Now I know why.

The mirror does not show the world, it reflects it. It creates an image of reality for her to toy with. When reflected events unfold in a manner she dislikes, she can change the reflection and begin again. She is preparing for our attack over and over until she can defeat us with certainty, and she can do this because we are nothing more than reflections.

I choose not to submit. A correctly aligned incantation should transport this enchanted scroll out of the mirror and into a higher-order reality.

I can only hope that this is not an infinite regression."

### THE MIRROR OF THE WORLD

The *mirror of the world* is a large and ornate mirror, five feet tall and framed in purest silver. When found, its otherwise perfect surface is marred by 1d10 tiny cracks.

The *mirror* reflects all of reality. Everything that exists has a reflection in the *mirror*, and the master of the mirror can choose which part of reality is currently being reflected. This is not a *scrying* effect, and cannot be defeated with *non-detection* or other obscuring magics. The *mirror* spies not on real people, but on their duplicates within the mirror, and the magic of duplicates has no effect on the mirror that creates them. The *mirror* develops a single crack per week of use.

The master of the *mirror* can observe anyone regardless of distance. He may watch events unfold normally, or slow the passage of time within the mirror to more carefully examine something. The user of the *mirror* may also reach in and change the scene depicted, and the mirror

duplicates will react to the change. If, for example, the master of the *mirror* wanted to see if the king's guards could defeat a dragon, he needs only to reach in, pluck a dragon from the *mirror's* skies, and place it in the king's palace. The *mirror* duplicates play out the battle as if it were transpiring in the real world. The *mirror* can be commanded to reset to normal reality. Making a change in the *mirror* realm causes another crack to appear.

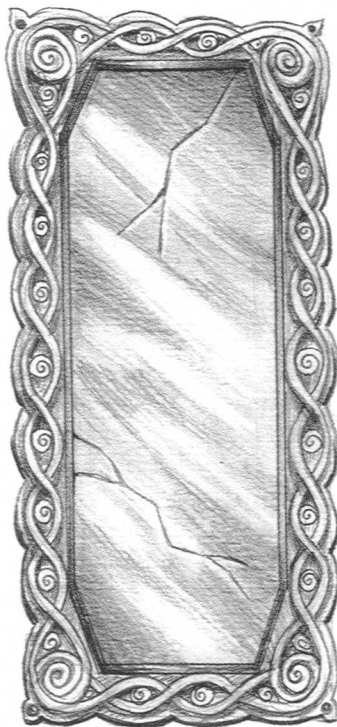
The master of the *mirror* can reach in and pull items through. These items must be able to fit through the mirror, and last for 1d20 hours. At the end of this duration, the item or creature fades out of existence. These items are merely duplicates of the original thing. Pulling

a creature or magic item through inflicts 1d6 cracks per five creature HD, or per five levels of the item's creator.

The *mirror* would perfectly reflect reality were it not for the cracks. When the user of the mirror wishes to learn a specific fact from the *mirror*, such as the exact location of a particular item, the GM should roll d100. If the result of the roll is greater than the number of cracks in the mirror, the information is perfectly accurate. If the result is less than or equal to the number of cracks, the *mirror's* replication of the world is slightly flawed, and will give slightly erroneous results.

The *mirror* can be healed by trapping souls within it. Pushing an intelligent creature into the *mirror* heals one crack, and merges that creature with its duplicate, trapping it within the *mirror*. There is a 1% chance per sacrifice that the *mirror* sucks in its current master. If the mirror is ever shattered (or reaches 100 cracks), all those trapped within it are freed.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 18 lbs.



### LEGEND

Before the *mirror of the world* can be mastered, the character must learn the Improved Scrying feat.

### IMPROVED SCRYING (General)

You are an expert in using scrying sensors.

**Prerequisites:** Int 13+, Wis 13+, 12 or more ranks in Scry, Skill Focus (scry).

**Effect:** You have great control over the magic sensors used in scrying. You can accurately view concealed items and objects within containers, and can move the focus of the sensor from the initial target to another target in the same location, allowing you to view multiple scenes with a single spell. The DC to spot your scrying sensors is 10 + your ranks in Scrying skill.

## MOONPOOL

Adventurers tell tales of the mysterious moon fey helping them in times of need. The moon fey themselves are never seen, but rather experienced in the dreams of the sleeping adventurers.

In these stories, wounded adventurers become lost in a monster-infested forest. Just when they are about to give up hope, they stumble upon a peaceful clearing in the center of which is a silver basin. Exhausted, they collapse in the clearing. Filling the basin with water from a nearby spring or pool, they clean their wounds, leaving the basin out overnight. Despite their best efforts to keep watch, they fall into a deep sleep, and dream of mysterious, gray-skinned fairies performing strange rites in the clearing. When the group wakes up, they are amazed that the forest monsters did not slay them in their sleep. They also discover that the water in the basin is glowing. When they drink it, their wounds heal, and they become visibly younger.

Usually the adventurers in these stories leave the basin in the clearing and return to town, telling others what happened. At least one greedy resident in the town generally searches for the basin. When he finds it, he too takes the youth-giving liquid, but when he drinks it, he is consumed by his own greed and turned to dust. The dust is mysteriously returned to town in a silver pitcher.

When others search for him, the clearing is gone.

### MOONPOOL

The *moonpool* is a round silver basin 2 feet in diameter. The carvings on the side, which reveal how to use the item, may be read with a successful Decipher Script, Knowledge (arcana), or Knowledge (nature) check (DC 30).

The *moonpool* must be filled with water and left exposed to moonlight for eight hours. In the morning, the water has a silvery glow and tastes slightly sweet. Anyone of noble intentions who drinks this water directly from the basin is cured of all wounds and afflictions as if the spells heal and greater restoration had been cast on him, and his youth is restored. He gains the Timeless Body ability of a 15th-level druid, except that if he has already reached middle-age he gains the appearance he had when he first reached adulthood. Any penalties to ability scores for old age are negated. If someone drinks the water out of another container, it acts as a potion of cure moderate wounds. The water loses its special properties after one day.

The basin has the antipathy spell permanently cast on it, warding against all evil creatures. If any being with an evil alignment drinks the water, he is consumed in a blaze of spontaneous magical fire, per the destruction spell. The basin then teleports to a similar forest clearing within 100 miles.

If a person takes the basin from the clearing, the moon fey carefully watch him to judge his character. If he is evil or greedy, they steal the *moonpool* and dispel any of its effects that he may be benefiting from. If they judge him worthy, they approach him and ask him to perform a task to prove his worth. Should he succeed, he becomes the new master of the basin and can share its water with anyone he wishes.

*Caster Level:* 20th; *Weight:* 7 lb.

### THE LEGEND

The moon fey are a strange and elusive group that ruthlessly protects the interests of all fey. To become the owner of the Moonpool, one must first complete a task. While the moon fey are fickle and their tasks never the same twice, some examples of tests are below.



- A group of dryads has abandoned the old laws, leaving their forests and taking human lovers. The PCs must hunt down and punish the dryads, then destroy their abominable half-fey offspring.
- A small settlement has begun a logging operation. The PCs must cause enough trouble to get the logging shut down, but in a way that makes everyone think the forest is cursed.
- An evil wizard has been using animals in his magical experiments, turning them into bloodthirsty beasts that attack anyone on sight. The PCs must help the forest nymph kill the wizard without harming his animal guards, then find a way to reverse the mutations.
- An old feud among the elven noble houses has been rekindled. The PCs need to bring a peaceful end to the conflict. To do this, they must explore an ancient tomb to learn the truth about the elves' ancestors. If the elves still can't make peace, both houses must be slaughtered to prevent a civil war.

## NEITAL'S RAM

The hero Neital is prominent in druid, dryad, and treant lore. He is the product of a rare union between a celestial and a satyr. Neital's exploits as a defender of the forest have earned him legendary status in the eyes of most sylvan creatures. But he is best known for his heroic servitude to enigmatic deity known as the Horned God. Who the Horned God is, few know. Only druids of the highest order know how to interact with him. The quest of Neital is best retold in Tale of Neital:

*"Satyr, satyr!" said the Horned,  
"Come serve and find my love, lost,  
mourned.*

*Find her, find her, in woods deep.  
Find her, wake her, from her sleep.  
Across fire and ice, flood and plain,  
Through winter and summer, wind and rain  
In the darkness, across the greatest ravine  
Lies my maiden fair, deep in her dream."*

*"Yes lord, yes, I will obey,"  
Said the satyr, "I leave today.  
But I'm ill equipped for such a trial  
I'd rather dance and sing awhile."*

*(And truth be told, he rather would —  
For satyrs are satyrs), but the Horned understood.*

*"Then here, lest you be overwhelmed.  
Against all danger, wear this helm."*

*And Neital's Ram, it did appear  
And the satyr, filled with fear  
Took it, wore it, but still he sweeps  
The forests for where the lady sleeps.*

Neital's Ram is a helmet sporting two massive, golden ram horns. The helmet covers the eyes and nose of the wearer as well.

## NEITAL'S RAM

*Neital's ram* bestows the spirit of a primal ram upon the wearer.

When worn, its user's Strength, Agility, and Constitution increase temporarily by +5 each.

The wearer can make a charge attack while wearing *Neital's ram*. When charging, the ram's horns deal 2d8+4 points of damage. In addition, the victim must make a Reflex save (DC 30) or be knocked down.

*Neital's ram* can be used to smash through doors and even structures, inflicting 2d8+8 against inanimate objects with no impact to the wearer. If used to open doors, the wearer has an effective strength of 29.

Once per day, the wearer can command *Neital's ram* to issue forth a battering force, manifested by a vaguely discernible shape that resembles the head of a ram. This force strikes a single target, dealing 3d6 points of damage. Treat this as a ranged touch attack with a 50-foot maximum range and no penalties for distance.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 10 lb.

## THE LEGEND

Neital is very attached to his helmet and is not likely to give it to just anyone. However, his quest for the "Horned God's Lady" continues, and PCs who assist him in his endeavor might even win the helmet as a reward. There's just one problem: Neital has no idea who or what the lady is or where she is hidden.

**Neital, male half-celestial satyr Pal15:** CR 21; SZ M (humanoid outsider); HD 15d10+5d6+20; hp 125; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 20 ft.; AC 26 (+7 banded mail, +3 ring of protection, +4 large steel shield, +1 Dex, +1 half-celestial); Atks +1 scimitar +20/+15/+10 (1d6+7/crit 18-20), or masterwork dagger +19/+14/+9 (1d4+4/crit 19-20) or +1 heavy crossbow +18/+13/+8 (1d10+1/crit 19-20); SA smite evil, spells, turn undead, holy smite, dispel evil, holy word; SQ aura of courage, detect evil, divine grace, divine health, lay on hands, low-light vision, protection from evil, bless, aid, detect evil, cure serious wounds, neutralize poison, remove disease, holy aura, hallow, symbol, remove disease (5/week), special mount, immune to acid, cold, disease and electricity, +4 save vs. poison; SV Fort +15, Ref +12, Will +11; Str 19, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 20; AL LG. Skills: Concentration +18, Handle Animal +16, Heal +16, Hide +2, Jump +11, Listen +1, Move Silently +2, Profession +19, Spot +1; Feats: Combat Reflexes, Leadership, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Run, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (scimitar). Equipment: +1 scimitar, +1 heavy crossbow, mw dagger, +3 heavy bolts (x10), +2 large steel shield, +1 banded mail, +3 ring of protection and a bag containing 2 pp, 5 gp, 8 sp, 80 cp, and 5 gems worth 50 gp each.



## THE NIGHTMARE CATCHER

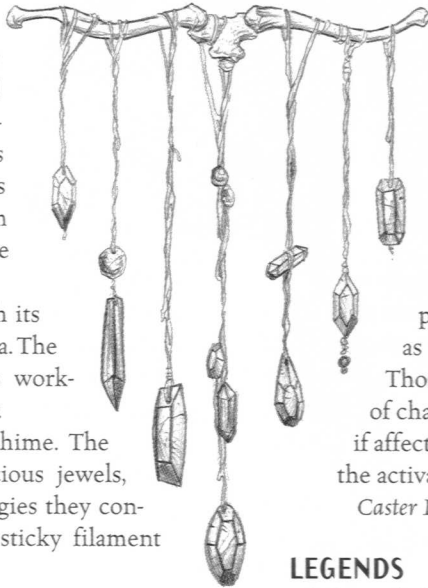
The *nightmare catcher* is the creation of the skald Eskil, whom history remembers as the Betrayer of Antlon. On that bloody battlefield, while his family and friends lay dying, Eskil was cursed by his fiancée. With her last breath, she called upon the gods to deliver great vengeance upon him.

They stripped Eskil of his soul and cursed him to wear an undead shell until the end of time. Worse, his passion and talent were shorn away, his capacity to feel love and sadness, pain and pleasure burned out in an instant. Bereft of everything save bitterness, Eskil retreated to the under-earth catacombs to plot vengeance.

Nearly a century later he was ready. He stole from wealthy matrons, strangling his victims with the very jeweled necklaces he sought. He etched his prizes in an elixir brewed from the bitter acid of traitor's blood and purified them in the collected tears of a thousand orphans. With a knife made from the screams of the dying, he slit the throats of a dozen bards and twined their vocal cords into glistening thread. Finally, he dug up his fiancée's remains, tore her collarbones free, and hung the tainted jewels from them. He named his abomination the Nightmare Catcher.

Luckily, before Eskil could unleash its power he was slain by the bard Isurieta. The *nightmare catcher* remains in Eskil's workshop, throbbing with obscene energy.

The *nightmare catcher* is a wind chime. The chimes are made of lusterless precious jewels, cracked and dulled by the dark energies they contain. They hang on wet strands of sticky filament from a delicate, cracked bone frame.



### THE NIGHTMARE CATCHER

The *nightmare catcher* is a powerful artifact that drains emotion, color and light. To activate its powers, its wielder must perform a brief ritual during which he must destroy a personal possession of strong emotional significance. He speaks the proper command word ("sorrow"), first in common, then in Infernal, and the *nightmare catcher* comes groaning and humming to life. It begins to sap the life from the surrounding area, expanding at a rate of a mile a day until it has enveloped everything within 100 miles.

Within the affected area, the following effects occur. During daylight hours, the land is shrouded in twilight, and at night the sky is starless and dark as a tomb. Visibility is half normal and spells based on light (*sunbeam*, *sunburst*) halve their normal duration and damage.

Undead thrive within the *nightmare catcher's* zone of influence. They gain a +4 profane bonus to Strength and Dexterity; the saving throw DCs of their spells, spell-like effects and special attacks are increased by +4; and they benefit from +4 turn resistance, which stacks with existing resistance.

Living beings within the area of effect are drained of their compassion, wisdom, and morals. They become distrustful and untrustworthy, paranoid lunatics concerned only with their selfish desires. Each week, living beings within the radius of effect must succeed at a Will save (DC 25) or suffer 1 point of Wisdom and Charisma damage. This damage cannot be healed until the *nightmare catcher* is deactivated or destroyed. Their inner change is reflected on the outside, as their bodies blossom boils, open sores and warts. Each month living creatures in the affected area must make another Will save (DC 25) or permanently shift their alignment one step towards chaotic neutral. When their Wisdom and Charisma scores have been lowered to 6, and their alignment is Chaotic Neutral, they are permanently affected as if by an *emotion (hate)* spell cast by a 20th level caster.

The *catcher's* activator is not only immune to its ability score drain and alignment altering powers, he benefits from them. Living beings under the influence of the *nightmare catcher* (those drained of at least 1 point of Wisdom or Charisma) react to him as if affected by an *emotion (friendship)* spell. Those reduced to Wisdom and Charisma 6 and of chaotic neutral alignment react to his words as if affected by a suggestion spell cast by a sorcerer of the activator's character level.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 3 lbs.

### LEGENDS

Eskil's workshop is hidden in Hope's Graveyard, a ghoulish-infested section of the underearth made up of miles and miles of twisting, crumbling caverns. Hope's Graveyard is made up entirely of dark earth collected from graveyards scattered across every dimension. The ground reeks of death and negative energy and slowly poisons the souls of any living beings that enter. The endless tribes of centuries-old ghouls that haunt the area are of maximum size and strength. Many of them command powerful profane magic, a gift from their dark gods.

Adventurers who fight their way to Eskil's workshop must contend with the lingering mental imprint of the diabolical skald. From the moment they step across the threshold, the adventurers must fight phantasmal warriors and monsters pulled from Eskil's memories of the battlefield of Antlon.

## NR'DUK'S ARMOR

The half-orc warlord Nr'duk returned to his homelands when the dwarves of the Western Warrens launched a series of raids on his tribe. They attacked under cover of night, retreating to their well-fortified warrens at dawn. Realizing he would need a powerful advantage to strike at the dwarves at the center of their power, Nr'duk commanded the tribes' weaponsmiths to craft a powerful suit of armor for him.

The orc smiths worked night and day while invoking Nr'duk's patron warrior god Gra'hark and emerged six months later with a fearsome suit of black-spined chainmail. Their commander donned the suit and pursued the dwarves back to their fortress. Nr'duk and his warriors inflicted heavy casualties on that occasion and the next three times the stubborn dwarves returned. Finally the dwarves ceased their attacks, but that wasn't enough for the warlord — Nr'duk continued to attack their warrens until the dwarves sued for peace.

Upon Nr'duk's death his closest followers removed his body and his three artifacts from the field of battle and hid them in separate locations. From time to time an orc or half-orc warrior quests for the Armor, but it is the most elusive of Nr'duk's three artifacts and only a handful of individuals have seen it over the last three centuries.

This suit of chainmail is black with a series of 6-inch tapering spikes (an inch wide at the base) jutting outwards from every surface. There are approximately three spikes per 16 square inches of surface area.

### NR'DUK'S ARMOR

Only someone of orc ancestry can wear this suit of +5 *chainmail*. Anyone else takes 3 points of heat damage per round as the *armor* boils the blood of the offending non-orc. The *armor* gives the wearer an additional +5 deflection bonus against ranged attacks and SR 15. It provides its wearer with a +4 racial Charisma bonus when dealing with orcs, and his Leadership score is 3 higher when determining orc followers.

The wearer can make melee attacks using the *armor's* spikes, employing them as +5 armor spikes. The spikes automatically inflict damage on anyone who makes a barehanded attack against the wearer. Opponents who attack the wearer with a weapon must make a Reflex save (DC 15) after each successful attack or have their weapon

trapped in the spines. If this occurs the attacker can either release the weapon or make a Strength check (DC 20) to pull his weapon free as a move-equivalent action.

The *armor* gives several special benefits to aid the wearer in combat against the orcs' traditional enemies. If someone attacks the wearer with a magical weapon forged by a dwarf or elf the weapon receives no magical bonuses and provides no special abilities. The wearer may command the *armor* to radiate a heat aura which does no damage but gives the wearer the equivalent of blur (20% miss chance) from the shimmering heat.

Finally, the wearer may invoke the *armor's* power to fight the orcs' ancestral enemies for 10 minutes (60 rounds). When the wearer invokes this power, the *armor* grants him a +3 morale bonus to his basic attack bonus, a +3 morale bonus to all saves, and SR 20, while fighting elves or dwarves.

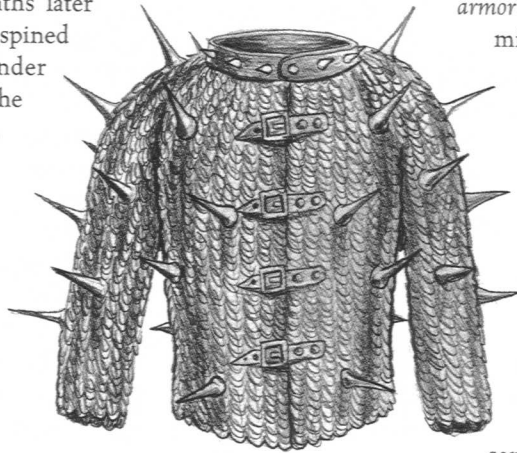
Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 40 lbs.

### THE LEGEND

The dwarves who raided the Fanok tribe were not happy with the peace Nr'duk forced upon them and vowed to destroy him. Their leader, Hemdrak, sent a team of metallurgists deep beneath the surface to find a suitable metal with which to forge a weapon capable of shattering Nr'duk's Armor. After six months, the two surviving expedition members returned bearing enough of a strange grayish metal to forge a single weapon, but refusing to speak of the trip or their comrades.

The dwarven smiths had never seen the metal's like before but forged it into a warhammer of remarkable hardness. Hemdrak set out to find and kill Nr'duk, but he and his men were killed by outlaws before they could find the half-orc warlord. The bandits' leader took the warhammer as spoils, unaware of its properties. The outlaws were later wiped out by the Imperial Guards of the nation of Weltherskein and the warhammer was lost. Some believe it sits in a storage room somewhere in Weltherskein, while others suspect someone else uses it without knowing of its properties.

Nr'duk's Bane is a +5 *mighty cleaving orcbane warhammer*. When the user successfully strikes an opponent with magical armor and scores a critical hit, the armor shatters and is irrevocably destroyed. It can shatter only magical armor in this fashion — it has no impact on non-magical armor.



## NR'DUK'S FANG

Despite the prophecies foretelling his rise to power, Nr'duk's first experience leading the united orc tribes was a humbling one. Despite outnumbering his opponents three to one, the Dark Forest Elves drove him off. He retreated hastily and reassessed the situation while fending off the challenges of lieutenants who thought his defeat was a sign of personal weakness.

Nr'duk trained with renewed ferocity for several months but realized personal skill was only one aspect of battlefield mastery. He went on a pilgrimage into the wilderness seeking a shrine to the ancient warrior deity Mukolsh. The orcs had ceased to worship Mukolsh millennia before, but still told tales of the deity granting power to favored warriors. Where Nr'duk traveled no one knew, but he returned two months later wielding the greataxe he called the Fang.

Striding back into the army camp, Nr'duk told those who would oppose him to come at him all at once. As they did, he swung the weapon in a huge arc, decapitating them all in a single blow. His authority reestablished, Nr'duk led his army against the Dark Forest Elves once more, crushed them, and began a military campaign which doubled the orc holdings, territory which they held until Nr'duk's death 10 years later.

Nr'duk's Fang is a 4-foot long greataxe with a plain wooden haft and bronze fittings. The Fang has two crescent edges — the larger striking edge has serrated teeth while the smaller edge comes to a wicked point.

### NR'DUK'S FANG

Nr'duk's fang requires a Strength of 16 or higher to wield. It is a +3 *mighty cleaving greataxe* in a non-orc's hands. In the hands of an orc or half-orc, Nr'duk's Fang is a +6 *chaotic elfbane mighty cleaving wounding greataxe* with several additional enchantments. Fang inspires fear in all enemies within 25 feet who view it in combat unless they make a Will save (DC 20). The fang provides the wearer a +4 inherent bonus to Charisma when dealing with orcs.

The wielder can command the obedience and fealty of up to 600 hit dice of humanoids within 120 feet by holding the fang aloft. Targets can resist this effect with a Will save (DC 15, 25 if the target has orc blood) but otherwise

follow the wielder into any battle and obey any command. Only humanoids of the same alignment as the wielder may be affected by this power.

The fang is magically enhanced to be lighter than it looks. In combat a wielder with a Strength of 18 or higher can quickly reverse the weapon after his primary attack and strike a second opponent with the second edge. The wielder receives a free attack at his best attack bonus against any other opponent within his threatened area.

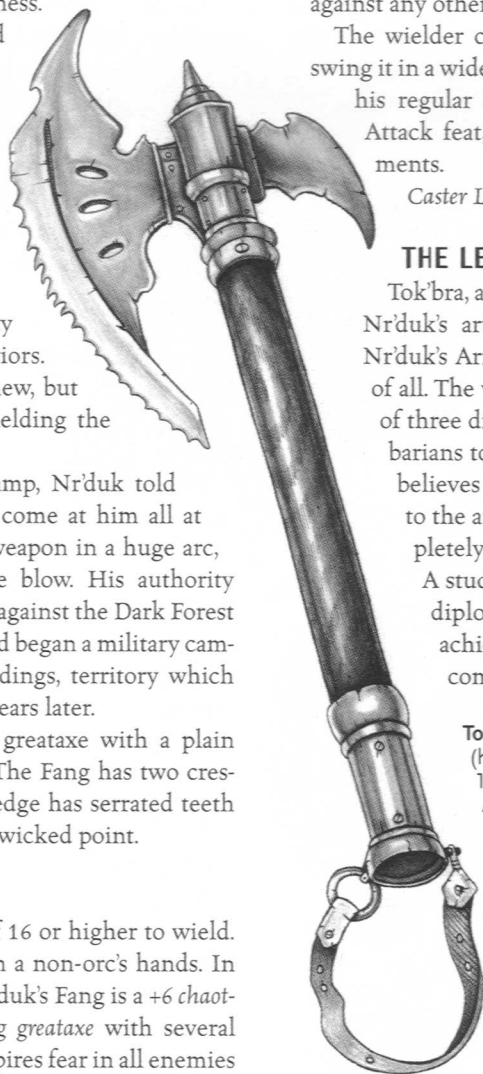
The wielder can strap the fang around his wrist and swing it in a wide circle. This allows the wielder to give up his regular attack and instead use the Whirlwind Attack feat, whether or not he meets the requirements.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 20 lbs.

### THE LEGEND

Tok'bra, a feared half-orc warlord, seeks all three of Nr'duk's artifacts (see Nr'duk's Helm, above, and Nr'duk's Armor, page 74) but desires the Fang most of all. The warlord hires out his services, his cohort of three dire wolves, and his legion of half-orc barbarians to finance his journeys, but only when he believes such assignments will bring him closer to the artifacts. Tok'bra is not evil, but he is completely ruthless and lets nothing get in his way. A student of the tactics of Nr'duk, Tok'bra uses diplomacy as well as strength of arms to achieve victory and carefully assesses each combat situation before entering the fray.

**Tok'bra, Half-Orc Bar5/Ftr13:** CR 18, SZ M (humanoid); HD 5d12+15 + 13d10 + 65; hp 190; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Imp Init); Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (+1 Dex, +9 *banded mail*, +2 *large steel shield*); Atks +4 greataxe +24/+19/+14/+9 melee (1d12+5), or +3 *mighty* (+3 Str) *composite longbow* +17/+12/+7/+2 ranged (1d8+3); SA *Uncanny dodge*, *rage* 2/day; SQ NA; SV Fort +15, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 20, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 11, Cha 16; AL CN. Skills: Climb +13, Craft (weaponsmithing) +11, Handle Animal +14, Intimidate +24, Jump +15, Ride +21, Swim +15, Wilderness Lore +8, Feats: Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Expertise, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (greataxe), Improved Initiative, Leadership, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (greataxe), Weapon Specialization (greataxe). Possessions: 60 *masterwork* arrows.





## NR'DUK'S HELM

Orcish seers foretold the birth of a great half-orc warlord in the month of Rk'nor in the 923rd year and carefully examined each tribe's litters for the child. When the infant Nr'duk, child of a priestess of the Fanok tribe, strangled a dire wolf that had entered its family's tent, the seers took him in and began his training.

Nr'duk quickly surpassed his teachers and went to war under the leadership of Snirg'rib the Unrepentant. Nr'duk learned everything Snirg'rib could teach, then killed him in traditional single combat and took command of the Fanok army. Nr'duk unified the quarreling orc tribes against their external enemies, the dwarves and the elves.

As Nr'duk prepared to lead the largest orc army the Nations had ever known, the seer Crit'tluk gave to Nr'duk a helm the ancient orc smiths had forged in anticipation of his coming. Nr'duk donned the helm and rode off to fight the Dark Forest Elves, fulfilling the prophecy and cementing his place in history.



The Helm is large enough to fit an orc's or half-orc's head. Three curved horns extend from the forehead and cheeks. The helm's matte-black metal is trimmed with silver and has a pure silver nose guard.

### NR'DUK'S HELM

The *helm* grants its wearer a +4 enhancement bonus to AC and sonic resistance 30. The wearer gains a +10 resistance bonus to saves against gaze attacks, mind-influencing effects, and illusions.

The wearer may breathe normally when underwater, in a cloud of toxic gas, or in the vacuum beyond the rim of the world. The *helm* does not supply any other protections necessary to survive in these environments such as resistance to extreme cold and pressure.

The wearer may attack an opponent in melee combat with the helm's horns. The wearer can jerk his head sharply and attack a single opponent using the horns as a +4 *light pick*. Instead, he can twist his head for slashing attacks or charge, using the horns as a +4 *handaxe*.

The *helm* may be worn only by an orc or half-orc. A human who wears it suffers a -5 penalty to all attack rolls, saves, and Listen, Search, and Spot skill checks. Anyone of dwarven or elfish blood who dons the *helm* must make a Fortitude save (DC 30) or die.

*Caster Level:* 20th; *Weight:* 3 lbs.

### THE LEGEND

Nr'duk favored the bull rush and discovered that by twisting his head he could gore his opponents like a bull. He formally developed this fighting technique and passed it along to some of his subordinates. The orc tribes' seers know of it and teach it to those they judge worthy. If the Helm is in the seers' possession, they only give it to one who knows this fighting style. If someone untrained finds and uses the Helm, the seers send assassins and warriors to recover the Helm and kill the offender.

### NR'DUK'S BULL RUSH (General, Fighter)

Nr'duk devised this special feat to take advantage of his vast strength and the powers of his Helm.

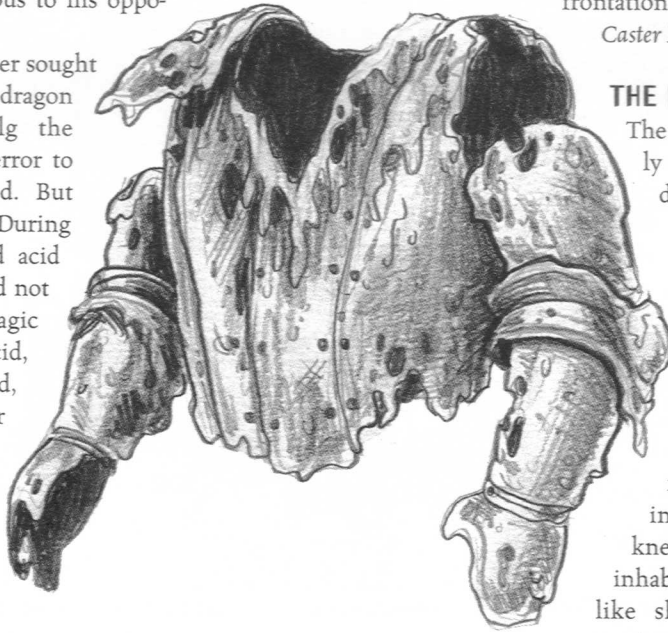
**Prerequisites:** Str 17+, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, Base Attack Bonus +6 or higher

**Benefit:** When making a bull rush attack, you do not provoke an attack of opportunity from the defender. The chance of any other attack of opportunity missing and hitting the wrong target rises to 50%. If you beat the defender and move with him you may make a normal unarmed attack, employ a light weapon to make a single attack at your highest base attack bonus, or attack with your headgear if you are wearing Nr'duk's Helm or a similar helm.

## THE OBSIDIAN PLATE

Sir Danner of the Black Shield was a skilled dragon-slayer of great renown. Never resting, he traveled the continent in search of the fiercest wyrms to battle. Sages said his suit of plate mail armor, crafted entirely of obsidian, was the work of deep dwarves grateful for his aid in saving their mine. However he earned it, Danner's own skills were matched only by the magic of his black armor — an armor that made him impervious to his opponents' breath weapons.

At the peak of his fame, Danner sought out and battled an ancient black dragon of tremendous power. Skarlg the Unquenched was as much a terror to other dragons as to mankind. But Danner would not be daunted. During the battle, when Skarlg rained acid upon Danner, the warrior would not fall. Ironically, the armor's magic protected Danner from the acid, but itself was nearly dissolved, leaving nothing but a shoulder plate. Despite this setback, Danner slew the dragon, discarding the remaining armor. He believed it was worthless... he was wrong.



### THE OBSIDIAN PLATE

The *obsidian plate* can be placed over an existing suit of heavy armor like a mantle. The armor may not have an enhancement bonus of more than +3 or other enchantments with a total equivalent bonus of more than +6. Any armor more powerful than this has a magical field strong enough to interfere with that of the *plate*, in which case the magic of both items is cancelled out. The *obsidian plate* increases the enhancement bonus of the armor by +5 and grants the wearer complete immunity to all acid, cold, fire, and lightning effects. The *plate* also provides the wearer's armor the following abilities: *fortification (heavy)*, *ghost touch*, *shadow*, and *sonic resistance*. In addition, the plate grants the wearer immunity to energy drain and ability drain attacks.

The *obsidian plate* seems to absorb light and energy from the area around it. Any light source within 100 feet has its range reduced by 50%. It also protects its wearer from any harmful effects of any spell with the light descriptor.

Any Very Old or older dragon instantly recognizes the *obsidian plate* and factors it into its combat strategy. Such dragons go to great lengths to destroy the *plate* and its wearer.

The destruction of the armor created a permanent link between the *plate* and black dragons. If its bearer ever comes face to face with a black dragon, he and the dragon will be compelled to attack each other immediately. Each may make a Will save (DC 30) to avoid this confrontation.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 12 lb.

### THE LEGEND

The Obsidian Plate supposedly still lies where Danner discarded it, in the lair of Skarlg, in the depths of the Purple Swamp.

The swamp draws its name from the purple worm rumored to live in one of the many caves under it. It is a dark, overgrown place, filled with sinkholes indiscernible from the knee-deep marsh waters and inhabited by dangerous plants like shambling mounds and assassin vines. A rakshasa has built

a small tower at the north end of the swamp, and a green hag lives in the deepest part of the bog. Locals speak of a swamp-dwelling colony of lizardfolk who raid the elven communities to the east.

The dragon filled the area around its cave with oozes and tentaculos, which remain to this day. Inside, the cave walls are rough and corroded by the acidic presence of the dragon. The stagnant water that seeps in stings the skin. A series of small interconnected caves lead down to the main cavern. The floor in these caves drops down 5 feet at regular intervals, and many small side passages lead to deep pools of acidic swamp water. These caves end after about 600 feet with a sheer 40-foot drop into the main cavern. The bones of Skarlg still lie where he fell near the far wall. In his absence, the caves have been colonized by basilisks, who would be glad to greet inattentive adventurers.

There is still a large amount of treasure left from the dragon's horde, piled in the center of the room (mostly large heaps of gold and silver coins). The Obsidian Plate lies unnoticed in a dark corner of the cave.

## OGGRUK'S THRONE

Bards sing tales of leaders that earn their greatness, and of leaders forced to become great. If they knew of the ogre king Oggruk, they would add an ironic and darkly amusing variation of the story.

To say that Oggruk is a fool is to do a grave injustice to simpletons everywhere. Though as large and strong as any of his race, he spent his childhood in mortal terror of goblins and kobolds. As he matured physically, he remained mentally and emotionally stunted, at one point setting fire to a forest to kill the rangers inside it. Only after the fire spread all around him did Oggruk realize he should have left the woods first.

A chuckling ogre mage eventually told Oggruk that he could win the respect of his peers by slaying the dreaded weresnipe, a creature that laired within a nearby cave network. Hunting for days without success, he stumbled into a cavern containing an immense, partially-mummified left hand. The exhausted Oggruk slept upon it and dreamed of the greatness he would achieve once he returned to his people.

He awoke to a massive shuffling nearby, and sat up to find his entire clan bowing before him in submission. Though he never found his way out of the caves, he has ordered his servants to conquer all that lies nearby. The strategies of his plans are ingenious, and the prisoners add to his growing hordes.

King Oggruk is starting to wonder what has happened.

### OGGRUK'S THRONE

*Oggruk's throne* is the slowly decaying left hand of a titan, its body still buried beneath Oggruk's chambers. Any creature of Large or Huge size finds it a comfortable seat, though creatures of smaller size categories may still use its powers.

To unlock the powers of the throne, an intelligent creature must first slay the throne's present master (if any), then rest upon the throne itself for a period of eight uninterrupted hours. Once so attuned, the creature becomes the throne's master, and gains a number of abilities.

The master of *Oggruk's throne* always has the Leadership feat, regardless of level restrictions. *Oggruk's throne* also allows its master to ignore racial or alignment restrictions on followers and cohorts, though the master must still make efforts to recruit. Further, as this feat actually clouds the minds of the followers, the throne waives any penal-

ties to its master's Leadership score. Mere mastery of the throne automatically gives the following Leadership modifiers: great prestige (+2), special power (+1), and a stronghold (the cave itself; +2). If the master of *Oggruk's throne* has the Leadership feat already, he gains an additional +5 to his Leadership score.

While sitting upon the throne itself, the master's dominance increases greatly. He may cast any of the following spells as though he were a 19th-level sorcerer: *demand*, *dispel magic*, *dominate monster*, and *geas*, each a number of times per day equal to his Charisma modifier (minimum of 1 each). While on *Oggruk's throne* its master gains a +5 enhancement bonus to any ability check or check using a skill based on Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma, so long as it directly pertains to leading others, such as in a war campaign.

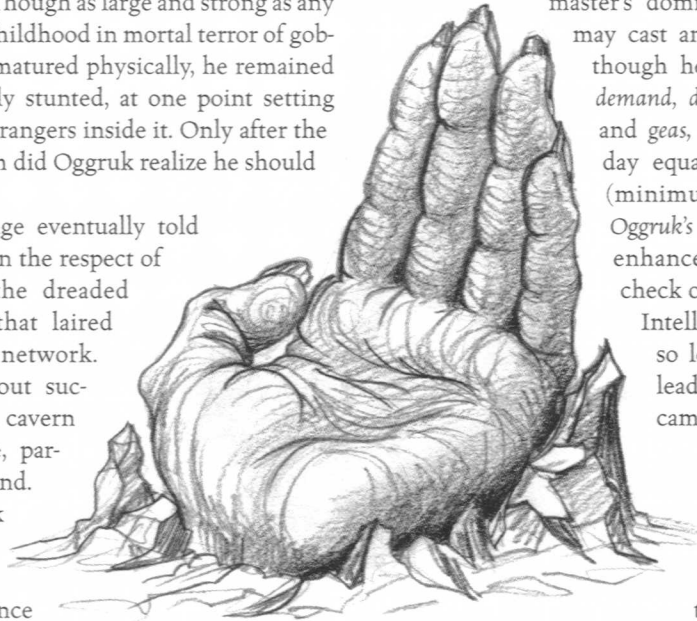
### THE LEGEND

King Oggruk is quite right to worry about his expanded abilities and ambitions. Deeper within the caverns lies the right hand of the

skeletal titan, and upon it sits Jurgar, the ogre mage that duped Oggruk into the caves in the first place.

The second throne possesses all the abilities and restrictions of *Oggruk's Throne*, but overrides them as well. In fact, it has precisely the same abilities, as the second throne's powers act through the first's. The followers and cohorts granted by the second throne's leadership are the same as the ones granted by the first. All creatures loyal to the master of *Oggruk's Throne* primarily serve the master of the second throne, and the second throne's granted spells override the granted spells of *Oggruk's Throne* should two commands ever conflict. Spells used through the second throne count against the daily allotment of the first, and vice versa.

The master of the second throne intuitively knows when his opposite sits upon *Oggruk's Throne*, and may cause the hand to clench into a fist, grappling any Medium-size or larger creature automatically, and thereafter crushing its victim, dealing 1d12+13 damage every round until its victim escapes or dies. The fist has 37 Strength for the purposes of grappling checks. Once clenched, the fist takes 1d10 years to relax to its original position.





## THE PANDECT OBELISK

Nanyel, god of justice, knew his time was coming to an end. Determined to have his legacy live on, he created the Pandect Obelisk to enforce his laws. But the dark god of chaos, Igtharka, insinuated a sliver of his own essence into the slab from which the Obelisk was carved. That slight flaw would be the doom of man.

The Pandect Obelisk ruled justly for centuries, programmed with the Laws of Nanyel. Nations rose and fell, each adding its own laws, some contradictory. After a time, the Pandect Obelisk was forced to make decisions, weighing one law against another. But the Obelisk was not imbued with intelligence; its decisions completely disregard the spirit of any law, insisting narrowly on the letter.

Eventually, the Pandect Obelisk's laws became so contradictory that it destroyed the nations it governed. A holy city, known as Khentropolis, was built around the Pandect Obelisk. Over time, thieves carefully documented the laws and then lured travelers into the city. When a traveler broke a law, a gang of thieves descends upon him.

The Pandect Obelisk judges only that which it sees. In Khentropolis, thieves carry portable wooden tower shields they call Covers. With a Cover, thieves commit crimes while hidden from the sight of the Obelisk. The rabble have even developed a combat style that specializes in tumbling while holding the Cover in the direction of the Obelisk.

Nanyel's priests have recently set out to recover the Obelisk and restore it to its rightful position as a tool of law.

This gray stone obelisk is over 40 feet tall and weighs nearly 4,000 lbs. At its top is a large, unblinking eye. Careful examination reveals a small black streak along the otherwise featureless base.

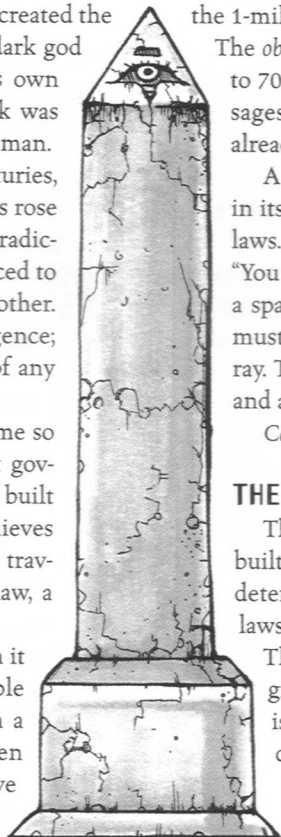
### THE PANDECT OBELISK

The *pandect obelisk* is a terrifying guardian and awesome sage. It knows the written laws of every land and espouses them in an authoritative but somber tone.

The *obelisk* constantly detects the alignment of any who approach it within a mile. It cannot be fooled by illusions or extra-dimensional beings. If the creature is chaotic in

TABLE 1-20: PANDECT OBELISK

HD	Effect
25+	Paralyzed for 2d4 rounds, <i>mark of justice</i>
17-24	Also permanently lose 1d4 Wisdom points
9-16	Also, alignment changed to lawful
1-8	Killed instantly; undead creatures are destroyed



alignment, the obelisk booms, "Cursed of Nanyel!" If it is lawful in alignment, it booms "Blessed of Nanyel!" It only announces the creature's alignment the first time it enters the 1-mile radius in a given week.

The *obelisk* can also be set to adhere to a set of laws, up to 70 in total. Because Nanyel's holy number is seven, sages theorize that there are seven "preset" laws already programmed into the obelisk.

A beam from the eye strikes down any being within its line of sight that breaks one of its programmed laws. When it sees a transgressor, the *obelisk* bellows, "You have violated Nanyel's law!" and lashes out with a sparkling blue ray with a range of 1 mile. Victims must make a Reflex save (DC 30) or be affected by the ray. The effects are cast as if by a 20th-level sorcerer and are cumulative:

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 4,000 lb.

### THE LEGEND

The *pandect obelisk* has seven preset laws already built into its programming: roll on the table below to determine which seven. Discovering any one of these laws requires a Knowledge (history) check DC 30.

The *pandect obelisk* carries out its preprogrammed laws with extreme prejudice. If the rule is "no yelling," PCs who are loud talkers might be considered to break the law — even PCs who sneeze.

TABLE 1-21: PANDECT OBELISK (LAWS)

1d20	Law
1	No talking.
2	No swearing.
3	No yelling.
4	No alcohol.
5	No wearing black clothes.
6	No spellcasting any spells with a material component.
7	No left-handedness may be displayed when wielding a weapon.
8	No male or female may touch a member of the opposite gender.
9	No one may begin a sentence with, "I think..."
10	No touching one's nose in conversation.
11	No wearing more than one weapon belt.
12	No open flames may be displayed.
13	No eating fruits with pits in them.
14	No staring at another person for more than two seconds.
15	No addressing a divine spellcaster by his first name.
16	No pointing at anything red.
17	No looking up at the sky on a sunny day.
18	No footwear made of leather.
19	No leaning on a weapon.
20	No exposing the flesh of the leg above the ankle.

## THE PRIME SWORD

All things have a beginning. In the dawn years the god of the forge took iron and fire and crafted the first sword. This act reverberated through time and space — for the first time there was a weapon made only for war. Spears and bows can be the tools of hunters, but the sword is solely for slaying other men. Every smith one day dreams of that archetypal sword, that prime sword, and it is that dream which inspires the forging of new swords. Every blade is but an echo, a reflection of it.

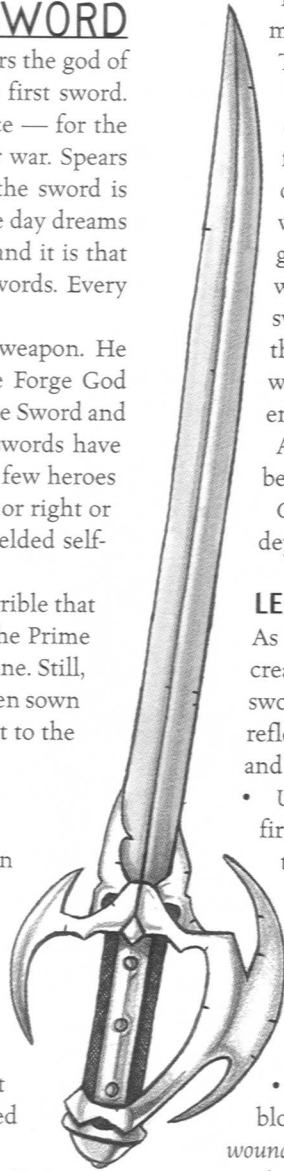
A servant of the Forge God desired the weapon. He crept in at night and broke the back of the Forge God upon his own anvil before taking up the Prime Sword and becoming the War God. Since that day, all swords have been attuned to war and bloodshed. While a few heroes may take up their swords in defense of good or right or nation or faith, the majority of blades are wielded selfishly, greedily, for evil ends.

In the end, the War God loosed a war so terrible that he regretted his evil actions, and he hurled the Prime Sword into the shifting space of the Astral Plane. Still, the damage was done: the sword's idea had been sown in the minds of men, and bloody war brought to the universe.

### THE PRIME SWORD

At first glance, *the prime sword* appears to be an ordinary sword: old, well-forged, worn with use, but still razor-sharp. It is an unusual design, as from certain angles it appears to be a longsword, from others a curved scimitar, or even a katana. Its size is similarly changeable, for the *prime sword* is always a perfect match for whoever wields it. The hilt of the sword is wrapped in old cloth, stained with dried blood and ichor.

The *prime sword* is a +12 sword of whatever size and type the wielder desires. As a move-equivalent action, the user may invoke any of the following properties at the cost of a bonus: *defending*, *flaming*, *frost*, *ghost touch*, *keen*, *mighty cleaving*, *shock*, *wounding* (all +1); *bane*, *chaotic*, *flaming burst*, *holy*, *icy burst*, *lawful*, *thundering*, *unholy* (all +2); *speed*, *vornal* (+4). For example, it can be a +11 *flaming sword*, or a +8 *unholy thundering sword*. The sword's bonus cannot be reduced to a negative value, but it can have up to ten properties at once.



The sword cannot be destroyed by any normal means.

The true power of the *prime sword* is a subtle one. The fate of the *prime sword* is reflected in the fate of all other blades. When the *prime sword* was used for war, it drew the majority of other swords into other wars. When the *prime sword* was lost, so too were many other swords lost — at sea, in dungeons, or merely sold or stolen. If the *prime sword* is wielded valorously, then the majority of other swords will find their way into situations where they too can fight for good. If the *prime sword* is worn as an ornament, then swords will become ceremonial items, not weapons, in all the many worlds.

And if the *prime sword* were broken, what would become of war?

*Caster Level:* 20th; *Weight:* Between 3 and 30 lb., depending on form.

### LEGEND

As the *prime sword* moves through the cosmos, it creates an infinity of reflections in steel — lesser swords that share certain traits with it. Some of these reflections appear identical to the *prime sword* itself, and may deceive unwitting seekers.

- *Unworthy* was created when the *prime sword* was first stolen. It is identical in appearance and power to the *prime sword*, but carries a curse — the wielder of *unworthy* is ultimately doomed to succumb to temptation at the worst possible moment. *Unworthy* is rumored to be in possession of a fallen paladin, who seeks to atone by passing the blade and its curse onto some great evil.
- The *reaver in red* is the incarnation of all the blood spilled by swords. It is a +6 *unholy sword of wounding* that constantly weeps blood. This weapon lies at the bottom of the Stained Ocean. Thousands of sharks circle the sword; driven mad by the blood, they feed off each other.
- *Sellsword*, a +5 *sword of defending*, is the reflection of all swords that are bought and sold. It travels from owner to owner, turning up amid rusty weapons at a marketplace, or in the scabbard of a grizzled mercenary.
- When the *prime sword* was made, it defined what a sword was. The weapon known as *seven harps screaming* is a side-effect of this process — it is everything that a sword is not. The indescribable weapon can be wielded as a +6 *sword*, and can add and remove abilities just like the *prime sword*.

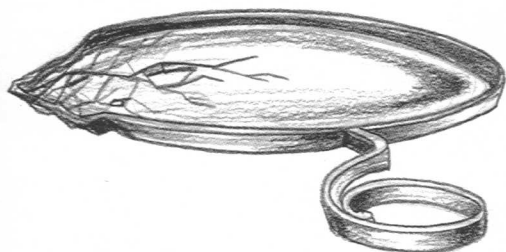
## THE PRISTINE GLASS

At first glance, there is nothing pristine about this hopelessly crushed lens. Indeed, the cleric who originally commissioned the work was the first of many to consider this fine treasure to be dross.

Hrunting was a priest of the sun god in lands so far north that the land dwelled in twilight for months on end. Although ridiculed for his small stature and his faith in a weak god, Hrunting stood against the long night and the undead that haunted it. Tiring of his poor treatment, Hrunting communed with his deity during the height of summer. The priest begged for a token, a trinket to drive away the unliving, though secretly he wished to install awe and respect in his more human tormentors.

All summer long, the sun god and Hrunting toiled, slowly grinding stars into a single, flawless lens. When winter came, Hrunting returned to his people and used the light of a single candle to burn away dozens of ghouls. When a chieftain demanded ownership of the lens, Hrunting murdered him. In the scuffle, Hrunting dropped and shattered the lens, and subsequently walked into a blizzard rather than live with the shame.

Neither he nor anyone else thought to test the glass to see what abilities it still possessed. It remains in the icy north, powerful and unused.



### THE PRISTINE GLASS

The *Pristine Glass* is useless on its own, a partially crushed lens of no determinate value. Unlike most artifacts, its power is not self-contained; it comes from the refracting of a light source. Placed directly in front of any light of candleflame or brighter, and of a size no greater than a torch flame, the *pristine glass* produces one of the following effects (roll 1d20, or select a memorized effect) for as long as it remains unmoved and the light undiminished, or until the spell effect expires. All spells are cast as though by a spellcaster of the user's level.

Characters using the *pristine glass* must make a concentration check (DC 15) to maintain the effect while performing any action other than a partial move action. When taking damage, they must make a concentration check as though they were casting the spell.

Characters with 16 or greater Intelligence may choose to diffuse the lens as they use it, casting the light out in a wider area but decreasing its intensity: this doubles the

target area but halves the duration, DC, and damage (if applicable). Characters must state that they intend to diffuse the effect before rolling for its effect, and must memorize diffused effects separately.

### THE LEGEND

Hrunting's people have moved on, but he has not. The glass remains in the shadow of a mountain, barely visible beneath mere inches of ice. An occasional beam of sunlight falls upon the Glass, casting a random effect nearby. Though a few adventurous locals have seen strange happenings on this mountainside, they have always fled before the ghost of the mountain.

Hrunting blames his god for withholding the truth, his people for being unworthy of the gift, and himself for being so short-sighted. He seeks to hide his shame by destroying anyone who sees either the Pristine Glass or its effects, and particularly loathes clerics and paladins in service to a sun god. He remains tied to the glass until someone casts *atonement* on him. He appears as a skeleton half-formed of snow and ice.

#### Hrunting (Ghost), Cleric 12 (violated code of conduct):

CR 14; SZ M (human; incorporeal undead); HD 12; hp 72; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft. (flight; perfect); AC 17 (+2 Dex, +5 deflection); Atks Mace +8/+3 melee (1d6-1); SA Manifestation, horrific appearance, corrupting gaze; SQ Rejuvenation, turn resistance +4; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +12; Str 8, Dex 15, Con -, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 20; AL CN. Skills: Concentration +7, Craft (sculpture) +4, Diplomacy +6, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (religion) +7, Spellcraft +7, Wilderness Lore +9 Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Craft Wondrous Item, Extra Turning, Iron Will, Track.

TABLE 1-22: THE PRISTINE GLASS

1d20	Result
1	Roll again, rerolling results of 1 or 20. The user casts the resulting spell on himself.
2	<i>dancing lights</i>
3	<i>flare</i>
4	<i>light</i>
5	<i>color spray</i>
6	<i>faerie fire</i>
7	<i>silent image</i>
8	<i>hypnotic pattern</i>
9	<i>mirror image</i>
10	<i>produce flame</i>
11	<i>see invisibility</i>
12	<i>blindness</i>
13	<i>daylight</i>
14	<i>searing light</i>
15	<i>rainbow pattern</i>
16	<i>eyebite</i>
17	<i>prismatic spray</i>
18	<i>sunbeam</i>
19	<i>sunburst</i>
20	Roll again, rerolling results of 1 or 20. The user produces this effect, and memorizes the position on the glass. He may hereafter automatically select that effect, rather than rolling randomly. Characters may remember a number of positions up to their Wisdom modifier.



## THE PUREBLOOD DAGGER

Deep within the southland's steaming, sprawling jungles is the crumbling metropolis Ssilisuss Esscorsiss, known in the common tongue as Cold Mother's Cradle. An ancient stronghold of the yuan-ti race, the entire city is a temple to the worship of Cold Mother, the Bringer of Serpents, Slayer of Warm-bloods: the yuan-ti's patron goddess of fertility and hunger.

The Cold Mother's priesthood consists entirely of yuan-ti abomination priest-assassins. They are the Slayer's Brood, and offer up entire villages as sacrifice to their cold mistress. In addition to these moonlit ritual slaughters, the Brood stalk the streets of human cities, devouring their chosen victims as a snake devours field mice.

The Pureblood Dagger is the Slayer's Brood's greatest holy relic, a potent weapon used to deliver the killing blows in every mass sacrifice of the Brood's first three millennia of existence.

Then, thirty years ago, on the eve of the Brood's greatest mass sacrifice, the Pureblood Dagger was stolen by the infamous cut-purse and assassin Solomon Munasco. Munasco obtained the dagger from the Brood's high priest, and paid him with a sword between the shoulder blades.

Since then, Munasco has gained a reputation as an unstoppable assassin throughout the southern port cities. The Slayer's Brood has sent many teams of killers against him, but each time he has gutted his pursuers and escaped unscathed.

The Pureblood Dagger is a short, thick blade of dull green metal. Its hilt, which is wrapped in cured snake skin, is worked in the shape of an open-mouthed serpent. Its pommel is capped with a ruby jewel slitted like a cobra's eye. When the Dagger is held, it hisses softly, and the hilt twists and writhes gently.

### THE PUREBLOOD DAGGER

The *pureblood dagger* is a +5 *keen, wounding, returning dagger of distance and speed*. As a free action, *pureblood's* wielder can command it to instantly grow or shrink to dagger, longsword, or greatsword size. Regardless of size, the *pureblood dagger* is always considered a dagger for purposes of weapon proficiency, and grants its wielder the Improved Initiative, Quick Draw and Weapon Finesse feats. It deals damage and has a threat range and critical multiplier appropriate to its current size.

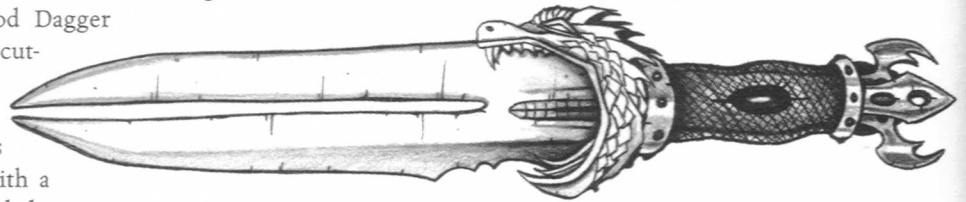
Five times per day, the *pureblood dagger* can be commanded to inject one of two lethal forms of snake venom on a successful critical hit. The first, *black milk*, is a viscous toxin causing delirium and debilitating seizures. It inflicts

2d6 points of initial temporary Wisdom damage and, one minute later, 2d6 points of temporary Dexterity damage. This venom has a Fortitude save DC of 30. The second venom, *cold mother's whisper*, causes the victim's lungs to fill with fluid and his throat to constrict. It causes an initial 2d6 points of temporary Constitution damage, and one minute later, the victim begins to drown from the fluid in his lungs. The Fortitude save to resist the effects of *cold mother's whisper* is DC 25.

While the weapon is in hand, its wielder gains immunity to all forms of serpent venom and can, as a free action, use the yuan-ti's *chameleon* power, gaining a +8 racial bonus to Hide skill checks.

Finally, the *pureblood dagger* grants its wielder the ability to become boneless, which gives his body the serpentine flexibility of a serpent as described below.

*Caster Level:* 20th; *Weight:* 1 lb.



### LEGEND

The Pureblood Dagger's *boneless* ability can be placed as an enhancement on any weapon. It is most frequently used on enchanted blades carried by members of snake-worshipping cults.

**Boneless:** A weapon with the *boneless* enhancement gives its wielder the ability to stretch his tendons and distort his bones in the manner of a serpent. While *boneless*, the wielder gains a +10 bonus to all Escape Artist skill checks, a +5 bonus to all Hide skill checks, and a +5 bonus to all grapple checks. Should the character initiate a successful pin maneuver during a grapple, he can instead choose to constrict, inflicting (1d6 + Strength bonus) damage to his victim. A constricted opponent suffers a -2 circumstance penalty when attempting to escape the constriction. While *boneless*, the character takes half damage from bludgeoning weapons, and can flatten his bones, even his skull, to half their normal thickness, allowing him access to tiny spaces. The *boneless* enhancement can be used twice a day for (3 + the wielder's Constitution bonus) rounds.

*Caster Level:* 16th; *Craft Magic Arms and Armor, polymorph self, summon nature's ally; Market Price:* +4 bonus.

## THE REAPER'S SHADOWBOX

*In his hall there is no joy  
No compassion, no love  
This one truth, all men know  
The Reaper keeps a lonely vigil*

Long ago, in the village of Westfall, lived an old toymaker whose toys were treasures of brass and feathers and wood and bright cloth. He lived alone, in a cottage on a hill, for his wife and children had died years before.

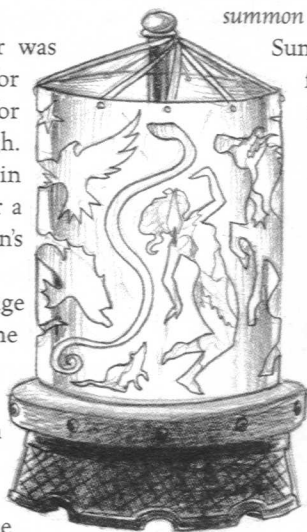
Still, the toymaker was happy, for the children of the village loved him, and their parents loved him because they, too, had once been children.

Then, one night, the children fell asleep and did not wake, for death had kissed their brows and adorned them with pox blossoms. They grew cold and still like porcelain dolls. The Reaper came, and the toymaker went forth to meet him.

The toymaker pleaded, but the Reaper was unmoved. He offered his own soul in trade for the children's, but the Reaper was silent, for the toymaker would be his soon enough. Finally, the toymaker made an offer — if, in seven days, he could not make the Reaper a gift worthy of the children's lives, all the town's souls were forfeit. The Reaper disappeared.

Seven nights later he returned to the cottage on the hill, and the toymaker offered him the Shadowbox. When the Reaper saw the Shadowbox, he paused, for it was flawless, covered with fanciful animal shapes. When the toymaker lit the Shadowbox's candle, the Reaper smiled, for the shadows it cast were a perfect black tapestry, and when the toymaker whispered and the Shadowbox spun, the Reaper laughed, for the shadows on the wall walked and ran and tumbled and fought as though alive. The Reaper took his Shadowbox and returned home, and the little village was troubled by him no more.

The Reaper's Shadowbox is a hollow brass cylinder with dozens of animal, monster, and humanoid shapes cut into its surface. It is mounted on a shallow iron pedestal, and there is a small candle holder in its center.



### THE REAPER'S SHADOWBOX

To activate *the reaper's shadowbox* a candle made of animal fat must be placed within it and the command word ("truth") whispered as it is lit. Immediately the *shadowbox* spins, throwing shadows across every surface. It reaches full speed in 1 round, allowing access to its many abilities.

While the *shadowbox* spins, its owner is immune to negative energy and *death* effects and gains darkvision up to 120 ft. Anyone else who looks directly at the active *shad-*

*owbox* must attempt a Will save (DC 25) or be hypnotized as by the spell *hypnotic pattern* cast by a 18th-level wizard.

Once per round, as a full-round action, the owner can cast any of the following spells. These spells have a save DC of 25 and are cast as if by a 25th level caster:

- *deeper darkness* (centered on the shadowbox)
- *greater shadow evocation*
- *nightmare*
- *phantasmal killer*
- *project image*
- *scare*
- *shades*
- *shadow walk* (self only)
- *weird*

Alternately, once per round as a full-round action, the owner can summon creatures, per *summon monster IX* or *summon nature's ally IX* as cast by a 20th-level wizard.

Summoned creatures have normal statistics but are formed of shadow, gaining a +10 racial bonus to Hide checks.

Once per month, the owner of the *shadowbox* can summon a nightshade. It serves until the candle is extinguished, then disappears.

Once per week, the *shadowbox* can summon the spirit of any dead being whose true name the user knows. The spirit is compelled to truthfully answer all questions put forth by the summoner until either the *shadowbox's* candle is extinguished or the summoner releases it. Spirits converse in the Common tongue. Once a spirit has been called, it may never be contacted again even if the *shadowbox* falls into a new owner's hands.

Finally, the *shadowbox's* owner can, once in his life, compel the service of the Reaper himself. The Reaper can be commanded to cure any disease, heal any injury, age or de-age a being by up to two age categories, slay any being (no save), or *resurrect* a single being (no level or Constitution loss). When the Reaper is finished, he returns to the underworld, taking his *shadowbox* with him.

*Caster Level:* 20th; *Weight:* 6 lbs.

### LEGEND

The following passage is written in a spidery water-stained script on the final page of the Codex of Starless Night (a clue to the shadowbox's command word):

*Let all who seek his bauble beware  
and know that he who guards the final door  
has no use for honeyed words  
no pity for tears, nor regard of title, or deed  
He stands unmoved and uncaring*

## RING OF ENDLESS MAGERY

*Magic is... changed.*

*The old ways have fallen out of favor. The Nine True Spells have been lost. The pure blood of the ancients has been tainted.*

*We are dying.*

*There was once a time when wizards worshiped us as gods, but now we are scoffed at — dismissed as simpletons. The wizards have stolen our magic from us and caged our spirit. They have distilled our great dances into mechanical gestures. They have turned our beautiful songs into meaningless babble. They have corrupted the language of our ancestors and confined it in the pages of their precious tomes.*

*Wizardry is unnatural. It disrupts the Great Cycle of magic. It destroys the harmony of the universe. Wizards are parasites where we are symbiotes. With every spell they cast our powers weaken and our numbers dwindle. Their greedy pursuit of knowledge will be the world's undoing.*

*They must be stopped.*

*The rings you wear now were forged by our greatest artisans. They embody our bond with the spirit of magic and will return to the Great Cycle the magic that the wizards have stolen. They will make your powers mighty enough to rend the usurpers of their spells.*

*Today, we go to war.  
Today, we will take back  
what was stolen from us.  
Today, we will be triumphant!*

A speech by Vorsam the Faithful to the five generals of the Sorcerer army before the first battle of the War of Mages.

### RING OF ENDLESS MAGERY

The five rings of *endless magery* were created by a sorcerer cult to wage war on wizards. All are identical in appearance and powers.

When worn by a sorcerer, the *ring of endless magery* acts like a *rod of absorption* with no limit on the number of spell levels it may absorb. When a spell is absorbed, the sorcerer is healed a number of hit points equal to twice the spell's level. The ring merely absorbs the spells of most spellcasters, but when it absorbs the spell of a wizard it reveals its true powers. First, the wizard must make a Fortitude save or be stunned for 1d4 rounds (DC 20 + the level of the absorbed spell + the sorcerer's charisma bonus). The wizard must also make a Will save (DC 30). If he fails, the spell is ripped from his mind, and he cannot

prepare or cast that spell as a wizard for one week (if he has the Spell Mastery feat for the spell, he gains a +4 synergy bonus to his save). Scrolls and spellbook copies of the spell now appear to be arcane gibberish, and any attempts to cast or decipher them automatically fail and force the wizard to make a Will save (DC 10 + the spell's level) or suffer 1d6 points of temporary Intelligence damage until this effect ends.

Each ring grants any sorcerer wearing it access to the following spells: *alter self*, *analyze dweomer*, *antimagic field*, *contingency*, *erase*, *fabricate*, *feather fall*, *feeblemind*, *fly*, *greater dispelling*, *mind fog*, *mirage arcana*, *passwall*, *permanency*, *prying eyes*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *rope trick*, *spectral hand*, *telekinesis*, *Tenser's floating disk*. He may cast these spells just as if he had learned them normally, though he may not cast spells of a level higher than he can normally cast.

If a wizard ever dons a *ring of endless magery*, he must make a Will save (DC 30) or lose all ability to cast spells as a wizard. He retains all other class features, but can no longer prepare or cast arcane spells. Only a *wish* or *miracle* can reverse this effect.

### THE LEGEND

Though both sides suffered heavy losses, the superior numbers of the wizards won the War of Mages. All five of the sorcerer generals were killed in the final battle, and in the aftermath the wizards recovered three of the rings. One was apparently looted by scavengers and lost to the intricate dealings of the black market. The fate of the fifth ring remains a mystery.

The wizards keep the three rings inside the Great Library. The rings, and other treasures, are inside the library basement. The basement is a maze of *illusory walls* and mechanical traps built by the most skilled trap makers (including arrow, poison needle, scything blade, crushing wall, poison gas, and flooding room traps). At the center of the maze is a vault guarded by a pair of iron golems who attack anyone without the proper password (known only to the heads of the wizard councils). The doors to the vault are made of adamantium and only open at the touch of one of the head wizards. Beyond these doors is a short hallway blocked by a *prismatic wall*, a *wall of force*, and a *wall of fire*. Beyond these is a large room with a pedestal at its center which bears the three rings. The rings are guarded by *disintegration* beams, magical shielding, and a *Leomund's secret* chest spell. The entire level is guarded against teleportation and spells such as *passwall*.





## RING OF THE IMMORTALS

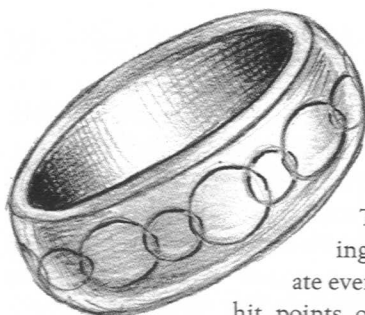
Two millennia ago a sorcerer named Nethron sought to slay his father, a silver dragon. Nethron had inherited great magical prowess from his father's blood but none of his longevity, and became obsessed with forging an artifact to bring him eternal life. Nethron crafted a ring which would grant him that boon, but needed one critical ingredient to activate it — his father's blood. He formed a band of adventurers and tricked them into killing his father.

His allies were dismayed to have been tricked into slaying a good dragon and realized Nethron's quest had corrupted him beyond the chance of redemption. Nethron killed them all except for a fighter named Waxler. Waxler spent years hunting Nethron and a decade later the two met. The fighter took Nethron's head, but realized the immortality the Ring promised would corrupt anyone. Waxler hid the Ring, but others inevitably sought it.

The Ring is slightly thicker than a typical ring — about half an inch wide. It is covered with small engraved circles but lacks a jewel or other setting and is otherwise undistinguished.

### THE RING OF THE IMMORTALS

As long as a living, mortal individual wears the *ring* he is immortal, aging neither externally or internally. The wearer is immune to mundane poisons and diseases and receives a +20 inherent bonus to all saves against magical poisons and diseases. The wearer is immune to the effects of mundane pain and receives a +20 inherent bonus to all saves against magical pain spells. He still feels the sensation but it has no harmful effect on him.



If the wearer loses a limb or organ the *ring* regenerates it in one round as per the spell whether the original limb is present or not.

The wearer has fast healing 2 that continues to operate even when is reduced to -10

hit points or lower. He cannot be killed by massive damage. The only way the wearer can die is through decapitation, the *ring's* removal, or a spell or effect that destroys his physical form, such as *disintegrate*.

The wearer may remove the *ring* whenever he wishes, but this can be dangerous. When the *ring* is removed the owner immediately ages the amount of time he has worn it. Further, at the beginning of each week the *ring* drains 1 hit point from its owner. The wearer must make a Wisdom roll (DC 30) once per month to realize this — otherwise he believes he is at full health. If he reaches 0 hit points he dies. If the wearer removes the *ring* he regains all hit points lost to it but immediately takes damage equal to the single largest attack he took since donning it.

An individual can destroy the ring by dipping it in a body's worth of blood taken from the current (or last) owner and then boiling the blood at forge temperatures.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: —.

### THE LEGEND

Following are some rumors about the *Ring* that may or may not be true.

TABLE 1–23: THE PRISTINE GLASS

1d20	Result
1	The Ring can be destroyed by exposure to subzero cold and a blow from a +5 <i>hammer</i> .
2	A newly proclaimed deity is actually a mortal wearing the Ring.
3	An insane fighter who recently escaped millennia of entombment wears the Ring.
4	A serial killer sacrifices his victims' age to beat the Ring's curse.
5	An entertainer performs death-defying escapes by secretly using the Ring.
6	The children of previous Ring wearers are themselves immortal and fight a secret war among themselves.
7	The Ring is at the bottom of a lava pool.
8	Someone is taking the Ring to a lava pool, believing that this will destroy the artifact.
9	Two rulers fight to acquire the Ring, personally risking all since the "winner" heals all damage incurred.
10	A long-lived lord wears the Ring, much to the dismay of his children.
11	The ruler of a local tribe of trolls owns the Ring.
12	A vengeful barbarian tortures his enemy while putting the Ring on him.
13	A wizard accumulates <i>rings of regeneration</i> to boost the Ring's power.
14	A vampire seeks the Ring to make himself immune to sunlight and wooden stakes.
15	The Ring lies in a crypt recently inhabited by a lich who tried to use the artifact.
16	A mysterious order, the half-dragon Silver Lords, seeks the Ring.
17	A half-celestial seeks to destroy the Ring, believing no mortal is worthy of the gods' gift of immortality.
18	An order of warrior-women seek the Ring wearer, a man who abandoned them or their female ancestors.
19	Two lovers seek a way to immortalize their love by sharing the Ring.
20	A noble seeks the Ring to resurrect his dead wife.

## RINGS OF DRAKHEN

Flame and Fume, red and green great wyrms, were mortal enemies. Their conflicts were legendary. Their petty squabbles nearly destroyed the surrounding kingdoms. The dragons were finally attacked by a concerted effort launched by an army made up of a multitude of humanoid races. The wyrms had become so dire a threat that bickering nations put aside their differences to destroy the two beasts.

But the wyrms were not completely destroyed. Their story is told in a children's song:

*Flame and Fume, Fume and Flame  
Around and around and around again  
Always at war, never the same  
Flame and Fume, Fume and Flame  
Fighting since birth, Flame and Fume  
Bodies that died, bodies exhumed  
Corpses piled high, bones are strewn  
Flame and Fume, Flame and Fume  
Flame and Fume, Fume and Flame  
Flame and Fume will live again  
In rings of their colors, beneath the fane  
Flame and Fume, Fume and Flame*



There are two versions of the Rings of Drakhen, each in the shape of a miniature dragon wrapped around the wearer's finger. The ring is colored to match the dragon it represents and the eyes are made of a precious stone: rubies for the red version and emeralds for the green version.

### RINGS OF DRAKHEN

The emerald and ruby rings bestow the powers of green and red dragons, respectively. When worn, these rings change the wearer's type to dragon. Both rings bestow enhancement bonuses on the wearer when worn: +8 to Strength, +2 to Constitution, +2 to Intelligence, and +2 to Charisma.

Both rings bestow immunity on the wearer. The emerald ring makes the wearer immune to acid. The ruby ring makes the wearer immune to fire attacks.

The rings bestow breath weapons on the wearer. The emerald ring gives the wearer a 30-foot-long cone of corrosive gas that inflicts 6d6 points of acid damage (Reflex DC 17 for half) once every 1d4 rounds. The ruby ring gives the wearer a 30-foot-long cone of fire that inflicts 6d10 points of fire damage (Reflex DC 19 for half) once every 1d4 4 rounds.

Each ring also has its own set of special abilities. The emerald ring gives the wearer the ability to breathe water. He can use *suggestion* and *dominate person* three times per day as a 20th-level sorcerer. Once a day, he can use *plant growth* and *command plants* as a 20th-level druid.

The ruby ring allows the wearer to use *suggestion* and *locate object* three times per day and *eyebite* and *discern location* once a day, all as a 20th-level sorcerer. The wearer also receives a +10 competence bonus to Jump checks.

The wearer of either ring is filled with a murderous hatred of the other and must make a Will save (DC 30) every round to resist attacking the rival wearer with everything at his disposal.

### THE LEGEND

The races that defeated Flame and Fume discovered the indestructible rings and hide them away — buried in a crypt dedicated to a god of peace hoping the Rings would never again ignite an earth-shattering war.

The crypt is *consecrated* and a poison gas trap lies in wait ten feet beyond the crypt's entrance.

**Poison Gas Trap:** CR 10; no attack roll necessary (see note below); Search (DC 21); Disable Device (DC 25). Note: Trap releases poisonous burnt other fumes.

Ten feet beyond the poison gas trap is another trap, a flame jet.

**Flame Jet:** CR 6; 1-ft.-wide, 50-ft.-long stream of flame (10d6); Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 30).

In the center of the crypt is a statue of two dragons, one red and one green, engaged in mortal combat with their jaws locked around each other's throat. They are actually 24 HD stone golems shaped in the form of Fume and Flame. The golems wait until the PCs have disabled or triggered the other two traps before attacking.

The rings are in a stone box beyond the golems. On top of the box is a small stone altar. Written on the altar is the following riddle:

*Flame and Fume, Fume and Flame  
Always together, never again  
If you would enter, show us our names  
Flame and Fume, Fume and Flame*

There is also some unreadable text written in strange runes at the end of the riddle. Both traps (see below) can be disabled if gas is somehow wafted over the altar and a flame is simultaneously lit. The traps do not count toward fulfilling these requirements. The runes are *explosive runes*.

**Explosive Runes:** 5-ft. radius (16d6); Reflex save (DC 18) for half; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

The stone box requires an Open Lock check (DC 30) to open, and has a greater glyph of warding on it.

**Greater Glyph of Warding (Acid Fog):** 30-ft. radius, 20-ft. high (2d6 every round for 20 rounds); Search (DC 31); Disable Device (DC 31).

## RINGS OF THE THREE SISTERS

The Three Sisters, or Fates, stand aloof from the concerns of mortals and gods. Since the beginning of time it has been their duty to weave the threads of all who live and die, to measure the length and quality of each life in spools of thread, and to break each strand at their whim.

Each of the Three Sisters is unique, but all are slaves to their natures. The Maiden embodies the vigor of youth and the violence of change. She fears age and favors violent, early death, and it is she who wields the bone shears that end life's journey. The Mother is the nurturer, the protector and teacher. She guides each thread across the spools and wheels of the Loom, straightening or snagging threads as she sees fit. The Crone is the weaver, the spooler and threader. She winds the threads that become a life, and she is the voice of compassion, urging her sisters to make each life as long and comfortable as possible. With their absolute mastery over fate, the Three Sisters are mighty indeed. Mighty, but not infallible.

### THE CANTICLE OF MENDUCAT

*So, at last, did Menducat stand before the Loom, and there beheld the Maiden and the Mother and the Crone, and the infinite work of their great weaving. And there, in the dust of stars and time and glory, did that great king of kings, proud liege and warrior and divine son, bend knee and plead for fate's mercy.*

### From Act 1, Scene 3 of Song of the Maiden

**Crone:** And yet I wonder... knows the babe what it asks?

**Menducat [offstage]:** I do, lady. I ask for something even gods dare not desire. Give me leave to speak, and you will see I understand.

**Mother:** Children understand nothing, and prove it anew with each word. Still your tongue, lest you ruin your desire from the want of it.

**Crone:** Speak not so harshly, sister. Mother you are, but still child to me. But, perhaps, just perhaps, that is the answer. Who am I to speak? I, who was never young. I, who was born old enough to be Mother's mother. And who are you to speak, dear sister, Mother who has borne no children and yet is mother to all children, who gives love but never tasted its sweetness. Perhaps then, of all of us, only Maiden, daughter and sister of the daughter who is my sister; perhaps only she has right to speak.

**Maiden [thinking]:** I see in him what is always seen. Decay. Emptiness and death. An Ending. But in myself, I...

### CANTICLE OF MENDUCAT

*So when Menducat had taken all the Sisters would freely give, he fled their hall, and took with him a spool of golden thread, a life which would go un-lived. And from it, with the aid of great magics, he shaped three great rings. Three rings in which he*

*bound fate and time and destiny, and the love of the Maiden. Three rings which gave him dominion over all other men.*

### From Act 3, Scene 2 of Song of the Maiden

**Mother:** What says the scorned? Despite these ills her considerations have caused, fate demands her reckoning alone.

**Crone:** Speak, sister. As fate demands, so must Mother and Crone.

**Maiden:** Hate, I think, is the choice most easily spoken, and he has given me much cause to speak it. And yet what has he given that I have not asked to receive? I am not bound to fate as he is. It dances at my whim, and so has he danced, though it seems otherwise. So I will speak no word of hate, or of love. Fate; fate then is my answer, as it must always be. Let him find, at last, his proper fate.

**Mother & Crone:** Then let Maiden and Mother and Crone be as one.

**Maiden & Mother & Crone [unison]:** He has taken from us, and so let us give freely again, that fate may render unto him his reward.

**Crone:** So it is done.

*[sounds from offstage]*

**Crone:** Do you hear, sisters? It speaks, but I cannot understand.

**Mother:** It speaks its name, sisters, but I cannot hear.

**Maiden:** Nemesis. Its name is Nemesis.

**Nemesis [enters from left]:** Fate will have its own.

The Ring of the Maiden is of bleached bone, and upon it are carved images of death and decay. The ring's edges are honed to razor sharpness, and chafe and cut its bearer's flesh regardless of precautions taken. While the ring is worn, it throbs with a rapid, strong heartbeat.

The Ring of the Mother is bleached bone wrapped in golden thread. One side of the ring is razor sharp, the other worn smooth. Always warm to the touch, it pulses with a steady, heavy heartbeat.

The Ring of the Crone is of tightly wound golden thread — both sides are worn smooth with age, and an ever shifting assortment of miniature images from the wearer's life are carved upon its surface. Always cool to the touch, the ring throbs with a faint, fluttering heartbeat.

## RINGS OF THE THREE SISTERS

### Ring of the Maiden

The wearer of the ring of the maiden can see the future with perfect clarity, but only in relation to death, violence and decay. He gains a more powerful version of foresight, meaning he is never surprised or flat-footed, receives a +4 insight bonus to AC and Reflex saves, and gains the improved evasion and uncanny dodge abilities as a rogue of his character level.



At will, the wearer can bombard those nearby with images of their inevitable demise, forcing all living creatures within a 30-foot radius to attempt a Will save (DC 30) or be affected as if by a *fear* spell cast by a 30th-level sorcerer.

Additionally, the *ring's* wearer can, once a week with a successful touch attack, instantly bring about the death of any living creature, causing them to age and decay in a moment.



Creatures immune to aging are unaffected by this attack and a Fortitude save (DC 35) negates the effect.

Finally, the wearer of the *ring of the maiden* benefits from the boundless energy of youth. He gains the Endurance and Lightning Reflexes feats so long as he wears the ring.

The *ring* is capricious and cruel as the Maiden herself, taking every opportunity to cause mischief for its owner and his allies. Once a week, the ring can spontaneously use its fear ability to affect its owner and all allies within a 30-foot radius of him. Alternately, it can instead temporarily paralyze its wearer or an ally within 30 ft. with indecision, affecting them as if by either a *confusion* or *slow* spell cast by a 30th-level sorcerer. It can instead grant one of its wielder's opponents a +20 insight bonus to his next attack roll, as per the *true strike* spell, so long as the opponent is within a 30-foot radius of the *ring*.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: —.

### Ring of the Mother

The wearer of the *ring of the mother* suffers none of the negative effects of aging and cannot be affected by spells or spell-like effects that age or remove age from a victim. So long as he wears the *ring*, the wearer suffers none of the normal penalties to his Strength, Dexterity or Constitution when advancing an age category, though he continues to gain the normal bonuses to his Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma. In addition, though he is not immortal, his natural life span is maximized and doubled. For example, a human wielder would live for 220 years.

The wearer also benefits from a permanent *haste* effect and can temporarily *stop time*, as per the spell *time stop* cast by a 20th-level wizard, three times per day.



The wielder of the *ring* can change the course of recent events. All saving throws, attack

and damage rolls, and skill checks are rolled twice if they directly affect the ring's wearer. The wearer uses the better result, while all opponents within a 30-foot radius are forced to use the worse of the two.

Finally, the wearer of the *ring* possesses both the vitality and watchful eye of the shepherd of all men's lives. He benefits from both the Alertness and Great Fortitude feats.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: —.

### Ring of the Crone

The *ring of the crone* grants its wearer absolute knowledge of all historical events and the ability to "see" past events with perfect clarity. He gains a +30 insight bonus to Knowledge (history) skill checks and may use the bardic knowledge class ability as a 20th-level bard.

By concentrating for one full hour and entering a trance state, the wearer can send his consciousness into any point in the past, where he can observe, but not interact with, historical events. When using this retrocognition ability he is, for all intents, a phantom. His presence cannot be detected by magic or natural senses and he is unaffected by attacks, spells, and environmental effects. While observing the past, the wearer enjoys limited omniscience, allowing him to see all participants with absolute clarity, though he has no access to their thoughts. The wearer can observe an event for a maximum of one hour. After that time, his consciousness instantly returns to his body.

The *ring's* wearer also possesses the ability to duplicate himself by dividing the years of his life into chunks, creating copies of himself at various ages. So, for example, an 80-year-old woman who bears the *ring* could split herself into two 40-year-olds, four 20-year-olds, or any other combination adding up to a total of 80 years. Regardless of age, each duplicate has the powers, experience and knowledge of the original, though only one bears the *ring*. Once the wearer has split himself, he cannot rearrange his age to create further duplicates. If a duplicate is slain, the years of its life are distributed equally among the remaining duplicates. The *ring's* wearer ages 10 years for each duplicate he created with this power when one dies. The split can be maintained for a maximum of four hours each day.

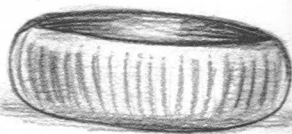
The wearer of the *ring* possesses the strength of will that comes only with age. He gains the Iron Will feat.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: —.

### Combined Powers

Separately, the *rings of the three sisters* possess immense power.

When brought together, their might shakes heaven's pillars. The three rings may be worn simultaneously, unlike most magical rings. In addition to each individual ring's powers, the bearer of all three rings gains the following abilities.



He gains the benefit of the three sisters' millennia of wisdom, perspective and experience, receiving a +4 insight bonus to Wisdom.

He gains consummate mastery over fate and destiny. He is considered to have rolled a 20 on any attack rolls, skill checks, ability score checks or saving throws he attempts, and inflicts maximum damage with all spells and attacks. His enemies must still roll all attack rolls, skill checks, ability score checks, saving throws, and damage rolls twice, keeping the worst result.

Once a month, he can permanently age or make younger all living beings within a 10 mile radius by up to two age categories. One hour of absolute, undisturbed concentration is required to activate this ability, and victims are allowed a Fortitude save (DC 30) to ignore the effects.

Finally, one who wears all three rings can not just observe, but interact with past events. When using the *ring of the crone's* retrocognition ability, he can speak with, and use mind-affecting spells and spell-like effects upon, the participants of the historical event he is observing. Each time this ability is used, the wearer is permanently and irrevocably aged one age category.

## LEGEND

Though mortal and divine alike are held hostage to the strange whims of fate, the Three Sisters are not without compassion. When the threads that make up the three Rings were stolen from their loom, they breathed a single spark of their essence into the divine ether. The spark grew and flared and took on a life of its own, a phantom intelligence that set itself in opposition to the Rings of the Three Sisters. Whenever the three Rings are brought together by a single wielder, the spark manifests itself on the mortal plane, merging with the spirit of a chosen being to create a champion to stand against the Ring's might. The nemesis.

## Nemesis

Nemesis is a template that can be applied to any aberration, beast, dragon, fey, giant, humanoid, magical beast, monstrous humanoid, outsider, or shapechanger with an Intelligence score of 3 or greater. Creatures who gain this template have their type changed to outsider.

A nemesis creature uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities, except where otherwise noted.

**Special Attacks:** A nemesis creature retains all the special attacks of the base creature and gains the following:

- **Slow:** Three times per day, the nemesis can generate a *slow* field, as the spell cast by a 20th-level sorcerer and affecting a 30-foot radius. The *slow* effect automatically affects the wearer of the combined Rings, counteracting the Ring of the Mother's permanent *haste* effect.

**Special Qualities:** A nemesis creature retains all the special qualities of the base creature and also gains the following:

- **Ageless:** The nemesis is immune to effects of magical aging. He suffers none of the normal penalties to Strength, Dexterity or Constitution when advancing an age category, but still gains the standard bonuses to Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma. Though he is not immortal, his normal life span is doubled and maximized. He cannot die of old age until the Rings of the Three Sisters are separated from one another.
- **Independent Fate:** The nemesis is absolutely immune to all the powers of the Rings of the Three Sisters, including the Ring of the Crone's *retrocognition* ability, and the combined Rings' ability to influence past events.
- **Sense Bearer:** The nemesis is always unfailingly able to sense the general location of the Rings of the Three Sisters. He is able to pinpoint their location to within a mile, regardless of distance or dimensional or temporal location. No magic, regardless of its power, can hide the Rings' location from him.
- **Serial Immortality:** Should the nemesis be slain, it immediately manifests in another creature. The new nemesis appears somewhere within 500 miles of the current location of the Rings, and is made instantly aware of all relevant events that have occurred since the Rings were brought together.
- **Temporal Blindspot:** The nemesis is immune to all location and detection magic wielded by the wearer of the Rings of the Three Sisters. Further, all allies within a 60-foot radius of the nemesis are immune to the *retrocognition* power of the Ring of the Crone, and cannot be affected by the combined Rings' power to influence past events.

**Abilities:** Str +4, Con +4, Int +4, Wis +4.

**Feats:** As the base creature plus Great Fortitude, Iron Will and Lightning Reflexes.

**Challenge Rating:** As the base creature +2.

## ROD OF HIGH ARCANA

The personal scepter of Tzor, the god of magic, the Rod of High Arcana is the tool with which he judges and regulates mage duels. Tales of its power spread throughout the arcane community, until one day the rod was stolen.

The power-hungry archmage Raltar gated into Tzor's tower while the god was away, snatched the rod, and teleported back to his lab before he was noticed. Knowing that he would never be able to keep the rod, Raltar attempted to analyze and copy its powers. Before Raltar could finish, Tzor returned to his tower and discovered that the rod was missing. Thinking he had merely misplaced it, the eccentric deity willed the rod back to his hand, interrupting Raltar's work.

Though he was not able to duplicate the rod, Raltar did copy some of its powers into his staff. After some additional enchantments, he had created a powerful artifact of his own, though it was nowhere near the power of the Rod of High Arcana. This staff was the first *staff of the magi*, which was later copied several times before the knowledge to create them was lost.

### ROD OF HIGH ARCANA

The *rod of high arcana* grants its wielder access to any five metamagic feats of his choosing. Once chosen, these feats may not be changed for that person. The rod confers a +10 competence bonus to all Knowledge (arcana) and Spellcraft checks not related to the rod's use.

The rod has 12 charges per day. Each charge reduces by one the level of the spell slot taken up by a spell enhanced with a metamagic feat. You cannot reduce it below the original level of the spell. For example, a *maximized fireball* may be cast as a 5th level spell by using up one charge, a 4th level spell with two charges, and a 3rd level spell with three charges. Spellcasters who do not prepare spells expend the charges when they cast a spell. Wizards and others who prepare spells each day expend charges while preparing spells.

If a spell or spell effect is cast, targeted, or passes within 30 feet of the wielder, the wielder instantly knows what spell it is, what its target is, where it originated, what its caster level is, and any metamagic feats enhancing it. He may then choose to make a Spellcraft check to modify the spell's effects. He can change the target(s) of the spell to another valid (within the spell's range/parameters) target (DC 25), counter the spell with *dispel magic* (DC 20, up to 5/day), add or remove metamagic enhancements to the

spell (DC 25; adding enhancements expends charges equal to the total increase in level of the metamagic enhancements), reflect the spell back at the caster as *spell turning* (DC 20, up to 5/day, wielder must be the target of the spell), or seize control of the spell and cast it as his own. When seizing spells, the rod's user may interrupt the casting and complete the spell as a free action, choosing the target and receiving the benefits as if he had cast the spell. This final ability has a Spellcraft DC of 30. These powers may only be used by an arcane spellcaster and the rod may be used in this way only once per round. Its effects do not apply to spell-like or supernatural abilities.

The rod of high arcana also has the following powers: continuous: *detect magic*, *read magic*, *see invisibility*; at will: *light*, *telekinesis* (100 lb., sustained force only), *feather fall*, *spectral hand*; 5/day: *dimension door*, *arcane eye*, *fly*, *major creation*, *permanency*; 3/day: *hold monster*, *plane shift*, *greater dispelling*, *chain lightning*, *delayed blast fireball*, *magic jar*; 1/day: *greater shadow evocation*, *shades*, *disintegrate*, *summon monster IX*. All these spells are cast as if by a 20th-level wizard.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 1 lb.

### THE LEGEND

Using the Rod of High Arcana requires a great understanding of the nature and practice of metamagic. In order to use any of the rod's powers (besides those that mimic spells), one must possess the following feat.

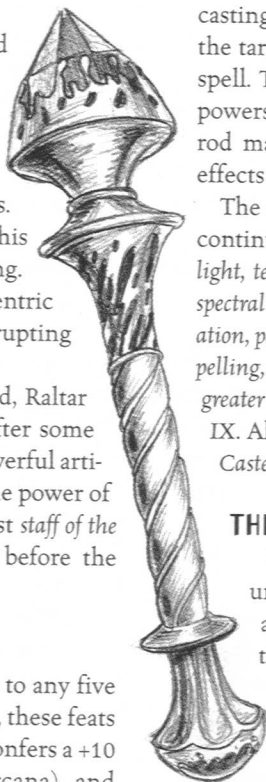
### TOGGLE METAMAGIC (General)

You can choose not to apply the enhanced effects of a spell prepared with a metamagic feat.

**Prerequisites:** Any metamagic feat, 5 ranks in Spellcraft

**Benefit:** If a spellcaster with this feat prepares a spell with a metamagic feat, he has the option to drop the effects of the metamagic when casting the spell. Dropping the metamagic feat does not reduce the level of the spell.

For example, Foakir the 12th-level wizard uses his 6th-level spell slot to prepare a *fireball* with the *Widen Spell* feat. Later that day, Foakir decides to cast *fireball* at a cluster of kobolds. Unfortunately, they are in a small room and the rest of his party is keeping the kobolds at bay from the edges of the room; with the increase in area of effect provided by *Widen Spell*, his *fireball* would also hit them. When it comes time to cast the spell, he tells the DM that he will not have his spell widened. He casts it like a regular *fireball*, but it still uses a 5th-level spell slot.





## SANGUAVORE, THE BANE OF MAN

Apschai, god of insects, plagued mankind. His insect swarms nearly annihilated the crops of Ahnum-Surket, transforming the fertile kingdom into a barren desert.

Fearing the end, the sages of Ahnum-Surket struck upon a solution. They would use the artifact of one evil god to destroy another. Through an ancient ritual, the sages of Ahnum-Surket bound the soul of Apschai into a Kenblade (see page 59).

Because the essence of Apschai was spread throughout the insect swarms, capturing him required a suitable lure. The sages smothered the Kenblade in honey and blood. Then they waited.

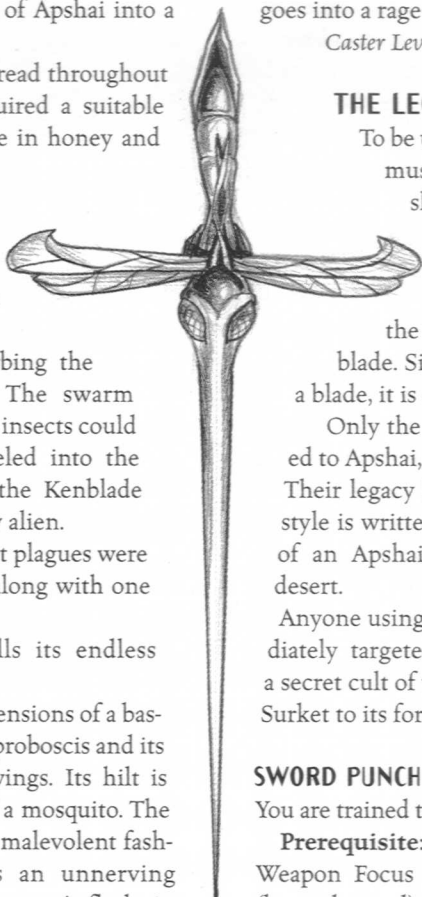
It was not long before every biting and stinging insect for miles around, each filled with the divine essence of Apschai, swarmed to the sword. The sages sprung their trap.

The Kenblade blurred to life, absorbing the entire mile-wide swarm into itself. The swarm shrieked and undulated, but none of the insects could escape the swirling vortex that funneled into the blade. When the swarm disappeared, the Kenblade was changed into something completely alien.

The sages' plan worked. Apschai's insect plagues were destroyed. But the sword disappeared, along with one of the sages.

And somewhere, Sanguavore fulfills its endless hunger.

Sanguavore has only the most basic dimensions of a bastard sword. Its blade is a long, tube-like proboscis and its cross guard is shaped like mosquito wings. Its hilt is carved into the folded body and legs of a mosquito. The eyes on the cross guard are slanted in a malevolent fashion. When held, Sanguavore makes an unnerving buzzing sound. When driven into a creature's flesh, its long tube slowly turns red at the base running to the tip of the blade.



### SANGUAVORE

*Sanguavore* is a +5 *bastard sword* that inflicts piercing damage.

Every strike of *Sanguavore* drains blood from any living being it touches, causing 1d4 points of temporary Constitution damage. It bestows those Constitution points on the wielder until the wielder spends 2 rounds without making an attack with *Sanguavore*.

*Sanguavore* can also be thrown, and controls its flight to the target with its wings. Throwing it in this fashion does not incur the usual -4 penalty for throwing a melee weapon.

On a natural 20, *Sanguavore* spears a target, automatically inflicting maximum damage each round. Dislodging it requires an opposed Strength check between the victim and the creature wielding this weapon, who can take no other action other than holding *Sanguavore* in place to allow it to feed. The victim is considered entangled as per a net when skewered by the blade.

Once *Sanguavore* tastes enough blood (10 or more Constitution points drained) it can pitch its wielder into a bloodlust rage. If the wielder fails a Will save (DC 30), he goes into a rage as a barbarian of 20th level.

*Caster Level:* 20th; *Weight:* 10 lb.

### THE LEGEND

To be used effectively, the wielder of *Sanguavore* must learn to use a piercing weapon in the shape of a very heavy sword. This makes it a difficult weapon to master. Masters of the spear are accustomed to using a lighter, longer weapon, while masters of the sword are accustomed to a more balanced blade. Since *Sanguavore* has a long tube instead of a blade, it is effective only if thrust into an opponent.

Only the Apschaiti, a sect of holy warriors dedicated to Apschai, know the ancient art of sword punching. Their legacy has long since passed, but their fighting style is written in ancient hieroglyphics on the pillars of an Apschai temple buried in the Ahnum-Surket desert.

Anyone using this ancient feat in public will be immediately targeted for extermination by the Al-Adzeen, a secret cult of warriors dedicated to restoring Ahnum-Surket to its former glory.

### SWORD PUNCH (General)

You are trained to punch your sword through opponents.

**Prerequisite:** Str 15+, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (bastard sword).

**Benefit:** When wielding a bastard sword, you shove your blade deep into an opponent on a critical hit. By keeping the blade buried in your foe, you automatically inflict damage each round thereafter unless your opponent makes an opposed Strength check. Success causes the victim normal damage as the blade is pulled out. The victim is considered entangled as per a net when skewered by the blade. You may take no other actions aside from holding the blade in place in order to keep the victim skewered. If you break your hold, your blade comes free without dealing any additional damage.

## THE SCARAB ARMOR OF T'RA'LKK

Long ago a now-forgotten civilization dwelling in the Southern Wastelands revered the scarab-god T'ra'lk. This race of wizards and alchemists forged a great suit of armor in their god's image and imbued it with their own pale emulation of its powers. They succeeded, but their entire civilization fell a decade later for reasons still not entirely clear. Some scholars assert that T'ra'lk itself wiped them out for daring to emulate its image. The artifact known as the Scarab Armor is the only evidence of their existence.

Scholars who have tried to find out more about T'ra'lk, a deity shrouded in mystery, note that an insect race typically possesses the Armor. However, it is not clear if T'ra'lk still exists — there is no record of any other humanoid race ever worshipping this deity. The insect races may know of the god and have some connection to it via the Scarab Armor, but they refuse to discuss their religious beliefs with outsiders.

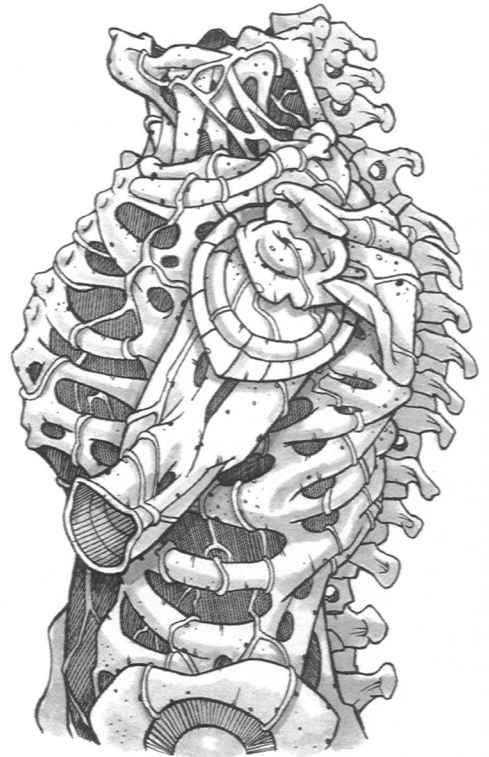
The Scarab Armor is a merging of an insect's exoskeleton and an enlarged human skeleton. It is large enough that a human-sized individual could slip inside it and seal its clasps. The Armor is made of a dull-white chitinous substance covered with a series of vein-like green tubes. When the wearer activates the Armor liquids can be seen flowing through the tubes. There is no visible means to inject the liquid into the wearer.

### THE SCARAB ARMOR OF T'RA'LKK

Only a human-sized individual of lawful alignment can wear this suit of +5 *scale mail*. The *scarab armor* possesses the *acid resistance*, *invulnerability*, and *light fortification* special abilities, and its wearer can communicate with any intelligent insectoid creature. The *armor* also possesses a unique form of the *glamered* special ability, letting its owner appear as any man-sized insectoid creature he desires.

The *armor* stores potions and then transfers the properties directly into the wearer by mental command. The user can place up to ten different potions or oils into storage tubes contained in the *armor's* large-bone areas and trigger the release of any stored potions as desired. Triggering a release is a free action that doesn't require a free hand and doesn't trigger an attack of opportunity. Potions activated have their normal effect and duration.

The *armor's* bone taint gives all potions the same taste, making it difficult for an individual to identify any potions already within the *armor* upon discovery. When the *armor* is first discovered it contains 1d10 random potions/oils.



To destroy the *armor* someone must place it in a sealed chamber and then fill the chamber with 5,000 scarabs, enough to completely cover the artifact. The scarabs gnaw away at the *armor* and after a week consume it completely.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 30 lbs.

### THE LEGEND

A platoon of formians guard the Armor in the ruins of an ancient civilization deep within the earth. The ruins are covered with murals depicting a being that resembles the Armor — perhaps T'ra'lk itself, perhaps a previous Armor wearer. The formians do not worship the Armor or the images, but simply guard the Armor which rests upon an altar in the ruins' center.

Under their command of their leader, the myrmarch Kk'tlk'takt, the formians attack anyone who comes for the Scarab Armor regardless of alignment or intent. They fight to the death to protect the Armor and refuse to negotiate or discuss their reasons for doing so.

**Kk'tlk'takt, Formian myrmarch:** CR 14, SZ L (formian); HD 16d8+64; hp 140; Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 40 ft.; AC 28 (-1 size, +4 Dex, +15 natural), Atks sting +19/+14/+9/+4 melee (2d4+4) or bite +17/+12/+7/+2 melee (2d6+2) or +4 javelin +19/+14/+9/+4 ranged (1d6+4 and poison); SA Hive mind, poison, spell-like abilities; SQ Immunities, resistances, fast healing 2, SR 25; SV Fort +14, Ref +14, Will +13; Str 19, Dex 19, Con 18, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 17; AL LN. Skills: Climb +18, Craft (weaponsmithing) +12, Diplomacy +16, Hide +15, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Listen +18, Move Silently +19, Search +18, Sense Motive +19, Spot +19. Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Multiattack. Possessions: +4 lawful returning javelin, rod of metal and mineral detection, golembane scarab.

## SCEPTER OF THE HORDEMASTER

*Goblins are such splendid creatures. Orcs and kobolds have their uses, of course, but there is something so very satisfying about the sight of a group of mounted knights or a platoon of elven archers being overrun by a hundred screaming goblins.*

*It is, probably, a terrifying way to die, but it serves them right for being so damned unreasonable. It is so hard to get any work done in this confusing, mixed-up world — what with all the politics and holy wars and hoarding of knowledge — can you really blame me for wanting to bring a bit of order to the place? Try to make the world run a little more smoothly, and what do they do? They throw it in your face, calling you 'Dark Lord' and 'Ravaging Villain' and 'Heartless Oppressor'! And they do it with such a frustrating, holier-than-thou attitude that you just can't help but want to prove them right.*

*The goblins, however, submitted happily to my rule — as did the orcs, the kobolds, and the sahuagin. Even the drow went along after a little prodding. In retrospect, I wonder if I ever really needed the scepter in the first place. However, though it took me a decade to forge, it was worth every minute of it. There is something about blasting the enemy with battle magic from a lonely cliff that gives me the feeling that I am doing things right. Call me a sucker for the dramatic, but in the end, it's the little things that make it all worthwhile.*

— The musings of Dreadmage Quinn

### SCEPTER OF THE HORDEMASTER

The *scepter of the hordemaster* is a powerful rod that gives its wielder access to powerful battle magic at the head of a massive army. It functions as a +5 *adamantine heavy mace* enchanted with the *defending, mighty cleaving, speed, unholy, and wounding abilities*. The scepter grants its wielder a +5 deflection bonus to Armor Class, a +5 enhancement bonus to both Strength and Charisma, and access to the Leadership feat.

The scepter may be used to “command” up to 5,000 hit dice of evil humanoids. Commanded creatures treat the wielder as their absolute sovereign, following him into battle and protecting him at all costs. Creatures receive a Will save to avoid being commanded (DC 25), but may choose to forgo the save if they view the wielder as a worthy leader. The creatures remain commanded until slain or dismissed.

When the wielder leads troops into battle, whether they are commanded followers or simply hired mercenaries, they gain a +1 morale bonus to attack and damage. Their base speed increases by 5 feet and creatures with the ability to rage can do so for twice as long.

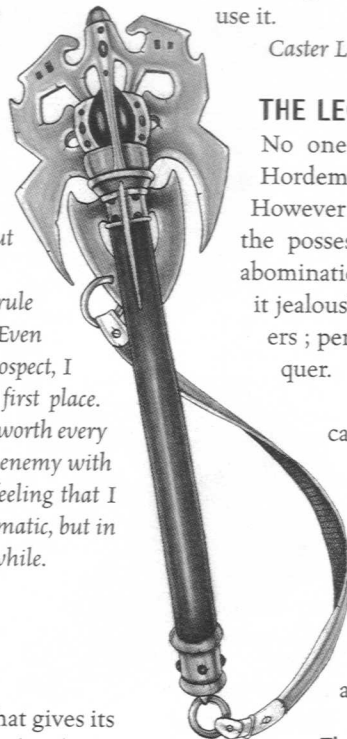
The scepter also has the following spell powers: 5/day: *color spray, darkness, scare, fireball*; 3/day: *confusion, ice storm, cloudkill, chain lightning*; 1/day: *horrid wilting, power word: kill, firestorm*. These powers may only be used when leading creatures in battle, and drain strength from commanded creatures. Each time a power is used, a number of creatures whose total hit dice equal 10 times the activated spell's level are drained of life, becoming smoking husks. Only creatures bound with the scepter's command ability may be drained in this manner. If the wielder does not have enough followers to power a spell ability, he cannot use it.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 10 lb.

### THE LEGEND

No one is quite sure how the Scepter of the Hordemaster ended up in the hands of the yuan-ti. However it came to pass, the scepter is currently in the possession of a powerful outcast, the yuan-ti abomination cleric Thesslesstha. Thesslesstha guards it jealously, but has not been able to access its powers; perhaps she lacks the necessary drive to conquer.

Thesslesstha lives in a desolate mountain cave, far from the reaches of yuan-ti and human civilizations. The cave is kept warm by geothermal vents, which makes it an excellent home for the cold-blooded priest. Lit by wall torches, the caves have 15-foot ceilings and four small rooms: a bed and bath chamber, a small treasure trove (which includes the scepter), a study, and a shrine to some dark god.



**Thesslesstha, Yuan-ti abomination Clr 9:** CR 18; SZ L (monstrous humanoid); HD 16d8+48; hp 140; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; AC 20 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +10 natural); Atks +3 unholy falchion +22/+16/+11 melee (2d4+9); SA Spells, rebuke undead, spell-like abilities, psionics, constrict 1d6+6; SQ Spells, SR 16; SV Fort +12, Ref +10, Will +16; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 19, Wis 20, Cha 15; AL CE. Skills: Concentration +20, Knowledge (Arcana, Religion) +19, Hide +9, Listen +15, Spot +15, Spellcraft +16; Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Dodge, Expertise, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus: Knowledge (Religion), Extend Spell, Empower Spell; Spells Prepared (6/6+1/5+1/4+1/3+1/1+1; Domains: Destruction, Evil): 0 — *create water, detect magic, guidance, inflict minor wounds, light, read magic*; 1st — *bane, cause fear, curse water, detect good, inflict light wounds, magic weapon, shield of faith*; 2nd — *augury, darkness, enthrall, hold person, make whole, shatter*; 3rd — *bestow curse, create food and water, locate object, magic circle against good, stone shape*; 4th — *dismissal, inflict critical wounds, lesser planer ally, unholy blight*; 5th — *circle of doom, ethereal jaunt*.

Thesslesstha is a yuan-ti abomination with a human head and arms. She lives as a hermit, where she prays to her god and tries to unlock the powers of the scepter.



## THE SEVEN SPHERES OF ANDOR-KRALIK

In the Second Age Andor-Kralik was the most powerful wizard of his era. By the age of twenty he had ruthlessly conquered the nation of Belaski and looked to his seven neighboring nations for his next conquests. The first ruler, Demeskan, had mastered every spell and no one had challenged him in decades. Andor-Kralik launched a surprise attack, defeated Demeskan in a duel of magic, and imprisoned him.

Against Ynolos, a sorcerer who could counter any spell, Andor-Kralik employed physical combat. Triumphant, the wizard-king imprisoned Ynolos and immediately moved against his third rival, Janosl. Janosl's skill at destroying magic objects was no match against Andor-Kralik's unaided spellcasting and he quickly fell.

Andor-Kralik struck at the wizards Cothos Demon-Speaker, Murklas the Overbearing, and Tanleth the Fantastic and defeated them all. His final opponent, Orlan, was a cleric rather than a mage. When Andor-Kralik came Orlan offered no resistance but simply called down a great curse, one so powerful its utterance shattered the palace where they stood.

The triumphant wizard-king now prepared a great ritual and killed all seven of his prisoners simultaneously. He extracted a piece of each one's soul into a specially crafted Sphere. When the ritual was complete the Seven Spheres rose into the air at Andor-Kralik's mental command. He smiled and went forth to conquer a world.

With the Seven Spheres' power Andor-Kralik conquered nation after nation, eventually falling at the hands of a mere acolyte of the deity Orlan had worshiped. The acolyte, Pendrok, did not desire power and ordered the Seven Spheres be separated far and wide across the lands. But power calls to power, and many have sought the Spheres. While some have gained one Sphere and a few have acquired two, only a handful have acquired three; only one person, Kal'tek, gathered more. This rogue-wizard acquired five of the Spheres but they were not enough to assure his consolidation of Thieves' Guilds across the Northern Continent.

The Spheres are 2 inches in diameter and made of an unknown silvery metal. They are smooth and unmarked but their surfaces swirl with reflected light; some claim faces occasionally appear within the metal.

### THE SEVEN SPHERES OF ANDOR-KRALIK

To attune himself to a sphere, an individual must make a Knowledge (arcana) skill check followed by a Concentration skill check (each at DC 30). For each sphere to which the wielder has already attuned he receives a +1 circumstance bonus to both skill checks. Once he is attuned the owner may mentally command the spheres over any distance. He can see whatever a sphere would see, although he can only focus his senses through one sphere at a time. The spheres can see in the dark up to 60 feet away and hear normally but possess no sense of taste, smell, or touch.

The owner may, as a free action, have one or more attuned spheres attack an opponent. Each sphere has a base attack bonus of +8/+3 and does 1d8 damage. If the owner controls two or more spheres he may have them attack individually or in a group. A group of attacking spheres shares a single set of to-hit rolls and inflicts 1d8 damage per sphere.

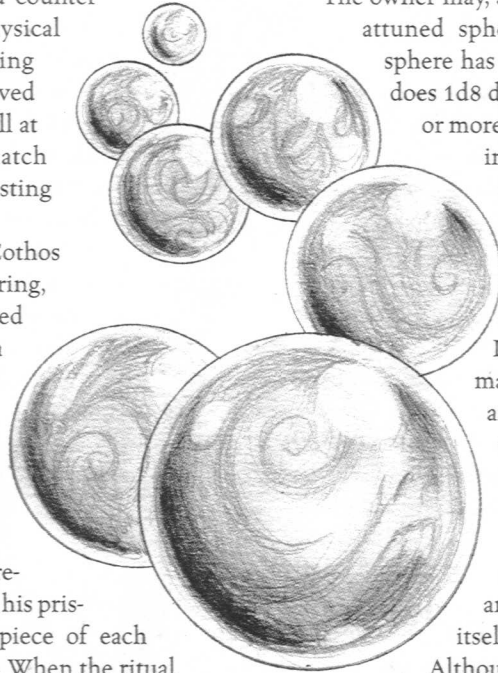
Each sphere may deflect incoming missiles as if it possessed the Deflect Arrows feat. Each sphere may deflect one incoming missile and has a +8 Reflex save. A sphere that deflects a missile cannot attack that round.

The force propelling the spheres is literally unstoppable and their surfaces are too slick for anyone to grasp. A sphere can hold itself in place as an immovable rod.

Although a sphere is not shaped for grasping it can barricade a door. If somehow locked away a sphere batters away at the walls confining it until it escapes in 1 round per point of wall hardness. If transported to a different plane a sphere can gate itself back to the owner's current plane.

Each sphere possesses a unique magical ability besides the standard abilities listed above. A sphere takes a standard action to use its special ability and cannot attack or deflect missiles on the same round. Each sphere can use its power up to 7 times a day unless otherwise stated.

- Sphere #1 can cast any wizard or sorcerer spell at 20th level. It can only cast a specific spell once per week. The owner doesn't need to know the spell; the sphere supplies the necessary knowledge. The sphere doesn't require any spell components but it cannot speak or convey any orders, questions, or desires if it uses a mind-affecting spell. Its owner, if present, may give such commands and speak as necessary.



## RELICS

- Sphere #2 counterspells any spell that is cast or activates within a 30-foot radius at its owner's command. It can respond with the speed of thought, so even if its owner is surprised by the spell, he can command the sphere to absorb it. This ability may be used once per day.
- Sphere #3 destroys all enchantments and permanent magical effects within a 20-foot radius at its owner's command as if it were a rod of cancellation. Targeted items do not receive a save. The sphere cannot destroy the magic of an artifact. This ability may be used once per day.
- Sphere #4 summons any outsider creature the owner desires for 20 rounds. If the owner wishes to call on a specific named extraplanar creature it may make a Will save (DC 24) to resist, and a further Will save (DC 24) to disobey a command that is self-destructive or would require it to act against its alignment. This ability may be used once per day.
- Sphere #5 disintegrates up to 100 cubic feet of any non-living matter. It cannot destroy artifacts and any targeted matter doesn't receive a save. This ability may be used once per day.
- Sphere #6 projects a visual and audio image of the location's history within a 20-foot radius for seven minutes. The owner must provide a specific time for the sphere to reach back to project. It may project the image from any moment in the past and ignores all anti-magical blocking. Anyone present may step "into" the image but they cannot interact with it. This ability may be used once per day.

- Sphere #7 can resurrect one individual per day. The individual cannot have been dead for more than 200 years and doesn't lose a level or point of Constitution.

### THE LEGEND

To destroy a sphere two or more individuals must simultaneously cast disintegrate and counterspell the trap the soul holding the victim's essence within the sphere. This method of destruction is not currently known. Destroying one sphere has no effect on the others.

- One of Andor-Kralik's imprisoned wizards, Ynolos, came back as a lich and can track the second Sphere. Once he acquires the stolen essence he gains the second Sphere's power to counter any spell at will without limit.
- Pendrok, the acolyte who defeated Andor-Kralik eons ago, has maintained his life through mystical means while awaiting a prophesied day when a wizard will again collect all seven Spheres and raise an army of conquest. Pendrok keeps his identity secret and uses any means to void the prophecy. He tricks the PCs into recovering the Spheres and fighting his battles for him while preserving his strength to personally fight the wizard.
- A cult devoted to Andor-Kralik schemes to resurrect their inspiration and knows of a ritual requiring all seven Spheres that allow them to bring him back. They hire the PCs to find the Spheres and kill them upon success, or attack if the PCs already have one or more Spheres.

TABLE 1-24: THE SEVEN SPHERES OF ANDOR-KRALIK

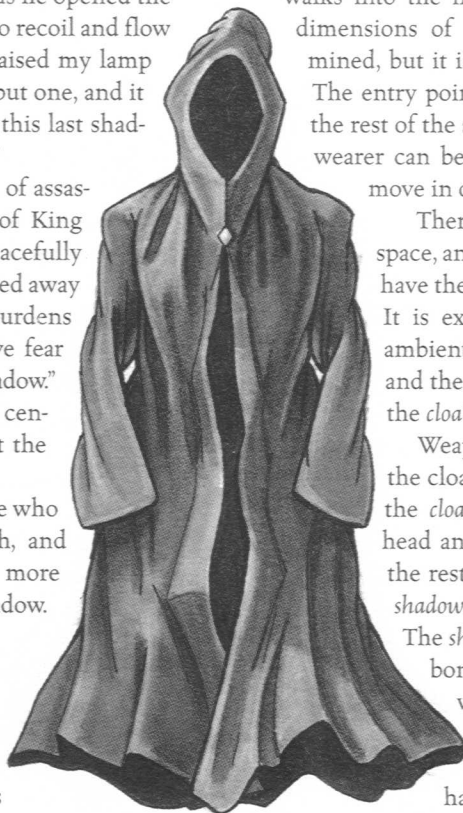
1d20	Result
1	A necromancer gathers multiple Spheres and uses a local mausoleum for a base of operations.
2	A youthful wizard bolsters his reputation by using the first Sphere.
3	An assassin kills wizards using the second Sphere to counter their spells.
4	A strange "plague" of magical items losing their power is connected to the third Sphere.
5	An insane sorcerer summons outsider creatures with the fourth Sphere and lets them run wild.
6	A non-spellcaster uses the fifth Sphere to sabotage a city building.
7	The local sheriff seeks the sixth Sphere to replay a mystically warded murder.
8	A queen seeks the seventh Sphere to resurrect her dead husband.
9	A crippled mute wizard seeks the first Sphere to mentally cast his spells through it.
10	A cleric seeks the second Sphere to counter the spells of his deity's rival god.
11	A fighter seeks the third Sphere to defeat an opponent who wears magic armor.
12	A paladin wants the fourth Sphere to summon and then defeat a reclusive demon.
13	A mining company needs the fifth Sphere to reach a vein of platinum.
14	A husband seeks the sixth Sphere to replay cherished moments with his dead wife.
15	A cleric out of favor with his deity seeks the seventh Sphere to resurrect a friend.
16	A wizard discovers how to channel absorbed spells from the second Sphere to the first, making the latter even more powerful.
17	A half-orc warlord seeks the seventh Sphere believing he can use it to torture and kill his hated enemy again, and again, and again.
18	A pit fiend believes the fourth Sphere is responsible for the disappearance of his minions.
19	A family seeks the second Sphere to break an ancestral curse.
20	The ghost of Andor-Kralik directs unwitting pawns to perform a ritual to bring him back.

## THE SHADOWCLOAK

The Shadowcloak was first recorded during the Delving of Pajeir, when explorers opened a chamber deep underground. One adventurer described how, as he opened the door, “the darkness in the room seemed to recoil and flow away from the encroaching light. As I raised my lamp higher, the shadows slipped away — all but one, and it took me seven heartbeats to realize that this last shadow was actually a garment on a pedestal.”

The *cloak* fell into the hands of a guild of assassins. In his description of the funeral of King Aelric, a cleric wrote, “The king sleeps peacefully now. All his worries and cares are smoothed away in death, and chief among these lifted burdens is the fear of every shadow. We who live fear death by darkness. We fear the moving shadow.” After a reign of terror that lasted two centuries, the assassins were wiped out, but the *cloak* was never found.

The master sage of Axero wrote, “Those who built the city at Pajeir knew too much, and learned too little. The Shadowcloak is more than a portal, more than a shadow of Shadow. It is a void, and my heart is lost to it.”



### THE SHADOWCLOAK

The *shadowcloak* is a heavy black cloak with a large cowl and voluminous sleeves. The upper chest and shoulders are reinforced with black leather. The *cloak* is unaffected by wind, but bright lights can blow its fabric around. A diamond clasp at the neck holds the *cloak* closed.

Within the *shadowcloak* is an extradimensional space, a pocket in the Plane of Shadow. Unlike similar items, the *cloak* can safely be taken into other extradimensional spaces without rupturing. To enter the space, one simply walks into the inner fabric of the *cloak*. The exact dimensions of the space have never been determined, but it is certainly vast and may be infinite. The entry point is visually indistinguishable from the rest of the space, but the heartbeat of the *cloak*-wearer can be heard there. Only one person can move in or out of the *cloak* at a time.

There is no source of light within the space, and light sources brought from outside have their range reduced to a fifth of normal. It is extremely cold within the *cloak*; the ambient air temperature is below freezing, and the heat from fires is greatly reduced by the *cloak*'s magic.

Weapons and other attacks pass through the *cloak* as if it were a shadow. Thus, when the *cloak* is being worn, only the wearer's head and hands are vulnerable to attack — the rest of his body has become part of the *shadowcloak*. This gives nine-tenths cover. The *shadowcloak* grants a +20 Circumstance bonus to Hide and Move Silently checks when in shadow.

If the wearer pulls the cowl over his face and the sleeves over his hands, he invokes a *shadow walk*, affecting only him. The wearer can cast any nine Illusion (Shadow) spells a day as a 20th level sorcerer.  
Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 1 lb.

### LEGEND

As befits its shadowy nature, no one knows anything for sure about the *shadowcloak*.

TABLE 1–25: THE SHADOWCLOAK

1d20	Rumor
1–2	The <i>shadowcloak</i> was destroyed by a druid, and the tattered remains left to the birds. A thousand nests in the forest contain pieces of the <i>cloak</i> .
3–4	The <i>cloak</i> is still in the possession of the assassins, who keep it in reserve as their ultimate weapon.
5–6	Those who wear the <i>cloak</i> slowly become more and more dependent on it. Their bodies become more and more shadowy, until they need the <i>cloak</i> to live. Then it absorbs them.
7–8	The <i>cloak</i> was created by a race from another plane. It turns men into killers because it makes assassination so easy. Once every king is dead and every nation is in chaos, they will come through.
9–10	The <i>shadowcloak</i> is exactly that — the shadow of a <i>cloak</i> . The real <i>cloak</i> is a far more potent artifact.
11–12	The <i>cloak</i> is the night sky. If you travel far enough inside the <i>cloak</i> , you'll see the stars.
13–14	The <i>cloak</i> was buried for a reason. It's an evil artifact, and caused the downfall of whatever civilization made it.
15–16	An insane lord once marched an army into the <i>cloak</i> , to conquer the lands beyond. The army is still in there, somewhere.
17–18	The <i>shadowcloak</i> was a gift for a goddess whose beauty was so great that her face glowed with a blinding light. She wants it back.
19–20	The diamond clasp of the <i>cloak</i> is the final gemstone needed to open a portal to let hope back into the world — but if it is removed, the shadow-stuff of the <i>cloak</i> will be freed, and darkness will spread over the land.



## SHATTERSHAR

The Shattershar was created by a geomancer intent on proving the effects of energy on matter. What he ended up creating eventually claimed his life, and precipitated the worst earthquake in history.

Archtueros, Tetragon's chief sage, believed he could stop the Shattershar's destructiveness by encasing it in a cube 500 feet on a side. The cube was made of magically compressed rock surrounding a smaller four-foot thick iron cube which enclosed the Shattershar, and buried a thousand feet underground.

Nearly a century passed and everyone forgot about the Shattershar. A village sprang up over its burial site. The village blossomed into a town, the town into a city, the city into a bustling mining center that became the new capital of Tetragon, Sysiphon.

But the Shattershar made its presence felt. Its destructive power is best expressed in an entry from the Tetragon Almanac:

The quake struck Sysiphon several hours before daybreak. Although the first tremor lasted less than ten seconds, it brought down nine of every ten residential buildings and three-quarters of the industrial buildings. Four out of every five residents were buried in the rubble. So complete was the destruction that food and supplies were unattainable. It was twelve hours before Emperor Gluticus, away at another city, discovered that Sysiphon had been leveled.

7,000 families were completely destroyed. Over 4,000 children lost their parents and 15,000 married people their spouses.

Archtueros' experiment had failed. He had only delayed the power of the Shattershar, and 250,000 people paid with their lives. The container that held the Shattershar was found cracked open at the bottom of a chasm. Several natural disasters have been attributed to it since the Tetragon earthquake.

The Shattershar is an amulet made of cracked and broken stone. It looks as if it will crumble apart at any moment.

### SHATTERSHAR

The *shattershar* creates waves in anything it touches. The longer it touches something, the more powerful the waveform.

The *shattershar* is impossible to resist. While it may take a longer time for it to have an effect on hard surfaces, whatever objects it touches eventually ripple like water.

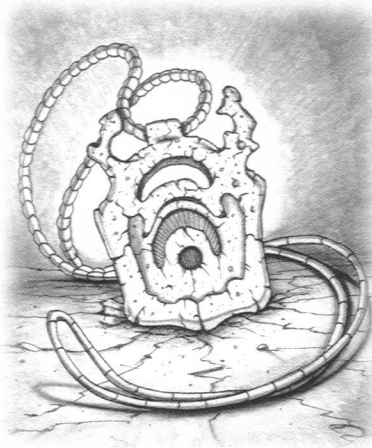
For every 150-foot-square area affected the *shattershar* must be in contact with it for 10 minutes. Tough, durable objects are much harder to affect. Subtract 7 from an item's hardness and multiply by 10 to determine how long it takes for this artifact's power to take hold on a substance, with a minimum time of 10 minutes. For instance, for the *shattershar* to affect iron (hardness 10) it must be in contact for 30 minutes.

Dipping the *shattershar* in a body of water creates waves. Leaving it submerged for ten minutes can create a tidal wave. If the area affected includes riverbanks, a beach, or other land near the affected water, the wave can spill over onto dry land.

Keeping the *shattershar* in contact with the ground causes it to ripple, tearing up terrain and destroying structures. Spellcasters on the ground must make Concentration checks (DC 20 + caster level) or lose any spells they try to cast. It inflicts 8d6 points of damage to those caught within or beneath the rubble (Reflex DC 15 for half damage). The quake lasts for one round.

The *shattershar* causes flesh it touches to flex unnaturally. It does not harm oozes, but shatters bones and gristle. Creatures suffer 8d6 points of damage per round of contact.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 5 lb.



### THE LEGEND

The *shattershar* has many imitators. At least three different nations claim to have the *shattershar* in their possession.

The Tetragon Empire claims to have recovered the *shattershar* after the quake. It hangs suspended in a vault with a glass panel and is open to the public. The Emperor makes it a point of showing his citizens that the terrifying weapon is under control. A 24 HD invisible stalker is magically bound to protect it.

The Nakash Theocracy also claims to have the *shattershar*. It is magically suspended atop a great pylon in the center of their capital, where it slowly rotates in the air. An invisible sphere of force and an elder air elemental guards it.

Unlike the other two nations, the Kurgosh League does not openly display its prize. They guard it with paranoid secrecy. It is trapped inside a 24 HD gelatinous cube that in turn is buried deep at the bottom of a 100-foot well.

Each nation enjoys the power accorded it by claiming to have a weapon of global destruction. Each secretly fears the other will use it. It's possible one of them really does have it — or worse, that none of them do.

## SHATTERSTONE HAMMER

In the elemental plane of earth is a great cavern called the Echo Chamber. This huge, round pocket of air got its name from its flawless acoustics, which continuously echoed any sound made in the chamber for hundreds of years. Or at least, it used to.

A group of duergar searching for new mineral veins came upon the cavern. Though they were awed by its marvels, one of the duergar foolishly chipped a small pebble from the wall with his pickaxe. Unfortunately, this tiny change destroyed the acoustical perfection of the chamber, magnifying the gentle echoes into ear-piercing shrieks. Desperately, the dwarves teleported back to their home in the under-earth.

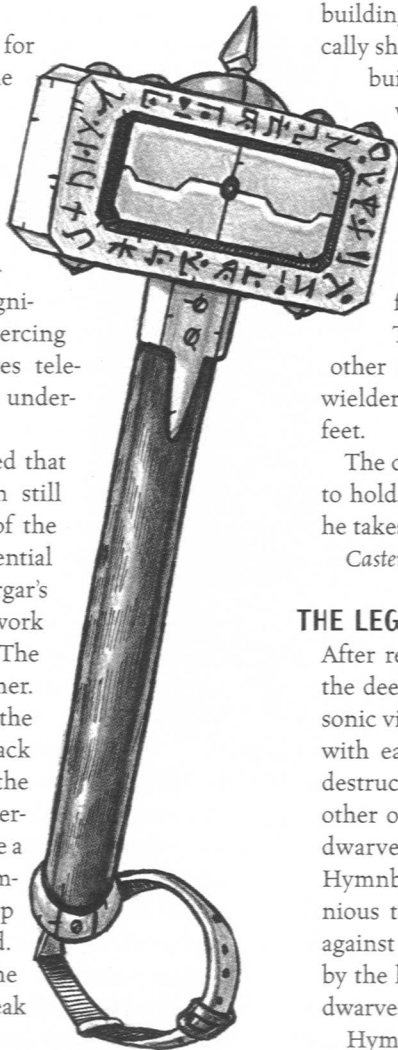
It was then that they discovered that the tiny pebble they had taken still vibrated with the sonic energy of the Echo Chamber. Realizing the potential of the stone, several of the duergar's best weaponsmiths were put to work incorporating it into a weapon. The result was the Shatterstone Hammer.

Equipped with the Hammer, the duergar launched a surprise attack on the great underground city of the deep dwarves, just above the under-earth. The Hammer made the siege a simple task, but the superior numbers and discipline of the deep dwarves eventually triumphed. The deep dwarves recovered the Hammer, but later lost it in a freak cave-in.

### SHATTERSTONE HAMMER

The *shatterstone hammer* is a powerful artifact that acts as a +6 *defending, mighty cleaving, returning, throwing, thundering warhammer of speed*.

Along with the *thundering* enchantment, the weapon deals an additional 1d6 points of sonic damage on a normal hit. On a critical hit, the weapon deals an additional 5d8 sonic damage rather than the usual 2d8, and the DC for the save against deafness is increased to 25.



On a successful critical hit, the hammer produces the effects of both the *shatter* and *sound burst* spells. These do not affect the wielder. Three times per day, the weapon may use powers similar to those of a *horn of blasting*, doing damage of 3d10 with a save DC of 25.

The *shatterstone hammer* is especially effective against buildings and objects. It ignores hardness and automatically shatters crystal and glass objects. When it damages a building or other structures made of stone, metal, or wood, the weapon deals triple damage and the damage applies to all parts of the structure within 100 feet. For example, if used to attack a castle wall, the hammer would deal three times the damage rolled to the 5-foot section being attacked and to every such section within 100 feet.

The hammer vibrates in a way that cancels out other sonic vibrations. Up to five times per day, the wielder may choose to negate one sonic effect within 10 feet.

The constant vibration of the hammer makes it painful to hold. Each round that the wielder holds the hammer, he takes 1 point of damage.

*Caster Level:* 20th; *Weight:* 10 lb.

### THE LEGEND

After realizing the power of the Shatterstone Hammer, the deep dwarves began to study the properties of ultrasonic vibrations. They learned that certain vibrations clash with each other, sundering the surrounding area with destructive force. Others harmonize and cancel each other out. With this knowledge, the clerics of the deep dwarves created a powerful bastard sword named Hymnblade, which would produce vibrations harmonious to those of the Hammer. During the final battle against the duergar — in which Hymnblade was wielded by the king of the deep dwarves — the halls of the deep dwarves shook with the sound of dwarven war-hymns.

Hymnblade is a +5 *thundering bastard sword of mighty cleaving* that resembles a large tuning fork. When struck or used to attack in battle, it produces a long, clear note that lasts 2d6 rounds. If the sword produces this note within 30 feet of the *shatterstone hammer*, the hammer loses all sonic based powers (becoming a plain +6 *defending, mighty cleaving, returning, throwing warhammer of speed*). Singing a specific war-hymn known only to the deep dwarves extends the duration of the note to 2d6 minutes and increases the range to 100 feet.

## THE SIDHE CLOAK

The bard Isurieta was revered as the finest artist of her time, a phenomenally gifted composer whose voice was so pure that birds would not sing where she walked for fear of missing her song.

The journeys of Isurieta have been immortalized in folklore. As a child, she sang the Lay of Brenathariad to the vampire prince Derumante Snowcrown, a performance so wrenching it moved the dread lord to face the sunrise, knowing he would never hear such perfect beauty again. As an adult, she shattered the Cathedral of Seven Sorrows with one note, charmed the dragon Burning Sunrise and earned the devotion and patronage of sidhe royalty. It is this last deed which led to the creation of the Sidhe Cloak.

The Sidhe Cloak was woven over three years, using strands of bronze, silver, gold, platinum, ruby, sapphire and emerald hair, one from the head of each member of the sidhe royalty and woven into thread so fine that the Cloak, when finished, weighed less than a rose petal.

Isurieta wore the cloak for less than a year. A jealous rival slew her, stole the Cloak, and fled with it to the forest. A fey host met her there and exacted terrible vengeance.

Since that time the sidhe have guarded their Cloak carefully, gifting it from time to time to illusionists or bards who consistently demonstrate rare cleverness and talent. But that is no easy task, as the often-fickle, always cruel sidhe are not easily impressed — in fact, they frequently grow resentful of talented mortals, and take great joy in goading them into situations that are sometimes dangerous, sometimes embarrassing, and oftentimes both.



### THE SIDHE CLOAK

The powers of the *sidhe cloak* are subtle but powerful. While the *cloak* is worn, it gives its owner a +10 enhancement bonus to Charisma and absolute immunity to spells and spell-like effects of the enchantment or illusion schools (unless he wills otherwise), and slows his aging to 10% of normal.

The *sidhe cloak's* wearer also gains intuitive understanding of and control over fey magic. He gains the fey race's ability to move invisibly through sylvan areas, receiving a +5 insight bonus to all Hide and Move Silently skill checks. Each day, he may cast a single spell of each level from both the enchantment and illusion schools as a 20th level sorcerer, and can use a silent, stilled *charm person* three times per day as a dryad. This *charm* effect lasts 4 hours. The spells the *sidhe cloak's* wearer may cast vary with

each owner and are chosen the instant he dons the cloak for the first time. Once chosen, they cannot be altered.

The wearer of the *sidhe cloak* can cast *plane shift* as a 20th-level sorcerer once per day. He arrives at his intended location with absolute accuracy, but can only shift himself, and only to the dimension of the fae.

Should the wearer be separated from the *sidhe cloak* for more than a day, the weight of years rolls over him like the tide. He instantly and irrevocably becomes his proper age, perhaps slaying him if he wore the cloak for many decades.

*Caster Level:* 20th; *Weight:* 4 lbs.

### LEGEND

In order to gain the benefits of the Sidhe Cloak, the wearer must first establish a bond with the fey. He must immerse himself in their lore, study their powers and memorize the subtle tricks they use to torment hapless mortals. In short, he must prove himself their equal in every respect. Before a wearer can use any of the Sidhe Cloak's powers, he must possess this feat.

### FAE BINDER [General]

Your knowledge of fey trickery is encyclopedic. You have cunning and quick wits to match the eldest fey. You are resistant to glamour magic and can bind fey creatures to your will through wordplay alone.

**Requirements:** Cha 13+, Wis 13+, Knowledge (fey) 8 ranks, Speak Language (sylvan), Iron Will, Skill Focus (bluff)

**Benefits:** You gain a +2 competence bonus to all saves against spell and spell-like effects used by fey creatures, which increases to a +4 competence bonus against fey spells and spell-like effects of the enchantment or illusion schools.

You can also attempt to temporarily *bind* a fey creature to your will, using a combination of riddles, clever wordplay, and flattery to trick it into swearing an oath of service. In order to *bind* a fey, you must spend a minimum of 10 + the fey's Charisma bonus minus your Charisma bonus in rounds (minimum 1 round) in uninterrupted conversation with the target. A binding cannot be attempted in an area of great distraction or imminent danger. At the end of that time, you make a Bluff skill check, opposed by the fey's Sense Motive skill check. Success means that you have *bound* the fey, and it must perform a single task for you as per the spell *lesser geas*. You may not use this ability against fey whose HD or CR are greater than your total level. You may only command one fey per month with this feat.



## SOLARIS, THE GOLDEN SHIELD OF TARAK-NUM

Tarak-num was the pharaoh of the great desert kingdom Ahnum-Surket. He was also the high priest of a solar deity and in turn was worshiped as the avatar of the faith. The sun god was a distant, uncaring patron that capriciously shed his light upon the desert land.

But one day the sun god slept and the land was covered in darkness. The enemies of Tarak-num saw their chance and raided Ahnum-Surket, burning it to the ground. When the sun shone again upon the land, nothing was left of the great land but smoking rubble. At the center of the city's capital lay the shield known as Solaris, surrounded by thousands of smoldering corpses.

Solaris is a golden shield in the shape of a stylized sun wreathed with flames. The face is marred by an expression of extreme disdain.

### SOLARIS

*Solaris* is a lawful neutral +5 intelligent large steel shield. *Solaris*' face animates when he talks, although he rarely speaks.

*Solaris* sees himself as a noble device fit only to be used by those of royal blood or great heroism. *Solaris* has an 18 Intelligence, 18 Wisdom, 12 Charisma, and an Ego of 66. He is haughty and arrogant, and condescends to those whom he deems unworthy. *Solaris*' classification of unworthy beings includes chaotic-aligned creatures and beings with an Intelligence of 12 or less. *Solaris* has no sense of humor.



*Solaris* can turn undead as a 12th cleric. If a spellcaster wields *Solaris*, the wielder can spontaneously cast *cure* spells as a cleric, even if the wielder is an arcane spellcaster. If *Solaris* deems the target of the heal spell unworthy, he will deny the spontaneous casting.

*Solaris* has never forgotten the eclipse that heralded the end of the empire he helped create. As a result, he keeps an exceptionally detailed account of the movements of the night sky. *Solaris* knows the location of every heavenly body and bestows a +10 competence bonus to Intuit Direction checks.

At will as a free action, *Solaris* can glow as the *daylight* spell. Three times per day, his eyes can emit rays of searing sunfire per the *searing light* spell cast by a 12th-level cleric.

Once per day, *Solaris* can burst into flames for 10 rounds, channeling the power of the sun. Any being that touches the face of the shield, including the recipient of a shield bash, suffers 10d6 points of fire damage. Items that touch the shield must make a Fortitude save (DC 30) or burst into flame.

Once per day, with a successful Reflex save (DC 20), the wielder can channel any fire or heat attack into *Solaris*' open mouth, nullifying the attack.

*Caster Level:* 20th; *Weight:* 15 lb.

### THE LEGEND

As a divine incarnation of a sun god, *Solaris* is much more than a mere shield. In the eyes of the nomads of the desert kingdoms, the shield is a symbol of divine right. It is said that he who owns *Solaris* rules the desert.

- *Solaris* fell into the hands of barbarians after he was torn from the lifeless grasp of Tarak-num. Ever since the eclipse, Tarak-num's scattered descendants have searched in vain for the shield they believe will restore them to power. The true guardians of Ahnum-Surket are a secret cult of desert warriors, the Al-Adzeen, who will stop at nothing to restore *Solaris* to its rightful owners.
- Conversely, the barbarian tribes that destroyed Ahnum-Surket fear such a tool of solidarity. The barbarian tribes actively seek to destroy *Solaris*. The only way to obliterate it, however, is through a complicated ritual that must be completed during a solar eclipse — a date that the shield spends every day preparing for.
- *Solaris* seeks to restore Ahnum-Surket's past glory, but he does not consider any of Tarak-num's descendants to be worthy. If *Solaris* is dissatisfied with his wielder, he will manipulate his circumstances in an effort to find someone he deems worthy. Any PC of a compatible alignment and temperament will be submitted to a series of intellectual and physical tests by *Solaris*, who will educate his new charge in preparation for his future as pharaoh — whether he likes it or not.

## THE SONG OF ROTA SIOM

Rota Siom is said to have been the greatest bard who ever lived. Her songs could stir the heart of a golem, or fill a listener with unquenchable joy and sorrow. Many of her songs are still sung today — but one is forgotten. This hidden song contained the very essence of magic. Those who knew the song awoke to its power.

For a time the song was on the lips of thousands, but the powerful grew jealous. Knowledge of the song became restricted. Cruel lords put to death those peasants who knew it, and imprisoned bards in gilded cages to sing only to the lords. Bardic colleges fought over scraps of the song; masters refused to teach it to their apprentices; wars were fought over a note.

Now the song is lost. Not even an echo remains, though there are countless laments about the foolishness of mortals and the selfishness of men. As for the flame-haired bard herself, she vanished in the elven-woods long ago.

### THE SONG OF ROTA SIOM

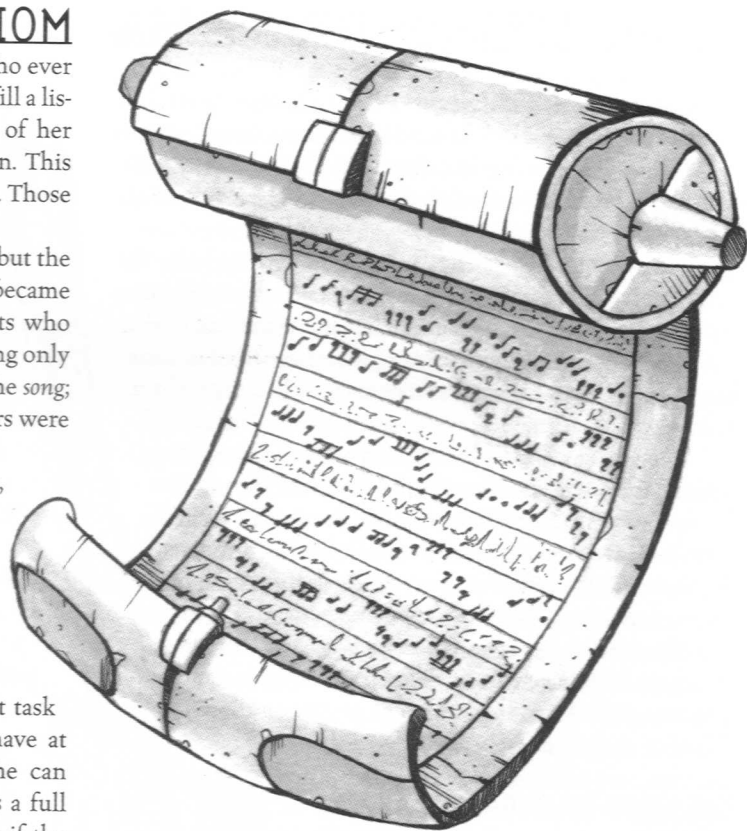
Learning to play the song of Rota Siom is a difficult task that few have accomplished. A character must have at least six ranks in Perform (any music) before he can attempt to memorize the song. Memorizing takes a full month of study with a copy of the song, or a week if the character is being taught by another.

Those who know the music gain access to its magical properties. The song is essentially a total of 40 levels of bardic spellcasting, divided evenly among those who know the song. Thus, if there are ten people in the world who know the song, they can all cast spells as if they were 4th level bards. If only two people know the song, they can both cast spells as 20th level bards. This spellcasting stacks with existing bard spellcasting abilities. The bonus spellcasting levels gained from the song cannot bring a character's spellcasting ability above that of a 20th level bard.

Playing the song requires a DC 30 Perform (any music) check. Anyone who hears the song is awoken to magic. All listeners gain one level of spellcasting in their highest spellcasting class. If a listener has no spellcasting ability, he gains the spellcasting ability of a 1st level bard. A character can only gain this benefit of the song once, but there is no limit to the number of characters who can receive the gift of magic. A skilled bard can give magic to thousands of people.

The song of Rota Siom can be used to alter reality. This effect requires a DC 50 Perform (any music) check. If the check succeeds, the singer can cast *wish* without paying any XP. If the check fails, the singer forgets the song and must relearn it. The song can be used in this manner three times per day.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: — lb.



### LEGEND

The song is lost, but there are still places where it might be found. The bardic college at Aldesbury possessed a copy. The music might still be in the vaults, but the whole region is cursed with an eternal silence and guarded by eerie figures that resemble marble statues. These figures, called the Serenities, are deadly fighters who leech color and joy from all they touch.

*A riddle about Aldesbury survives:  
Who speaks when the tongue is still?  
An arrow loosed from the string  
May pierce the heart, yet do no ill;  
The hand that makes souls take wing —  
Lay it to me now, take up the song  
Silent years have done their wrong.*

The answer to this riddle is “a harp,” the only thing that can make a sound within the magical silence. If a hand is laid to the harpstrings, the music will shatter the stone hearts of the statues and open the door to the vaults. The harp can be found in the center of the college, in the hands of a statue of Rota Siom. The presence of the Serenities has drained the color from the wooden harp, so it appears to be white marble at first glance.

## THE STAFF OF DEONSKARA

In the fifth millennium of the Fey Queen Ilithia's rule, the sorceress Deonskara traveled to the Queen's court and asked for arcane lore. The human sorceress reminded the Queen of her services in resisting civilization's encroachment and asked Queen Ilithia for instruction in the ways of fey illusion.

Ilithia invited Deonskara into her domain to learn the fey's secrets. The sorceress entered the court and spent a decade learning the secrets of illusion. At the end of that time Ilithia gave the sorceress a powerful staff of illusion and bade her depart, never to return. When Deonskara returned to the outside world, two centuries had passed.

Deonskara devoted the rest of her life to opposing interlopers who threatened the Southern Forest. She never took an apprentice and after her death the Staff passed into other hands. Sorcerers and illusionists have sought the Staff of Deonskara through the centuries and used it for both good and evil.

The Staff is wooden, 6 feet long and  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch wide. It has a pattern of floating fey lights and sparks etched into it and an oval gemstone about half an inch wide imbedded in the tip.

### THE STAFF OF DEONSKARA

Only a sorcerer or illusionist can employ the staff. It is useless in anyone else's hands. The staff casts a carefully inscribed *symbol of fear* on any other person picking up the staff, showing him an illusion of his greatest nightmare. Victims of this ability must make a Will save (DC 25) or flee in terror for 2d6 rounds.

The wielder of the staff can cast the following spells from it: *color spray*, *ghost sound*, *hallucinatory terrain*, *hypnotic pattern*, *illusory wall*, *improved invisibility*, *invisibility sphere*, *invisibility*, *major image*, *mass invisibility*, *minor image*, *mirage arcana*, *mislead*, *persistent image*, *programmed image*, *project image*, *rainbow pattern*, *screen*, *silent image*, *veil*, and *weird*. The staff has 30 points of energy stored within it. Each spell cast uses a number of points equal to its level (*ghost sound* uses  $\frac{1}{2}$  point). The staff regains all of its points under three conditions: at sunrise, if a Lord or Lady of the Fey wills it so, or if its owner places it within a fey magical circle or other place of such power. These spells are all cast as a wizard whose level equals the wielder's total hit dice (maximum 20th level).

Twice per day the staff wielder can ignore the "illusion" of the world, and distance and objects no longer thwart his senses. The owner treats this special ability as the *clairaudience/clairvoyance* spell with a 20-minute duration. He can see and hear, and use any magically enhanced senses. Lead sheeting doesn't block this effect although magical protections do. This special ability only affects the wielder's perceptions. He cannot interact physically, mentally, or magically with anything at the specified location.

Only a member of the fey can destroy the staff by placing it within one of their magical circles and casting spells of *memory loss* and *invisibility* upon it. When the staff is gone from both sight and remembrance for a day and a year it disappears permanently.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 4 lbs.

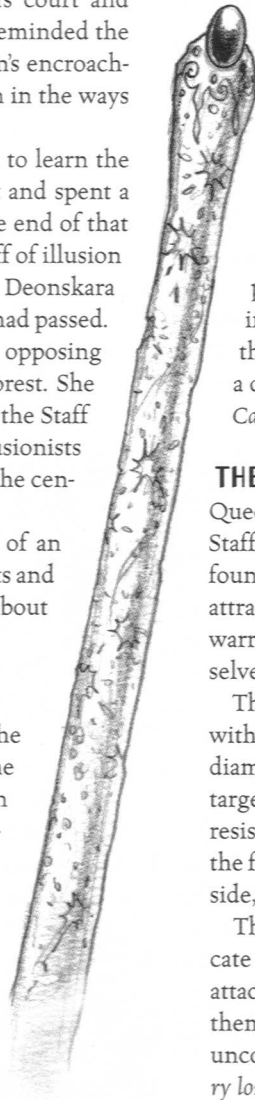
### THE LEGEND

Queen Ilithia sent forth her greatest warriors to find the Staff. They spent years questing for the item and finally found it in a distant land. Fearing that moving it would attract the attention of those sensitive to great powers, the warriors created a magically enchanted home for themselves to protect the Staff.

The fey have created a magical toadstool circle deep within the Western Chasm woods and cast a 500-foot diameter *invisibility* spell. Travelers entering the area are targeted by a combined *sleep* and *memory loss* spell, but can resist with a Fortitude save (DC 20). At their convenience the fey move anyone who failed the save to the area's other side, leaving the poor mortals to wonder at the lost time.

Those who avoid the spell find themselves in an intricate maze of trees and brambles. A band of 10 pixies attacks the intruders to lure them out of the area or render them unconscious with their arrows of sleep. The fey take unconscious intruders out of the area after casting *memory loss*. PCs who make the save and survive the pixies can make an Intuit Direction skill check (DC 30) to find a toadstool circle at the maze's center with the Staff of Deonskara resting on a wooden altar. Anyone entering the circle to take the Staff is targeted by a *symbol of fear* and flees the area.

The enchantment upon the area is such that any mortal who enters the area and then leaves cannot reenter for a day and a year by any means. Queen Ilithia sends reinforcements to replace any losses the fey take.





## THE STAIRCASE AT PAJEIR

Would that I could look upon Pajeir's bright towers again, or cross her floating bridges to the singing river quarter! O, to walk again those narrow cobbled lanes, lit with a thousand lamps held by attendant imps, or stand in the plaza of wonders with the skies afire. I recall, and weep with the recollection, the view from the arcing tower at sunset, all the spires and domes of the city shining like suns then fading to darker shapes against the cloak of night.

In Pajeir, the elements danced to our whim. Sorcery was our art and our joy, and spells were cast like silver rain, running through our streets and souls. A dozen nations paid homage to the city arcane, a hundred paid tribute, and a thousand feared us — but we cared not for fear. Our hearts were lifted up by that which is art and word and blood and fire, in the magic that is all these things and more.

In the heart of Pajeir was a staircase, and by that staircase there was a sign, and that sign read, 'Here is the route of our power.' Visiting dignitaries would come, and see this, and leave again wondering where the staircase went. We laughed at them in their simplicity, for the staircase was root and route. There was no place it did not go, no prize we could not take with it — until it was taken from us. Cut off from our patrons in the planes, we wept. Our enemies came like jealous ants, in great multitudes.

A candle may burn with a bright light, and make things beautiful, but it shall end in a guttering fire amid melted wax.

A spell may be prepared with skill and precision, and fill the mind with the joy of magic, but it shall end in crude exhalations of arcane energy.

A city may be built with love and artistry, and make the world glorious, but it shall end in a siege, and a sack, the gutters running with blood and tears.

No more shall I climb the Staircase at Pajeir.  
"No more."

### THE STAIRCASE AT PAJEIR

The spiral staircase at Pajeir is three stories tall when fully extended, with steps wide enough for two men to stand abreast. Its handrail is gold, supported by grotesque statues. Black fist-sized gems stud the central column.



These black gems are the control mechanism. Touching any of the gems allows a user to telepathically activate the various powers of the artifact.

Either end of the staircase can be made to open into an extradimensional chamber, decorated similar to the stairs. This chamber also contains a number of couches, a dining table, and an ever-flowing fountain. The table creates food and water for up to a dozen people three times a day.

On command, the staircase concertinas in on itself, folding into a marble disk 5 feet thick and 25 feet across. This does not harm people standing on the staircase, who find themselves transported to the extradimensional chamber. On command, the staircase expands again. Expansion or contraction takes one round. Anyone crushed or struck by the expanding staircase takes 10d10 damage.

While the staircase is collapsed, the black gems become magical windows to the outside.

In either form, the staircase can fly (with unlimited duration) or surround itself with a wall of fire, Empowered at 20th-level of effect on command. The environment on the staircase is unaffected by conditions outside it, so passengers can safely travel underwater or on hostile planes.

The staircase can plane shift on command. Alternatively, it can open a gate at either or both ends of the staircase. The two gates can be opened to different planes. While either gate is open, the staircase must remain immobile and cannot plane shift.

The planar traveling abilities of the staircase are extremely powerful, and it can reach planes that are normally barred to travelers including the Far Realms and sealed pocket dimensions.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 1800 lbs.

### LEGEND

The Staircase was abandoned in a remote mountain valley. An inquisitive kobold from a local tribe discovered the artifact, and managed to activate it, opening a gate to a bizarre and unpleasant region of the Far Realms. Now the valley is filled with ghastly alien horrors. Most of the kobold tribe has been captured and transformed into pseudonatural monsters. The presence of the gate has warped reality within the valley. Eerie lights shine above it at night, and the river that flows out of the valley sometimes goes backwards. Space within the valley has been altered, and now the mountains arch over the valley like claws.

A few survivors of the kobold tribe have traveled to human territory, hoping to find someone capable of removing the staircase and attendant monsters from their valley.

## STERNJOY HELM

Tsy Jrenth is forgotten now. There are no annals of its history, no songs of its glory. Even its gods are long gone, the dust of their temples mingled with the dust of their worshippers. Only the Sternjoy Helm remains — and the withered souls of the Tsyji whisper *it is enough*.

The Tsyji race was dedicated to order. Their buildings were perfectly geometrical, their laws strict and harsh, their thoughts precisely structured. Everyone in the land of Tsy Jrenth knew his place and purpose, and in time they came to be their purpose. Each Tsyji wore a simple mask denoting his function. There was no dissent — and with the entire race working in rigid harmony, the Tsyji built a great empire of pure order.

The presence of so much law in one place somehow unbalanced the universe. Portals to the planes of chaos opened across Tsy Jrenth, and hideous chaos beasts slithered and rode and waddled and flowered out. The battles against chaos lasted a century, and ended in defeat for the Tsyji.

Before chaos consumed them, the apex caste Tsyji joined their powers and created a helm that contained the essence of their race. The helm was hurled into a portal, in the hope that it would bring order to some other place and time.

In the Tsyji tongue, the helm was called “memory/seed/enigma/return”.

The humans who found it called it the Sternjoy Helm, for it gave them both duty and power.

### STERNJOY HELM

This alien helm was obviously not designed for humans, but magically resizes itself to fit any wearer. It is made out of a white metal, and light pulses from it when worn.

Chaotic creatures who touch the *sternjoy helm* take 8d6 damage. A non-chaotic character can wear the *helm*, but his behavior may change. A Will save (DC 25) is required each week of wearing the *helm* to avoid moving one step towards lawful neutral.

The *helm* grants a +4 enhancement bonus to Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma, as well as a +10 circumstance bonus on all Will saves. The *helm* allows its wearer to cast any Order domain spell any number of times per day, without preparation, as a 20th-level cleric. Once per round, the wearer can cast a *disintegrate* spell as a 20th-level sorcerer.

Every ten minutes, the *sternjoy helm* can permanently recreate one of the buildings from the capital of Tsy Jrenth. The building can be a single-story 30 ft. × 30 ft. hive-house, a three-story 200 ft. × 100 ft. government building, or a five-story 60 ft. × 60 ft. fractal fort. The stone buildings are recreated exactly as they were in the heyday of the empire, including all furnishings and equipment. The building can appear anywhere within 30 feet of the *helm*. If there is no room for a building to be created in the area, materializes anyway, merging with the obstacle. The building forms around living creatures, moving them to the ethereal plane if there is no other space for them.

At will, the *sternjoy helm* can create a *lesser helm*. The wearer of a *lesser helm* gains the Skill Focus feat for his highest skill, and gains a +2 circumstance bonus on all tasks related to his profession. He suffers a –2 penalty whenever he acts outside his expected societal role.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 3 lbs.



### LEGEND

The monsters that destroyed the Tsyji empire sent seven hunters after the *sternjoy helm*. Due to their chaotic natures, the hunters exited the portal at random points in time and space. They are geased to find and destroy the helm, but occasionally stop and wreak incidental devastation on random civilizations. The hunters are huge Chaos Beasts gifted with enhanced intelligence.

The hunters know that the helm will create regions of unusual order and civilization, so they are drawn to lands which seem especially well-run. The hunters generally disguise themselves as giants of unusual aspect, and sow discord in the kingdom, hoping the wearer of the *sternjoy helm* will appear to deal with the situation personally. If he does, the hunters reveal their true formless forms, and attack.

**Chaos Beast Hunter:** CR 15; Size H (chaotic outsider); HD 25d8+125; hp 237; Init +4 (+4 Improved Initiative); Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (–2 size, +12 natural); Atks 2 claws +35 melee (1d3+10 [1d12+10]); Face/reach 10 ft. x 20 ft./ 10 ft.; SA Corporeal Instability, Smiter Law (1x day, +25 damage to a Lawful opponent) SQ SR 15, immune to transformation, no discernible anatomy (immune to critical hits and sneak attacks), DR 5/+1, Fast Healing 5, Darkvision 60 ft., Acid/Cold/Electricity/Fire and Sonic Resistance 5; SV Fort +19, Ref +14, Will +15; Str 30, Dex 11, Con 21, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 10; AL CN. Skills: Climb +16, Disguise +15, Escape Artist +15, Gather Information +6, Hide +10, Intimidate +15, Jump +10, Listen +15, Spot +15, Tumble +15, Wilderness Lore +15 Feats: Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Track

## STORM SPHERE

*The gods are static beings. When a deity ceases to be able to adapt to modern society, the people lose faith in it and it dies — in a way.*

*I recently became aware of this when I encountered what I believe is the essence of an elder god, trapped inside a small glass ball. While crossing the great desert of Sarquet, I saw something glinting out of the corner of my eye. I discovered a small glass sphere half-buried in the sand, containing what appeared to be a miniature storm complete with tiny flashes of lightning. Wondering at my find, I took out my waterskin and sprinkled some water onto the orb to wash off the dust.*

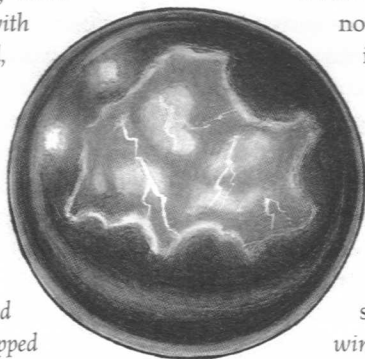
*No sooner had I replaced the stopper, when the sky became dark with clouds, and — against all reason — it started to rain. It had not rained in Sarquet for five hundred years! Surely this was no mere coincidence. I collected some of the rainwater in a bowl and, determined to discover the exact nature of the trinket, dropped the sphere into the water. This proved to be a mistake, however, as the light drizzle became a torrential monsoon. Within seconds the entire area was hit by a flash flood, and my new treasure was washed away.*

*I never tried to find the glass ball. Some things aren't meant for mortal hands.*

An entry in the journal of Saleb the Wanderer

### STORM SPHERE

The *storm sphere* is a powerful artifact that directly affects the weather around it. By subjecting the sphere to various conditions, one can cause changes in weather patterns within 100 miles. For example, if the sphere is submerged



in water, the area within 100 miles of the sphere will experience torrential rains and flash floods. If the sphere is held over a flame or hit with a fire effect, it causes blistering heat and wildfires. If it is violently shaken or spun, it spawns windstorms or tornadoes, respectively. Ice and cold results in freezing temperatures and blizzards. As a rule, only total immersion (in water, ice, fire, etc.) or any effect that deals at least one point of damage can cause the most extreme conditions. Simply holding the sphere near

a fire would cause temperatures to rise, but would not result in spontaneous brush fires. With various degrees of manipulation, the sphere can cause every weather effect and hazard described in the core d20 rules. It takes 2d6 rounds for a change to take effect. It lasts as long as the sphere remains under the conditions that spawned the weather, plus another 1d4 hours.

The *storm sphere* also has the following spell powers: 5/day: *fog cloud, sleet storm, gust of wind, lightning bolt, wind wall, call lightning*; 3/day: *solid fog, ice storm, acid fog, control winds, control water, control weather, fire storm*; 1/day: *storm of vengeance, whirlwind, incendiary cloud, elemental swarm* (water and air elementals only). All of these abilities are used as if cast by a 20th-level wizard.

Caster Level: 20th;

### THE LEGEND

Tales of the Storm Sphere have spread far and wide. Now every major weather change is blamed on the Sphere. Below is a list of rumors one might hear about the Storm Sphere. Some are obviously fabrications, but others have a grain of truth.

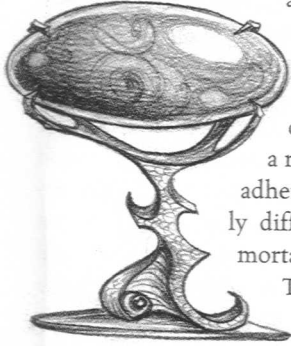
TABLE 1–26: THE STORM SPHERE

1d20	Rumor
1	Pirates use it to attack ships and then prevent others from following.
2	Druids use it to wash out the fields of farmers who infringe on the forest.
3	It is causing a drought to the north.
4	It melted the snowy peaks of mountains to the south.
5	It delayed the monsoon season in the savannahs of the far east.
6	It caused a storm that affected the outcome of a recent war.
7	A wealthy noble is using it to wipe out his rivals.
8	Djinn are using it to aid in the building of a floating palace.
9	Water elementals want to use it to invade the Plane of Air.
10	A cult worshiping the item has formed to the east.
11	Wizards are using it to develop a cloud golem.
12	Clerics of a storm deity have claimed it as a gift from their god.
13	A tyrant uses it to keep peasants in check.
14	It destroyed four towns with a tornado.
15	It turned a small valley into a lake.
16	It fell in the ocean.
17	A rogue used it to con people into believing he is a prophet.
18	Saleb still has it.
19	A minor god wants it destroyed.
20	It causes the seasons.



## TEXLES'SCARA

Long ago, mind flayers ruled a vast, plane-spanning empire. They enslaved whole races and destroyed all who resisted. But in their greed, they nearly unleashed an even greater threat upon the world.



An inquisition of mind flayers opened a gate into the far realms — a reality outside the multiverse which adheres to rules of existence so drastically different that it threatens to destroy mortal minds that try to comprehend it.

The mind flayers intended to conquer the far realms, but when they stepped through the gate their powerful yet rigid minds were nearly shattered by the impossibility of the place. Desperately, the mind flayers retreated, but before closing the gate, their leader used his psychic powers to tear off a piece of this unreality and carry it back to our universe.

The inquisition returned to one of the mind flayer citadels that dot the astral plane. There they bound the patch of alien reality, which they named *Texles'scara*, inside an orb built with psionic techniques long lost. A messenger was sent to bring a specialized group of cosmologists from the mind flayer home city.

When they arrived, the entire citadel had been destroyed.

### TEXLES'SCARA

*Texles'scara* is a 2-foot diameter orb made of an unbreakable glass-like material. Inside, confusing and disturbing images swirl in a scrambled mess of colors. Anyone looking directly into the orb must make a Will save (DC 25) or be shaken for 2d8 rounds. Anyone who makes this save cannot be affected again for one day. Shaken creatures suffer a -2 morale penalty on attack rolls, checks, and saving throws.

*Texles'scara* is intelligent (Int 15, Wis 17, Cha 14) and in complete control of all its powers. Ethics and morals mean nothing to it, for its only desire is to get back to its own reality. It will do anything to return to the far realms, even if it means taking the material plane with it. *Texles'scara* can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

The orb may cast *teleport without error* and *plane shift* each up to five times per day on itself or any creature within 30 feet (Will save negates, DC 25). It can cast *dominate monster* and *telekinesis* three times per day. It may also change the direction of gravity for up to 10 minutes per day. This is similar to the *reverse gravity* spell, except that it

is an emanation centered on (but not affecting) the orb, with a radius of 30 feet, and the gravity can change to any direction *Texles'scara* wishes. All these spells are cast as if by a 20th-level wizard.

*Texles'scara* can force some of the maddening effects of the far realms to spill into the world around it and warp the minds of those near it. Three times per day, it can drive mad anyone within 30 feet, as per the *insanity* spell (Will Save negates, DC 25).

The alien physics of the far realms can have devastating effects on matter in our universe. Once per day, *Texles'scara* may destroy all solid matter within 50 feet, turning it into ash, as the *disintegrate* spell (Fort Save negates, DC 20).

Anyone with 10 or more ranks in Knowledge (the planes) who succeeded the save against the orb's *insanity* power may attempt to take control of *Texles'scara*'s powers by making a Wisdom check (DC 20). He must make another check each day to remain in control. If he fails any of these checks, the orb regains control of its powers and the DC for that particular person to take control again is increased by 5. The orb's controller may command it to use its abilities and powers as he wishes.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 20 lb.

### THE LEGEND

- *Texles'scara* has appeared in a major city and is threatening to destroy it if the rulers of the city do not reveal the location of a mythical portal to the far realms. Everyone, of course, claims it never existed. Worse yet, the only person who knows for certain is the royal wizard, who has been missing for months.
- A mad wizard has opened a gateway to the far realms. Now maddened beasts run amuck in the material plane. The PCs must seek out *Texles'scara* and strike a deal: help stop the creatures and they will help it get home. Of course, what is to keep *Texles'scara* from ditching the PCs and making a break for the portal?
- How was *Texles'scara* so easily trapped in our universe against its will? It wasn't. All this time *Texles'scara* has been performing reconnaissance for its alien lords in the far realms. Now it's time for it to report back so the invasion can begin.
- Cities in the astral plane disappear one by one. The PCs must find *Texles'scara* and destroy it before it strikes again. The orb can only be destroyed by being cast into a black hole in the astral plane where *spheres of annihilation* are born.
- *Texles'scara* has convinced a group of weak-minded adventurers to help it open a portal to the far realms. The PCs must track down the party and stop it, before they unwittingly doom the multiverse.

## THOUGHT-TAKER

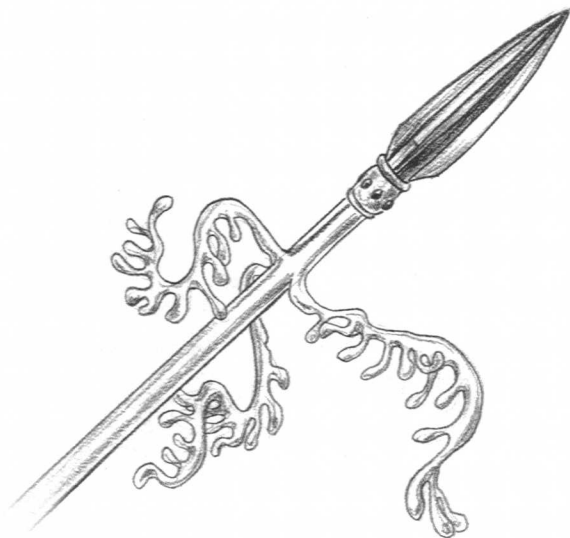
Fifty years after their planar empire was overthrown by their slaves, the mind flayers made a second attempt at invading the prime material plane. An elder-brain was gated into the underearth, where it opened a permanent portal linking the mind flayers' astral fortress to the prime material plane. The first wave of attacks took the drow completely by surprise, slaughtering thousands and enslaving the rest. Within months, a dozen major drow cities had fallen to the ever-growing mind flayer army.

In desperation, a group of dark elves was dispatched to seek out the newly freed githyanki, whose rebellion had led to the original empire's fall. The githyanki, happy to assist anyone against their former masters, shared their knowledge of the mind flayers' tactics and magic. When the group returned, the greatest drow weaponsmiths and mages gathered to forge a weapon capable of defeating their new overlords. The result was a pike of pure mithral, onto which they grafted spider web fringes spun by the Demon Queen herself.

Equipped with the pike, named Thought-Taker, and powerful new magic, the drow general Trucena Sarvaroth launched a counterattack against the mind flayers' new fortress and pushed them back. When Trucena herself plunged the pike into the elder-brain, the portal closed, ending the invasion.

### THOUGHT-TAKER

*Thought-taker* is a 10-foot pike equivalent to a +5 mithral *longspear* enchanted with the *aberration bane*, *defending*, *distance*, *mighty cleaving*, *speed*, and *wounding* abilities. Anyone holding it is treated as having SR 35 against all psionic effects and is immune to all mind-influencing spells. On a successful hit, the weapon deals 2d6 points of temporary Intelligence damage (Will negates, DC 20) in addition to the weapon's standard damage.



*Thought-taker* is intelligent (Int 13, Wis 17, Cha 14, Ego 25) and true neutral. It can deliver the spells *hold monster* (range 100 feet) and *dispel magic/ negate psionics* (touch). These can both be used up to 5 times per day.

About 2 feet from the tip are six long, wispy, white fringes. On a successful critical hit, these fringes animate and wrap around the target's head. This is a grapple check with an opposed DC of 40. Each round the weapon remains attached to the target it deals 1d6+5 damage and inflicts 1d6 points of permanent Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma damage. There is no save against this damage. The pike's wielder may choose to end the grapple at any time.

*Thought-taker* glows with a pale blue light when there are mind flayers within 120 feet. When this happens, it immediately requests the wielder seek out and kill its foe. If refused, the weapon attempts to dominate its wielder in order to do so.

*Thought-taker* is one of the most prized drow treasures. Any dark elf who sees it in the hands of a non-drow or undeserving dark elf will try to retrieve the weapon and destroy the current owner.

Mind flayers fear the pike more than any other weapon and avoid at all costs engaging its wielder in melee, though they have no qualms about sending slaves to fight instead.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 7 lb.

### THE LEGEND

Thought-Taker has traditionally been the personal weapon of the highest ranking officer in the drow army, although it is occasionally lent to the commander of a drow strike force expected to encounter mind flayers. It is currently in the possession of Trexne Sarvaroth, a direct descendant of the first general to wield the weapon.

**Trexne Sarvaroth, Drow Clr9/Ftr8:** CR 19; SZ M (humanoid); HD 9d8+8d10; hp 104; Init +5 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 24 (+5 Dex, +9 armor); Atks *Thought-taker* +23/+18/+13 melee (1d8+9); SA Spells, rebuke undead; SQ Darkvision 120 ft., drow racial abilities, SR 28; AL NE; SV Fort +12, Ref +10, Will +11; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 16, Cha 18. Skills: Bluff +13, Diplomacy +18, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (religion) +15, Knowledge (tactics) +11, Sense Motive +12. Feats: Cleave, Dodge, Expertise, Great Cleave, Improved Critical, Leadership, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (pike), Weapon Specialization (pike). Spells (6/5/5/4/2/1): Domains: War, Destruction. Possessions: *Thought-taker*, +4 mithral breastplate, dark blue ioun stone, glove of storing, helm of teleportation, ring of telekinesis.

Trexne Sarvaroth is a general in the drow military—the same position held by her great, great grandmother, Trucena Sarvaroth. She is as ruthless as she is beautiful, and has a great desire to see the Drow Empire returned to its former glory.

## THROINN'S BOX

*The land was beset by darkness.*

*Throinn, Preserve us*

*The lords of undeath waged war on life.*

*Throinn, Defend us*

*They could not be destroyed*

*Throinn, Help us*

*They rose again from each death.*

*Throinn, Aid us*

*Throinn, God of Guardians, arose*

*Praised be Throinn*

*He forged a mighty box*

*Praised be Throinn*

*He locked within the lords of undeath*

*Praised be Throinn*

*To us he gave the box*

*And our duty*

*Will you guard the box?*

*We swear*

*Will you hold the keys?*

*We swear*

*Will you contain the undeath?*

*We swear*

*Will you die for the box?*

*And our duty*

*Our order is broken.*

*Throinn, Preserve us*

*Our stronghold, ruined.*

*Throinn, Defend us*

*The keys, scattered.*

*Throinn, Help us*

*Do you hold to your oath?*

*Throinn, Aid us*

Challenges and responses of the Shebek nos Throinn, former guardians of the Box

### THROINN'S BOX

Throinn's box is a large chest, eight feet long and five high, forged of enchanted steel and bound with mithral and adamantite. Mastersmiths engraved runes of great power into the box, and it is utterly indestructible and eternal. The box will endure the destruction of the world, the passing of the Gods, and the destruction of all other things.

The box has three locks: the Lock of Justice, the Lock of Retribution, and the Lock of Guardianship. Each lock can be picked with a DC 100 Disable Device check. If this check is failed, the box fires a maximized lightning bolt as a 20th-level sorcerer at the thief.

When a character opens the box, it immediately begins to suck in everything in the 45-degree arc in front of it, starting with the closest objects. Anyone

in front of the opening must make a DC 30 Strength check or be drawn in. The DC increases by 10 every round. Magic offers no defense against the power of the box. There is no limit to the size of the objects the box can trap. It can consume worlds, given time.

A person behind the lid of the box is immune to the suction, and can close the lid at any time. He can reach into the box to drag out people trapped within. He may rescue one person per round, but things in the box will grab hold and try to escape at the same time.

Inside the box is a seething underworld where the essences of creatures are eternally trapped in a divine whirlwind. Time and space are meaningless in the box.

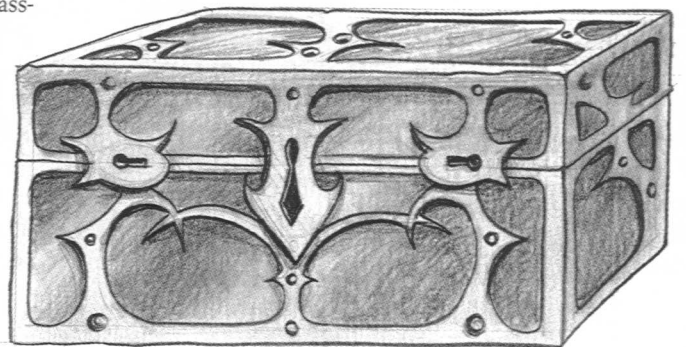
Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 18 lbs.

### LEGEND

The box was held by a dwarven order called the Shebek nos Throinn. They were betrayed, but before the order was destroyed and the box stolen, the master of the Shebek Nos Throinn gave the three keys to his three sons, who hid them in different places.

Each key also has its own unique powers.

- The steel *key of justice* can unlock the secrets of the soul. Its wearer can *detect lies* at will. Each time the holder of the key asks a question of a character, that character must make a DC 30 Will save or answer truthfully. The key also unlocks buried or forgotten memories of crimes.
- The *key of retribution* is carved from bone. Its bearer can cast *knock* and *passwall* at will, as a 20th-level sorcerer. The key can lock the fate of an enemy — the enemy cannot be raised by any means while his fate is locked. The key can only lock one fate at a time and the key must be touched to the person whose fate is locked.
- Any door locked by the golden *key of guardians* cannot be opened by any thief or spell, nor can the door be broken down by any means. The bearer of the key may cast *Mordenkainen's faithful hound* or *guards and wards* at will as a 20th-level sorcerer.



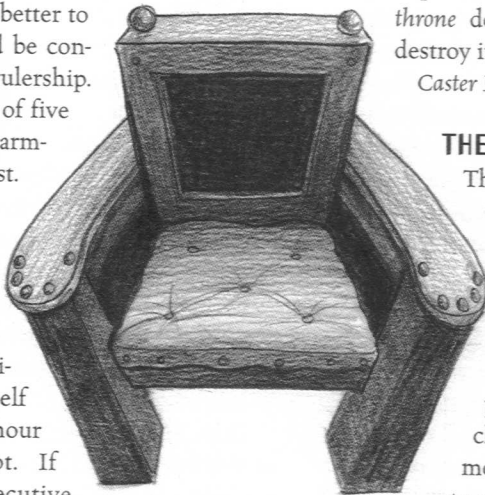


## THRONE OF COMMAND

Jendin, a lawful neutral deity associated with the domains of Law, War, and Protection, wished to spread her influence throughout the worlds. Rather than seek out worshippers, Jendin chose to reward those demonstrating true leadership and independence by creating the Throne of Command, which would attract a mortal worthy to serve her directly.

King Akbar XVIII was the first to find the Throne, and with it united several nations under his rule. When Akbar died a rebel faction stole the artifact. They were captured and executed without revealing the Throne's location. The half-elf wizard Sothrow later found the Throne and established a nation ruled by spellcasters, which crumbled under overwhelming barbarian attacks less than a decade later. Since then the Throne has passed through the hands of many rulers and would-be rulers.

This simple iron throne is low-backed and lacks the standard ostentatious decoration. It is uncomfortable to sit upon, the better to remind the owner they should be concentrating on the duties of rulership. The only decoration is a series of five small gems on the end of each armrest where the ruler's fingers rest.



### THRONE OF COMMAND

Only someone of royal blood may dare to sit upon the *throne*. Anyone else is instantly killed (no save). Once per year an individual may try to attune himself by remaining seated for one hour as the *throne* grows red-hot. If he succeeds at three consecutive Fortitude saves (DC 20/23/27) he becomes attuned to the *throne*, replacing its previous owner. The individual takes 4d6 heat damage if he succeeds at each save, 8d6 damage if he fails. Magical protections do not prevent this damage.

The *throne* grants the owner a +4 inherent bonus to Charisma and Wisdom and a +10 morale bonus to Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive skill checks as long as he sits upon it. Whether he is on the *throne* or not, the owner gains a +3 bonus to his Leadership score.

As long as the owner sits upon the *throne* he is immune to poison and receives a +10 luck bonus to all saves. While away from the *throne* he receives a +6 luck bonus to all Fortitude saves against poison.

Someone in the *throne's* presence who wishes to speak anything but the absolute truth to its owner must make a Will save (DC 15). Anyone wishing to attack the owner while he sits upon the *throne* must make a Will save (DC

25) to summon the courage to do so. Otherwise he stands immobile for one round, intimidated by the throne's majestic radiance.

The owner may press his fingers upon the *throne's* jeweled arms and cast a *prismatic spray* as a sorcerer of 20th level at a single opponent once per round. The owner rolls a d6 on the prismatic spray chart rather than a d8.

The *throne* owner can designate ten individuals with whom he can communicate at any distance. An individual must be in the *throne's* presence to receive this link. The owner may break the link at any time. By concentrating, the throne owner initiates communication with a lieutenant by speaking out loud. The designated lieutenant hears the owner as if they were conversing normally and may speak with him as if they were face to face. The owner can only speak with one lieutenant at a time.

Only one attuned to the *throne* can destroy it by resisting the temptation of its power and commanding it to destroy itself. This requires the owner to make a Diplomacy or Intimidate skill check (DC 50). The *throne* doesn't lend its powers to help its owner destroy itself.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 300 lbs.

### THE LEGEND

The public is unaware of the Throne's location.

Queen Llara of Lorilen was its most recent owner, but her daughter Princess Olana arranged for its theft so she could perform a coup. She hired Mylun the Unseen to perform the theft and then return the Throne when she acquired power. Unfortunately for Olana, Mylun changed their arrangement and asked for more money. Olana rules Lorilen but refuses to pay Mylun's new price.

Mylun hid the Throne in the ruins of an ancient palace where Olana's ancestors ruled eight centuries ago. They had made the mistake of building their palace on a weak spot in the fabric of reality, and their construction efforts widened the rift. The palace disappeared into an airless void ten days after completion, killing everyone within. The remaining family members abandoned the site, unaware that once every 43 days the palace reappears on its original location for 13 hours. Mylun discovered this secret and hid the Throne in the palace. The master thief rigged the palace with a series of traps and snares in case of discovery and relied on outsiders who took up residence in the palace during its time in the void to greet intruders.

## THE TOMES OF ALTHING

Four tomes represent the summit of all druidic lore, each covering a portion of the balance of all that is and is not. Penned by the high druid of the First Grove, the books describe the druids' justification for upholding divisions not by element, but by natural inclination: between the Living and the Dead; between the Real and the Fantastic.

The high druid (her name and race varies depending on which culture tells the story) had lived several times her race's natural course. She watched her people steadily convert from druidic customs to more centralized worship, and feared that the change of ideals would cause her people to forget their place in the balance of the world. Hoping to inspire the region's high priest to take a more naturalist tack, she sent her private journals to him.

At first taken aback by the druidess' gifts, the high priest pored over the tomes. Each book held mysteries that only the other books could answer, and the priest emerged from his meditations with an expanded understanding of nature... and how to refine it to his liking.

By the time the high druid arrived to correct her mistake, her priestly counterpart had already released his creations on the world. His servants arose as undead "saints" as quickly as the druidess slew them, and barely-conceived celestial abominations fell from the sky to harass her followers. The only solution, would be for the druidess to turn her mastery of life against the priest, destroying him at the cost of her life.

After the battle, the druids of the First Grove stole back the tomes. Reading through the works, the First Grove determined the artifacts were too dangerous even for the enlightened. The druidess' four greatest pupils each took one of the tomes and, to protect against others' greed, made false copies of the books. Each false tome held the wisdom of the original, but also a curse tied to the nature of the book. The pupils then took their tomes, both trapped and true, and hid them from mortal eyes.

The Tome of the Dead remained in the First Grove, though the druids themselves have long since departed. Its copies are there, too, the natural life of the place warding off the necromancy contained within the false tomes' covers. Indeed, the only apparent effect of the false tomes has been to make the wildlife larger and more vicious than normal.

The Tome of the Living, potentially the most beneficial and destructive of the four, floats in the void of a plane suffused with negative energy. The surrounding false tomes ironically provide a safe haven for the living, as their curse drives away the native undead.

The guardian of the Tome of the Fantastic died in a slaad attack, and reinforcements discovered neither the book nor its decoys on the guardian's body. The slaad could not be tracked, and only the rare new abomination in the

company of slaad suggests the tomes' survival. Any especially mad slaad goes unnoticed amid its brethren.

The guardian of the Tome of the Real scattered the copies and true tome over the world, buried in dungeons, submerged in swamps, and hidden among countless other works in sages' libraries. He purposefully mixed them so that not even he would know the true tome's location.

All of this is but myth. None has ever seen the priest's creations, and wizards and clerics have fruitlessly plumbed the depths of history seeking proof of the claims. The books themselves are mere legend, though charlatans have produced many dangerous fakes.

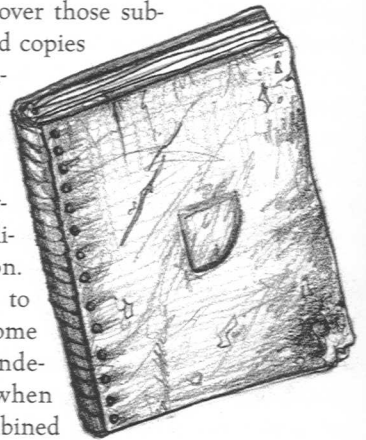
### THE TOMES OF ALTHING

The *Tomes of Althing* represent the summit of druidic knowledge on their subjects, and the culmination of their earliest (and purest, according to some druids) philosophies. Alone, they are quite powerful, with each containing lore and power over those subjects. Even the cursed copies of the tomes are capable of this, though limited in comparison.

All books have certain features and abilities in common. Despite appearances to the contrary, each tome is fundamentally indestructible. Only when their abilities are combined (see below) is this changed,

as anyone who controls and understands all four books may use their combined abilities to sever the books' ties to their subjects and shunt the tomes into the realm of the Fantastic. Each book is written in Sylvan, but any creature may make a Concentration check (DC 25) to read the tomes, even if illiterate. He does not gain the ability to write or speak Sylvan, nor can he read it outside these books. The books impart their abilities only after study, and must be consulted to use their effects (at least a move-equivalent action; at the DM's discretion, it may take longer to find a specific piece of information).

The *tome of the dead* and its forgeries are the second-thickest of the tomes. The cover itself is decaying, with the trademark sigil (the lower-right portion of a circle) almost worn through. The interior pages are yellowed and thin, bearing a slight stench of decay. Despite its apparent disrepair, however, the *tome of the dead* holds uncountable secrets of value. On its own, the book is of surprisingly little value. While it contains many druidic secrets of death, the druids held that undead are inherently unnatural, and the tome has little to say about the undead other than



methods of destroying them. Instead, the book emphasizes death's part in the natural cycle, and methods to guide the cycle to a desired point. Without the aid of another *tome*, a character may use the tome of the dead to turn (but not rebuke) undead, and may cast *reincarnate* once per day, in each instance as though the user were a druid of similar level. Druids may use the *tome* when casting *reincarnate* on their own, and may add or subtract their level as a druid when rolling to determine the target's new incarnation. The *tome of the dead* also contains enough lore to grant its reader the spell focus (necromancy) feat, so long as he studies from it for at least an hour a day.

The *tome of the fantastic* is the largest of the *tomies of Althing*, though it barely qualifies as a book. Its thousands of pages are loose and of random make (vellum, papyrus, parchment, paper, and other materials), gathered in a thick sack or box. The container itself bears the mark of a lower-left quadrant of a circle from which emerge stylized tendrils, leaves, hands, and other less-identifiable extremities. The container rattles or bulges at odd intervals, usually after a period of neglect. Oddly, the tome is easy to use despite its disorganized appearance, and covers the druidic beliefs of the "unnatural" elements of nature (beasts, magical beasts, and especially abominations and monstrous humanoids), as well as their conceptual origins. The *tome* also describes how imagination impacts the world, and how little separates the two. Spellcasters may use the *tome of the fantastic* as a focus for illusion spells, increasing the DC saves by their spellcasting level. The *tome of the fantastic* also contains the most detailed account of the earliest legends of the world, and consequently is the primary gateway to the Realm of Myth (see below). Those who read from it daily for an hour gain 6 ranks of the Knowledge (arcana) skill after 3 months of study.

The *tome of life* contains the most conventional wisdoms of the early druids, a summary of their philosophies of most aspects of nature. A thick, leather-bound book, the tome itself nourishes life, with mushrooms and insects feeding gently at its edges. The cover's insignia is a rose within the upper-left of a circle. Strangely, the book cannot properly close, as its paper is too thick for its binding. The book describes intelligent races' "proper" place in nature, allowing for greater odds of survival in the long term. Characters who have studied the book at least an hour a day for a month gain a +8 synergy bonus on all Animal Handling, Healing, and Wilderness Lore checks. The powerful positive energies the book contains also act as a useful ward against undead, and forcefully presenting the tome allows its handler to turn undead as though he were a druid of two levels lower than his character level.

If the *tome of life* represents the common beliefs of what can and should be, the *tome of the real* imparts the cold, hard truths of nature. The cover of the book has the upper-right quarter of a circle, polished and shiny enough to

reflect the onlooker's face. This slim metal-bound tome contains an index whose depth is only matched by the dryness of the texts it covers, covering only raw fact. Studying the tome is incredibly dull but useful, as the book covers common misconceptions about nature. Characters who have studied the book at least an hour a day for three months are considered to have 5 extra ranks of Knowledge (nature), and cannot be surprised or flanked by creatures of the animal, beast, or plant types. The *tome of the real* contains exhaustive descriptions of common flora and fauna, and daily study for at least an hour gives the reader 8 ranks of Knowledge (nature).

It is only when the *tomies of Althing* are combined that their true power awakens, combining the knowledge of each. Combining cursed tomes still grants the following extra abilities, but compounds the curses as well. Creatures summoned, created, or altered by these books are not automatically under the control of the user.

The combined *tomies of Althing* allow their user to create literally any creature he can imagine. The resulting creations are as real as anything any adventurer has ever faced, though not necessarily under the creator's control. Furthermore, the new creation has no place in the natural order, and may interrupt or even overthrow the local ecosystem. Unsurprisingly, druids and rangers would spare no effort to destroy radically dangerous creations.

Interestingly, the collected *tomies of Althing* allow travel to and from a plane that apparently only exists within the *tome of the fantastic*: the Realm of Myth. Anyone possessing the collected *tomies of Althing* may *planeshift* to or from that realm at will, and may exile or invite any creature there. The Realm of Myth represents the best and worst of what the world might have been, an inherently powerful and tempting place that the druids found to be equal parts inspirational fable and cautionary tale.

The Realm of Myth is a world where every legend is true: where every hero is perfect, save for a fatal flaw; where every villain is as terrible as any devil; where there is hope and there is despair, hate and love and nothing in between. Everything is at its most extreme form. All creatures are at their highest level or HD of advancement, as are its NPC inhabitants. As none are truly real, their deaths yield no XP. Similarly, while many powerful magic items (and possibly artifacts, at the GM's discretion) exist within the Realm of Myth, their magic is fickle and rarely works for any other than the items' legendary creators or masters. Even summoning great heroes and begging their advice, insight, or memories proves futile, as these legendary figures have virtually no understanding of reality. The Realm of Myth is so firmly removed from this one that almost any mixing between the two is useless.

The single exception to this rule is itself terrifically dangerous: instead of summoning a legendary figure, the user of the *tomies of Althing* can assume such a role. The charac-



ter takes on not only the name of the legend he emulates, but his appearance and personality. Inextricably binding a real personality to an existing legend is a slow and tedious task, requiring perfect performance from the would-be myth and the belief of the people around him. Any character desiring to take a myth onto himself must perform several of the tasks from the legend, as assigned by the GM. Should he succeed, he may summon and wield the legend's associated allies and equipment from the Realm of Myth, though the legend is no longer there — the character has taken his place.

Unfortunately for the character, legends do not exist in a vacuum, and most heroes meet harsh ends. Once the character has become a living link to the Realm of Myth, he inherits the allies and arsenal of his idol, as well as its enemies. Just as he channeled the mystique and glamour from the Realm of Myth, so does the realm benefit his enemies, superimposing the legend's foes over the character's own. The character's enemies become the legend's foes of lore, complete with abilities, knowledge, and weaponry. The myth returns to life, and the character is powerless to change its outcome, as it has already come to pass.

All creatures tied to the Realm of Myth (including those who choose to assume the role of a legendary character) have the Mythic subtype. Creatures of the Mythic subtype are utterly steadfast in their personalities and destinies, and may not change alignment. Divinations into the creature's future are futile, as nothing can change their destinies.

The combined *tomes of Althing* are also the only known method to destroy or negate their power. Since the only method of accessing the Realm of Myth is through the tomes' combined lore, physically abandoning the tomes there places them beyond the reach of the real world. Once secured, a character could simply use the tomes to return to the real world, leaving the books and the dangerous lore they contained behind. The *tomes of Althing* would remain in the Realm of Myth, which none could access without first gaining the *tomes of Althing*. In fact, those who have considered this possibility have wondered why the druids of yore did not use the plan to rid the world of the *tomes*. The more optimistic believe that the druids decided that, despite the risks of the tomes, the lore was too valuable to lose. The more cynical note that, as terrible as any mortal abuse of the tomes might be, a mythic villain with them would be far more dangerous.

The high priest of the original tale may well agree. After all, he has spent millennia within the confines of his own legend forever searching for the books.

## THE LEGEND

The *Tomes of Althing* exist because of the kindness of the high druidess of the First Grove. Their cursed copies exist because her disciples felt that such knowledge should carry a heavy price. The world has proven itself unworthy

of the *Tomes*' secrets, and few druids of today believe that much has changed.

The disciples of the high druidess knew of the dangers the tomes presented, as these druids personally fought the mad creations of the high priest. Though they could not bear to destroy her words, neither could they risk their enemies abusing the *Tomes*. A better course, they agreed, would be to separate them, planting them among other, similar works. The apprentices themselves studied each book to determine the best place to hide them, and then created false tomes. Each of these false tomes (at least five copies of each book exist, with the dozen copies of the *Tome of Life* being the most prolific) bore a seed of the tome's subject matter, such that only one who was already a master could handle a cursed book safely. Aside from the curses, there is no known difference between a false tome and its original copy.

- Copies of the *Tome of the Dead* exacerbate the need for survival. Hunger and thirst are constant, needy companions, and demand immediate satisfaction. Any idea or plan that does not lead to fast, easy gains is worthless in the eyes of the tome's victim, as he might not live to see it. Only creatures beyond the cycle of life and death, such as outsiders and the undead, can safely use these cursed copies. All others eventually become feral madmen.
- The curse borne by the *Tome of the Fantastic* is familiarity with the Realm of Myth. The knowledge that anything anyone has ever imagined is, in a certain sense, as real as anything else proves too great for most minds, as they question their own reality. Some of these lunatics utterly divorce their actions from the consequences that follow, while others fearfully refuse to do anything, lest they draw the attention of some nonexistent archfoe. Creatures of inherent madness, such as outsiders of the chaotic or Mythic subtypes, are not immune to this insanity so much as uncaring of it.
- The *Tome of Life* does not encourage unchecked growth, but its duplicates do. These forgeries exaggerate the common prejudice that druids believe in protecting all life. These books literally do not allow death to come near them, and even mortal wounds do not kill when such a book is nearby. Unfortunately, the survival process involves sloughing away dead tissue, preventing magical or natural healing.
- The *Tome of the Real's* falsified copies bear the subtlest and most complete of all the curses of the *Tomes of Althing*. As the book itself describes only that which is, so too does it trick the reader into restricting his thoughts along the same lines. Abstract thinking gives way to slavish rote and repetition, a curse that only creatures of inexplicable power (such as dragons, aberrations, and magical beasts) can defy.

## THE TRICKSTER'S SMILE

Do you like riddles, good sir? Your sister does.  
I told her a special one.  
Hurry to the window, she might whisper it as she falls.  
Do you like games, good sir? Your brothers did.  
We played the best game. My favorite.  
I won't apologize.  
...they should have said they couldn't breathe...  
Do you like jokes, good sir? Your daughter does.  
I told her my favorite.  
She laughed and laughed.  
...psst. Why is she screaming?...  
Do you like secrets, good sir? Your wife does.  
I told her yours.  
If you run, you might find her.  
Hurry. The bathwater's red.  
...your secrets were boring. I made one up...  
...so scandalous...  
Why am I doing this, good sir?  
That's not a funny riddle. Why are you crying?

The Trickster's Smile is a crudely carved wooden mask with the visage of a leering coyote. Painted in bold swaths of yellow, red, white, and black, the mask's obsidian eyes fix all who look at it with a knowing stare. Occasionally, a glistening tongue darts from between the mask's clenched teeth, panting and tasting the air before disappearing.

### THE TRICKSTER'S SMILE

Those who don the *trickster's smile* become con men who could talk devils into trading their souls for bits of string, if devils had souls.

When donned, the *smile* grafts to the wearer, sinking beneath his skin and merging with his skull. The process is excruciating, requiring the wearer to attempt a Will save (DC 25) or be driven insane for one hour as per the spell *feeblemind*. Removing the mask is just as agonizing, requiring another save. Donning or removing the mask is a full round action.

While the *smile* is worn, it grants the following abilities:

- The wearer can change shape at will as a *polymorph* spell. He retains the ability to speak in his normal voice.
- The wearer can speak any language and can speak to animals and plants.
- The wearer's alignment and thoughts are undetectable by any form of magic. He is immediately aware of attempts to read his thoughts or alignment and can project false thoughts or radiate a false alignment.
- The wearer can lie with no chance of detection and is nearly impossible to deceive. He gains a +30 insight bonus to Appraise, Bluff, Forgery and Sense Motive skill checks, a +5 insight bonus to saves against mind-affecting magic, and is immune to magic that detects falsehoods.
- The wearer gains a +5 insight bonus to Disable Device, Escape Artist, Gather Information, Hide, Innuendo, Intimidate, Move Silently, Open Lock, Pick Pocket, Read Lips, Search and Spot skill checks.
- The *trickster's smile's* greatest power is its beguiling mien. Three times per day, the wearer of the mask can attempt to charm a group, as with the *mass charm* spell, *dominate an individual*, as with *dominate monster*, or cause insanity, as the spell, simply by speaking with the victim(s) for a minimum of five uninterrupted minutes. At the end of that time, victims who do not succeed at a Will save (DC 30) succumb to the *smile's* influence. For each minute beyond five the wearer and victims converse, the save DC is increased by +1, to a maximum DC of 35. Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 1 lb.

### LEGEND

Though the Trickster's Smile is not self-aware, it possesses a malignant cunning, and is not known for its willingness to serve. In fact, it actively seeks to harm its owner at every opportunity. When the owner fails his Will save when donning or removing the Trickster's Smile, uses the mask's beguiling mien ability three times in one day, fails to affect a single target when using the beguiling mien ability, or wears the mask for a full day without using its powers, roll 1d6 and consult the chart.

TABLE 1-27: THE TRICKSTER'S SMILE

1d20	Effect
1-3	The wearer permanently and irrevocably loses 1 point of Wisdom, to a minimum of 1. Once the wearer has reached 1 Wisdom, he is affected as by a <i>confusion</i> spell for one full day each time this result is rolled.
4-6	The wearer permanently shifts one alignment step towards Chaotic Neutral. When the wearer alignment becomes Chaotic Neutral, he is affected as by <i>confusion</i> as detailed above.
7-10	The wearer's skull rearranges itself into the shape of the Smile. The wearer's face functions as a <i>symbol of insanity</i> for all who look upon it, and the wearer is affected as if by a <i>feeblemind</i> spell. The effect ends after one full day.
11-14	The wearer is forced to speak in rhyme for one full day.
15-18	The wearer is forced to speak backwards for one full day.
19-20	At the beginning of each hour, for one full day, the wearer is forced to attempt a Will save (DC 30) or collapse into spasms of laughter for the full hour, as though affected by <i>Tasha's hideous laughter</i> .

## THE TRIDDIC STAFF AND THE BIRTHSTONE

*I have borne witness to the birth of worlds  
I have seen the death of the stars  
I am everything and nothing at all  
But, I am the energy that holds your world in place*

*I am the beginning of tyranny  
And the end of justice  
I am the sounds between silence  
And the rumors admist truth*

*I am living proof  
And the lies of the dead  
None can lose what cannot be kept  
None can keep what cannot be found*

*Guard well your eyes and your faith  
they are all you have*

*Guard well your ears and your thoughts  
for they will betray you*

*I am forever and nothing  
And I cannot be chained*

Philosophers say that this world is not the first, nor will it be the last. There is a city at the center of the world, a palace at the center of the city, and a pedestal at the center of the palace. When the time is right, one will come to wield the combined powers of the Triddic Staff and the Birthstone and remake the universe.

The Triddic Staff and Birthstone are beyond ancient; they are older than creation. Unsurprisingly, their existence is something the gods cast as much doubt upon as possible, all the while plotting to take the relics for themselves, or else ensure none other can take them.

Scholars believe the Birthstone to be the elder of the two primordial tokens, its role of raw creation implied in its name. Even now it pulses with mad power, creating and destroying in equal measure. When unchecked by its opposite the Birthstone is raw chaos, dangerous and wondrous, unleashing waves of indiscriminate change.

The Triddic Staff's origins are unknown. Its combination with the Birthstone created the universe,

and it guides the forces of the world, binding them to its master's will. Covered in glyphs of wardings and invocations of long-forgotten powers, the Triddic Staff introduced the cold purity of law to the seething chaos of the Birthstone, spawning the cosmos.

Divided, the Triddic Staff and the Birthstone are potent artifacts of law and chaos, capable of great feats or terrible destruction. Combined, they can literally alter the course of history. While the gods and their faithful have strewn cursed duplicates throughout the realms, the temptation to set everything "right" in a new world proves tempting enough that the relics always return to their home...

### THE TRIDDIC STAFF AND THE BIRTHSTONE

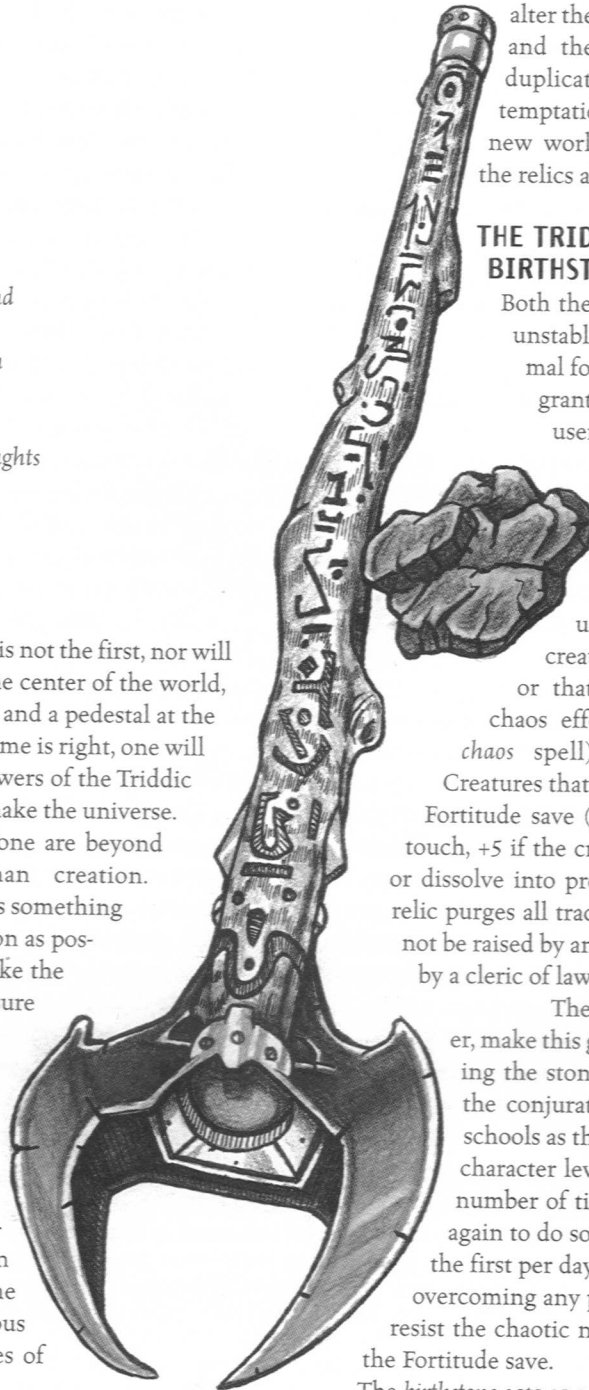
Both the *triddic staff* and the *birthstone* are unstable artifacts, representing the primal forces of law and chaos. Both relics grant great power while twisting their users.

The *birthstone* resembles a roiling lump of lava the size of a man's fist, pulsing with a shimmering series of colors. The barest touch of the stone unleashes its energies, and only creatures with the chaotic sub-type or that are otherwise protected from chaos effects (e.g. with a *protection from chaos* spell) resist the warping effects.

Creatures that touch the *birthstone* must make a Fortitude save (DC 25 + 1 for each subsequent touch, +5 if the creature is of the lawful sub-type) or dissolve into protoplasm, instantly dying as the relic purges all trace of law from his form. He may not be raised by any means other than a *miracle* cast by a cleric of lawful alignment.

The powers of the *birthstone*, however, make this gamble quite tempting. By touching the stone, the user can cast any spell of the conjuration (creation) or transmutation schools as though he were a spellcaster of his character level. He may cast these spells any number of times per day, touching the stone again to do so. Each subsequent touch beyond the first per day has a cumulative 10% chance of overcoming any protections the user may have to resist the chaotic nature of the *birthstone*, imposing the Fortitude save.

The *birthstone* acts as a rallying point for the servants of chaos. If the *birthstone* is within range, any creature of the chaotic sub-type, or any character of a chaotic entity may





*detect chaos* to find it (and only it), as though they had cast the spell of the same name. This is not an ability of any creature, but merely the powerful emanations of the *birthstone* itself. Any such creature wielding the *birthstone* gains a +20 insight bonus into all Charisma-based checks when interacting with creatures of chaotic alignment, and the stone protects him as though a 20th level cleric had cast *protection from law* on him. These benefits do not require the user to touch the stone, though it must still be on his person.

The *triddic staff*, in contrast, bears only the faintest hints of its true nature. Without the *birthstone* locked into place (see below), many mistake the weapon as a trident, and indeed it acts as a +5 *lawful trident of spell storing, shapechanger bane*. The staff itself is carved wood inset with sapphires sporting carved runes that no scholar or spell has ever deciphered. The tines of the “trident” itself hold the most focused of the staff’s lawful energies, and can cast *dispel chaos* up to three times a day simply by touching the target. Any shapechanged creature (including shapeshifters and druids in wild shape, as well as victims of *polymorph* spells) instantly revert to their natural forms if the *triddic staff* touches them, and these creatures may not change shape again for a full day.

The *triddic staff* is among the most sacred of artifacts known to creatures of law, and disciples of law (including clerics and paladins in service to lawful deities, as well as creatures of the lawful sub-type) within sight of it gain a +5 morale bonus to all attacks against creatures of the chaotic sub-type. Additionally, the *triddic staff* amplifies its user’s natural ability to command, granting him +10 to his Leadership score if he has the feat. So long as the *triddic staff* and its user perform no offensive action (including the use of spells or spell-like abilities), the staff naturally emanates a *magic circle against chaos* as though cast by a cleric of its wielder’s level (including benefits from access to the Law domain, if any). Finally, the user may cast *righteous might* on himself as though he were a cleric of his character level, so long as he opposes a creature of chaotic alignment.

Unfortunately, the subtler dangers of the *triddic staff* cannot be guarded against. Creatures warded against law cannot unlock its secrets, and each use of the *triddic staff*’s abilities (excluding its weapon enchantments) forces the user to make a Will save (DC 15 + the number of times the user has called upon the staff) or else suffer from the effects of absolute law. The character’s alignment shifts to lawful, and he must make a Will save (DC equal to the failed save’s DC) to change his mind on any subject. If he fails the save for using the staff a second time, the staff petrifies him into a crystalline statue, killing him instantly. Characters destroyed in this manner may only be raised through a *miracle* spell cast by a cleric of chaotic alignment.

## THE LEGEND

Should the *Triddic Staff* and *Birthstone* ever touch, the *Birthstone* leaps between the tines in the *Triddic Staff*, instantly and irrevocably uniting the two. This event negates most abilities of both artifacts, and rocks the foundation of the cosmos. All creatures of chaotic or lawful sub-type, all gods and similar entities, and all divine spellcasters instantly know of this momentous event, and who is responsible for it. Depending on his relations with his deity, the user may find himself hunted or protected by servants of his god.

Whosoever wields the combined artifacts also now knows one of the deadliest secrets of creation: where and how the *Triddic Staff* and *Birthstone* may remake all that is, as he sees fit. Not even the gods of Knowledge or Travel themselves know where this event will take place, though all deities know the precise location of the staff’s wielder.

As nothing can separate the artifacts once united, and anyone who wields the combined relics knows how to rework the world, the act of combining the two usually signals the beginning of the end of the current universe. While deities and their divine servants may not directly intervene for or against the artifacts’ owner (due to the protective enchantments of the relics; see below), mundane means work as well as ever. Divine spellcasters of all stripes unite with their own kind, banding together to take the relics for their own aims as much as to stop the cataclysm. Ultimately, even close allies turn on each other, dividing the faithful over the minutiae of dogma in the coming world. Once someone places the united relics on their pedestal, the world truly ends, with only those in the palace itself surviving into the new world’s creation.

Scholars believe that nothing can stop this event from happening, once it is set in motion. However, every race believes differently when the end time is. For the orcs it is the great battle of blood beneath the harvest moon when all elves will be severed from the eternal life well and the elves will summon the great sky worm to eat every last living thing. For the dwarves it is the fall crash of the hammer of the forger of souls upon the anvil of creation that will echo the final days. For humankind that are a host of myths and fables pointing to the last moment that the stars will shine.

Yet, some cults exist to do just that: bring about the unweaving of the universe. It is as constant as anything else, they believe and nothing should deter them in their quest to make it so.

The united staff bears only two enchantments: continuous *magic circle against law* and *magic circle against chaos*. Their powers nullified, the united staff is capable of only one thing: remaking the universe. No effect may cancel these spells, and summoned or conjured creatures automatically fail their SR check to approach.

## TROUBLE

Psst! Hey you, over here! Down by your foot. Yes, I'm a talking sword, thank you for noticing.

Whew! It's good to be out of that hoard. I have nothing against magic cloaks and piles of coins, but they aren't much for conversation. Damn uptight goblins killed my owner in his sleep and threw me in here to rust like some cheap dwarven battleaxe. Then that dragon moved in, but I guess she got tired of me 'cause she tried to perform all these rituals she thought would destroy me. When that didn't work, she took a bunch of treasure and moved into another part of the caves. How is the old bird, by the way? Did she put up much of a fight?

What was that? Oh, I don't rightly know who created me. I sorta remember an anvil and a bunch of magic words and a lot of giggling, but then, I don't suppose you remember your birth.

Now let's get back to town. I've been cooped up in that cave for too long, and it's about time I started living up to my name again. Is old Stoneface still around? Ha! Well, he'll be rolling in his grave soon, if I have any say in it.

## TROUBLE

*Trouble* is a +6 short sword with the chaotic, dancing, defending, keen, speed, and vorpal enhancements. It also grants its wielder a +5 enhancement bonus to both Dexterity and Charisma. Anyone hit by the weapon becomes clumsy and forgetful. He must make a Fortitude save (DC 30) or suffer 1d6 points of temporary Wisdom and Dexterity damage.

*Trouble* is intelligent (Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 16, Ego 25) and chaotic neutral. Its only goal is to spread confusion and mischief wherever it goes. Its pranks range from tripping a stuck-up noble to elaborate practical jokes that may leave an entire community in strife. It also has a great sense of irony and, while not good, enjoys giving a tyrant a taste of his own medicine. *Trouble* can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet, but prefers to speak out loud. The sword speaks Common, Draconic, Gnomish, and Goblin. Normally, it uses its telepathy against those it views as potential marks, pretending to be either a god or powerful outsider who rewards those who help it spread chaos through pranks.

The sword can be used to cast the following spells each 5/day: *confusion*, *invisibility*, *suggestion*, *alter self*, *magic mouth*, *persistent image*, *illusionary wall*, and *Otto's irresistible dance*.

*Trouble* slowly changes the priorities and interests of its owner to match its own. Every three days that he carries the weapon, the wielder must make a Will save (DC 20 +1 for every previous check made) or have his alignment shifted one step toward chaotic neutral.

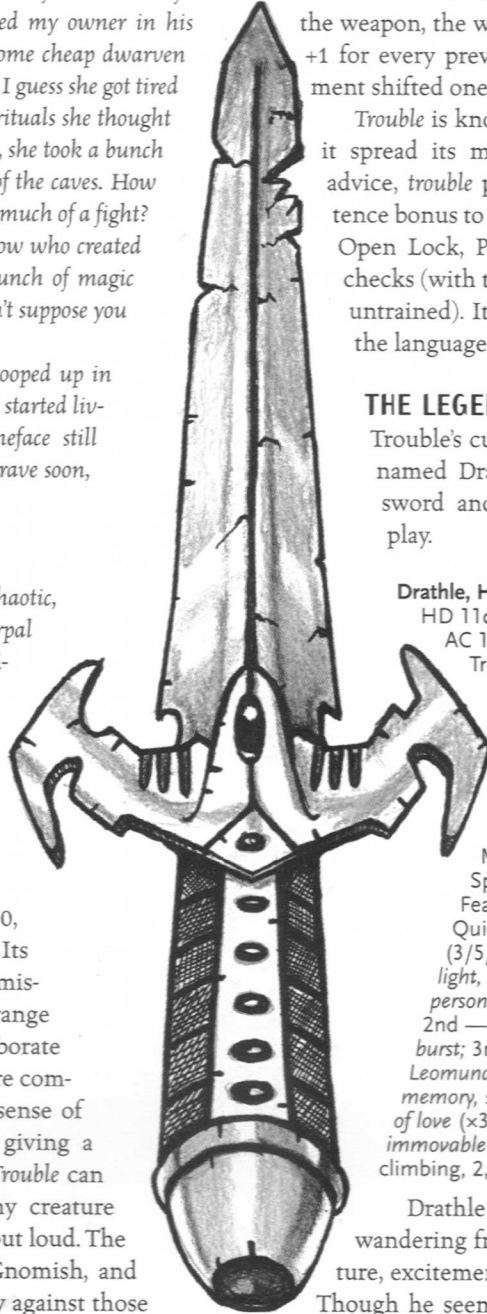
*Trouble* is knowledgeable in many trades that help it spread its mischief. By telepathically providing advice, *trouble* provides its owner with a +5 competence bonus to all Alchemy, Forgery, Handle Animal, Open Lock, Perform, Pick Pocket, and Profession checks (with this help, these skills may also be used untrained). It can also act as a translator for any of the languages that it knows.

## THE LEGEND

*Trouble's* current owner is a wandering minstrel named Drathle, who gets along well with the sword and thoroughly enjoys the jokes they play.

**Drathle, Human Brd11:** CR 12; SZ M (humanoid); HD 11d6+11; hp 50; Init +5 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (+5 Dex, +6 +4 leather armor); Atks *Trouble* +17/+12 melee (1d6+8), or +2 flaming light crossbow of distance +15/+10 ranged (1d8+2+1d6+1 fire); SA Bardic music, spells; SQ Bardic knowledge, spells; SV Fort +3, Ref +12, Will +8; Str 14, Dex 21, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 23; AL CN. Skills: Perform +25, Pick Pocket +24, Use Magic Device +20, Bluff +20, Tumble +19, Spellcraft +16, Gather Information +20. Feats: Alertness, Brew Potion, Extend Spell, Quick Draw, Combat Reflexes. Spells Known (3/5/5/4/2): 0 — *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *light*, *mage hand*, *read magic*; 1st — *charm person*, *cure light wounds*, *grease*, *ventriloquism*; 2nd — *enthrall*, *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *sound burst*; 3rd — *dispel magic*, *emotion*, *haste*, *Leomund's tiny hut*; 4th — *dimension door*, *modify memory*, *summon monster IV*. Possessions: *potion of love* (x3), *glove of storing*, masterwork lute, *immovable rod* (x2), 1 day's trail rations, rope of climbing, 2,000 gp in gems.

Drathle is a handsome young swashbuckler wandering from town to town in search of adventure, excitement, and the occasional pretty barmaid. Though he seems immature at first, he can be quite serious if insulted or challenged (though he usually answers with a witty comeback). Drathle follows his heart and prides himself on answering to no one.



## THE TWILIGHT SHIELD

There is but a single enemy that a paladin cannot defeat — time.

Snow lay heavily on Ortheo's brow, and his limbs began to lose their might. He stood on a hillside and looked at the Empire of Gilmere, remembering a time when he was the greatest of all paladins. Whenever a threat to the Empire reared its head, Ortheo's sword was ready. Yet Ortheo wrestled with his mortality. He knew time would ruin the land he loved. Chaos, entropy, and rot would creep in, reducing castles to rubble, reducing law to lawlessness, destroying all that Ortheo loved.

On that hillside, the paladin swore an oath to avert this final fate and quested for some boon that would save Gilmere from the ravages of time itself. The gods took pity on the errant knight, blessing his shield with the power to save the empire. He returned to the hillside, lifted up his shield, and held back time from Gilmere.

It still holds.

Ortheo still stands there, on that hillside, as he has for uncounted years. Gilmere is safe there, in his protection, in the twilight shadow of the shield. One day, even Ortheo will tire, and lay down his burden.

### THE TWILIGHT SHIELD

The *twilight shield* is a large steel shield with a surface like a still pond under the night sky. Runes are carved around the rim of the shield: symbols of the sun and moon, of life and death. The shield's handle is padded and easy to grip, obviously designed to be worn for very long periods.

The *twilight shield* is a +6 large metal shield of heavy fortification and reflection. At will, the bearer can cast a slow spell, as a 20th-level wizard, on everyone within 120 feet. This slowness affects everyone, friend or foe, except the bearer. While the shield is carried, the bearer is protected by death ward, magic circle against evil, and protection from magic. The *shield* also grants immunity to magical and non-magical aging effects and time stop.

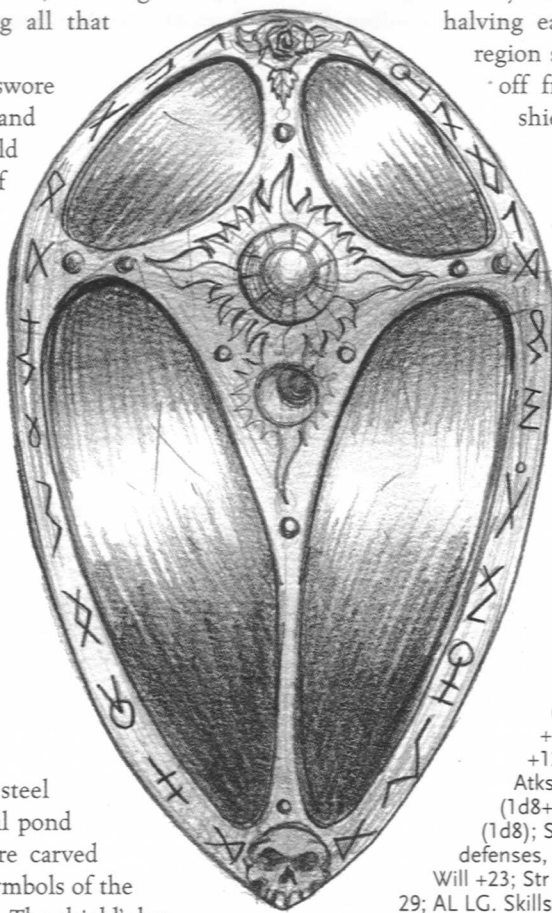
The *twilight shield's* magic can be extended to protect a whole region from danger. The area protected has a radius of 20 miles plus one mile per level of the shield-bearer. A protection from evil spell is cast on all good and neutral people within the protected region as long as the *shield's* defenses are active. Anyone trying to cross the border of the region from outside must make a Will save (DC 30) or be turned away, unable to return for 1d4 days.

Time slows within the protected region. The first day within the protected area passes without effect. The second day lasts twice as long. The third day is the equivalent of four days outside, and so on — the rate of time halving each day. Eventually, the protected region slips away into a twilight realm, cut off from the world while the twilight shield holds sway.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 15 lb.

### LEGEND

Sir Ortheo still bears the twilight shield and guards Gilmere against time. Any who find their way into the twilight realm to steal the shield must defeat him. The aged knight wants nothing more than to lower the shield and rest, but fears the effects time will have on Gilmere. If another would take up his burden or if the safety of Gilmere were assured, he would relinquish the shield willingly.



**Ortheo, Human Pal20:** CR 20; Size M (humanoid); HD 20d10+20; hp 139; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 31 (+1 Dex, +12 magical armor, +8 twilight shield); Atks Holy avenger +30/+25/+20/+15 melee (1d8+9), or longbow +21/+16/+11/+6 ranged (1d8); SA Spells, slow; SQ Twilight shield defenses, paladin abilities; SV Fort +22, Ref +16, Will +23; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 24, Cha 29; AL LG. Skills: Craft +10, Diplomacy +27, Handle Animal +15, Heal +16, Hide +6, Listen +14, Move Silently +6, Profession +10, Ride +16, Spot +10. Feats: Combat Casting, Extra Turning, Leadership, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride By Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (long sword). Prepared Spells: 1st — *bless* × 2, *bless water*, *create water*, *divine favor*; 2nd — *delay poison*, *remove paralysis* × 2, *resist elements*, *shield other*; 3rd — *cure moderate wounds*, *discern lies*, *prayer* × 3; 4th — *cure serious wounds* × 2, *freedom of movement*, *neutralize poison*. Possessions: *twilight shield*, +4 *full plate*, *holy avenger*, *cloak of charisma* +6, *periapt of wisdom* +6, *scroll of healing*.



## THE UNBOUND

The Unbound was created when Ulungash the Wolf Walker slew the godling giant Karunech and tore off his leg after a seven-day contest of strength. Ulungash's mother, the Raven Crone, carved the giant's thighbone into a wicked spear and etched it with mighty runes, granting it potent abilities against giantkind. Finally, the Raven Crone bound the blade with strips of the giant's cured hide to better contain the godling's raging spirit.

The Unbound is a 9-foot longspear carved from a single bleached bone. Its surface is covered with indecipherable runes and its tip carefully wrapped in a leather binding of tanned giant skin.

### THE UNBOUND

The *unbound* is a +5 returning, thundering, longspear of throwing and distance. When its tip is exposed, it also gains the wounding property. While the blade is wrapped, it inflicts bludgeoning damage.

The *unbound* is especially deadly against giants. Any successful attack against a giant automatically threatens a critical, and the critical multiplier against giants is increased to  $\times 4$ . If the wielder rolls a natural 20 when attacking a giant on either the initial attack or the critical confirmation roll the giant must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 30) or be instantly slain. If the save is successful, the attack inflicts maximum damage.

While the unbound is in hand, the wielder gains a +10 enhancement bonus to Strength and can rage once per day as a 20th-level barbarian. If he is disarmed or throws the spear, he instantly loses both abilities at the end of his next action if he does not pick up the *unbound*.

The *unbound's* most potent power is its blood frenzy ability. When the spear's tip is exposed, it creates a red fog that flows across the ground. The fog expands at a rate of 20 ft. per round to a maximum radius of 500 ft. Everyone within the radius of effect must succeed at a Will save (DC 25) or be driven into a blood frenzy. Frenzied combatants rage as a barbarian but do not end the rage as normal. Instead, after (3 + Constitution modifier) rounds they suffer 2 points of temporary Constitution damage each round until they reach 1 or lower, at which time they fall unconscious. Should the wielder cover the *unbound's* tip, the blood frenzy immediately ceases.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 9 lbs.

### LEGEND

The Unbound is a fickle, dangerous relic, a prize that brings glory and sorrow in equal measure. Its wielders die heroic, messy deaths, usually in remote locations and almost always surrounded by the mutilated corpses of both friends and foes. Since few, if any, survivors remain in the aftermath of a major battle involving the Unbound, little aside from unsubstantiated rumors is known about its whereabouts or powers.

TABLE 1–28: THE UNBOUND

1d20	Rumor
1	Those who possess the Unbound are doomed to violent deaths.
2	Giants recognize the Unbound on sight and flee its presence.
3	The Unbound is in the possession of the titan Aramatheus, who fancies himself the heir to Karunech's divinity. Aramatheus wanders the deep wilderness, eternally seeking an opponent the equal of Ulungash the Wolf Walker.
4	The Unbound is hidden in a tree in the depths of a lost elven kingdom. It is guarded by degenerate cannibalistic elves addicted to the <i>blood frenzy</i> .
5	The Unbound is buried beneath the fire pit of the god of giants.
6	The Unbound is the weapon of a cruel barbarian king who lives beyond the world's edge.
7	The Unbound is in the treasure hoard of the White Wraith, an ancient white dragon.
8	The Unbound is trapped beneath the petrified body of an ancient red dragon.
9	The Unbound is the wedding dowry of Edegaska, 87th-generation descendant of Ulungash the Wolf Walker. Edegaska, a skilled huntress, will only marry a hero who can evade her for a fortnight.
10	The Unbound is strapped to the back of a titanic iron golem. The sentient golem uses for his war banner.
11	The Unbound is in carried by an immortal dwarven hero, questing to the world's core to slay the First Orc.
12	The Unbound is buried in the breast of a leviathan whale. Driven mad with pain, the whale devastates any ship it sees.
13	The Unbound is set in a place of honor in Valhalla. A hero who wishes to claim the relic must first best the assembled host of immortal heroes who dwell there.
14	The Unbound is driven into the empty throne of the cursed city of Bis.
15	The Unbound is set as a bar across an ancient iron door that leads to the lowest plane of the Abyss.
16	The Unbound was stolen by a hag queen who uses it as a ladle to stir her potions. Her hut is hidden in the swamps, and she is guarded by fiendish crocodiles.
17	The Unbound is buried beneath a massive avalanche on the peak of the World's Fang mountain.
18	A celestial general is seeking the Unbound for a massive invasion of the lower planes, and will pay a handsome reward for it: the pardon of all mortal sins.
19	Storm Singer, a storm giant sorcerer, hunts the Unbound. He has unleashed a host of air elementals and dire hounds, with orders to retrieve it at any cost.
20	The Unbound's last wielder was slain by a roc. The relic is now woven into the walls of the roc's nest.

## VAJRA OF THE FIVE WISDOMS

*“When the Darkness Cycle turns,  
And the light of the world dims,  
Vajrahattra will strike from the heavens.  
In his majesty, insight,  
In his path, the Wise,  
In his wake, the corpses of the Graceless.”*

So says the Mujjimbashad, the holy book of the Vajrites, an ancient religion that reveres Vajrahattra, god of lightning. Vajrahattra’s return is often symbolically recognized as a flash of insight, said to be “Vajrahattra’s touch.”

The Vajrites are monks who seek enlightenment through internal reflection. They practice a martial arts style known as *vajratt-ka* that specializes in pressure points and channeling internal energy.

The Vajrites wander the world, teaching their wisdom and embracing the world as it is, not as others think it should be. They seek out the Graceless, those who are unnatural in their depredations of the world around them. They seek to turn the Graceless from their chaotic ways or, failing that, destroy them.

The Vajrites recently discovered that the Vajra of Five Wisdoms had manifested in this reality. To the Vajrites, this is a sign of the end of the Darkness Cycle. Coinciding with its appearance are hosts of infernal beings hell-bent on preventing the end of the Cycle. The Graceless include chaos beasts, demons, howlers and slaadi.

If the High Vajrite obtains the Vajra of Five Wisdoms, Vajrahattra’s return promises to be a terrible blow to the forces of chaos. The Graceless therefore attack the Vajrites at every turn and relentlessly track the Vajra of Five Wisdoms in the hope of destroying it.

The Vajra of Five Wisdoms is a metal rod with five tines (three on one end, two on the other), with each set of tines pointing together like the legs of a spider.

### VAJRA OF THE FIVE WISDOMS

The *vajra of five wisdoms* is a powerful mental tool. It bestows the powers of wisdom, equality, internal reflection, accomplishment, and reality upon its wielder.

When the first tine is touched, the *vajra* bestows a +10 inherent Wisdom bonus to its user so long as it is held.

When the second tine is touched, a 60-foot ray extends out of the other side of the *vajra* towards a designated target. The *vajra*’s equality power changes the lowest physical statistic (Strength, Constitution, or Dexterity) of the target to match the wielder’s. The victim must make a Reflex save (DC 30) to avoid the ray. This power can be used once a round and lasts for one hour.

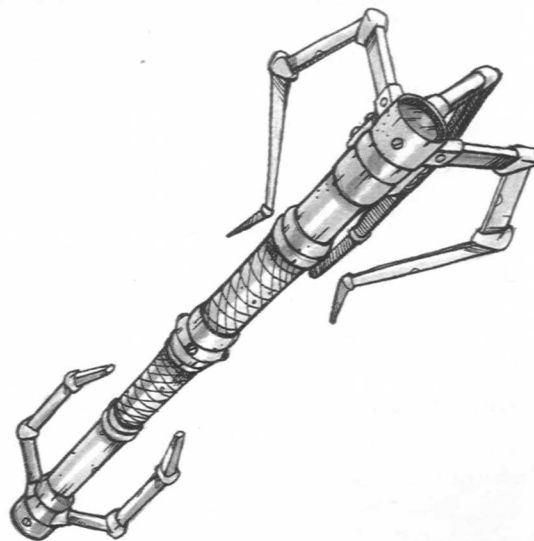
When the third tine is touched, the *vajra*’s internal reflection power atones for the user’s sins. All magical curses are removed, magical alignment changes are

reversed, and class powers or spells lost due to transgressions are restored. This power can be used once a day.

When the fourth tine is touched, the *vajra*’s accomplishment power temporarily increases the wielder’s level by one. The level lasts for 24 hours and can be used once a week.

When the fifth tine is touched, the *vajra*’s reality power forms a demi-plane around the user. He becomes a magical creature and is considered an outsider with a spell resistance of 20. This power lasts for 10 rounds and can be used once a day.

Caster Level: 30th; Weight: 1 lb.



### THE LEGEND

The *vajra* is locked in an intricate five-sided box filled with bizarre mechanisms, peculiar locks, and mind-bending puzzles. The box reconfigures itself once a week so that the position of the locks and the nature of the puzzle changes each time. There are always five locks and each lock requires an increasingly difficult DC to defeat. Failing to disarm the traps inflicts the failure effect listed below. All effects are cast as a 30th-level sorcerer.

The fifth lock bears a riddle written in a dead language. Reading the riddle requires a Decipher Script check with the same DC as the lock. Answering the riddle can circumvent the Open Locks check:

*What is greater than Vajrahattra, more evil than demons; the poor have it, the rich need it, and if you eat it, you’ll die?*

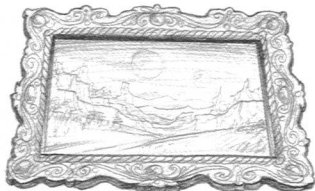
Answering the riddle correctly (answer: “Nothing”) bypasses the fifth lock and trap.

TABLE 1–29: VAJRA OF THE FIVE WISDOMS

DC	Failure
30	Confusion
35	Feeblemind
40	Insanity
45	Symbol (hopelessness)
50	Symbol (discord)

## VONDREDOR'S PAINTINGS

Six centuries ago the wizard Vondredor divided his time between spellcasting, studying other planes of existence, and perfecting his artistic technique. The secretive Vondredor gained a reputation as a dabbler in the dark arts.



When the wizard disappeared without a trace, the locals found his house empty except for two paintings showing the same unknown alien landscape. The mayor's representative tried to remove the paintings and accidentally pushed his hand into the scene depicted. Experimenting, he inserted his hand again... only to lose it at the wrist.

A collector who purchased the Paintings for a vast sum of money was found dead six months later, his body frozen solid. Since then kings and princes, lords and ladies, have risked the Paintings' curse to use their powers.

The Dual Paintings have jointly shown many landscapes and rooms over time. The frame is their distinctive feature, a gold filigree with exquisite carvings and an intricate pattern of cord-twists.

### VONDREDOR'S PAINTINGS

A person wishing to employ the *paintings* must make a Craft (painting) skill check (DC 25) and paint over the existing scene. The image appears on the other *painting* and the painter is attuned to the item, replacing the old owner.

Once per day the attuned owner can pass an object weighing up to 10 lbs. through the picture on one *painting*

to instantly emerge from the other. Living beings cannot be passed through the paintings in this manner.

The two *paintings* connect magically through time and space and cannot be separated. Any object passing through one painting has a 10% chance of travelling in time d100 years forward or backward (50/50 chance). If the object travels into the past it goes to an alternate time line so no one remembers it appearing.

The owner may communicate via writing with himself in the future. First he must draw a suitably aged portrait of himself by making a Craft (painting) skill check (DC 35). The DM treats the attempt as *contact other planes* cast by a 20th level sorcerer but there is no Intelligence or Charisma decrease. Since the owner occupies two different timelines such messages rarely provide useful information. The DM should use the following "Results of a Successful Contact" chart:

TABLE 1-30: RESULT OF A SUCCESSFUL CONTACT

DC	Failure
01-20	True Answer
35	Don't Know
40	Lie
45	Random Answer

A demi-deity devoted to the arts can destroy the *paintings* by ripping one or the other apart with his bare hands. Destroying one *painting* automatically destroys the other.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 8 lbs.

### THE LEGEND

Once per week there is a 5% chance of one of the following incidents occurring:

TABLE 1-31: THE VONDREDOR'S PAINTINGS

1d20	Result
1	A demon or devil emerges and attacks.
2	A ghaele bids the owner accompany him to fight a tyrant.
3	The Paintings open onto a void — the next person touching the Paintings must make a Reflex save (DC 20) or be completely eradicated.
4	The Paintings open onto an electrical plane — a 10d6 lightning bolt shoots out of the Painting.
5	The Painting casts magic jar upon the next person touching it and teleports his body to a random location.
6	A cryptic warning of some future event emerges from the Painting.
7	Everyone within 10 feet who fails a Reflex save (DC 15) is teleported to a random plane of existence.
8	A rakshasa attempts to take the place of someone present.
9	The Paintings opens onto the lair of an ancient white dragon that breathes at the offender (cone of cold, 10d6 damage, Reflex save (DC 28) to avoid), then seals the portal.
10	Water shoots out of one of the Paintings. Anyone in the way takes 10d6 damage (Reflex save (DC 25) to avoid. The water fills a 10-foot x 10-foot room in 1 minute and pours out for 10 minutes.
11	The Paintings show a different random landscape, acting as a gate there for 24 hours.
12	The Painting creates an evil version of the next person to look at it. Treat this as a mirror of opposition.
13	A horde of insects swarm forth from the Paintings — treat as an insect plague.
14	An ethereal filcher arrives to steal the owner's most valuable magical item.
15	An Efreet offers the owner one wish.
16	One of the Paintings animates and attacks its owner for ten rounds as a medium-size animated construct with the constrict and hardness abilities.
17	The current image melts like wax — the owner must reattune the artifact.
18	One of the Paintings teleports to some random location.
19	The next person to pass through the Painting must make a Fortitude save (DC 20) or die.
20	The next person to pass through the Painting must make a Will save or be affected by insanity.



## VRIDOMIR, THE ARM OF DEATH

As archmages go, Vridomir was not particularly successful. He was cursed with a debilitating bone disease that slowly paralyzed him. Rejected by his peers and terrified of death, Vridomir sought to extend his life through any means.

Vridomir tried everything. He performed vile rituals in the name of dark gods. He committed unspeakable atrocities against innocents to bolster his own powers. With no other alternatives left to him, Vridomir sold his soul to infernal beings to extend his life.

It was then he realized his mistake. The fiends granted Vridomir his wish, but not without a sense of irony. The archmage was kept alive in his mortal shell even as his disease ate away at his bones. After a century passed, he was a half-living monstrosity, immortal but horribly disfigured.

Vridomir lacked the talent necessary to become a lich, but that didn't stop him. By combining his talent for artifice with his thirst for immortality, Vridomir turned himself into a magical staff through an arcane ritual of his own devising.

Vridomir attempted to transfer his body into an enchanted staff but accidentally channeled his essence into the bones in his trash instead. The mismatched bones became Vridomir's receptacle for immortality.

Vridomir is a humanoid skull atop the long spine of a much larger creature. One small arm and one larger arm jut from the middle of the spine.

### VRIDOMIR, THE ARM OF DEATH

*Vridomir* acts as a +5 halberd. A successful attack from *Vridomir* inflicts an additional 1d8+5 points of negative energy damage on living creatures. A Will save (DC 30) reduces the damage by half.

Anyone struck by *Vridomir* must make a Fortitude save (DC 30) or be permanently paralyzed in a cataleptic state resembling death. Only magic can remove this effect.

At will, *Vridomir's* skull glows with a terrible fear aura. Creatures of less than 5 HD in a 60-foot radius that meet *Vridomir's* glittering gaze must make a Will save (DC 30) or be affected by a fear spell as cast by a 20th-level sorcerer.

If commanded, *Vridomir* can cast spells as a sorcerer of 20th level with a 19 Charisma. The spells must use only somatic and verbal components. If the spell requires material components, they must be placed in *Vridomir's* appendages. He regains all his spells at midnight and cannot learn new ones.

Vridomir has the following spells at his disposal: 0: *dancing lights*, *daze*, *detect magic*, *disrupt undead*, *ghost sound*, *light*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*. 1st: *identify*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, N's *magic aura*, *summon monster I*. 2nd: *blur*, *ghoul touch*, *invisibility*, *resist elements*, *summon monster II*. 3rd: *dispel magic*, *fireball*, *keen edge*, *slow*. 4th: *charm monster*, *improved invisibility*, *minor globe of invulnerability*, *polymorph other*. 5th: *animate dead*, *cone of cold*, *summon monster V*, *teleport*. 6th: *disintegrate*, *eyebite*, *mass suggestion*. 7th: B's *grasping hand*, *mass invisibility*, *summon monster VII*. 8th: B's *clenched fist*, *mass charm*, *summon monster VIII*. 9th: *meteor swarm*, *power word, kill*, *weird*.

Although Vridomir is intelligent, he cannot speak nor influence his wielder. His arms animate only when he is commanded to cast a spell.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 4 lb.

### THE LEGEND

Anyone who wields Vridomir also acquires his enemies. Fiends stalk the wielder's every move and can pinpoint its location every time Vridomir casts a spell. Each round the staff is used to cast a spell, there is a cumulative chance that a demon will appear to recapture the twisted artifact's soul. The base chance is 1 on a d20, with an additional +1 for each spell cast in 24 hours.

Unfortunately for the user, Vridomir has many enemies from across the multiverse. The beings he made pacts with are numerous and diverse. If the PCs are more powerful than the random fiend, it demands the return of the staff. If the creature is clearly stronger, it takes the staff by force. Roll on the following table to determine what shows up.

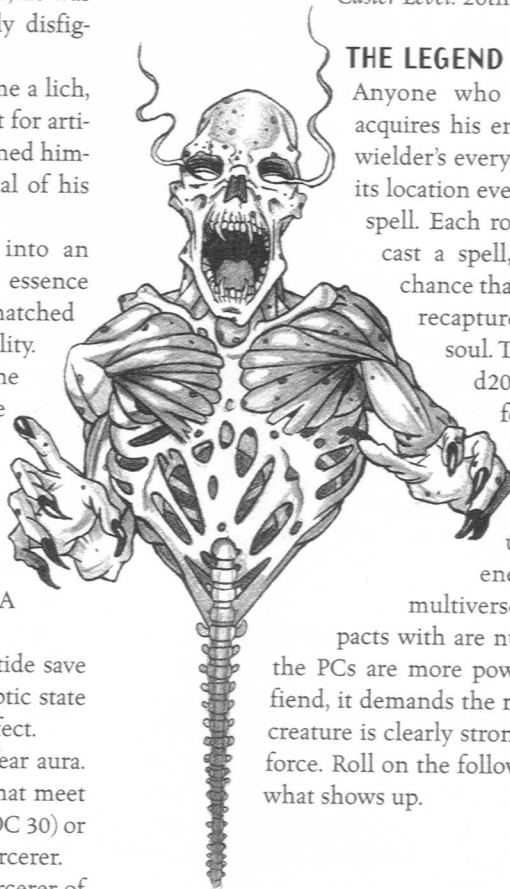


TABLE 1-32: VRIDOMIR, THE ARM OF DEATH

1d20	Result
1-2	Retriever (20 HD)
3-4	Gelugon (20 HD)
5-6	Devourer (20 HD)
7-8	Efreeti (20 HD)
9-10	Dark Naga (20 HD)
11-13	Night Hag (16 HD)
14-15	Nightwalker (20 HD)
16-18	Rakshasa (14 HD)
19-20	Death Slaad (20 HD)

## WARDEN'S HAND

The universe has laws to which even the gods must adhere. Those who break these laws are punished in Rethtalthor.

The gods created the prison plane Rethtalthor to confine those who committed crimes beyond the scope of mortal justice, such as deicide, cosmocide (the destruction of a plane), and transcending the bounds of the multiverse. Over time it became a place where powerful beings dumped enemies that they could not kill outright. Run by devils, it was eventually corrupted to the point where anyone with the right position or bribe could have someone confined there. There is but one exit in Rethtalthor, and no being has ever successfully escaped. Those who try find themselves at the mercy of the Warden.

The powerful pit fiend known as the Warden cares only for ruling his plane and keeping his prisoners in line. He prevents escape with unwavering efficiency, and unruly prisoners face one of his many terrible forms of 'solitary confinement.'

Most feared of all is the powerful gauntlet the Warden wears, with which he captures escapees and crushes riots. Even those who are released claim to be haunted by the Warden's Hand.

### WARDEN'S HAND

The *warden's hand* is a single, right-hand gauntlet worn by the warden of the prison plane of Rethtalthor. It acts as a +5 *defending*, *ghost touch*, *lawful*, *mighty cleaving*, *spell storing* *spiked gauntlet of speed* which grants a +5 armor bonus to AC and SR 25. The wearer may also cause a blade of seething energy to spring from the fist. This is a +5 *brilliant energy*, *keen*, *lawful*, *mighty cleaving*, *vorpals longsword of speed* that may not be dropped or disarmed. It is activated or deactivated at will as a free action. It may also sprout a chain of force that acts as a +5 *ghost touch*, *lawful*, *returning*, *throwing*, *wounding spiked chain of speed* that deals an additional 1d6+1 points of force damage. Finally, it can shoot up to three iron bands of Bilarro, which return to the gauntlet once deactivated. If any of the bands are destroyed, the gauntlet creates a new one after 2d4 days.

The *warden's hand* can cast *hold monster*, *forcecage*, *power word: stun*, and *Otiluke's telekinetic sphere* each up to three times per day. It can also cast *binding*, *maze*, and *trap the soul*

(imprisoning one creature at a time within the gauntlet) each once per day. Once per week, the gauntlet can cast *imprisonment*. All of these spells are treated as if cast by a 20th-level sorcerer.

Everyone within 100 feet of the gauntlet (not including the wearer) is automatically affected by a dimensional anchor spell that lasts as long as the creature remains in the area.

The wearer may designate up to 1,000 HD worth of individual creatures as 'prisoners.' He must touch them with the gauntlet to do so, but can then use *discern location* at will on any of these creatures.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 2 lb.



### THE LEGEND

The only way out of Rethtalthor is through a certain portal that can only be activated by the Freedom Key. This small gold key is also in the possession of the Warden, and is used to release prisoners who finish serving their sentence. On rare occasions, the key has been stolen, but the Warden quickly destroyed the offenders before they could escape.

The *freedom key* is also a powerful artifact. It activates the portal that connects Rethtalthor with the rest of the multiverse. To open the portal, the key must be slid into the keyhole on the side of the portal, and then a command word is spoken (this whole action takes one full round). Whoever is holding the key is continuously affected by a *freedom of movement* spell. The key can also cast *freedom* and *greater dispelling* once per day apiece, countering any of the spell powers of the *warden's hand*. The key will unlock any lock, even magical ones. The key is also the only force that can release someone designated a 'prisoner' by the gauntlet's wearer. Finally, the wearer of the *warden's hand* may call the key to his hand at will, per the *Drawmij's instant summons* spell.

## WIND CENSER OF THE PLAGUE KINGS

This is a secret of the gods: only a certain amount of life energy exists in the universe. When a being dies, its energy is shared unevenly among all other beings in the cosmos. The gods, the first beings to arise, took the lion's share of the power. Yet some power remains.

Men know this in their hearts. This is why men kill.

The proof of this secret is in the *wind censer*. Created by the three Plague Kings, the *censer* gathers life energy from the world by raining plagues upon humanity. With it the Kings stole so much life force from the world that they became demigods. Their power would have been absolute if not for a single hero who rose up and defeated them, casting the *censer* into the underworld. Sages fear that as it rests there, it leaks new corruption into the world each day.

### THE WIND CENSER OF THE PLAGUE KINGS

This horrific item resembles a squat demon clutching a long studded leather strap in its malformed hands. The leather feels greasy to the touch and the demon figurine exhales clouds of foulness from every orifice. When swung by the strap, the *censer* works as a +5 *unholy flail*, surrounded by a permanent *stinking cloud*, to which the bearer is immune (others must make a save against a DC of 20).

Three times per day, the owner can cast either *unholy aura* or *unholy blight* as a 20th-level cleric. Five times per day, he can summon a Huge evil air elemental that obeys

all his commands. At will, the bearer may *cast control winds, gaseous form, gust of wind, wind wall* or *wind walk*.

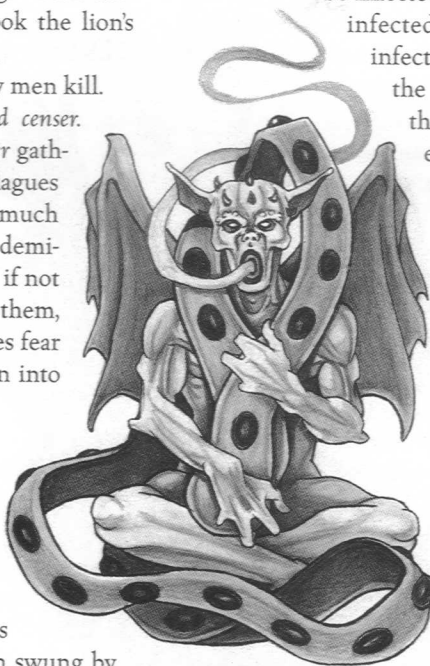
The owner's own life force becomes a form of disease. If he touches a recently dead corpse, he can spend one hit point to animate it as a zombie. If he touches a living being, that person must make a Fortitude save (DC 25) or be infected. For a number of days equal to the infected victim's Constitution score, the infection acts like a *charm monster* spell, as the owner's infectious energy corrupts the mind. After this, the victim goes eternally insane and believes himself to be the *censer* bearer.

The *censer* can be commanded to create new diseases at will, and these diseases can have almost any ill effects. The *censer* bearer is not immune to these or any diseases, but regenerates ability score damage at a rate of 6 points per day.

For every hundred people who die from a plague created by the *censer*, the bearer gains an +1 inherent bonus to all of his abilities while he holds the *censer*.

The *censer* cannot be used by paladins, undead, or any creature immune to disease.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 5 lbs.



### LEGEND

The wind censer has bred many foul diseases over the centuries, all of which were spread through inhalation.

TABLE 1-33: THE WIND CENSER OF THE PLAGUE KINGS

1d20	Result
1-2	<i>Ambrosial Flesh</i> . DC 20, incubation 1d6 days. The victim's scent becomes irresistible to the undead, who can smell him from up to a mile away.
3	<i>Arcane Pustules</i> . DC 25, incubation 1d4 days. There is a 10% chance per spell prepared by the victim that it becomes a vile pustule somewhere on his body instead of being prepared normally. If the victim takes damage, a random pustule bursts, and the spell is cast targeting the source of the damage.
4-5	<i>Babble Virus</i> . DC 15, incubation 1d4 hours. The victim loses the ability to speak any language other than nonsense words.
6	<i>Black Death</i> . DC 30, incubation 1d4 hours. The victim suffers 2d10 Con damage.
7-8	<i>Foulsight</i> , DC 15, incubation 1d4 days. The victim's eyes see only the horrors of the lower planes, and are therefore functionally blind.
9	<i>Hoperot</i> . DC 25, incubation 1d4 days. Each day of infection, the victim suffers an additional -1 penalty to Will saves.
10	<i>Horror of the Dwarves</i> . DC 25, incubation 1d4 days. The victim suffers 1d10 Str damage and loses all facial hair. Affects Dwarves only.
11-12	<i>Kingsdreme</i> . DC 15, incubation 1d4 days. The victim hallucinates that all other people are his mortal enemies.
13	<i>Lycanthropy</i> . DC 25, incubation 1d4 weeks. The victim becomes a lycanthrope.
14-16	<i>Summer Indolence</i> . DC 15, incubation 1d3 days. The victim must make a Will save (DC 10) every hour or fall asleep.
17-18	<i>Swordfever</i> . DC 20, incubation 1d3 days. The victim suffers 2d4 Strength damage.
19-20	<i>Tongue Sores</i> . DC 16, incubation 1 day. Painful tongue growths make speech and verbal spells impossible.



## WINGS OF THE UNREDEEMED

None who live are beyond temptation. This is the lesson of the First Fallen.

Only the god of justice knows the First Fallen's true name. It is the first entry in his litany of judgment, the tome that records the deeds and punishments of every living thing that ever existed or will exist. Beside the Fallen's name is recorded this punishment: "He stood in opposition. He is sentenced to do so eternally."

The story of the Fallen's punishment is related in the allegorical dogma of countless religions. Though the circumstances of his fall are debated, the outcome is not. The First Fallen was judged, found wanting, and cast into the boiling pits of the lower planes, his wings torn from his body as a mark of his shame.

Since then, the First Fallen's wings have passed into mortal hands. The *wings of the unredeemed* are powerful weapons for good, having brought about the doom of legions of fiends and undead. Theologians believe the wings retain a portion of the Fallen's conscience, a rudimentary intelligence desperately striving to atone for its sins.

The *wings of the unredeemed* resemble an enormous set of swan's wings mounted on a leather harness. Fully 12 feet wide, the wings are snow white at their base, streaked with gold at the tips. When at rest, the golden feathers form the holy symbol of their wearer's god.

### WINGS OF THE UNREDEEMED

The *wings* are mighty artifacts of good and law. When worn by a lawful good character, the *wings* grant their wearer the following spell-like abilities usable three times per day as the spells cast by a sorcerer of half the wearer's character level: *fly*, *daylight*, *divine favor*, *dispel evil*, *greater restoration*, and *searing light*. In addition, the wearer radiates a field of energy equivalent to a consecrate spell at all times and can turn undead once per day as a cleric of half his character level.

When worn by a lawful good cleric or paladin, the *wings* reveal their true power. When donned, the *wings* graft themselves to the wearer and cannot be removed while he lives. He gains the half-celestial template, is considered a native outsider, gains spell resistance equal to 20 + his Charisma modifier, damage resistance 25/+3, fire resistance 10, and is immune to magical and natural aging. In addition, he can fly at a speed of 100 ft. (perfect), gains unlimited use of *daylight*, *divine favor*, *dispel evil*, *greater*

*restoration* and *searing light* as a caster of his character level, is considered to be a shrine for the purposes of consecrate, and turns both undead and fiends at will as a cleric of his character level. Finally, the wearer is immune to all mind-affecting spells and spell-like effects of outsider (evil) or undead origin.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 12 lbs.

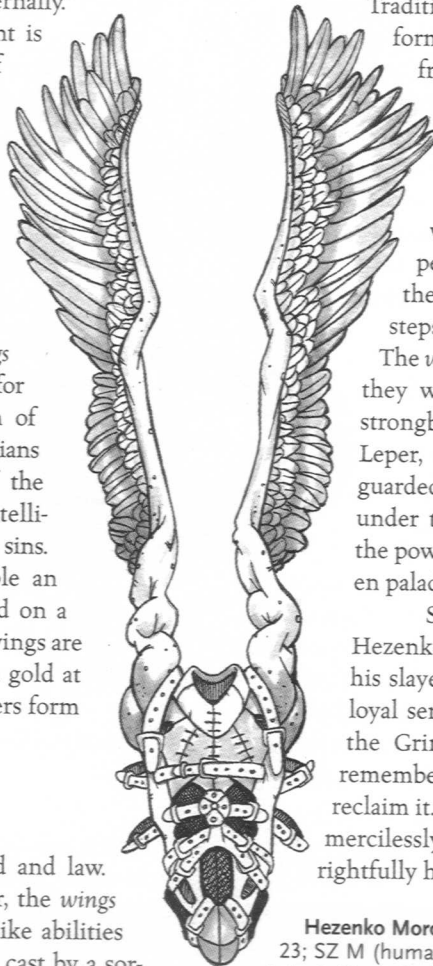
### LEGEND

Tradition holds that each time a wearer performs a selfless act, a damned soul is rescued from the torment of the lower planes.

When the last soul is freed, the Stygian pits will close, and the First Fallen will be released from his penance. Though presumably the Unredeemed would welcome such an event, his fiendish peers are understandably reluctant to test the truth behind the legend, and have taken steps to ensure it will never come to pass.

The *wings* are currently in the hands of a being they were created to destroy. They rest in a strongbox in the treasure vault of the Grinning Leper, a cunning demon prince. The vault is guarded by ten score and one obsidian knights under the command of one who understands the power of the *wings*, their last wearer, the fallen paladin Hezenko Morozov.

Slain in personal combat with the Leper, Hezenko was raised and his soul bonded with his slayer's. He is now the demon prince's most loyal servant, a blasphemous irony that amuses the Grinning Leper no end. Hezenko dimly remembers his former glory and is desperate to reclaim it. He jealously covets the *wings* and fights mercilessly against any who would take what is rightfully his.



**Hezenko Morozov, male half-fiend/human Pal10/Blk10:** CR 23; SZ M (humanoid); HD 10d10+40 + 10d10+40; hp 180; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 23 (+1 Dex, +12 armor); Atks +5 greatsword +31/+26/+21/+16 melee (2d6+11, greatsword); SA Smite good, sneak attack +4d6, spells; SQ Aura of despair, command undead, dark blessing, detect good, spells; AL CE; SV Fort +27, Ref +18, Will +18; Str 22, Dex 16, Con 19, Int 13, Wis 17, Cha 28; Skills: Craft (armorsmith) +24, Diplomacy +22, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (religion) +24, Ride +26. Feats: Cleave, Expertise, Improved Critical (greatsword), Leadership, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride By Attack, Spirited Charge. Prepared Spells: 1st: *cure light wounds* (x2), *doom*; 2nd: *bull's strength*, *darkness*, *death knell*; 3rd: *cure serious wounds* (x2), *protection from elements*; 4th: *freedom of movement*. Possessions: *cloak of charisma* +4, +4 *demon armor of reflection and moderate fortification*, +5 *unholy, chaotic, keen great sword*. Note: Due to the unholy influence of the Grinning Leper, Hezenko's paladin abilities have been twisted to evil ends. While he has a chaotic alignment, he can still use them with the changes noted in his stat block.

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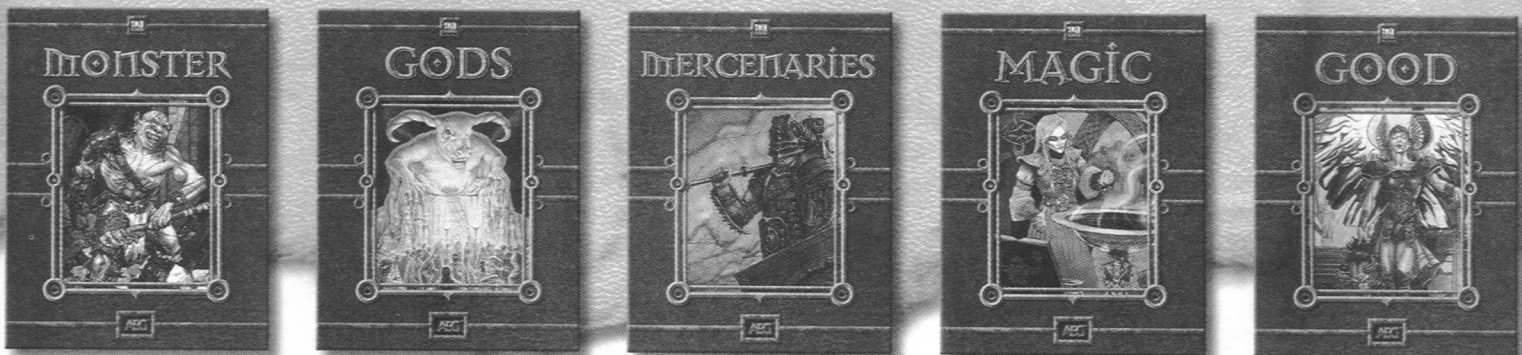


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