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El Raja Key's Arcane Treasury™

by Eric N. Shook & Robert J. Kuntz

A MAGICAL RESOURCE BOOK FOR ADVANCED ROLE PLAYING CAMPAIGNS



El Raja Key's Arcane Treasury details a wide range of magical items with unique and imaginative capabilities ranging in power from those suitable for use by introductory characters up through artifacts to challenge high-level PCs. A must source book for GMs who wish to challenge and engage their players!

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Premiering
Game-Designer
Eric N Shook

FIRST EDITION

El Raja Key's Arcane Treasury™

by Eric N. Shook & Robert J. Kuntz



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A Special Introduction

Welcome once again to the Realm of Enchantment—this time Eric Shook style! Pied Piper Publishing is proud to introduce Eric as the premiere author here, for without a doubt he did the majority of design work for this unique and, sometimes, difficult project.

I say “difficult” for several reasons, but for one especially which deserves the merit of explaining in full. This book contains what is magic, and more specifically magic which is used in the confines of the game. In that regard this may be understood by past aficionados of our favorite RPG game as “magic items.” And therein lies the grandness of this book and its difficulty. For these are no “ordinary” magic items. Some are pure magic in the making, or so unique to defy traditional interpretations and comparisons to those “items” which have preceded them.

Please note that last sentence. In remembering what our game was from its very inception, what it became for those interacting within its boundless area of conception, and then forwarding those emerging perceptions to now, we will note that along the way of participating within it that millions upon millions of words have been written for it, whether in book or magazine form. As with anything, some have been drivel, some passed muster and some (and oftentimes, unfortunately, a handful, only) ranked up there in the realms of greatness of design and conception. What makes greatness in design? An opinion or two would no doubt fly from various roosts in answer to that question, and I will add mine as well, and as a singular thought which relates to why I believe whole-heartedly and without reservation that ERKAT is a great product: Nothing like it has ever been attempted or published for our game, at least to my knowledge.

But one could say that that deserves no merit of mention—heck, shopping lists have not made it to RPG lines, as well. So what’s all of the “hub” about “bub”? In answer to all, this book, if nothing else, is another marker for defining that fantasy (whether in games or in its precursor, fantasy fiction) has no limits. That’s what makes it unique, that’s what imbues it with a wide range of options, that is what adds an elegance and refinement to its detail, and that’s what makes it grand.

We have all come a long way with the traditional magic that we have become comfortable with

and which has kept us company for some time now. But magic is as boundless as the game that uses it as an idea to guide enchantment produced by the union of these two distinct and interrelated parts. Without the infusion of newness—and here I mean true uniqueness of thought and action as realized through new design, not merely templated rehashes and listless remakes—how does one push onward into the realm of a limitless and ever-expanding magic in fantasy? If everything is immediately understandable or recognizable by interaction with the game rules as is, if everything can be readily defined and put to a formula (either from the design view or from the play view) then how much are we as designers and fans of the most open-ended RPG in history pushing the limits of fantasy’s component parts? And what price do we as designers and fans that make up such a beloved industry pay for that and in what ways?

Fantasy has always embodied the spirit of impossibilities come to life and the ability to interact within a fictional strangeness, and sometimes, to even understand it. The freshness of mystery and suspense that that brings to the game can be readily manipulated by a competent DM, and so too can it be enhanced by uniqueness, whether self-created or borrowed from books meant to help with that.

This one-of-a-kind book is meant to help with bringing uniqueness back to play. Its pieces define and guide but also leave much open for interpretation and thus for your ultimate personal application and enjoyment. Its contents are fine sculpture and easily sculptable at once.

So, page ever so slowly though this treasury. And do note along the way that much of its true glitter comes not from the supposed golden artifacts described herein, but instead bears from a solid exhortation to follow the roots of our game through the creative application of imagination that leads us upon the path to enchantment.

Robert J. Kuntz
Satellite Beach, Florida

"Remarkets" on Valuation

Gold piece values are given relative to numerous factors. In some cases the amounts may seem more or less than expected. Please feel free to make adjustments according to your campaign, of course. However, we suggest that you consider how such a thing as a magic item might come to market, or how it might be in demand for its unstated, improvisational uses. Is it even known to be magical, with some certainty? It would seem to depend on the rules of magic identification. In the early campaigns this was made a difficult task. In today's campaigns it may as well be instantly known to anyone with the slightest magical sensitivities or knowledge. We suggest carrying the identification process. Not everything glows or radiates magic anymore than every engine on earth fumes with gaseous odors. Or, while some things are complicated in their origin, they offer some little power, thus they are pricy not for their magic, but by their scarcity, yet magic in some extent, nonetheless. In some cases an item cannot be valued. And in any case, by what coin, of any world, is a consistent price revealed? Nations, markets, situations, lack of information, greed and pure cunning are each able to erase or inflate the values given.

majority of DMs will come around to recognizing its value after some thought. Most of the items in this treasury avoid the category of commonly encountered "strap-on" devices that boost powers in between levels. They are meant to be conducive to infusing the storylines in a campaign, valuable for the attention paid to them and the focuses they may serve in role playing. But the design of the book was determined to provide items for use across a range of character levels.

Also, from these gold values, the DM who awards experience for garnering such items may calculate the experience value by using somewhere between a 1:5 and a 1:8 ratio, per their personal campaign standards.

Inquiries

Questions about El Raja Key's Arcane Treasury can be addressed, and will be answered by us online, in the ERKAT section of our forum, which can be found by visiting:

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Most certainly, in almost all cases, we purposefully illuminate no means of reproduction. We are not inclined to imply industries of magic item creation. You might even note that in this book many of the items evolve from happenstance, their stories being keen to their campaign context, and highly worthy of role playing. Some of them are magic by virtue of magical beings trapped within them, or employed in their creation. We ask you to note the Gnome-in-a-Box, for instance. One reviewer has remarked that the item seems to be nothing more than an irritatingly interpersonal encounter. We ignore this thought with an assured faith that the

Aanruff's Rain Barrel

Aanruff was a legendary acrobat known for his amazing diving skills. In his waning years he refused to quit the circus, so instead, he commissioned a magical oak barrel to serve as a diving aid. The barrel's watery depths were made to exceed its height and absorb the force of his dive, and above its opening an invisible and conical shaft of force was made to guide him into his target without harm. To create the barrel Aanruff chose the equally legendary artificer, Malestrof. But unbeknownst to Aanruff, Malestrof had fallen into his cups, becoming a complete sop. Malestrof drunkenly chose wood previously prepared for a coffin and mistakenly used it to craft the barrel's bottom. This deadly mistake cost Aanruff his life. He neither surfaced from his test dive, nor could his body be found within its depths... at that time.

Today, the sides and rim of Aanruff's barrel are covered with grease that draws pernicious flies. These shoo away most intending to draw water from it. Yet, when scooped out, the barrel's waters appear to either mysteriously leak out of the container or evaporate. Turned upside down, the waters remain in the barrel. The barrel is quite portable. A plank covering hangs from its side on a leather strap. Thus, it can be rolled without appearing odd, and by coincidence its greasy sides prevent signs of the barrel having been recently moved. Therefore, wherever set, it is both full and appears to have always been there. The barrel currently belongs to a thieves' guild and is ideal for innocuous placement under a rain spout, where thieves can later jump into it on post-burglary rooftop escapes.

Living objects falling from up to 200' above the barrel are drawn into its opening, so long as they are within 5' of the barrel's rim, and objects aimed at the barrel's mouth have a +6 to hit. Objects exceeding 48" in girth or 350 lbs in weight will fall slightly outside the barrel,

taking normal damage. The barrel's actual mouth is 30" across and magically generous.

Because the barrel is meant to absorb force, its water is resistant to motion. This limits swimming inside the barrel to $\frac{1}{4}$ regular walking speed and only skilled swimmers can double this by swimming swiftly.

Unknown to most, using the barrel does hold additional risks. Those who have survived plummeting into its perilous depths, if they speak of the experience at all, describe a deep and murky place wherein float the bloated bodies of many halfling and gnome zombies. Each of the zom-

bies wears 1-4 pieces of jewelry and carries concealed gems and gold in pouches worth a total of 5-500 gp. Stopping to snatch any of these items before the zombie has been dispatched gives it a free attack in addition to its regular touch attacks.

The water within the barrel is divided into 10 layers, each 10' deep and 20' circumference. Each layer is separated from others by a thin field of force and anyone jumping into the barrel passes through 1 layer per

20' dropped. A total of 27 barrel zombies float in the layers of the barrel and never leave its confines. If somehow pulled out of the barrel, a zombie ceases animation and becomes an unidentifiable bloated corpse. The 3rd through 9th layers are each occupied by 3 barrel zombies. Thus, jumping from a height of 8 stories, of 10' each, causes the jumper to pass through 4 layers, alerting a total of 12 zombies to the presence of an intruder. The deepest and 10th layer of the barrel can only be reached by swimming.

The touch of a barrel zombie does no damage. Instead, it partially coats a swimmer in greasy corpse fat and re-



duces their swimming speed by 10% per touch; as well, hitting a barrel zombie causes its gullet to burst, producing a tendril of floating corpse fat. The chance of accidentally touching a tendril of corpse fat is 5% per tendril floating in the layer. Each accidental touch of a tendril counts as a zombie touch, again reducing swimming speed another 10%. When touched a total of 10 times the victim floats in a web of corpse fat that should be treated as a web spell for purposes of calculating escape attempts.

Dead zombies float to the bottom of the barrel and remain concealed in its muck for 1 day, at which time they reanimate and rise to their former layer. Also in this final layer, Aanruff's corpse is completely coated in the black grease that swills about the bottom of the barrel. His body continuously reaches out in slow motion, and then is pulled back down into the ooze. Touching Aanruff or the ooze requires a save vs. death magic. A successful save results in being slowed/greased over 20% of the body per round of contact. Failing the save results in instant undeath. Those dying in the barrel settle into the scum where they remain zombified until the next barrel zombie is killed, at which time they float up to replace it.

Alternately, the DM could choose to debut this item shortly before Aanruff's fateful jump, prior to the accumulation of zombies.

Barrel Zombies (AC: 8, MV: (swimming) 9", HD: 2, HP: 2d6, or 7 each, ATK: 1, D: see special, A: CE, S: small).

GP: 5,000

The Ambassadorial Sash of Nemur'rin

Within this gold trimmed, royal blue and crimson sash there resides the ambassadorial wisdom and cunning of the Great Vizier Nemur'rin. During his long life Nemur was not only advisor to lords and kings, but as well, his knowledge of customs was so great he was called upon to serve the gods from time to time. For this service he was given a limited immortality and resides within his sash.

The sash wearing PC acts as they normally would, but among courts, merchants, or foreign beings, their actions are translated by the sash using subtle conjurations, illusions and charms. Those in the wearer's presence are more likely to interpret the wearer's actions as if they

were courteous, courtly, and properly in accord with their own customs and mores. These subtle translations and interpretations are represented by a +4 to any die rolls involved in eliciting favorable diplomatic or interpersonal reactions.

The individual powers of the sash are not as strong as normal charms or illusions, becoming effective only by working in combination. The sash never benefits blunt lies, outward deceptions, or plans to convince others to act irrationally, neither outside of their personal interests, nor outside of their valued associations, such as kingdom and family. The sash's primary strength focuses on finding common ground or destroying the same. The sash provides no bonuses or benefits during combat.

To receive the sash's bonus the wearer must willfully intend a positive impression. If the wearer abandons this intent, then the +4 bonus is negated and the sash instead assumes the wearer intends to break customs, resulting in a -4 penalty to rolls it would otherwise benefit. The sash's benefits stack with Charisma bonuses related to diplomacy.

If above 4th level, then the wearer can access the sash's "First Impression Power." This power can be used 4 times, total, automatically gaining a positive first impression each time. The activated power lasts 4 rounds and only works person to person, in meeting with those previously unmet. During this time Nemur's voice speaks to the wearer's mind, advising them of each proper action. After 4 rounds, the wearer is on their own behavior. Each time used, the first impression power permanently lowers the +4/-4 bonus by 1 point until all 4 charges are used and the sash becomes a normal, non-magical sash. The sash cannot be recharged.

GP: 3,000

Amuseum Rope

This soft, decorative golden rope is 2" thick and 30' long, ending in gloriously tufted tassels. The gold of the rope scintillates, suggesting flecks of metal.

When amuseum rope is laid upon a horizontal surface and a command word is spoken the rope rises 3' into the air and forms a 5' deep, transparent wall of force along its length and extending 1' beyond either end. The wall conforms to the shape of the floor and ceiling, up to a maximum height of 60', and follows the course of the rope as it was laid out. Another command word causes

the wall of force to vanish and the rope to collapse. The rope user can designate which side of the force wall is "inside" and which is "outside."

Any physical object or magic touching the wall of resistance activates a gentle but distinct chiming noise that can be heard within 100' over any other din. An invisible magic mouth effect then speaks, "Please step back from the display rope. The museum warmly thanks you for your kindness!"

Movement over and past the rope and through the field of resistance is incredibly difficult and slow. To move each 1' through the field takes 1 round and requires a successful open doors roll. Failing an open doors check causes the interloping object or person to be thrown forcefully outside of the field. This causes 1d6 points of damage and provokes a Dexterity check to avoid falling prone. Any object on the inside of the field is likewise thrown outside if the field is penetrated, suffering the same damage and chance of falling. Magically powered physical effects such as telekinetically moved objects or summoned creatures meet the same resistance as any other physical body. Magic energies such as magical missiles, fireballs, or lightning pass effortlessly through the field, but do set off the alarm. A faint aura of white encases any material object or magical force in the field.

If activated in a circle pattern the tassels intertwine and disappear, forming the rope into a seamless circle. Unlike other configurations, a circular shape causes the wall of force to form a 20' in circumference dome around enclosed objects and persons. As before, any creature or object that fails an open doors roll when attempting to move through the force wall is thrown outside of the dome, taking damage and perhaps falling prone.

GP: 3,000

Antler Daggers

These +1 dagger-sized pieces of antler have no edge, but they do present an incredibly sharp point. When grasping the antler a wielder senses an eagerness to leap into combat. Each antler dagger only does 1d4 of piercing damage, but after being in the possession of a single wielder for 1 day the antler will spring 1 additional prong per every 3 levels of the wielder, up to 5 prongs. Using the prongs individually, when the wielder chooses, each prong causes 1d6+1 points of piercing damage. Any target struck by a prong must also check Dexterity -4 or be rendered prone. Making the save results in be-

ing knocked back 10'. Using more than one prong in the same round of combat does not accrue more than 1d6+1 damage, but it does add another -2 to the Dexterity save of the target. Thus, a 3 pronged hit delivers 1d6+1 and the target must check Dexterity -8. After choosing to use a prong, it recedes until the next day.

GP: 1,400

Antler Daggers - Greater

This dagger looks and functions like an antler dagger (q.v.). In addition, a great stag appears and defends the wielder when they score a natural 20 hit with the dagger. This happens once per day/per every 3 levels of the wielder. The stag appears behind the wielder and charges into battle with antlers lowered and causes 4d4+1 points of damage with a successful hit. Every 3 rounds the stag backs into the rank behind the wielder, if possible, and then charges again. It attacks with its hooves in the first two rounds between charges. After 3d4 rounds, the stag vanishes.

Great Stag (AC: 6, MV: 24", HD: 6, HP: 23, ATK: 2 hooves, 1 charge, D: 2-5/2-5, A: N, S: large, Special: Charge 4d4+1).

GP: 4,500

The Argent Ribbon

This ½" wide yard of bright silver cloth is quite supple. It flows through the hands as smoothly as water and its touch lightens the heart, creating an urge to laugh or sing out loud. This braces the wearer's mood against any foul or dour occurrences, providing a +2 bonus to avoid such effects.

Sewn into a non-magical cloak, worn as a neckpiece, or even wrapped about the forearm as a bracer, one time per day the wearer can touch the ribbon to receive a protection from evil effect, per the spell. When this occurs clouds in the sky part and a ray of sunlight shines down upon the wearer. If underground, the ray comes from nowhere. The ray lasts 1 turn, during which time the argent ribbon burningly glows as a "silver lining," just as it did before plucked from its original cloud.

The ribbon also increases Charisma +2 when interacting with creatures or religions of the sky or cloud natures.

GP: 2,400

The Argentiferous Turban and Hourglass

The folds of this turban are made of a shimmery, silver cloth, decorated with a ruby-eyed cobra's head above it. The turban is heavy with smooth, silvery sands that must be shaken out of its folds several times a day, as it mystically accumulates more.

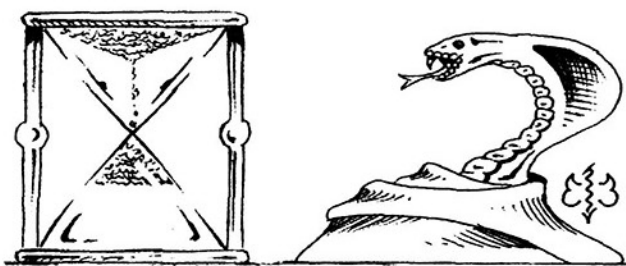


The turban gives a +2 save vs. wind magics and poisons, and if the wearer is a monk or a thief it provides knowledge of a striking technique called "coiling force." Upon activating this ability every 3rd hit scored against the same target causes an

additional +3 points of damage. This technique can be used once per day per level of the turban's wearer. The effect ceases upon changing targets or after a one round interruption of melee attacks.

The very fine sand of the turban is also magical and can be accumulated for use in creating an argentiferous hourglass. An hourglass older than 100 years and made of glass and wood worth more than 250 gp can be filled with the sand by a mage of no less than 7th level while wearing the turban and casting a telekinesis spell to convey the sand into the hourglass. The sand passes through the glass while under telekinetic motivation, but it requires an entire week's worth of the turban's silver sand to sufficiently fill the hourglass.

When all the sand has fallen into an argentiferous hourglass's bottom funnel, then the sand begins to rise back up into the top funnel at the exact same rate it fell, removing the need to turn the hourglass over.



Any

Chronographer's Guild will pay out 1,000 gp for such an hourglass, or 7,500 for its turban source.

GP: 4,500; 7,500 if a chronographer's guild can be located.

Argoyle Stones

Found in ruins, these weathered sculptures of long past deities and demons are barely recognizable as anything other than lumps of stone. Yet, the occasional arc of an eye's orb, or perhaps the pointedness of what could only be an ear, still distinguishes some of them as being more than churned up stones. While luminaries once invested in these devices of worship have since set below the horizon of humanoid records and consciousness, vestiges of their power yet remain. Touching one of the stones results in effects outlined below.

Uncovering and lifting an argoyle stone without using magical means has a 60% chance of crumbling the stone, rendering it non-magical. Carrying an argoyle stone in transit is quite possible, but the stones have been leached by time and are quite fragile, therefore they do not save as normal magic items. Dropping a stone, hitting it for 2 points of damage, or merely tossing it causes it to crumble. But the stones are immune to forces of elemental magic, including electricity, fire, earth, wind, and water. Touching an argoyle stone without lifting it out of its place does not damage the stone.

Looting a stone, removing it from its original site for the purpose of profit alone, has a chance of currying disfavor with the gods of the ancient pantheons. The chance of this occurring is shown in parentheses in the chart below. If an argoyle stone is removed in order to take it to another place of worship that is aligned with the stone's modern aspect, then no disfavor applies. How the ancient gods relate to their more current aspects is discussed in more detail under the monolithic-sized stone's entry below. Also note, the priests receiving this item might not recognize it as belonging to their religion, instead interpreting it as a heretical device.

Each argoyle stone possesses one permanent power that can affect up to 1d8 individuals per day, but a single individual can only receive one effect from each argoyle stone per month. When touching any of the argoyle stones an individual can waive their saving throw and accept the consequences of failure. The number of effective touches can be increased dramatically if the stone is tended by a hierarchy of priests in an appropriate place of worship, per DM's option.

Consult the chart below to determine a specific stone's powers. First, roll 1d100 to determine the size of the uncovered stone. Next, roll 1d4 to determine the effect

of any stone other than the monolithic-sized stones. Monolithic stones always have the same effect.

01-60 (40%) – Hand-sized

1 – The stone heals 2 points of damage.

2 – One gallon of fresh wine seeps out of the stone's porous surface, pooling in a cavity. If necessary, this wine may be collected in a container. When ingested, the wine removes thirst and sates hunger for 1 day. The wine evaporates altogether in 3 days.

3 – A silver sliver embedded in the stone pricks the toucher's hand. For the next 3 days approaching undead within 3" causes the entire surface of the pricked skin to flush with a silver tone. All damage received from undead strikes and spells is reduced by 1 point either per attack, per die of damage, or per round of spell duration.

4 – A glinting fleck of granite-like substance flakes off the stone and adheres to the toucher's skin. This grants a +2 bonus to saves vs. poison for 1 day and slows the effects thereof by 25%, provided they don't first brush off the fleck.

61-90 (70%) – Torso-sized

1 – The stone imparts the benefits of a cure light wounds spell.

2 – Save vs. poison. Success indicates the next disease encountered within a week is instantly negated.

3 – The toucher must save vs. spell or remove all weapons and armor, stowing them away safely. While in this state the toucher receives the exact same benefits possessed while previously armed and armored. AC remains as it was before removing armor, and the toucher's hands do the same damage their primary weapon would have done. This miracle includes magical effects from stowed items. All equipment must remain within 12" of the owner's position and all benefits are immediately lost if the toucher initiates physical conflict. The effect is also nullified if anyone else dons even one piece of the equipment being emulated. This emulation ends after 13-24 rounds, or upon leav-

ing the 12" range. Those benefitting from this power for an accumulated period of 24 hours receive a stronger faith in the doctrine of pacifism and receive a permanent +1 resistance to charms. Interruption nullifies a period of emulation and it does not count toward the 24 hour requirement.

4 – This stone is ashen black, as if it were a coal more than a stone. Touching it imparts a darkened pallor to the skin for 1-3 turns. This allows the toucher to see into the deepest of shadows, where they can steal the shadow of any being for 1d4+1 rounds. The target of the shadow theft must save vs. spell. Failure indicates the target cannot move from its current position. The target can act, but cannot move away from the spot to which it is rooted. Success indicates the target may move freely within the bounds of the shadowy area in which they stand. If the target wishes to move into an area of light while without their shadow, then another successful save vs. spell is required.

91-99 (91%) – Human-sized

1 – A foretelling vision of a future meeting is implanted in the toucher's mind. The details of this vision are unclear until the meeting occurs, at which point the toucher recalls 1d4 pieces of general knowledge about the person met, such as that person's tendency toward kindness, the person's general disposition toward the foreteller, how strong the relationship will become, or other such general tidbits. None of this information should emulate the full effect of any other spell. For example, the foreteller can neither determine the person's precise alignment, nor can they obtain the kind of yes or no information a commune spell might grant.

2 – Touching this stone imparts an eerie and pervasive feeling of being watched for 2-5 turns. The toucher must make a save vs. spell each turn, or begin to believe that even close friends are plotting against them. This effect can be ended by a remove curse. Regardless of the save's result, during this period the toucher cannot be surprised and gains an anticipatory +2 bonus to all initiative rolls.

3 – Contact with this stone imparts knowledge of unspeakable acts. The toucher must save vs.

spell or commence scrubbing off up to 1d6 hp of their flesh in penance, but stops if reduced to 1 hp. The toucher may choose to waive the save. After scrubbing, and during the remaining daylight, the toucher receives double melee damage against evil targets of less than 10 remaining hit points. The toucher must save or repeat the scrubbing ritual at dusk. After dusk the toucher receives invisibility to both evil beings and the undead, for 1d3 hours. Treat this effect as a limited version of the invisibility spell.

4 – A hand-like force slaps the toucher's face, requiring a Dexterity check, or they are thrown aside. This leaves a red hand imprint, which fades over the course of the next 3 days. During this period the victim of the blow receives a heightened understanding of the plight of the downtrodden and unfortunate. Orphans, beggars, exiles, ex-convicts, victims of injustice, and other similar characters take on auras only the bearer of the handprint can see and read. Using this general information the toucher may then choose to help the downtrodden rehabilitate themselves, possibly gaining strong and dedicated allies; or, the toucher may recruit the downtrodden with promises of revenge, harnessing their resentment to the cause of evil. Per DM's discretion, this may either be role-played, or the toucher may be given a +4 reaction when dealing with the downtrodden in either case.

Hauling away a human-sized stone, if it doesn't crumble during extraction from the ground, requires a sufficiently padded space and support to prevent the stone from shifting and disintegrating. Human-sized argoyle stones typically weigh between 300 and 500 pounds, depending on completeness.

100 (100%) – Monolithic-sized

A monolithic argoyle stone is usually between 8'-16' tall and 3'-8' in both width and depth, weighing 6,000-12,000 pounds. Although nearly unrecognizable now, a monolithic stone still represents the power of a god it once depicted.

When touching a monolithic argoyle stone the sublime bliss of being in the presence of its god fills the toucher, who then must either immediately choose to convert to

the religion of the ancient god, or else choose to abandon that god's sublime splendor. Abandoning a god's splendor results in almost immediately being attacked by 1d4+1 devotional beings aligned with the god. The beings appear just out of sight and then charge into the toucher's area, engaging without parley. While attacking the devotionists will shout fervent curses and intimidating threats that reveal their cause and devotion to their god. For example, if this is the god of love, 2-5 discontented suitors in a fanatic craze threateningly spring upon the offending character, crying and bemoaning both the rejection and the mocking of their god's sincerest warmth. No matter what is said the devotional beings will contort it into a heresy and attack the character. More evil devotional beings will feel no need to establish a rationale justifying their actions; therefore they will waste less time on words.

Devotional Beings (AC: 4, MV: 9", HD: 3, HP: 15, 13, 12, 12, 9, ATK: 1, D: 1d6, A: per god, S: medium).

The gods depicted by monolithic-sized argoyle stones could be alien to the world in which they are found, but they are more likely ancient aspects of a world's native, modern gods. An aspect's tie to its more recent appearance may not be obvious, except to clerics of 18 or greater Wisdom, or to those skilled in the lore of ancient worship practices.

If choosing to worship, the PC is eventually led to understand the connection between the current and ancient aspects of this god. However, envious priests might find the manner in which this knowledge was gained heretical; while more enlightened priests might choose to honor the PC for having come of the ancient pathways.

A convert's tie to a god's ancient aspect occurs across the divide of time. This has several effects. They receive half as many powers or spells. Each dimension of scope, such as duration, area of effect and range is reduced by 50%. The potency of each power or spell is doubled, as if the same power or spell had been cast twice in such a way that all other effects outside of the scope stack. For example, casting an aid spell would normally grant the target a +1 morale bonus on attack rolls and saves against fear effects, plus temporary hit points equal to 1d8 + caster level, to a maximum of 1d8+10 temporary hit points at caster level 10, for a duration of 1 round per level. An aid spell granted by an ancient aspect of the God of Love grants the target a +2 morale bonus on attack rolls and saves against fear effects, plus temporary hit points equal to 2d8 + 2 per caster level, to

a maximum of 2d8+20 temporary hit points at caster level 10, for a duration of 1 round per 2 levels. Spells and powers requiring 2 or more rounds to cast require twice that many.

The ancient aspects of the gods are more raw and simple in their powers, representing a clearer and stranger path than what fits into society's current patterns of worship. For example, the current god of war may have strict codes for the conduct of war that followers must honor, whereas the ancient aspect of the god of war may favor simply crushing one's enemies in any way possible, since they are all "outsiders." Although the ancient aspects of the gods require fewer codes, they are highly intolerant of the unfaithful. A follower who unrepentantly breaks the tenants of their faith will be hounded by misfortune for 1-6 months, or until repenting. Misfortune takes the form of a randomly recurring curse, per the spell, once per week, duration 1 day, but will not occur on any holy day associated with the gods' pantheon. Per the DM's discretion, the curse is more likely to work its ill at a critical moment. Repentance requires the blessing of a current priest of that god, who will immediately recognize the supplicant as a worshipper of their god's ancient aspect. This will intensify the priest's reactions, magnifying dislike into disdain and appreciation into favor, and a disdaining priest will withhold their blessing until the supplicant performs a highly significant act of faith.

Excavation of a monolithic-sized stone requires a caravan of 4-10 large wagons, one of which must be large enough for the stone, and 10-100 workers, armed guards, and taskmasters, in addition to 4,000-20,000 gp worth of supplies and hiring costs. The excavation requires 16-26 weeks. The size of the crew and the region's density of population will both affect how news of the event spreads, and whether interruptions or challenges present themselves at either the archaeological dig or during the transport of the stone. Note that discovery, movement, and the subsequent worship of a monolithic argoyle stone, all create potentials for creating a fundamental rift within the religion of the stone. It is also quite possible that a prophet arises, heralding the ancient monument's discovery, per DM's option.

GP: 2,000-12,000; Monolithic argoyle stones are priceless.

Aspiring Carpet

Made of tightly interwoven threads of air, this 3' x 60' carpet presents an elegant geometric design done in deep maroon, metallic gold and a rich, forest green, suit-

able for a royal palace. The carpet continually emits the fresh aroma of flowers and unrolls on command. Rolled up, the carpet is about the size of a backpack and weighs 30 pounds.

If one end of an aerial carpet is laid upon a solid, immobile surface, the rest can extend without support. The carpet can thus be commanded to bridge a chasm, spiral upwards, or form a ramp. While extended, the carpet can support up to 1,500 pounds along its entire length, or up to 300 pounds at any one point. Exceeding this limitation causes the carpet to collapse. The carpet is capable of escalating objects along its length with a rumpled wave at 12" per round. It can remain extended indefinitely, and will collapse or roll itself up on command.

An aerial carpet can be commanded to attack, constricting its target with its first successful hit and then suffocating for 1d10 points of damage per round thereafter.

The vapors composing an aerial carpet are not entirely stable. If the carpet is kept rolled for more than a week the patterns intermix chaotically. Thereafter, if the carpet is not unrolled and beaten to work out the kinks, it must save vs. spell at -4 each day or become hopelessly snarled. This releases the 8 HD air elemental bound within, which will confront the owner and demand reparations or attack as the carpet would. Having been interwoven for so long, it has forgotten how to attack as an elemental. Its manifestation destroys the carpet.

Aerial Carpet (AC: 4, MV: 9", HD: 8+1, HP: 44, ATK: 1-10, A: CN, S: large, Special: +1 or better weapons to hit; suffocating attack).

GP: 12,000

Astral Flutterers

These tiny insect-like creatures are native to the astral plane. Their wings are extremely delicate, and touching them immediately kills the astral flutter. Astral flutterers are attracted to the glow from a jar of flatoot (q.v.).

Dead astral flutterers are worth 100 gp each to artificers, bards, or physicians. As engines of motion they are used to make sanding boxes, musical instruments and cures for various stomach ailments. Live astral flutterers are worth 1,000-1,200 gp to any master jeweler familiar with astral lore, as they are useful in crafting flutter rings (q.v.).

Back Cracker Burrman's Brutish Belt

This 4" wide leather belt is heavily stained with sweat and worn with friction. On the inside of the belt is the inscription, "Keep on going!"

Burrman appears in many fables. He is always described as a powerful bear of a man, but his history and profession change according to the tale. In one tale he is described as a strong but unskilled baker, in another as a poor ship captain, and so on. Tales of Burrman's adventures tend to focus on three themes. First, Burrman never gives up no matter the risk. His courage never fails. Second, if Burrman can do the inappropriate thing, he probably will. Tales invariably describe him as touching what he shouldn't touch, yelling when he should be silent, or otherwise doing exactly the opposite of what any other would do. Third, Burrman is exceedingly lucky, yet incurably cursed. For all his luck he can never save himself. Most children know at least one tale of Back Cracker Burrman, usually told to them as a warning against indiscretion and foolishness.

Back Cracker Burrman's brutish belt does not function for bard, ranger, thief or spellcaster classes of any kind. Other classes, including 0-level characters, receive several abilities. Each manifests only once in any three-day period, and never at the belt-wearer's command.

Overbearance – In situations where social grace is a necessity the belt may choose to make its wearer appear overbearing and brutish. Observers take note of the wearer as if a bull had just entered a china shop. In combat, opponents tend to see the wearer as the target of choice. And the wearer receives a +4 bonus to initiative if attempting any grappling maneuver. If the attempt succeeds, there's a 10% chance per point of Strength above 12 that the maneuver cracks the opponent's back, causing 2d6 points of damage and forcing the opponent to check Constitution or move at half speed for the next 1d3 days.

Perseverance – Where others would balk at a given set of chances, the wearer believes he has a 50% greater chance of success than others. Unfortunately, this is only a delusion. In fact, the wearer of "Back Cracker" Burrman's brutish belt receives the normal, poor chances anyone else would likely refuse to endure. Additionally, the wearer receives

a +4 bonus against any saves that can force a change in their intended course of action, such as fear, suggestion, or similar effects. The duration of this delusional thinking lasts 1 turn on average, or as circumstances require, per DM's option.

Cursed Luck – In critical life-or-death situations, in which the wearer's next action may stave off disaster, the wearer of the brutish belt automatically succeeds. This applies to saving throws for avoiding certain death, avoiding lethal traps, or any other circumstances that do not involve defeating an opponent. Unfortunately, the next such critical action automatically fails. If the wearer of "Back Cracker" Burrman's brutish belt faces no other critical action within the next three days, then something else unexpected, but no less disastrous, occurs. For example, the belt wearer may jump into bed only to have it crash through the floor onto innocents – although they are barely harmed. Under no circumstances should this disaster result in the death of others or the belt wearer.

It is rumored that a strange cult of Burrman worshippers exists in the back streets and slums of certain cities. The cult is said to be extremely interested in obtaining Back Cracker Burrman's brutish belt, and will supposedly stop at nothing to obtain it. Cult members are reputedly blessed with a fanatical enthusiasm they call "Burrmania." This amounts to being cursed with the same luck as their patron. Since no clear proof of this cult's existence has yet been discovered, it is believed their curious luck prevents them from functioning in any significant way.

GP: -

The Bag of Weaseling

This magically enchanted burlap bag holds 7-12 weasels that are constantly squirreling around. When the bag is opened one or two poke out their heads. But with the jumble of the others they quickly fall back in. The bag holder will sense something very special about this bag, something elusive and almost gleeful, but distinctly a power.

At first unknown to the bag holder, they can tell lies without detection. The bag does not function for anyone else after the first lie is told, and each weasel makes available one undetectable lie. After the first lie is told the bag holder has ten days in which to discharge the remaining lies. The owner needs to take care not to lie about ordinary things such as, "Why is that bag mov-

ing?" Inadvertent lies also expend one of the bag's detection proof lies, at which time the bag holder becomes instantly aware of their new found weaseling power.

Each time a lie is told one of the weasels rips a hole in the bag. Upon sustaining ten holes the bag splits open and all ten weasels flee in opposite directions. If the tenth day ends with the bag intact, then the weasels finally escape from the bag by ripping it to shreds. When the weasels all escape, every subject of the ten lies suddenly realizes they were lied to! Just after this, the bag holder begins to be plagued by seemingly paranoid and uncertain daydreams in which their deceptions are discovered, although they have no concrete reason to believe these fancies are true.

GP: 3,000

The Bardic Banded Stein

This large ceramic stein stands 20" tall and 8" in diameter. Around the entirety of its circumference, between silvery metal rims at lip and base, six realistically painted bas relief musicians appear on a stage-like setting. Each musician is dressed in an eccentric style and is unique in appearance. The 6 figures represent a drummer, a mandolin player, a flautist, a piper, a horn player and a tambourine player.

For non-bards the stein is little more than an interesting heirloom. A non-bardic character who owns such a stein will occasionally hear the faint sound of music coming from the area of the stein, but these sounds are unable to be confirmed. Anytime a potential witness draws near, the music stops.

For a bard, however, a bardic stein is immediately recognizable as something special. When touching or picking it up a bard will feel a subtle pulse of musical vibrations. After spending some time alone with the stein, the bard will discover that when they play their own music the bas relief band animates and attunes their instruments to accompany the bard's music. After one night of attunement is complete, then the carved musicians are enabled to learn 8 songs, 4 odes and 2 epics. Thereafter, even the poorest bard's music sounds 3 times better while playing these tunes with the stein band's accompaniment; and the bard will earn 3 times the normal tips, and innkeepers will pay 3 times the normal amount for the bard's services.

After its debut concert the bardic stein must be filled with ale to liven its band. Over the next hour it slowly drains itself – even faster if the bard drinks from it. After the first hour the band's music becomes progressively more loose and improvisational. In most cases crowded inns are also increasingly loose as the night progresses, thus it is unlikely that anyone notices. If the stein is allowed to remain empty the musicians cease to play, yet remain animated and keep looking around at the bard and the audience. After a round or two, one of the stein's musicians will clear their throat or cough, another might patiently whistle; and after 4 or 5 rounds the band will fervently play a phrase or two from a well known drinking song, but then halt suddenly, until someone figures out they're thirsty and refills the stein. After 1 round without suds the musicians become inanimate until the stein is again filled with ale.

If a bard attuned to the stein should ever die, their corpse instantly dissolves into nothingness and they join the depicted musicians within the stein, from any range. After joining and meeting the bas relief musicians in person the bard gains a greater knowledge of the musical craft; and, if any spell that would return the bard to life



is cast, the bard thereafter receives six times their normal compensation when playing with the band. Two new benefits also result from the bard's greater knowledge, allowing them to store 2 spells of their choosing in the stein, and the band can learn twice the number of songs. (See *Greater Bardic Stein*.)

After being resurrected from the stein twice, the bard will become a permanent, unresurrectable member of the band when they die a third time. Only a wish or miracle could return them to life from this state. Although, they may be communicated with by spells cast into the stein while a member of the band. During their time with the band their powers do not function outside of the stein. If the stein is broken, but the bard's figure remains intact on a shard, they enter a dormant state of afterlife until resurrected.

Per DM's option, the bard may join the band in some way other than death. In either case, a bard's time spent with the stein's other musicians could be crafted into an entire adventure.

GP: 8,000

The Bardic Banded Stein - Greater

This item functions as a bardic stein (q.v.), but in addition, the players carved upon the stein watch the crowd, using prearranged musical sequences to warn the bard of pickpockets, robbers, impending attacks, spell casting, or other potential dangers that occur within 40'. This warning provides the bard with 1-4 rounds in which to act, depending on the nature of the danger. The precise chances of the musicians noticing a particular danger are left up to the DM, but should be roughly equivalent to having 2 highly observant 10th level bards standing guard, facing across each 120 degrees of the stein's circumference. The bard must be awake and within 90' of the stein for this effect to work.

GP: 11,500

Barrow Boots

The surface of these boots is rarely viewable because they are always caked in either dry or muddy grave dust. If cleaned, the boots are made of an unidentifiable ivory material, and their magical abilities cease to function. Wearing and walking the boots through any large and formal place of burial quickly recakes them in 1-3 rounds, restoring their magical properties.

Barrow boots allow the wearer to sense dead or undead bodies, graves, burial chambers, mausoleums, and blessed or cursed openings into the realms inhabited by the dead or undead within 9". This sense provides direction only, but in both horizontal bearing and vertical angle. When

sensing the dead the wearer also receives a sense of how long the corpse has been dead, rounded to the nearest day, year, decade, century, or millennia. Barrow boots do not allow the wearer to gain any knowledge of an undead creature's strength or powers – only the presence of the undead.

The wearer also receives the power of dead silence. This power allows the wearer to move silently 80% of the time vs. undead, provided the wearer moves at no more than one quarter speed. Moving at half speed reduces the effect to 60%, and moving at full speed to 40%. This will not stack with a thief's move silent powers. While attempting to hide and move silently the wearer cannot display any wards or holy symbols, cannot be under the effects of a protection from evil spell, and cannot be under the effect of any other spell that is anathema to the undead. Any of these cancel the boots' effects entirely.

GP: 2,500

Barrow Boots - Greater

These boots function as barrow boots (q.v.). In addition, any undead attempting to harm the wearer receives a -4 penalty to physical attacks they direct at the wearer. The wearer also receives a +4 bonus to any saves against magical or supernatural effects initiated by the undead.

GP: 4,500

Beavertail Cap

This fine beaver-pelt cap sports an intact beaver tail attached to its rear. It also radiates magic. When worn, the cap allows its wearer to detect and appraise wood for use in construction; sense where any hidden knots and gnarls are in a piece of wood; sense whether a piece of wood is rotten; and discern the type and age of wood. The wearer receives +4 to appraisals and craftsmanship skills pertaining to wood. Additionally, the wearer always knows the direction to the nearest and most dense copse or forest.

GP: 600

Beavertail Cap - Greater

This item functions as a beavertail cap (q.v.). In addition, if the cap has been worn for at least the previous 24 hours, then the wearer can attack with a giant, invisible

beaver tail 3 times per day. The tail has a range of 10'. Any target hit by the tail is knocked back 10' and must make a Dexterity check or fall prone. The cap grants additional abilities the longer it is worn.

In the first week of continuously wearing the cap the wearer's two front teeth lengthen and thicken like those of a beaver. The wearer experiences overbite pain and develops an urge to chew on wooden items. At first this causes some pain as splinters become lodged in the gums, but by the end of the week the gums toughen sufficiently to avoid this. Chewing on wood for at least 30 minutes each day keeps the two front teeth short enough to hide within the mouth, but failing to do so results in them growing too large to be concealed.

In the second week of continuously wearing the cap the wearer's proficiency in chewing wood increases. The wearer can chew through up to an inch of hardwood in a single round. The urge to chew also becomes stronger, and the cap wearer must save vs. spell each time high quality hardwood is nearby if they wish to avoid gnawing on it.

In the third week, the cap wearer's cheeks begin to grow an interior flap, forming a small pouch. This is accompanied by an urge to keep things in these cheek pouches. By week's end, up to 2 pounds of small items can be held within each cheek. Also, the cap wearer begins to hoard choice pieces of wood, keeping them in a pile near the bed. And most odd, the beaver cap wearer begins to absentmindedly carry sticks around in their mouth. Companions may discover items such as walking canes, staffs, or weapon handles missing after a visit from the cap wearer, or while adventuring with them. By the end of the week the cap wearer only feels comfortable resting or sleeping near running water.

The fourth week finds the cap wearer disappearing for significant periods of time to work on secretive projects - dams, specifically. The cap wearer becomes more comfortable while swimming and learns to hold his breath for up to 15 minutes plus 1 minute per point of Constitution bonus. The cheek flaps now allow the cap wearer to gnaw wood underwater. By the end of the week dam-building takes up most of the wearer's time.

After 4 weeks of continually wearing the cap the wearer awakes in the middle of the night as an 8' long giant beaver. This transformation lasts until dawn. Each night thereafter there is a 25% chance of this reoccurring. After 1d4+1 of these transformations the cap wearer learns

to control the change and can will the transformation to occur once per day.

Each transformation to or from giant beaver form heals one-fourth of all damage and cures all natural diseases and poisons. If a remove curse is successfully cast on a transformed character, a save vs. spell is necessary to avoid returning to humanoid form. Transforming into or out of giant beaver form takes 1 round. While in giant beaver form a character takes no damage from wooden weapons other than that caused by a magical bonus. For example, a +3 club only causes 3 points of damage on a successful hit. While in giant beaver form a character does not suffer from natural cold.

It is possible to remove the cap at any time, but if 24 hours pass, or another dons the cap, when the wearer puts the cap back on the process of transformation starts anew. After the cap has been worn for at least 2 weeks and then removed, during the first bareheaded week the cap wearer must save vs. spell anytime they are aware of a nearby quantity of high quality wood, or they put the cap back on and go after the wood. If the wood is of especially high quality, or if there is a large quantity, a modifier of -1 to -3 may apply to this save. If the cap is kept out of sight, then this urge slowly fades, with each week away from the cap providing a +1 bonus to the save. After 5 weeks saving becomes unnecessary. At any time a remove curse spell allows the cap wearer to resist any urges to don the cap ever again.



Giant Beaver (AC: 6, MV: 6"/12" (swimming), HD: per wearer, HP: per wearer, ATK: 1 bite, D: 4d4, A: per wearer, S: medium).

GP: 7,500

The Blessed Crosier of Wa'tsah Ma'tah

This gilded shepherd's crook is a mere 2' in length, with numerous rings of silver and azurite inlay adorning its length. It is far too delicate to be used as a weapon. The blessed crosier has 80-100 charges when found.

If the blessed crosier is used in casting any healing spell it increases the amount of healing done by 2 hit points. Using a blessed crosier in this way expends 1 charge.

Expending 10 charges allows a cleric to animate the corpse of any creature that recently died, provided the death occurred within 1 round per cleric level, and provided that the corpse's negative hit point total does not exceed 20% of its normal hit point total. The animated corpse does not attack or defend, but moves at 6" per round and responds to the commands of the cleric holding the crosier. The corpse will not further deteriorate or lose blood. Its soul will follow along with its body. The animated corpse collapses and dies if it sustains any damage while animated, but can be reanimated, if desired, by expending another 10 charges from the blessed crosier.

An animated corpse regenerates hit points at the rate of 1 per hour until it reaches 1 (positive) hit point, effectively resurrecting the dead character. This regeneration drains 1 additional charge from the blessed crosier per hit point healed. If all charges are drained from the crosier before the corpse reaches a positive hit point total, the corpse directly seeks the ground.

In the event a corpse's negative hit points do exceed 20% of its normal hit point total, when it is animated the crosier is only drained of 1 charge and the crosier's user feels a sense of loss. In this state, the animated stasis simply makes moving the corpse to a source of burial or a means of resurrection easier. A walking body might also be useful in several ways. Only one such body may be animated by the crosier at any one time, and healing spell cast upon the corpse while animated or regenerating are ineffective.

A cleric of 12th level or higher can recharge a blessed crosier of Wa'tsah Ma'tah by casting healing spells into it, uninterrupted, while on holy ground. Interruptions delay further recharging attempts until 48 hours have passed. One charge is restored per 10 points of healing. Note, each time a blessed crosier of Wa'tsah Ma'tah is used to resurrect a dead character its capacity is reduced by 10%. Thus, a crosier used to resurrect once can only hold 90 charges when fully charged; twice, 81, and so on.

GP: 20,000

Bodwell's Bodega

Tales of Bodwell indicate he was an alchemist who traveled widely, distributing a large body of knowledge on

how to concoct fortifying draughts as he went. Much of his work has been lost, but at least this one creation remains.

Bodwell's bodega is a simple wine sack with a shoulder strap and a firm cork. Any non-magical liquid placed in it takes on a fortifying property. A single person drinking from the sack throughout the day maintains an additional 2 hit points, plus an additional +1 for every level up to a maximum of 8 points at 6th level. These points continue throughout the night without waking to drink. If the sack is refilled before sleep, then its new liquids will be fortified with the powers of the bag over the course of the next 8 hours. The bag does not fortify its contents during the day and it will not function if only partly full at day's start. Interruptions in drinking proportionately reduce the effectiveness of the hit point benefits gained. Upon sleeping, the accumulated points are maintained until waking.

A dispel magic causes a character using Bodwell's Bodega to vomit out the fortifying liquid, losing 2 hit points. All other hit point effects from the bodega are retained, having already been absorbed into the body's tissues.

GP: 1,400

The Bone Chimes of Geburrah

Given the slightest wind, these wretched sounding bone chimes clank and give a hollow whistle. The bones are hung without design or arrangement, making clear their clanking was of no interest to their creator. A few other decorations are strung between the bones, such as dried organs, eyes, and withered entrails. A small skull hangs centered among the gnawed portions of bone.

Any living being within 3" sets the chimes' skull spinning, and a wind emits from its jaw, fiercely jumbling the bones. The resultant clanking is so chaotic that any within 4" must save vs. spell or become confused for 1d3 rounds, as a confusion spell.

Anyone touching the skull of the chimes must save vs. spell. Success indicates they withdraw their hand before the skull spins and nips it. Failure indicates the skull nips them, transforming them into a zombie over the next 4 rounds. This is a mere illusion of 1 turn duration. Upon successfully disbelieving it, the toucher may choose to maintain the effect for the remaining duration.

GP: 1,800



Bone Tornado – AKA “The Halfling’s Flail”

The black haft of this +4 flail is driven into the top of a small helm that holds a skull, from which the bones of a humanoid skeleton depend, each intricately and securely chained together. The bones glow dimly – enough to spot the flail from a distance but not enough to provide any usable light. The assembled skeleton somewhat resembles that of a gnome or halfling, which some might find offensive. Because of this the bone tornado is fitted with an ornate leather bag that can be quickly removed in combat.

If the flail succeeds in two attacks back-to-back the bones begin to tornado. In the next round the wielder can make one spinning attack against up to 5 adjacent enemies. This attack uses the same to hit roll against each enemy’s AC.

Each attempt to use the tornado effect in the same turn requires one more successive attack than the last. Therefore, the second tornado only occurs after 3 back-to-back successful attacks, and the 3rd after 4 back-to-back successful attacks. Tornado attacks against adjacent enemies can sustain the tornado if the last set in the series of attacks meet the requirement for back-to-back successes. Therefore, it is important for the wielder to

specify the starting target and direction of the tornado attack as it sweeps across the adjacent targets. Only one tornado attack can be made per round and the wielder receives no other extra attacks for class or level. If the tornado is active any other attack by the wielder halts the tornado until the same required succession of attacks is again achieved.

Waiting one turn after the last tornado attack resets the successive requirements back to the original two in a row. The bone tornado’s use can only be initiated during 6 separate turns occurring anytime in the same 24 hour period. Use in excess of this permanently removes one plus from the flail’s magical bonuses. The wielder is aware of these limitations upon grasping the flail’s haft.

GP: 28,000

Bottled Riff Raff

This clear rum bottle contains a model ship at dock. Uncorked, the scurvy tunes of dockside drunkards and miscreants are heard being sung inside the bottle. Turning the bottle upside down and shaking for a round causes 3 gaggles of 6 drunken rabble-rousers to appear in the 10’ radius around the bottle holder. These groups of 0-level drunkards instantly begin raising a hectic mess, insulting women, pushing men around, knocking over stalls and

boxing each other about. If they are released in a crowded area, such as an inn's filled main room, their chaotic influence rapidly commutes throughout the crowd.

The more orderly the area they are released into, the more quickly the riff raff are dealt with and their disturbance quelled. The more chaotic, the more chaos they spread. To determine how far and for how long these gaggles commute chaos, first judge the orderliness of the area on a 1-10 scale, with 10 being a tyrannical town square with guards lining the roads and 1 being a murderous dock-side scene where laborers are already inciting violence against merchants. Anything above 5 creates a positive modifier, and anything below 5 creates a negative modifier. Next, roll 2d6 and add the modifier. So, if the area was already a 1, then the modifier is -4. If rolling a 12, the result is an 8. This would indicate the laborers resent the gaggles and turn against them, eliminating their effect. Rolling a 12 with a +4 would indicate that not only do the guards instantly quell the gaggles, but nobody gets hurt and it's done lickety-split, perhaps in as little



as 3 or 4 rounds. This could also mean that the release of the bottled riff raff is more easily traced back to the bottle holder by any spellcaster or investigators present.

In any use, even in a king's court, the release of the riff raff from the bottle is sure to create a round or two of diversion. Whether or not key figures maintain discipline and resist being absorbed into reacting against the riff raff is a matter of level. A 12th level security figure will certainly keep an eye wide, perhaps following the bottle holder's actions while others treat with the riff raff for what they are.

Bottled riff raff come in two proofs. The regular bottles, described above, bear a 90 proof label; whereas, the specially-aged and labeled 100 proof bottles contain a more discontent riff raff that provides a -2 modifier against the above order rolls. Additionally, one of the riff raff pouring out of a 100 proof bottle will appear to be the long lost and cherished derelict family member of a significant person in the region in which the riff raff are released. The significant person may or may not be present, but those recognizing the family member likely will be.

This bottle can be recharged. However, doing so involves taking advantage of the unfortunate by imprisoning them in the bottle, where they will remain well-fed but drunk and discontent with the other occupants indefinitely. A bottle requires 18 drunkards to function. Getting them into it involves knocking them out with the bottle while they are too sopped to stand or defend themselves. This automatically fails on any 1st level or higher being. While emptying riff raff is a somewhat chaotic act, recharging a bottle is darn right evil.

GP: 90 proof, 7,000; 100 proof, 9,000.

Budding Charms

This druidic vine twines about the wrist. Upon it hang numerous buds. When first acquired, at least two of these will have already bloomed, each becoming a tiny wooden charm, one in the shape of an owl and the other in the shape of a bear.

Each charm allows a druid to teach an animal companion of the depicted type 2 extra tricks. Locate animals spells used to find an animal of the depicted type also have their range adjusted by +2". Any animal type for which a charm has bloomed saves against the druid's spells with a -2 penalty. Each charm works for any kind of animal depicted. For example, a bear charm works for polar bears, black bears, small bears, and even giant bears. Likewise, an owl charm works for any kind of owl including white, spotted, barn and giant owls.

Deliberately destroying a charm summons a normal animal of the depicted type with maximum hit points that serves the druid for 1 day. This creature obeys all commands and will fight to the death for the druid.

Additional buds can be caused to bloom if the druid is able to locate an elder animal of the desired type. An

GP: 1,800

These boots leave burrs in their wake, causing any who track the wearer to accumulate a constantly irritating and slowing jumble of burrs on their clothing and equipment. The slowing effect accumulates as a result of both the time it takes to pick the burrs off and the drag effect caused by the magical burrs connecting with other surfaces.

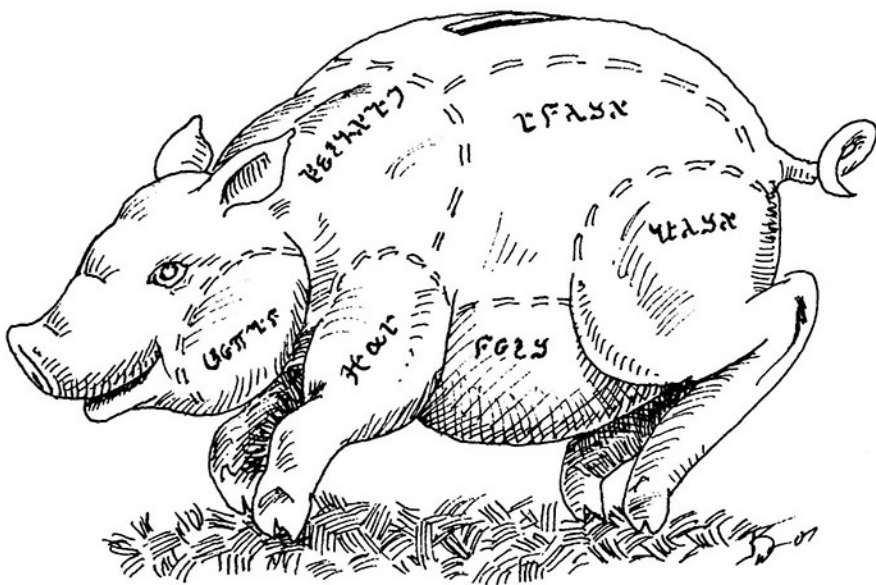
Burrbrush boots do not function when their wearer is mounted or in snowbound climes that have no exposed flora.

GP: 4,000

This pink painted iron, top-slotted piggy bank is 8" long and stands 6" high. It is cast with a butcher's diagram showing the various cuts of pork and their engraved names. Rump, ribs, etc., and it is typically found in butcher's shops, muddy environments, and occasionally in thieves' dens.

Empty or not, when the pig is shaken the sound of coins can be heard; yet, turning it upside down never results in coins sprinkling out of the top-slot. Prying or pinching at the coins through the slot, they always seem to slip, and there is no discernible way opening the pig. And breaking the pig is highly difficult, as it's made of magically strengthened pig iron that saves as hard metal +4. The money can only be removed by singing "This Little Piggy Went to Market," at which point the coins quickly spew forth from piggy's mouth. None know how to change this command.

Thieves are attracted to the pig, not only for its coin, but also for the sharpening of their daggers. When possessed by characters of ill-repute the proud pig enters a state of



extra sensitivity, setting off its squealing alarm when any sentient being approaches within 20'. Combined with the impossibility of filching coins from its slot, this feature makes the pig the perfect test to determine the calm and patience of a new initiate to the guild. And as rough as they may be, most thieves have a soft spot for cuteness.

GP: 2,000

The Casp of Dreamwalking

A casp of dreamwalking is an eggshell-thin, semi-spherical frosted glass cap that shapes itself to the back of a sleeper's head. When properly used by a sleeper possessing an Intelligence of 6 or more the casp possibly summons an oneiromantic lord into their dream. However, the dream magic of a casp is highly sensitive to mishandling and therefore a casp is often taken to be a merely useless oddity. A casp's magic isn't even detectable until laying the casp upon a sleeping pillow previously used for one year or more. But once properly pillowed, glowing white vapors swirl within the casp's bowl and it can then be identified by spell or use. A casp is likely to be found in the most unusual of places, for instance, mistaken for and used as a lampshade.

A casp's dream magic does not work if anything other than oneiromantic magic items, cloth, down, feathers or air touches the body of the sleeper. The sleeper cannot be under the influence of any spell or mind altering drugs or the casp will only enter them into a dreamless sleep. Properly attired, when laying their head to rest inside the casp's bowl a sleeper falls into an otherwise uninterrupted sleep. The sleeper becomes immune to all effects outside of the dream but for physical contact. This includes psionic attacks and spells. If something forbidden touches the sleeper, they immediately awaken and sit upright, the casp ceases to function, and the casp becomes detachable only by casting a light spell directly on it. If a casped sleeper, also known as a "casper," awakens previous to completing a full 8 hours of sleep, their dream is forgotten and aidless.

Existing only in the realm of dream, oneiromantic lords are unfixed in appearance. A lord could appear in the most complicated and confusing manner, such as pulsating within the dreamer's dream body as a second heart. However, lords who favor interacting directly with dreamers almost always choose recognizable, albeit, whimsical appearances that are close to the casper's kind; and although their chosen appearances change from encounter to encounter, the presence of a specific lord may

be identified by symbols attached to their personality, such as certain smells, smokes, breezes, temperatures or lights that consistently occur regardless of their appearance. For instance, the unchangeable hallmarks of an erudite and dominant lord will herald his every arrival with symbols of books, scrolls and inks, accompanied by a suddenly humid and oppressive atmosphere. A casp limits each dream to an encounter with only one lord, which limits confusion between symbols, and as well, a casp usually summons the same lord on subsequent uses.

When entering a casper's dream an oneiromantic lord always initiates conversation by first asking the casper if their physical body is fully covered by a cloth sheet, obviously to prevent unpredictable interference. The casper may choose to lie, but if the dream is interrupted by physical contact, which could have been easily prevented by a sheet, they will be ignored forever by all oneiromantic lords. If a casper utters anything other than the answer to the question, the lord ceases the encounter.

An oneiromantic lord aids a casper in achieving a task once per dream and may reject any request if it is outside the capacities of the casper to complete the tasks that are required to complete the aid. Within the dream the lord first determines the casper's need. The casper may directly express it, or the lord can determine the need by probing the casper's subconscious. The lord then assigns a task or series of tasks that must be completed in order to achieve a spell-like affect that satisfies the casper's need. The oneiromantic lord will clearly state and identify a specific task, but will only provide symbolic hints and insights about how to achieve them. These hints will never appear in conversation, only appearing as imagery, blending within the context of the oneiromantic encounter.

An oneiromantic lord is willing to aid in providing any of the effects given as examples below, regardless of the casper's level. However, the given list may easily be expanded. Oneiromantic lords can reproduce any spell-like effect for which there is a spell, up to 8th level spells. The casper is limited to receiving aid equivalent to a spell cast by a spellcaster 2 levels above the casper's own level. Notably, a DM should pair the difficulty of any dream directed task to the power of the spell-like effect.

Courage – Upon completing a test of bravery, the casper is immune to any fear effect for the duration of one upcoming battle occurring within a week. This may either be a single melee, a skirmish, or an entire battlefield encounter. The duration is loosely limited and can be perforated by retreats and re-engagements.

Remove Curse – Upon waking the casper is tasked with righting certain key wrongs that enabled or empowered the curse.

Cure Insanity – The dream reveals something or someone key to the unraveling of the insanity that must be brought before the afflicted. This provides the afflicted with a bridge back to reality. How to convince the key person or get the key back to the insane subject should require hints found in the dream's setting.

Freedom – A person lost in nightmare, under the influence of drugs, entranced, comatose, or magically sleeping can be brought back to reality. This typically requires a brief adventure as guided by the oneiromantic lord's dream.

Cure Disease – Gathering the materials and performing actions symbolized in the dream, the casper is enabled to concoct a cure for any magical or non-magical disease.

Hold Person – By investigating certain clues given by the oneiromantic lord the casper can garner a specific person's secret. When confronted with the secret the person must save vs. spell or be stunned by the realization that their secret is revealed in all its truth. This effect is identical to a hold person spell cast at the casper's level.

Note that 20% of all encounters with oneiromantic lords are negative. Like encounters with helping lords a second encounter with a negative lord is often a repeat summons of a previously encountered lord. Thereby, a wise casper may recognize the symbols of a negative lord's personality and choose to halt the dream.

Roll 1d100:

01-10% - The encountered oneiromantic lord is malicious and evil. In this event the lord pretends to aid the casper but in fact provides a task that

amounts to the casper being subject to a feeble-mind spell once the prescribed actions are accomplished.

11-20% - The encountered oneiromantic lord is of a chaotic and mischievous nature. In this event the prescribed actions in the dream serve only to mislead the casper, usually in some personally embarrassing (but not dangerous) way.

21-100% - The oneiromantic lord is of lawful, good or neutral alignments.

A casp of dreamwalking can only be used once per week, total, and functions for any class, including its spell-like results.

GP: 40,000

Centuried Sap Apples

Originating from the Happy Hunting Grounds, sap apple trees and sap apple fruit appear identical to their regular apple cousins right up until the tree is ready to drop its fruit. At this point the tug of the ripe sap apple on its stem causes the tree to produce a thick sap that completely covers the apple in a sugary, crystallized shell.

Sap apple trees neither grow wild, nor do they grow within 10 miles of another sap apple tree. They commonly belong to noble or royal families with long established properties where the first tree in the region would have been planted, preventing another tree from flourishing. This also makes sap apple trees status symbols, in addition to their known magical properties. In fact, it's not uncommon to hear stories of envious nobles plotting to poison a sap tree belonging to another noble's family estate. But these stories always come to naught, with the highly robust tree unharmed.

The roots of sap trees run for miles, and within this broad subterranean reach their roots encounter a myriad of toxins in the earth and water from which they leech their nutrients. Mere resistance to these broad and certain dangers would cut the tree's life quite short. Therefore, sap apple trees have a developed immunity to all elements of earth and water and anything that might be carried within them, such as insects and toxins. In fact, the entire magic of a sap apple tree lies within its ability to purify and condense the essences of earth and water to produce its magical sap.

The fruit of the sap apple tree is not so invulnerable, however. Untended, the protective crystal shell of most

sap apples rarely survives intact. If the wind doesn't rustle enough branches to crack the shell, then its ripened drop to the ground does. Even with systems tending to prevent these damages, such as blankets at the tree base and sophisticated wind blocks, a percentage of the fruit is always doomed to become dessert; and their sugary substances are so refined that eating a sap apple causes a joyful giddiness not unlike being drunk on a pint. Children reared on this fruit receive a slightly elevated Intelligence, provided they've been held to a regimen of 2 or 3 sap apples a month between the developmental ages of 2 and 8. This benefit could be applied to starting characters of noble birth from lineages so privileged, per DM's option:

Roll 1d100:

01-80%	+1
81-99%	+2
100%	+3

Sap apples with intact coatings are set aside to ferment, and a fermenting sap apple cannot be taken further than 10 miles from its tree of origin or else its crystal coating shatters and its golden juices evaporate into the ground. While fermenting, the apples are often kept and stored like bottles of fine wine. The fermentation process is allowed to continue for decades and each year increases the magical potency of the fruit. Sap apples that have fermented for more than 10 years have a chance of granting their drinker with the ability to scry through both time and space. The chance is equal to 1% times the fruit's age in years.

The sap apple's crystal is opened by snapping off its glass stem. The fermentation process halts forever and the juices must be drunk before a day has passed. Drinking the golden fermented fluids, the drinker immediately enters a trance during which they may scry their current location going back to any time coinciding with the period of the sap apple's fermentation. While in the scried time and place the scrier's view remains eye level, and the world around them appears infused with a golden tint. The viewer can move their point of view as if walking at their own rate, but the scrying ends after 10 rounds. While scrying, any sap apples within view of the scrier appear bright as the sun and their light shines through all objects, thus, they are seen from afar quite easily. Scrying a sap apple tree in another time permits the scrier to follow its underground root system and immediately teleport their viewpoint to any other location above or below ground within 10 miles of the tree.

At the end of ten rounds the drinker's sense of their own place and time returns to them. The scry session might also be interrupted, just like any other act of concentration, but after the interruption the drinker can still refocus so long as ten rounds have not passed since drinking. Drinking a second fermented sap apple in the same day causes the ends of the drinker's hair to grow tiny little sap apples that irritatingly bob and glitter as they move, but nothing else occurs and the sap apple is expended. After 24 hours the drinker's hair returns to normal.

Sap apples that have been allowed to ferment for a century or more impart divine intellect upon those who drink them. Any creature with an Intelligence of 11 or higher gains a +3 bonus to Intelligence, or an Intelligence of 19, whichever is greater, for 5-8 hours. This Intelligence boost reoccurs once per month thereafter, most commonly while eating sweets and reading.

Drinking the juices of another century fermented sap apple, in the same life, at first seems to have no effect. But if the drinker leaves a 20 mile radius from the sap apple tree, they become immediately rooted to the ground and cannot move. Over the course of the next 5-8 hours they transform into a sappling sap apple tree, permanently, although not bearing fruit for another 10 years, after their root system has expanded. Only a wish or other similar spell will return them to their original form.

GP: Dessert: 25; 1-100 years: 100 times age; 101+: 27,000.



The Claw of the Tenghurrah

This magical claw is taken from toxic, jungle-dwelling cat creatures called 'tenghurrah.' It is dark umber and sports a pattern of deep ochre spots. Intact, tenghurrah claws are sought after by both artificers and sculptors.

When moved, the claw secretes acrid fumes and small drops of acid. Skillfully controlled, the claw can be used to etch stones, metals, and hardwoods. TENGHURRAH claws are also used by jungle tribesmen who practice ritual scarification. Using a claw in such a manner is painful, but does no significant damage. The etchings produced by the practice continually emit a scent that can be sensed from a considerable distance, the scent varying depending on the nature of the etching. But, a claw of the TENGHURRAH is too small to be used effectively in combat, and its acid is too weak to cause meaningful melee damage.

The claw is often prized by thieves because it can be easily inserted into keyholes to dissolve locking mechanisms. Using a claw of the TENGHURRAH in this way takes 1d4 rounds and adds +20% to most lock picking attempts.

A lesser effect of the claw involves ingesting a small amount of the claw's secretions. If a character ingests at least 1 full ounce of this fluid and then sleeps, a dream reveals the exact location of the last item the character lost. This dream fades from memory over time and is also lost if not recorded or acted upon within 2 turns after waking. Recording the dream permits its use indefinitely, but elapsed time decreases the chance that the item remains where the dream indicated.

Living TENGHURRAH strongly resemble panthers with ochre-spotted umber fur. Their claws do damage as panthers, but adding 1d4+2 points of acid damage each round for the next 3 rounds after a claw hit. TENGHURRAH are completely immune to this and other acids. Additionally, TENGHURRAH never become lost and have a perfect sense of direction.

GP: 800

The Cloak of the Void

When gazed upon in daylight there is nothing much unusual about the cloak of the void; but at night the depths of the cloak's folds infinitely deepen, and any who look upon it must save vs. spell or become afflicted by vertigo for 1d6 rounds. Those afflicted with vertigo can only defend and must check Dexterity each round or fall over. Even if saving vs. magic to avoid the vertigo, or looking away, anyone within 20' of a cloak of the void at night will sense an eerie and sickening emptiness sucking at their soul, but its source is not identifiable except by assumption.

If a melee attack launched against the cloak wearer misses by more than 6 points, the attacker loses their balance and falls toward the cloak. This leaves them open to a free melee attack by the cloak's wearer. If the cloak's wearer has a backstab capability, they can use it in place of the free attack. The cloak renders the wearer immune to open handed and direct touch attacks.

Missile fire that misses the cloak wearer is absorbed into the folds of the cloak and exit it 1d4 rounds later on its opposite side. Magic missiles still automatically hit the cloak wearer but are delayed 1d4 rounds once they enter the cloak. Other missile-like spells that require a saving throw or stat check also pass through the cloak in 1d4 rounds if the cloak wearer makes their save or check. Delayed missiles passing out of the cloak extend to their maximum remaining range and present a random missile danger to anyone standing in their general direction of fire. Thus, the cloak wearer can turn their back on an archer and return any of his own missiles the cloak absorbed, but without the benefit of aiming. Likewise, if unthinking, the wearer might turn and later risk harm to their comrades-in-arms. The wearer never knows the result of the 1d4 delay roll.

The depths of the cloak's voids can be seen in any shadow except for complete darkness. Therefore the wearer receives -4 to hiding in shadow attempts. The void is darker than dark-at-night.

GP: 26,000

The Cloud Clog of Fhazzuel

There is only one pair of cloud clogs in existence, of which this is the right clog. The clog is 15' long and 7' wide. The sole is more than 1' thick. The toe section of the clog forms a chamber 4' high and 8' long. When touched, hands pass through the cloud exterior of the clog without sensation. The inside is lined with soft, golden Kirin hide, which curls up slightly along all exposed edges. Close examination reveals the imprint of a gigantic foot where the hairs have been worn short. Those with the capacity to make the calculation can determine the shoe should belong to a being slightly over 100' in height. Even in terms of giants, the titan being 25', 100' is stupendously tall.

A cloud clog glides effortlessly across any surface when pushed, and it is easily lifted by a mere touch. It can be launched by a standing push at a rate of 10' per point of

Strength. Unless influenced by other forces the clog continues in the same direction, its movement rate decreasing by 10' each round until it coasts to a stop. In windy conditions the clog skims along effortlessly, matching the speed and direction of the wind unless tethered or controlled in some way. If launched from a height the clog moves forward as normal but its altitude decreases gently at the rate of 30' per round.

The toe compartment of a cloud clog is protected from moisture by powerful magic. Rain, fog, snow, and even water elementals cannot enter. This section of a cloud clog always remains an even, comfortable temperature. At any time the clog floats above 200' a slam on the big toe spot produces the sound of thunder. Several slams will produce rumbling thunder. This sound radiates out over the lands just as regular thunder would, even on a day without forecasted rain.

Objects and creatures in physical contact with the sole of a cloud clog are completely immune to all electrical energies including magical and natural lightning bolts. Any spells that control or summon weather, mist, fog and other cloud-like effects will receive double damage, durations, ranges, powers and effects, so long as the caster remains aloft in the clog.

Any Kirin is naturally attracted to the clog when spying the pelt's glint from above. Every Kirin knows the clogs were made on the elemental plane of air for Fhazzuel, God of Clouded Visions, because several of their kind willingly dedicated their pelts and passed from life to line the clog. Fhazzuel is an absentminded, eccentric god, enwrapped in immense layers of constantly clouded thoughts and daydreams. He loses many things and cares little for anything beyond his own immediate thoughts and ideas. It is unlikely he is aware his clogs are missing.

GP: 35,000

Cloud Juice

A crystal bottle of cloud juice is filled with vaporous liquids that are continuously roiling like a fast moving, stormy sky. The warning, "Do Not Mix With Wisp Essence" is chiseled into one of its facets. Sucking 1 draught of cloud juice from the bottle causes a levitation effect that lifts the drinker ½'-1' into the air and lasts for 3 turns. This effect creates a buffer of air upon which the drinker hovers. This effect allows neither walking on water, nor does it reduce damage or prevent death from

stepping off a cliff, although the drinker's remains might hover for the remainder of the juice's duration.

The drinker can carefully push against adjacent surfaces or pole themselves across the floor. In this way they are able to glide across mud, pools of liquid, slippery surfaces, or trap-laden floors. The air cushion is quite springy, and unless the drinker moves at half their normal rate of movement they must check Dexterity each round or begin to bounce off the floor.

Each cloud juice potion has enough juice for 6-9 draughts. Drinking more than one draught at a time does not increase the thickness of the buffer below the drinker's feet, or extend the duration of the potion, but it does extend the buffer around the rest of the drinker's body. This might make it comically difficult to perform many ordinary tasks requiring direct contact. Additionally, when entirely buffered, the drinker's clothes puff out for the duration of the juice's effect.

When emptied, the remaining potion bottle rises and chaotically tumbles between 3'-7' in the air. If touching anything, or touched, it ricochets suddenly for another 3'-7', causing 1-3 points of damage to itself and anything it hits. The bottle is AC 6 and has 12 hp.

There is no limit to the total distance the crystal bottle can buffer in one round. The bottle will continue tumbling and ricocheting indefinitely, or until destroyed. Those unsuspecting, who intend to levitate over a danger by using the last draught in the bottle, are often shocked when the bottle batters them, setting them in motion.

GP: 450

Coin of Quartata

This thick, 1" diameter gold coin is impressed with a rectangular doorway on each side. On what appears to be the front face the right half of a lordly knight stands exposed in the doorway, while on the apparent back of the coin the rear of this knight's other half stands in the reverse of the same opening. The background of the coin's face is bright and untarnished, and its image is raised in a bas-relief stamping; whereas, the coin's rear appears dark and reflects little light, and its image is pressed concavely into the coin's surface.

When the coin is flipped toward an attacking target there is a 50% chance it hits the attacker's primary weapon. When it does, the faint outline of a light-green 6' x

3' door flashes into view for a brief moment and the coin splits in two, peeling into nothingness. The next attack using that weapon upon the flipper of the coin is automatically side-stepped, regardless of whether it would have hit or missed. If the coin fails to hit the weapon it falls to the floor, landing on its edge, and anyone can either attempt to kick it away or pick it up. Before the coin can be used again it must spend one round inside a linty pocket to degauss it.

GP: 150

Coin of Passata Soto

This coin is identical to the coin of quartata, but the images are slightly different. The face depicts the front torso and head of a knight falling through a trap door; while the flip-side depicts the knight's buttocks and legs dangling through the door's underside.

The 50% chance of flipping the coin upon an attacker's weapon permits the flipper to duck the next attack from that same weapon, or the coin falls to the floor. When an attack is ducked, the flipper receives a free attack against their opponent's primary melee weapon at the AC of their opponent. A successful hit disarms the melee weapon or nullifies a natural weapon for one round.

GP: 150

Coined Death

Should a thief possess one coin of quartata and one coin of passata, being of an inquisitive nature about strange coins and puzzles it might be discovered that the faces slide away from their tails using a peculiar twisting motion. Only thieves have a chance of discovering this. The chance of doing so each day is 10% per level; thus, a 3rd level has a 30% chance per day. Once a coin's operation is discovered, then the other operating identically is a logical assumption for a thief.

By constructing one very thick coin from the 4 sides of both coins, the shadowy substances that once held them together now form a black coin known in thieving lore as "coined death." Unlike the quartata and passata coins, tossing coined death upon a weapon creates 4 very confusing "golden shadows" that seem to slow time and hover as they separate off the weapon, guaranteeing the ploy's occurrence. These disappear forever upon touching the ground. Coined death cannot be used by a non-thief and its potential is undetectable by magic when ex-

amining the separate coins. Should a thief create a coin of coined death and it falls into the hands of a non-thief, it reverts back into the 4 sides of the coins of quartata and passata upon touch. If kept together, such as jingling in a pocket, these reattach and form the original

The coined death ploy is both a ducking and a side-step performed together, which places the thief behind their opponent. This coin toss off the opponent's weapon



splits the coin into 4 flying parts, which are guaranteed to catch the opponent's eye, and causes them to save vs. spell at -4 or entirely miss the movement of the thief. If their save is successful, the thief's sudden and surprising position grants one free back-stab attempt before the opponent is able to raise a defense and back away. This attempt is behind and with surprise, thus the defender's AC receives a -4 penalty. And if the defender's save vs. spell fails, then damage from the back-stab receives one additional multiple. Thus, if the damage would normally be doubled it is now tripled, as if the thief were of a significantly higher level.

There is one exception to the success of the coined death ploy. Creatures of shadow and master assassins automatically sense this ploy before it occurs. If they have a higher initiative, they can halt all other actions and attempt to catch the coin. Success reverses the ploy entirely and pushes the now surprised thief's initiative into the next round.

If coined death is used by an assassin in an assassination attempt, it grants 2 temporary assassin levels for purposes of calculating the attempt's effects. Otherwise, it functions as it does for an ordinary thief. In any case the coin only functions once.

GP: 1,800

Crackling Orbs

A crackling orb contains the energies of the sky, filled with blue, white, and yellow lightning. When used in conjunction with the casting of any lightning spell the orb refines the energies, focusing them to greater effect. A spellcaster may choose which color of lightning springs from the crackling orb.

White – White lightning is an intense form of energy capable of incredible destruction. The spellcaster rolls damage normally, but can reroll any 1's or 2's on the dice.

True Blue Lightning – White lightning often appears light-blue due to atmospheric effects; but true blue lightning is vibrantly blue, especially around its edges.

In addition to delivering regular damage, true blue lightning numbs any living flesh it courses through. The target of the lightning must save vs. paralysis or become numb for 1d4 rounds. This numbing effect results in a -4 penalty to all rolls requiring physical movement or tactile sensitivity. This side-effect is why standard caster spells do not channel true blue lightning – it would numb the caster. Holding the crackling orb prevents similar numbness from affecting its user.

Yellow – This effect is sometimes known as crown lightning since it leaves targets crowned with a faint yellow glow. In addition to normal lightning damage, targets of this kind of lightning remain electrically charged for 1d6 rounds, during which time they are subject to further damage from other crowned targets. Whenever two or more creatures crowned with yellow lightning come within 5' of each other an arc of electricity shoots between them for 1d4 points damage each. The crackling orb grounds its user from becoming similarly charged.

GP: 7,000

The Crown of Zeer

After the death of the storm giant Zeer the crown of his skull was removed to make this skull cap. Now the crown is a bluish bone dome sprouting several straggly wisps of white hair; and every few moments a bright fizzle of electricity runs down one of these hairs, burning it to ash and leaving behind an acrid smell. The hairs magically regenerate overnight.

The crown of Zeer improves the wearer's AC by 2. If the wearer wields a hammer in combat, the weapon receives a +2 bonus to hit and damage. Once per day per two levels the wearer of the crown of Zeer can deliver a powerful head butt that delivers 1d4+12 points of damage. Alternately, the wearer can attempt to stun a target with this attack. In this case the head butt causes 1d4 points of damage and the target must save vs. paralysis or be stunned for 1 round per point of damage. Used either way the head butt attack must be delivered to the target's brow, so this attack is not possible if the target's head is not within reach.

If the wearer of the crown of Zeer is too small to reach the target's head, the head butt attack must be delivered to an opponent's knee. This causes 1d4+6 points of damage and reduces the target's movement rate by 10% per point of damage. The target remains slowed for 1 turn per point of damage suffered.

Any humanoid shorter than 5' height who dons the crown of Zeer gradually takes on certain aspects of the giant's personality. Such a character becomes condescending and eventually degrading, taking great delight in insulting those of less than average stature even though they may be just as small, if not smaller, than the person they're degrading. Surprisingly, while the skull cap magically adjusts to the size of anyone else's head, it doesn't quite adjust to the small heads of halflings, gnomes and other small humanoids. They may still wear it, but its continuously returning tilt requires adjusting.

GP: 14,000

Crystal Coated Mail

The surface of this plate mail is encrusted with mounds of clear crystals, jutting every which way. In addition to the normal AC bonus granted by plate mail the crystals grant a further +2 to AC due to their hardness. Additionally, if the wearer of crystal coated mail is struck by a weapon the crystals absorb the first 4 points of damage. Up to 20 points of damage can be absorbed this way. When 20 points have been absorbed the armor is

treated as normal plate mail until the crystals regenerate. This occurs at the rate of 1 point per turn.

Prior to the limit of 20 points of damage absorption being reached, any time crystal coated mail is struck in melee the shattered crystals explode outward from the point of impact causing 2 points of damage to the attacker. A creature that grapples or otherwise enwraps a character wearing crystal coated mail takes 1d6 points of damage each round until the hold is released.

Cloaks or other clothing worn over this armor prevent shards from damaging attackers in melee for 2-4 hits, at which time the exploding shards will have ripped the outer garments into useless shreds. Magical clothing or cloaks resistant to ripping will suppress the shards.

The crystals coating this armor are slightly corrosive and over long periods of time they erode the metal armor beneath them. Some rare suits of crystal coated mail have entirely eaten away all metal. These crystal suits can be worn by members of any class, but provide only a +2 bonus to AC, in total. They otherwise function as above.

Any wearer having a combined Charisma and Intelligence above 28 discovers an additional property of the crystal suit. They can crack off mounds of crystals from the armor and throw them as fragmenting grenades, causing 3d4+2 points of damage to any creature within 5' of the point of impact. Each handful of crystals broken off decreases the amount of damage the suit can absorb by 4 points. These handfuls regenerate normally, at the rate of 1 point per turn.

GP: 14,000 plate mail; 24,000 eaten-away.

Dark Sky Prisms

This 3" long, hexagonal crystal bar is filled with shadows of varying hues, ranging from impenetrable black, to darkest blue, to deepest gray. Anyone who stares into the prism for longer than 1 round must save vs. spell, or be struck daft for 1-3 turns.

Expending 1 charge absorbs light within 30', intensifying shadow and lending a +25% to attempts to hide in shadows. Expending 2 charges allows a spellcaster to scry through the prism into shadows, effectively turning any shadow within 1 mile into a scrying device for 2-4 turns. The spellcaster may also view any location on the plane of Shadowstrands for 1 turn. The prism contains

2-7 charges. Upon expending all the charges the prism breaks, leaving behind 2-7 shards of obsidian.

GP: 1,500

Death's Grace – Bone Baring Ring

When placed upon a ring finger this ring causes the digit's flesh to melt away painlessly, revealing the bone beneath. The ring then tightens around the remaining flesh, sealing it to the bone. Pointing with the bony finger and moving in a circle reveals the presence and direction of any undead as a "detect undead spell" cast by a mage of the same level as the ring's wearer. Removing the ring restores the finger to its normal appearance.

GP: 3,000

Death's Grace – Porous Grey Bone Bracelet

Donning this bracelet causes all the flesh upon the wearer's hand to melt away painlessly. The bracelet then tightens around the remaining flesh, sealing it to the bone. Five times per day the bracelet wearer can raise their bony hand in a halting motion to cause a hold undead effect. This effect functions as a hold person spell cast by a wizard of the same level as the bracelet wearer, but works only on undead. Undead successfully saving can be halted in the next round, provided the 5 times per day limit is not exceeded. The bracelet's wearer can designate up to three targets that are no more than 30' from each other, all of which must be within a range of 100'.

GP: 5,000

Death's Grace – Ancient Blackened Bone Bracer

This ancient, blackened bone bracer is designed to fit just above the bicep. When worn the armband causes all flesh of the arm and hand from the bracer to the fingertips to painlessly fade away. In this state the wearer can roll a normal melee attack to hit a single undead target for 2d10 points of damage without touching the target. A target up to 40' away can be struck in this way, and any normal Strength bonus applies. After striking for a total of 100 hit points in a single day, the armband slides down to the wrist and functions as per Death's Grace - Porous Grey Bone Bracelet (q.v.).

GP: 10,000

Death's Grace – Putrid Green Bone Torque

The ends of this putrid green bone torque are capped with miniature skulls. One of the skulls commands undead at a cost of 1 charge and the other controls undead at a cost of 3 charges. Both skulls become linked by a putrid green liquid extending from jaw to jaw when either skull is discharging its powers, transforming the torque into a circlet. While the circlet is complete the flesh of the wearer's neck and head painlessly fades away, revealing the wearer's skull and part of their spine. While revealed, the seams of the wearer's skull ooze with a decaying green slime. After either skull is activated the torque can only be used by the current wearer and it can only be removed by a remove curse spell.

The torque has 1 charge for each point of the wearer's Intelligence and Wisdom. The wearer's skull increasingly decays with each point expended. When the torque is not in use the skulls cease ejecting their connecting fluids. The device returns to its torque form and the wearer's flesh reappears, but the wearer experiences 3 turns of headache per expended charge, and while suffering from this headache they receive a -3 penalty to all saves against necromantic magic.

When all charges are expended the torque emits a horrid smelling gas. The wearer must save vs. spell at -3 or all of their flesh dissolves and they turn into a skeleton. All others within 20' are affected as if by a stinking cloud spell. While in this form they are susceptible to clerical turning and necromantic spells and powers such as control undead, or damage from the porous grey bone bracelet. Within a week of the transformation the torque may be removed by a restoration spell, returning the wearer to human form. During this first week the green slime of decay eats at the skull, creating holes and disintegrating large sections of the brain case. After one week this decay ceases and a restoration spell will be insufficient. Only a resurrection, wish, or similar power will restore the subject's life.

A putrid green bone torque can be recharged by a 12th level necromancer casting command undead and control undead spells into the torque. This must be done while within the area of effect of an unholy site. Each pair of spells restores 1 charge. The torque can hold up to 30 charges.

GP: 18,000

Demon Hide Buckler

This +2 buckler is made of a fine scaly hide polished to a deep black sheen. The buckler has a tendency to slip into the path of oncoming blows. Any attack that misses by less than 5 points strikes the buckler.

When the shield is hit red and yellow ichors seep out from between the scales of the buckler's outer surface. In the next round the ichors begin to smolder and form sulphurous tendrils that reach out and burn the opponent's nostrils. These vapors are highly irritating, causing 1 point of damage per round for each of the next 1d4 rounds. Each round that the opponent takes damage from the vapors, the pain of breathing causes all initiative rolls to be made with a -1 penalty.

GP: 6,250

Digitonymous Salamander

A digitonymous salamander is a small, fiery red creature found living among coins, gems, or similar treasure, also known as a "ring salamander." It is attracted to warm-blooded humanoids. Within 2' of such a warm creature it will dart out of hiding and wrap itself around an exposed finger, then assume metallic form. When metallic, ring salamanders function as a ring of warmth. In this state they are indistinguishable from living creatures and always carry a small gem in their mouth, which completes their ring-like disguise. A ring salamander's gem may be replaced merely by presenting a more valuable stone near its mouth.

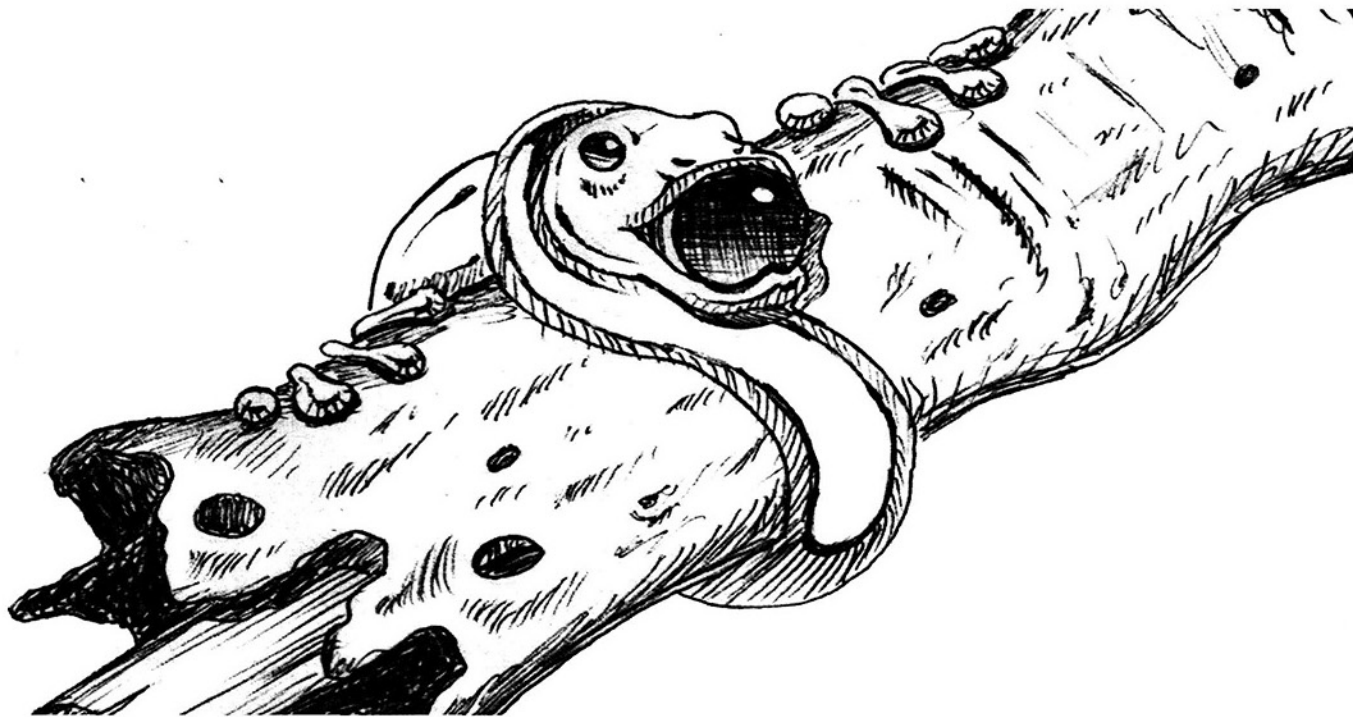
Ring salamanders are quite jealous of other rings, particularly magical ones. If presented with a hand already adorned with 5 rings the salamander removes one to make room. The salamander will specifically remove any ring worth more than the gem in its mouth. If the ring in question is magical, then the salamander holds the ring in its mouth, which continues to function normally. This effectively increases the number of magical rings a character can wear. When either holding a ring in their mouth, or when not mounted on a finger, a ring salamander swallows its gem for safekeeping. Luckily, at anytime a ring salamander may be coaxed into releasing either itself from its host finger, or a gem or ring from its mouth, by stroking it affectionately between the shoulder blades. Otherwise, it can neither be removed from "its" finger, nor will it let go of its treasure.

If ever within 6" of the presence of magics, creatures, or spell influences from the elemental plane of fire, its

home, the salamander's feet warmly pulse, which can easily be felt on the finger.

The longer a ring salamander is with its host, the more faithful it becomes. After a visit to the plane of fire, after receiving a gem upgrade worth more than 5,000 gp, or after a year with its host, a ring salamander contributes a +1 bonus to all saves vs. fire based spells and attacks. This accumulative bonus can never exceed +4. Of course, if changing hosts the bonus is reset to none.

When used in crowded areas like inns and marketplaces the cloak allows the wearer to move between others without slowing and without drawing attention. The cloak emits a mild magical field that causes those in the area to take no notice of the wearer, so even if the occasional elbow is bumped, or drink spilt, there is no risk of causing any upset. Note that this has no effect on those deliberately observing or pursuing the wearer, except that it makes escape from their field of vision more likely. Anyone wearing the cloak can attempt dodging a



Ring salamanders are immune to all spells and powers of detection and identification, but they do not contribute this same immunity to their wearer. Due to these immunities the powers and benefits of a ring salamander must be learned by interaction.

GP: 8,500

Discon's Slipstream Cloak

This cloak is medium gray and appears slightly worn – an average cloak by all accounts. Its lining is an exceedingly smooth, bright silver fabric, and this silver is quickly noticeable when the front of the cloak is not securely tied shut. The cloak otherwise permits its wearer easy passage through tight spots, including crowds and small openings.

tail by rolling a hide in shadows roll +25%. The result indicates that if the wearer keeps on moving they have effectively slipped out of visual contact with their pursuers. Magical scrying cannot be foiled by such a dodge.

When using the cloak to traverse small openings the cloak wearer can pass through any space of one-half the dimensions normally considered passable by a creature of their size. This allows the cloak wearer to move through prison bars and similar small openings with ease. The wearer's size does not change; this is a result of the dimension-distorting magic of the cloak.

The cloak provides no bonus to moving silently, or to hiding, except that smaller spaces are passable without the pause normally required to contort through them. However, the cloak wearer does receive a 20% bonus to pick-pocketing attempts, and any pick-pocketing attempts against the cloak wearer are penalized 40%. All melee and missile attacks targeting the wearer take place as normal, but a dash for cover that's a tight squeeze has

a 50% chance of providing double the cover for 1 round, after which, the cloak wearer must check Dexterity to remain in such a tight space without popping out of it. If popping out when not choosing to do so, the wearer is thrown 5'-10' out of the widest opening of the space.

Observing a slipstream cloak in action has a curious effect on most observers, usually causing them to rearrange memories to recall a smaller or thinner person more fitted to the space in question. If given a reason to recall more accurately, an observer may roll a save vs. spell to remember what was truly witnessed.

A slipstream cloak is most effective when worn by members of the smaller races. It is fabled that the original owner, a gnome named Discon, who was wearing the slipstream cloak to see the circus, was sat on by an elephant, only to be sneezed out its trunk a moment later, soggy, but no worse for the passage.

GP: 8,000

Doppeling Sword of the Mirrorrim

Made by the Mirrorrim, an academy of illusionists, this +2 sword is decorated with pairs of miniature, diamond-shaped mirrors, one bright and one slightly darker, set in diagonal patterns. The pattern continues from the pommel of the sword all the way to the tip of the blade, warping and shifting as necessary to accommodate the shape of the sword. Any image caught in one panel appears more darkly in the other, as if reflected in a smoky glass. The +2 of the sword derives from its ability to confuse the opponent with its quick flashes of light and dour repetition of shadows following on the eye's periphery.

During combat the wielder of a doppeling sword can call upon the blade to enact a powerful illusion. The chance of this happening successfully is equal to 5% per 2 points of damage the doppeling sword has delivered to that target in the current melee, including any damage done by the sword's magical bonus or the wielder's Strength. If the attempt fails, this chance is reset to 0%, and the wielder must again begin accumulating damage against that opponent. The sword's illusion power can only be invoked during combat, and the sword's wielder must begin counting damage anew with each fight.

If the sword's illusion is successfully invoked it begins dealing only illusionary damage, including the damage from the invoking attack. Simultaneously, the sword generates an illusion of having severed the target's non-

primary arm or other secondary appendage, which falls to the floor in gory detail. The illusion involves all the senses and the target experiences pain as if the limb had actually been severed. The fallen appendage rapidly regenerates by the next round, reforming into an exact duplicate of the target, including any visible equipment. The duplicate then attacks the target, duplicating the target's capabilities. Note that the illusionary duplicate can only reproduce those attack forms and abilities that the doppeling sword's wielder has personally witnessed. Thus, if the sword wielder has never seen the target attack with a bow then the duplicate cannot attack with a bow, even if one was created during duplication. While using the illusion powers of the sword its wielder cannot engage in any other action except for moving, attacking with their own sword, and concentrating on directing the duplicate's actions. Their concentration is not broken by taking damage or dodging spells, but mental attacks or disarmament ceases the illusion's session.

If the initial target dies or becomes incapacitated, the doppel-illusion moves on to other targets. It always attacks the same target as the doppeling sword's wielder and never moves more than 10' from the sword wielder's side. It never attacks a target alone, so if the sword wielder ceases to attack then the duplicate also ceases to attack. After 1 round without combat the doppel illusion ends by disappearing suddenly and the doppeling sword, itself, returns to doing normal damage.

As with regular illusions, the duplicate created by the doppeling sword's power may be disbelieved. Any viewer who successfully disbelieves the illusion can ignore the duplicate's attacks, taking no damage regardless of the attack form. Each use of the sword's power beyond the first weakens the illusion, allowing disbelievers to save with a cumulative +3 bonus. Thus, a third invocation of the sword's power in one day increases the save bonus to +6, a fourth to +9, and so on.

GP: 18,000

D'Trampa's Marvelous Coach

D'Trampa's marvelous carriage is a shiny, black, palm-sized sphere with a single white infinity symbol inlaid upon its surface in ivory. Three times per week the sphere can be given an underhand toss across a somewhat flat surface and the sphere will roll while the infinity symbol remains horizontal to the surface. After 15' the symbol turns into growing wheels which are soon joined by the sphere's expansion into a rolling carriage. The coach is

drawn by four glistening white horses and trimmed in gold and ivory like the conveyance of a wealthy nobleman. The carriage is immediately drawn to a stop by its driver. Wisps of fog swarm about its base.

The passenger compartment of the coach holds up to six human-sized occupants, although four fit more comfortably. The seats face each other on opposite sides of the compartment, their plump velvet cushions trimmed in red and gold. The walls of the passenger compartment are enameled with artful depictions of goblins, ogres, dragons, wizards, demons, and copious flames. Almost hidden in one corner of the coach is the artist's signature: "D'Trampa." A red velvet tassel opens a small panel, permitting passengers to speak with the driver without leaving the passenger compartment.

D'Trampa's marvelous coach goes anywhere it is commanded, terrain permitting. It travels no more than 50 miles in a single 8-hour night. Although capable of traveling as fast as an unladen horse when pursued, the coach typically travels no faster than 6 miles per hour. Passengers inside the coach ride in complete comfort and never feel a bump regardless of road conditions. Each passenger is allowed to bring no more equipment than can be carried with medium encumbrance.

After 7 hours and 58 minutes the coach automatically comes to a halt and the driver disappears. In 2 minutes the coach reverts into its spherical form, remaining passengers are dumped unceremoniously upon the ground and their luggage falls on top of them, resulting in 1d6 points of damage. More if their luggage contained bricks. The same sequence of events occurs at dawn, even if the 8 hour time limit has not been reached. The coach also reverts to its spherical form if the driver, a horse or the coach sustains more than 50 points of damage, or if the driver or one of the horses is separated from the coach, or if the coach is in some way disabled. In such circumstances there is no 2-minute warning. Although, Dexterity saves to avoid luggage might be in order. The coach may always be stopped by normal means, and reverts to its spherical form on command.

The driver of D'Trampa's marvelous coach is especially noteworthy. Having driven for countless years his driving skills are unmatched. When the coach is summoned the driver introduces himself without leaving his seat, looking over his shoulder and saying, "James. The name's James. Where to?" As the passengers enter the passenger compartment, James lifts a small flag attached to a metal box mounted on his seat, which then begins to emit a faint ticking sound.

In most circumstances the driver keeps the panel separating the driver's seat and the passenger compartment closed. He shows no particular interest in conversing with passengers. If spoken to he answers in a calm, slightly gruff, yet sophisticated voice. He answers most questions noncommittally, often saying little more than, "I'm on the clock for 8 hours. That's a lot of places you can go."

James is capable of remembering previous trips in the coach, as well as his experiences with passengers. Over time he gradually warms up to those individuals who treat him well, especially if they are not haughty, arrogant, or foolish. James possesses an incredibly dry, sarcastic wit and a strict philosophy of noncommitment. He is able to converse on almost any topic, and there is a flat 10% chance that he may know a minor tidbit of information that is of value to his passengers. Only one such tidbit is ever revealed about any single subject, and James is unwilling to converse on more than three subjects per night. He never reveals the complete solution to a problem, though when presented with particularly foolish plans his sense of sarcasm gets the best of him as he ruthlessly points out obvious errors. This signals the end of any conversation as far as James is concerned, and he slams shut the panel to the passenger compartment.

James has a considerable knowledge of and interest in art. He tries to mask this, but conversations concerning art invariably lead him to speak at length on the subject. If the right questions are asked by a character James has warmed up to, he might eventually reveal his origins and the nature of his peculiar curse.

Originally, James D'Trampa was apprenticed to an artist named Pynyck. Many of Pynyck's paintings functioned as dimensional gates to and from the painted places they depicted, which James learned after becoming trapped in his master's insane gallery. Desperate to leave the gallery, and mistrusting the hand of his master's brush, James managed to paint himself a means of escape. Unfortunately, his painting, depicting a marvelous horse-drawn coach cutting through the dark of night, by which he intended to escape, became his new prison. James later attempted to use his remaining supply of paint to paint his escape from the coach and into other worlds. He used the inside walls of the carriage as his canvas. Each of these attempts failed.

Pynyck and his gallery appear in Robert J. Kuntz's adventure, "Prisoners of the Maze," the first adventure in the Maze of Zayene series. If that adventure is used, then it is possible for a party of adventurers to discover a small

picture of James and his coach hidden in Pynyck's gallery, on the floor under a dust cloth. James can be rescued from his imprisonment if a character reaches into his painting and touches him or his coach. In this event, James pops through the gate into the gallery and the ivory-inlaid sphere inwardly shatters, becoming nothing, wherever it is.

Without "Prisoners of the Maze," an alternate method of releasing D'Trampa can be used. The paint "James" D'Trampa has remaining can be used to paint a route of escape on the outside of his carriage. Doing this will cause the painting to appear on the canvas of the original painting, which will make this new picture dimensional. D'Trampa never realized painting on the inside of the carriage would hide it from the surface of the painting the carriage is trapped within. However, with the right information and after investigating the situation intensely, any highly intelligent party member might think of this particular solution. Hopefully, this time D'Trampa will paint something real, rather than a desperately imagined escape that locks him into another infinite nowhere.

In either case of escape D'Trampa is immensely grateful to any who helped him. He insists on painting his rescuers an 8" x 8" picture depicting a single creature. Any creature that can be summoned by a summon monster spell is allowed. Three times per week the painting functions as a summon monster spell cast by a wizard of a level equal to D'Trampa's highest level rescuer. The same type of creature is summoned each time.

GP: 15,000

Echo Knot Boxes

Lifting the lid on this normal-appearing wooden box overwhelms every intelligent being within 20' with a vision of thousands of shapeless dark things suddenly escaping the confines of the box. These dark things burst out, violently flutter through the face of those facing the box, and rip through the air over the shoulders of those turned away. For the next 3 rounds the vision lingers like a candle flame lingering behind closed eyelids, and those afflicted by it are paralyzed with shock unless saving successfully vs. magic. In addition to indicating 3 rounds of shock, failure also indicates the vision begins to plague its recipient.

Anyone free of the vision will notice the dark runes they previously mistook for knots in the box's wood, and they may choose to loot any goodies in the box. How-

ever, attempts to take anything out of the box will be vehemently argued against by those still plagued by the vision. If no items are taken, or all items are returned and the lid is closed, the plaguing visions cease. If the box is again opened, then the violent vision automatically imprints the mind of anyone experiencing the opening a second time, regardless of whether they previously saved or not.

If items are removed from the box and the arguments of the plagued are ignored, they cease after 2 rounds, provided the items are put out of sight and remain unmentioned. However, this overwhelming urge of the plagued to replace the items continues to echo within them. An hour after leaving the box those still plagued must save vs. spell -4. Success indicates they again begin arguing for returning the contents to the box, and without anyone to argue with they'll argue at the walls. Failure indicates they will physically act to acquire and return the items. The plagued also receive a save vs. spell -4 before they will act violently or violate oaths, faiths or friendships. But they are not restricted by other self-interests or self-preservation.

The urge to replace the items "echoes" as follows (with durations of the urge indicated in parentheses): 1 hour (for 5 rounds), 6 hours (for 1 turn), 12 hours (for 2 turns), 24 hours (for 3 turns), 2 days (for 1 hour), 4 days (for 2 hours), 1 week (for 3 hours), 2 weeks (for 6 hours), 1 month (for 1 day), 2 months (for 2 days), and then is gone. The urge also reoccurs anytime the items are seen or brought to mind by others, and with each urge the save again indicates whether the plagued merely argues or acts. If the plagued lays hands on even one of the items they become obsessed with returning the item and will stop at nothing. A remove curse releases the plagued from their urge and their visions permanently cease.

If the box itself is taken anyone possessing it becomes obsessed with protecting both the box and its contents, even if the contents are merely air. More than one person may be obsessed with the box's protection if they, too, have touched the box, and they have a sense of shared ownership, and they trust the box's possessor as a leader.

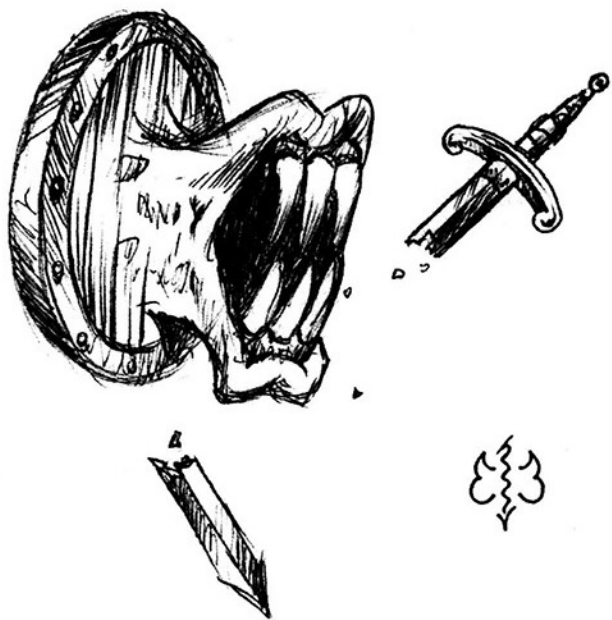
An attempt to divine anything about a Pandora's echo requires a save vs. spell at -4 or the diviner is struck dumb as if the target of a feeblemind spell. Success causes the diviner to end the spell immediately, refusing to look at or think about the box again.

GP: 12,000

Ennobling Fire Potions - "Salamander Oils"

The brilliant orange and vibrant red oils inside this clear potion bottle continuously swirl and fizzle. If consumed, the imbiber must save vs. spell with a -4 penalty.

Success indicates a day spent with severe indigestion, accompanied by gouty of illusionary flames emitting from various apertures of their body. These illusionary flames exist only in the mind and cannot be seen by others. If they are not immediately put out they begin to spread and the imbiber has 2-6 rounds remaining in which to put them out. After this, the fires form an illusory conflagration that cannot be extinguished, and which will



eventually cause a belief in the imbiber that the entire world has been set aflame, causing them to curl up into a fetal position until either 24 hours have passed, or their illusion has been externally dispelled.

Failure immediately creates a delusional state of mind in which the imbiber believes himself to be a noble salamander, come from the plane of elemental fire to render judgment upon the watery forms of this land. This delusion continues for 3 days, or until either a dispel magic or remove curse is cast upon the imbiber.

When properly applied to the surface of the wearer's clothing, and ignited, this oil burns without damaging flesh or flammable gear. A character swathed in this magical flame becomes cloaked with the illusion of a noble salamander. The user can mimic the abilities of a salamander, but any supernatural or magical abilities are harmless illusions and cause no damage. While cloaked

in this illusion the character attacks normally, or as an 8-hit die salamander, whichever is greater. Additionally, the illusion created is so flamingly intimidating that opponents must check morale or flee. NPCs of 3rd or 4th level receive a -2 penalty to this check, and those of 2nd level or lower receive a -4 penalty. Opponents of greater than 7th level or 7 hit dice needn't check morale.

Each potion of salamander oils contains 4 applications, each of which lasts 3d8 rounds when applied to clothing or skin.

GP: 750

The Escutcheon of the Gorgeous Maw

This +3 steel kite shield bears no other markings but for the large mouth depicted across its center width. This muddy green maw is set deeply into the surface of the shield and contains a bristling set of massive, dagger-like teeth tightly cogged together. Each of these is keenly etched and enameled in a bright, glinting white. The resulting bas relief effect is so dramatic, the teeth appear ready to jump out and bite the viewer. Those directly engaged in melee combat with the shield bearer receive a -2 penalty to all saves vs. fear and -1 to morale checks. Magical identification of the shield reveals the above properties as well as unidentifiable planar dweomers. Only spells specifically designed to identify planar magic or commune type spells can identify the shield's other powers, as described below.

Anytime a melee weapon or missile fails to hit the shield bearer by more than 5 the maw's biting power is activated. The maw thereafter attempts to bite the offending weapon each round, stretching out of the shield a foot or two and attacking as a 6 HD monster with a +3 bonus to hit. This results in no penalties for the shield bearer, and the maw suffers from no penalties for attempting to strike the offending weapon specifically. A successful hit indicates the opponent is disarmed and the weapon is held between the maw's teeth, where one of three things occur that round. Roll 1d6:

1-2: Spits the weapon out - Calculate where the weapon falls as if it were a grenade thrown 20'.

3-4: Attempts to break the weapon - The weapon must save vs. crushing blow at -3 or be destroyed.

5-6: Swallows the weapon whole - The weapon is burped up, undamaged, in 1d100 rounds.

If the maw breaks a weapon it is irretrievably swallowed. The maw gains 1 effective hit die for each of the weapon's plusses for the next 24 hours. If more than one magical weapon is broken, only the plusses of the more powerful weapon accrue. Any magical weapon is considered at least +1, even if it has no plusses. Magical weapons that cause damage when broken affect only the shield itself, allowing it to save as hard metal +3 for half damage. If the maw fails to break a weapon on its first attempt, re-roll 1d6 to determine what it does with that weapon the next round. Opponents can attempt to free a weapon held in the maw's teeth as if the maw has a 17 Strength.

The maw focuses on only one weapon at a time. Thus, if two weapons activate its powers it ignores the second weapon until it has successfully bitten the first one, then it turns its attention to the second weapon.

A shield bearer who deliberately feeds the escutcheon of the gorgeous maw or who regularly provides it with opportunities to eat magical weapons in combat receives further benefits:

1 - If the maw eats at least one magical weapon per week it is considered "well-fed" and takes the bearer under its protection. When not attempting to bite weapons it attempts to bite the shield bearer's enemies, attacking once each round as a 6 HD creature with a +3 bonus to hit and causing 1d12+3 points of damage. Extra hit dice gained by eating magical weapons may increase the maw's fighting ability. The shield bearer can mentally command the shield not to attack, if desired.

2 - Every 3 days the bearer receives an impression that the maw needs a large bundle of spearmint or similar herbs to freshen its breath. Feeding it minty herbs results in the added power to detect magical weapons and determine their plusses within 6". This power does not work through walls or other impediments that block scent. The range of this detection decreases by 2" each day the maw is not fed a large bundle of breath freshening herbs.

3 - If a communication spell is cast on the maw, such as a magic mouth spell, it receives the ability to roar once per hit die, including any hit dice gained by eating magical weapons. This roar causes a single target to save vs. spell or be paralyzed with fear for 1-2 rounds. The target must be visible to the shield and within 20'. This power fades after 24 hours unless recharged with another spell. Note

that the shield chooses its own targets. While the shield bearer may request that the shield roar, whether or not it does so depends on how well it has been treated. If the escutcheon of the gorgeous maw has been treated poorly it may well roar, but thereafter it is not likely to reward its bearer with any of its five special powers again.

4 - Apart from magical weapons, the gorgeous maw doesn't like to keep things in its mouth. However, if given a refreshing draught from any magical potion it is willing to act as a portable dimensional space containing 10 cubic feet of any materials – other than items containing more dimensional space, which it will refuse to hold. The maw can accommodate objects no more than 2' wide, or 3' wide if it is well-fed and smiling. After 24 hours it spits everything back out.

5 - Given magical projectiles to hold in its mouth the maw can spit/shoot them back out at targets. Half the missiles are consumed and the remaining missiles are fired at the rate of 1 per round with a range of 12" at the shield bearer's command. The maw fires these missiles as a 6 HD creature with a +3 bonus to hit and damage. Hit dice gained by eating magical weapons may increase the maw's chances of hitting. Upon consuming at least 5 missiles in this way (10 in total, of which 5 are fired), the maw is considered well-fed.

It is possible – but not easy – to prevent the maw from eating treasures that an adventuring party might otherwise like to keep. Covering the maw prevents it from attacking valuable magic weapons, but 2-4 hits on the shield destroy any covering. Cloaking the shield in darkness does not work, since the maw uses its tongue to "smell" magical weapons and does not rely on sight. A dispel magic spell cast on the shield works for 1d4 rounds, but also dampens the shield's +3 bonus and other powers. Note that attempting to prevent the maw from feeding angers it, requiring that it be fed several tasty magical weapons in order to get back on its good side. Angry the escutcheon of the gorgeous maw does not share its powers willingly.

The maw does not function for those unable to use shields, but it willingly accepts magical weapons it is fed by them.

GP: 24,000

Eye of the Catoblepas

This bloodshot, palm-sized cow eye is petrified, though the lens remains transparent. It also smells faintly of rotten flesh. A cursory examination of the eyeball reveals that it seems to have a large,



ruby-like gem within, suspended in a cloudy fluid. To check for sure requires turning the eye upside down and raising it above one's head for the gem to float to the bottom and be confirmed. Unfortunately, anyone who greedily examines the eye this closely must make a save vs. paralyzation when the fluids part, revealing the paralytic orb of the catoblepas. Failing this save results in being paralyzed for 1 turn. The eye also drops to the floor and possibly breaks open as if it had been thrown. A stone floor has a 75% chance of breaking the eye, hardwood 50%, and carpeted floor has a 25% chance.

Throwing an eye of the catoblepas hard against any surface within 40' causes it to burst, releasing a 30' diameter stinking cloud that remains for 1d8 rounds. All within the cloud must save vs. poison each round they remain in the cloud, or be doubled over with nausea.

A catoblepas eye can be harvested from a dead catoblepas by using a sharp cutting device or spoon. A successful Dexterity check removes the eye. Failure breaks the eye open, requiring everyone within 10' to save vs. petrification. A successfully removed eye must remain motionless until the eye petrifies and becomes safe to move in 3 rounds. If transported before petrified then the eye becomes a lump of non-magical, putrid flesh.

GP: 600

Faerinkling Ink and Divit

This glowing, brilliant blue ink comes in a sharp-edged crystal bottle with a fine glass quill inserted into its thin-mouthed stopper. The quill will not leave score marks on writing materials. One bottle contains enough ink to write 50 pages of script.

Any message written with this ink begins to instantly rearrange itself, leaving behind strange scribbles of bluish light that cannot be translated into any known language. The writer must designate for whom the message is in-

tended, and only those so designated can read it. Once all intended recipients of the message have read it, the ink fades completely.

Anyone not specifically designated as a proper recipient of the message must save vs. spell each round the blue scribbling is observed. Failing this save results in blindness for the next 1d4 days. A page of the script may be slipped into a book to blind a curious reader.

A designated recipient of the message can read the message easily. The message burns itself into the recipient's memory, and when concentrating for a single round the recipient can recall the message perfectly. This memory persists for 1 week per level of the inscriber, or until another message written with faerinkling ink is read.

Illusions inscribed upon a scroll using faerinkling ink may be memorized instead of cast off the scroll. This consumes the scroll in a flash of blue light, upon which the spell resides in the spellcaster's mind for 24 hours or until cast. Illusions cast in this manner are faerie fed. Another flash of blue light occurs when cast; two of the spell's regular effects such as duration, range, damage, or saving bonus are quartered, but the illusion possesses a vividness that penalizes disbelief attempts by -4. Only 1-3 spells can be inscribed from one divit of faerinkling, emptying the crystal.

Any kind of faerie creature can read messages written by faerinkling ink without risk. Faeries do not typically reveal this fact to their customers.

GP: 1,500

The Fingers of Puke

This glass orb sits within a half-sphere brass cage steadied by 4 brass feet. Its spout extends from its side and is corked with a brass stopper chained to the spout's stem. A dark mist swirls within the bottle.

When a character touches the orb the sentient mist within makes telepathic contact, revealing its desire to explore the world, its delight in discovering new things, and its interest in sharing its discoveries with others. Thereafter, the mist bonds with the character touching the bottle, sharing its experiences freely.

When released the mist fills one 10' x 10' x 10' area per round, but maintains connection with its orb. It swirls forth, investigating every tiny crack and object it

touches. The character bonded with the mist becomes instantly aware of all openings, such as normal or secret doors, and all creatures, including hidden or invisible ones within the area filled by the mist. Conversations are also passed along, as are the type and alignment of creatures. Dim lights resembling distant lightning flash within the mist each time it makes a discovery, growing brighter or dimmer depending upon the degree of interest the mist senses in its bond. Unless it senses specifically thought interests, undeniably intense concerns, or is ordered otherwise, the mist delights in providing a flood of details about its discoveries as if everything were equally important. After moving, the mist requires 4 rounds to sense 100% of all the things within its newly entered volume. For each minute it is given it has a 25% chance of detecting a specific thing being looked for, such as a creature or doorway. The mist cannot enter or move through liquid.

The mist continues to expand until it fills 10,000 square feet of space, which is equivalent to a 10' x 10' x 100' long passageway and can never extend further than 100' from its orb. At this point it proceeds to drift left or right at a rate of 5' per round, if it has leeway. The character bonded to the mist can direct its movements, commanding it to expand or contract, to move in a given direction, to investigate a particular space, or to reenter the bottle. The mist returns to the bottle at its regular rate of movement. It takes 2 rounds for the mist to fully enter or exit the bottle.

While outside the bottle the mist will retreat from high winds, mists, clouds, or water elementals. Any amount of fire or water damage fragments the mist, in which case the fragments nearest the bottle reenter it. The mist must then regenerate its missing fragment, which it does at the rate of 10% per day. The mist becomes transfixed with delight upon experiencing any kind of musical vibration emanating from within its volume. In this state the mist is paralyzed and will communicate only pure delight until the music ceases. Bird song and chimes will not have this effect.

The mist of the orb is one of many sent from the city of Peruke, which is located on the plane of Shadowstrands. Each orb's mist is connected telepathically to one of the blind diviners at the city's center. These diviners remain constantly entranced, reaching out across the planes using the mists and various other means in order to seek out mysterious trees on the prime material plane known as darkwood trees. This link is why those knowledgeable in shadow lore call the mists the fingers of Peruke.

In the event a darkwood tree is found, the shadow diviner linked to the mist casts a 20th level *geas* on the character bonded to the mist, commanding that the heart of the darkwood tree be harvested and given to the mist. If the character successfully saves against the *geas* the diviner uses the mist as a conduit to promise great rewards if the darkwood heart is harvested. If a heart is harvested the mist envelops it. If active the *geas* is released. Promised rewards are then magically presented by the mist and it retracts back through the orb's spout, but does not appear within the orb. The empty glass orb is left behind and the mist never reappears.

Darkwood trees appear similar to oak trees, but their wood is ebony and their bark and grain is struck through with silver. Darkwood trees grow at sites where they feed upon traces of powerful shadow events that have long since passed. They defend themselves by casting a special greater shadow conjuration one time per day. The spell functions like greater shadow conjuration, but duplicates any summoning or conjuration spell of 8th level or lower. The illusory conjurations deal 80% damage. The tree's most likely conjurations are monsters it has witnessed nearby, but over its many years of life. Thus, local legends often live again.

If a darkwood tree's defenses are defeated, its heart can be harvested by reaching into a special knothole at the base of the tree's trunk and pulling it out. Attempting this provokes a *save vs. spell* at -6. If the *save* succeeds the heart is successfully harvested and the withers and dies over the course of 2d4 rounds. If the *save* fails, the offending character experiences a waking nightmare so horrifying that all rolls thereafter are made with a -4 penalty until the mental scars are healed by a restoration spell.

The remaining orb can be used by any party member assisting in the harvest once per month to commune with the diviners of Peruke as if casting a *commune* spell. The orb will not function as a *commune* focus for any other being. The diviners' knowledge is keen in the area of shadow lore and also covers a limited awareness of the prime material plane due to the extension of their "fingers." The diviners are all telepathically to one another; therefore their accumulative knowledge is just as significant as other agents one might normally contact through a *commune* spell. Unlike a regular *commune* spell, more valuable information will require a service to be rendered the diviners. They maintain high level agents in many of the major thieves' guilds.

GP: 20,000 containing the mist.

Flutter Rings

This ring is classified as a wondrous item. Though normally worn on the hand, it still functions if hung on a silver chain as either a necklace or a bracelet charm. The ring is obsidian with the delicate silver wings of an astral flutter affixed.

The wings flutter when an object, creature, or spell associated with the plane of shadow comes within 6" of the wearer. The faster the wings flutter, the closer the shadowy presence is. A slow, deliberate beat signifies a distance of 60' and a desperate fluttering indicates the object of shadow is right beside the ring's wearer.

A flutter ring may simultaneously detect up to four separate shadow plane influences. Each of the flutter's two wings is composed of two lobes that move independently. Each lobe moves at its own rate to indicate the proximity of a shadow influence. When monitoring the movements of the lobes the wearer's initiative is reduced by 1 point for each moving lobe.

Having a flutter ring made by a master jeweler familiar with the astral flutter costs 2,000 gp with a live flutter. (*See the Jar of Flatoot.*)

GP: 3,000

The Foil of Chaos

The foil of chaos salutes any casting their first glance upon it with a quick glint of metal down its blade. So sharp is the glint, the viewer receives an impression that the blade may be conscious of their presence, which it is. Being light and relatively flimsy, foils are not known for being particularly effective against larger weapons. However, the foil of chaos makes up for what it lacks in robustness with intelligence, quickly pressing against larger weapons at just the right point of fulcrum to sway their approach.

When used offensively the foil of chaos is a flurry of untraceable thrusts and slashes, often seeming in two places at once. So chaotic and unfixed are its attacks that it causes damage to any target stepping within its reach. Rather than causing damage to a single target, all opponents within a 180-degree arc immediately in front of the foil's wielder take 1d4 points of damage, +1 for each point of the wielder's Dexterity bonus, if any. Strength does not contribute to this damage, and no to hit roll is necessary for any target within the area of effect.

Alternately, the foil can focus its attacks against a single target. The foil wielder must roll to hit normally in this case, receiving a +2 bonus due to the foil's magic and delivering 1d8+4 points of damage on a successful hit.

If at any time the wielder wishes to stand in total defense the foil can weave a wall of blades that either sets the wielder's AC to 0 or adds +4 to the wielder's AC, whichever is of greater benefit. This defense can be maintained against up to 3 opponents for 3 rounds plus 2 rounds per point of the wielder's Dexterity bonus. Once used, this defense form cannot be used again until the wielder's arm has had a chance to rest for at least 4 hours.

The wielder of this blade cannot use a shield, but while drawn the blade provides a 25% proof against backstabs.

The foil of chaos is chaotic good and has an Intelligence of 17. It may communicate telepathically with its wielder. The wielder must be, or be willing to convert immediately to one of the following alignments: chaotic good, chaotic neutral, neutral good, or neutral. If the foil's wielder is not chaotic good the sword will devote its energies to bringing about a change of mind.

Any wielder who is chaotic good receives the benefit of being attuned to the foil of chaos. This allows the foil's wielder to enhance the damage done when facing multiple enemies by sacrificing personal safety. For each 2 points of AC sacrificed in this way, the foil does 1 extra point of damage. The wielder cannot sacrifice more AC than would put them at an AC of 10. This conversion lasts 2-4 rounds and can only be initiated twice per day.

GP: 22,000

The Folds of Animamaminin

This magical parchment is typically found in bundles of 7-12 sheets. Each sheet is white on one side and dyed a bright color on the other. The white side is marked with numbered lines forming geometric shapes. When folding along each line in numerical order a PC shapes the colorful parchment into a parchment animal in 1 turn. Each sheet in a bundle forms a different animal. Typical animals include bears, bulls, leopards, monkeys, oxen, ravens, snakes, and wolves.

During the first 2 rounds of folding the PC notices the numbers along the lines change and their order becomes confusing, making the process of folding the parchment

elusive. Observers notice the paper becoming larger. But the PC is too enraptured in concentrating to notice this, unless told. In round 4 the PC will need to pin the paper under one of their arms, between their fingers or partly under their chin in order to pin it down while making progress with the parchment's other folds. In round 6, observers will notice the PC's body is now tightly intermingled with the folds, and the PC continues to fold themselves into an origami animal. By round 8 only the hands of the PC can be seen finishing the final folds. During rounds 6-10 the PC's concentration intensifies and they lose awareness of their surroundings. In round 10 all that is left is an origami parchment animal construct as large as a normal animal of that type. At any time during the folding process the PC can choose to check Constitution to attempt to discontinue folding the parchment, but can do this only once. After completing the fold they lose this option. High Intelligence reduces the likelihood of a successful save, reducing it by



the PC's Intelligence bonus. For example, a magic-user with a 9 Constitution and 17 Intelligence succeeds on a 6 or less. Once inside the parchment animal construct the PC is impervious to all attacks and limited to directing the powers of the parchment animal.

A paper construct has $\frac{1}{2}$ the hit points of the animal it depicts. It possesses double the normal movement rate, and receives a +4 bonus to initiative. It uses all the normal attacks of the depicted animal, causing 150% of the

normal damage. A paper construct has no special or magical attacks. It receives only 50% damage from slashing and bludgeoning weapons, being very agile and able to partially unfold and refold itself at will; it receives double damage from piercing weapons and magical fire. Water attacks dispel the magic animating the paper construct, reducing it to a sheet of sodden paper immediately. Such sheets cannot be reused. Piercing weapons and arrow fire might also pin a paper construct in place if it is adjacent to a wooden or similar surface. Otherwise, it has all the hit dice and other characteristics of the corresponding creature.

A PC inside a parchment compulsively uses the construct to defend itself as if it were their body. This includes attempts by friends to damage the construct and release the PC. A PC remains trapped inside a parchment construct for 3 days or until externally assisted for 3 turns to unfold themselves. When a parchment construct is either destroyed, or unfolded, all previous magical effects and spells cast on it cease and the PC inside now appears on the floor in a flat and folded form. The PC must spend the following round unfolding themselves as if rising from a prone position. During this round the PC is susceptible to normal damage.

A PC accumulating 21 days of time spent folded in any number of different parchment constructs permanently receives the ability to apply a +2 Dexterity bonus to a one round action once per day. This ability cannot be accumulated twice.

GP: 1,400 per sheet.

The Forked Tongue Whip

This +1 whip is made from the 18' long, salmon colored tongue of some very large creature. The last 2' of the whip are forked, and can deliver two potential hits with each snap, each doing 1d6+1 points of damage and counting as one attack. If the first fork hits successfully, then the second fork may hit with a -4 penalty. If both forks hit, then the whip's wielder may choose either to execute a feint, or to roll to hit again. If this final roll is successful, the target becomes entangled in the whip. Whereas, if executing a feint, the wielder receives a +4 bonus to their AC against attacks made by the whip's target during that round, as the whip temporarily fouls the target's weapon.

Entangled targets lose any Dexterity bonus to AC, and both to hit and damage rolls suffer a -3 penalty. Additionally, the whip wielder may attempt to render the target prone by pulling sharply on the whip. If the target fails to a Dexterity check the attempt is successful. A target may choose to forfeit any attacks in order to struggle free from the whip's entangling coils.

GP: 4,000

Freckish Ointment - AKA "Swamping Juice"

A jar of freckish ointment is crafted completely woody, living vines. The vines as well as the ointment itself are of a deep purple color, and the leaves are darkest green. When the jar's thick leaf lid is lifted a vine-stemmed applicator rises from within a hollow stem. A typical jar holds 12 1-ounce applications within its reservoir. If consumed, the ointment within the jar is vilely bitter. Freckish ointment is almost always found in swampy areas near planar portals.

Since the jar is in fact a living plant, it defies the use of identify and similar spells. A speak with plants spell reveals the properties of the ointment. An identify spell will only be successful on the ointment if it is removed from the jar.

Freckish ointment works only when applied to the nose and eyelids; when one of these areas is touched by the ointment the others experience a strange, fuzzy feeling until the ointment is applied to them as well. Once properly applied all vision becomes darkly tinted in various shades of purple, blue, and red, and the sense of smell sharpens, becoming the dominant sense. The ointment causes all plant life to appear more vibrant and each plant's relative need of hydration becomes plain at a glance. Non-plant life stands out in reddish colors, preventing natural camouflage and some forms of invisibility. Pollens and molds in the air appear as a light, hanging snow, and the relative levels of acid or alkaline in water and plants show clearly in spectrums of lighter or darker bluish-purple. Poisonous plants, as well as harmful molds and fungi, take on a deep, blackish-red color, seeming almost to "glow" with darkness. The overall range of sight remains equal to the ointment user's normal range. The sense of smell becomes 10 times more sensitive in this state, making the typical human breather able to identify both living and dead plant life and creatures within 24". Note that the effects of wind might interfere with this increased olfactory acuity.

One application of this ointment lasts 10-15 rounds before drying up. When the last ounce is taken from the jar the vines enwrapping it begin to secrete more of the sticky ointment from their ends hanging over the top lip. The jar secretes 6 more applications without being tended. Once dehydrated from giving up these last 6 ounces the plant-jar begins to die. Any attempt to water the jar, plant it, or otherwise tend it without properly knowing how kills it within 72 hours. After the first 12 hours it becomes obvious the jar has only another day or two to live.

Through research, a lucky accident, or by finding someone who can speak with plants, it is possible to discover that the freckish vine needs water treated by its own ointment in order to survive. Druids, rangers, or other characters knowledgeable in plant lore may determine this without resorting to magical research. One quart of water, when treated by no less than 3 ounces of ointment, is enough to moisturize the vine while it refills its reservoir. The ointment causes the water to take on its bitter flavor, rendering it unpalatable. When properly tended in this way the vine's reservoir refills up to its 12-ounce limit. Continued proper tending allows the vine to replenish 1 ounce of ointment per day.

GP: 5,000

Fungus Boots

Fungus boots are well-made boots any wilderness traveler would quickly recognize as worthy of their wear. After the boots are worn for one day an interior fungus rapidly grows, attuning the boots to the wearer. This initially appears as a simple case of mild toe-jam. One hour later, the medium-green fungus becomes visible, having covered the interior of the boots and now growing over their lip. The growth is not only obvious, but the boots' wearer also notes they've never had a more comfortable pair of boots, and the wearer's feet show no signs of harm. Removing the boots, the wearer immediately experiences a mild longing for the cozy warmth of their fungus boots.

By the end of the day the boots are entirely covered in fungus, including their soles. At this point the wearer receives a +15% bonus to move silently indoors, a +30% bonus to move silently outdoors, and a 10% increase in outdoor movement rate while in temperate climates.

When fungus boots are removed the fungus recedes, disappearing over the course of an hour. The fungus requires

an hour to regrow once the boots are again donned. After either 3 days unworn, or attunement to another soul, the boots lose their attunement to the wearer.

Fungus boots become mossy boots when worn by a thief, bard, ranger, or druid higher than 5th level. Mossy boots make the wearer 30% harder to track in temperate climates, and once per day a large pinch of moss may be plucked from the boot and tucked beneath anyone's front lip for 3 hours. During this time the juices of the moss permit the tucker to sing a treant marching song. In the wilderness this strange song vibrates up through the earth and allows party members within 20' of the tucker to move overland 50% faster. Rates of fatigue are also 50% faster, "tuckering" out the party in half the time.

GP: 3,750

Gauntlets of Fitful Swooshing

While wearing these tan gauntlets one's hands never sweat. A constant breeze blows through the fingers, making the wearer's grip upon a weapon more sure and deft and providing a +1 bonus to hit or maintain their grip. When concentrating on the ambient air blowing inside the glove it is possible for the wearer to shape the air and cause it to surround the outer surface of one or both the gauntlets. Using the air, small, light objects can be picked up without touching them. Objects may be carried this way for 1 round plus 1 round per 2 points of Intelligence above 6. Those with an Intelligence of less than 6 cannot use the gloves in this manner. The object can be no heavier than a pound and no larger than what can be contained within a 6" globe.

The gauntlets can also be used to create audible and tactile cantrip-like illusions of swooshes and breezes. As with other illusions, only disbelief gains a save vs. spell against this effect. This power may be used at will. However, if the illusory effects are used continuously in excess of 3-6 rounds, or more than 6 times a day, the wearer must save vs. spell each additional round of attempted use. Failure causes them to drop any hand-held objects and fitfully windmill and spin their outstretched arms for 3 rounds, as if they were being pulled and stretched by distant strings attached to the gauntlets. They may talk and walk while fitful, not recommended in a china shop, but they cannot take any other actions, including removal of the gauntlets.

If one hand is empty, the wearer can swipe the air while concentrating upon any point within a 9" line of site.

This creates a massive swooshing illusion inside a 10' cube. The illusion's effect is that of a massive flying creature or pendulum passing within inches of any sentient target within the cube. This raises the hackles of those in the area and possibly causes them to stop and wheel about. Other potential swooshing effects include warding off flying creatures, or adding concussive sounds to someone's punches in order to impress or intimidate simple-minded persons and creatures.

Empty handed, the wearer can use both gauntlets in concert to create either more nuanced sensations, such as gentle breezes, or more focused effects, such as forceful pipes of air. Given maximum concentration, to the exclusion of all other awareness, a breeze can be used to raise an erotic sensation in one humanoid target. Further focused, it can also create an illusion of something breathing down an enemy's neck.

GP: 4,000

Geht Pieces

Geht are elaborately carved coins minted in the legendary planar trade city of Cantos, which makes them considerably valuable. While it is believed that Cantos no longer exists, records of its location being highly obscure and doubtful, Cantos artifacts are important because it may have headquartered the Order of Tervergisators, a fabled guild of dream merchants. Nothing specific is known about the guild, except for numerous vague and conflicting stories; therefore, geht are highly sought after by sages, museums, and object readers, all of whom hope to learn more about Cantos and its associations.

Geht are made of gold inset with an iron-like metal. Each is the size of a thumbnail, and the face of each coin bears the image of a bold, radiant figure identifiable as Saint Erumedt, patron of the Cantos monastery. The tail of each coin is encircled in black ivy, upon which many twittering song birds sit. Rubbing a geht between the fingers causes one's last thought to echo in the mind. This property is thought to be a means of preventing counterfeiting and makes them desirable for use in trading. And the shiny, iron-like part of these coins is made of a rare metal called arnoree, which radiates magic. The art and use of shaping arnoree is said to have been alone mastered by the artificing monks of Cantos. Separated from the other materials of the coin, arnoree becomes a fluid black clay that reshapes into a perfect sphere and then hardens. In this state it looks like a polished iron ball, but under careful examination it has a much higher

reflectivity. The brighter the light, the more depth its mirror-like surface appears to have. Discovering what else can be accomplished with arnoree would require planar travel to the Starstrands.

Because merchants can confidently conduct trades using geht, many of them are angry about anyone collecting these coins to melt off the gold in an attempt to learn how to manipulate the slight amounts of arnoree in them. Hearing of such experiments, many of the major merchant guilds will pay to see this practice stopped.

Thus, being highly rare, a single geht fetches between 1,000-1,200 gp. Merchants value them at no more than 1,000-1,100 gp, whereas scholars and historians, who would take them out of circulation, pay the top prices of 1,100-1,200 gp. Unfortunately, by the time these coins circulate to the wise, the location of Cantos is usually far too dulled to be traced by spells or psychic probing.

If an almost uncirculated geht piece is traced, or a commune spell is used, Cantos' location will be indicated as near Shard Tower at the central hub of the web of Starstrands, where it has become cursed and overrun by the interplanar Evermore War.

A monk of good alignment touching a geht becomes aware they have the power to summon 3 canaries of Cantos, once per day, by caressing the coin's raised design. The monk also knows the power must be kept secret from all but other good monks. Upon activation, the canaries appear from afar and immediately bedeck the monk's shoulders with three 36" ribbons of yellow silk. During the remaining daylight the birds twitter about, remaining within 300' of the monk; however, each of these canaries possesses the power to pass through an unlimited thickness of iron, granite and oak, as if these materials were open air. While fluttering about, including passing through some buildings, if one of the canaries of Cantos spots a sick or wounded being it returns to the monk and streams off with one of the ribbons, intending to lead the monk to attend the being's ailments. Ignoring a canary trailing a ribbon dispels all three. While the monk attends the sick and wounded the canaries remain within 10' of the monk and sing a song that provides a +2 bonus to non-magical healing skills. There is nothing otherwise special about the canaries of Cantos.

Canaries of Cantos (AC: 5, MV: 24", HD: ½, HP: 1/ea., ATK: none, D: none, A: NG, S: tiny).

GP: 1,000-1,200; the summoning power is unknown to all but good monks and does not affect the value of the coins.

Genie Confetti

These multicolored bits of magical paper are typically found in bags containing 2-8 handfuls of confetti. When tossed a handful of genie confetti hangs in the air for 1d4+2 rounds, spreading to occupy the area within 1" of the character who tossed it. The confetti comes from the plane of elemental air and is therefore wind resistant. Winds less than gale force will not clear the confetti. The winds simply pass through it, causing the pieces of confetti to spin and turn faster, which in turn will extend their hanging duration by one round per 10 mph of wind.

Each round the genie confetti fills the air all observers within 12" must save vs. spell with a -2 penalty or be overcome by feelings of joy. 1st level or lower beings receive no save. Any creature within 12" who cannot see the confetti need not save. Any creature that makes a successful save must save again each round they remain within view of the floating confetti or else succumb to its effects.

This joy effect lasts until the confetti eventually settles to the ground, during which time a joy filled observer remains passive and unable to attack. Those affected may talk with, but cannot taunt or threaten their enemies, and they cannot make plans or coordinate any action geared toward the end result of lessening the well being of anyone, not even themselves. Additional handfuls of confetti thrown into the air extend the duration of the confetti's effects without the need for further saves.

Creatures pacified by genie confetti are free to move and interact normally but cannot attack or otherwise seek to harm other creatures. Negotiation is possible, and trade may be conducted. A pacified creature does not agree to acts outside its best interests, however, unless convinced by other means. Any pacified creature that takes damage while under the effects of genie confetti is immediately released from its effects, though additional saves may be required each subsequent round the confetti hangs in the air. Those making their saves may attack any unpacified target. However, when attacking a pacified target they must again save against the confetti's magics before initiating the attack. If a passive target is struck they receive an immediate counter-attack and are no longer subject to the influence of that confetti toss, provided they don't attack someone pacified by it.

GP: 3,400 per bag.

Ghostfisher

The Ghostfisher Walks region of the delta is known for its boggy swamps and hazardous traveling conditions. The region gets its name from the numerous plank paths and docks that fill the towns and crisscross the swamps. Most of these wooden paths have long since grown rotten, so walking along them is often as hazardous as walking through the swamp itself. Therefore natives rarely travel the walks without the use of a cane or walking stick, and so prevalent is this practice that it has become almost synonymous with regional culture and tradition.

The people of the Walks are exceedingly superstitious, owing to the fact that many ghosts and spirits haunt the area. Native lore is filled with tales of lost travelers and others who have been claimed by the swamps, their spirits forever doomed to wander, with little more than a dropped walking stick to mark their passage. Indeed, it is not uncommon to find lost walking sticks in the swamp as one travels its treacherous paths, and because of this, local tradition often identifies walking sticks with the spirits of the dead. This has given rise to the saying, "he's out in the sticks," when referring to one lost in the swamp.

The people of the Walks attach almost religious significance to their walking sticks, believing they are necessary not only for safe travel but also to ward off the swamp's many ghosts. Frequently these walking sticks are fortified with magic. An old tune typifies the superstitions many locals invest in their walking sticks and is often sung while walking as a ward against the encroaching swamp:

*"Without my walking stick,
There'd be no one done came
Without my walking stick,
I'd simper in pain
Cuz', where'er there's a vile air
A will-o-wisp or critter there
A bang-a-bangin rap-a-rap
N' I don't care"*

The enchanted walking sticks known as "ghostfishers" are by far the most famous found in the region of the Walks. Made of a strange material known as "séance wood," these sticks average about 3' in length and are capped with a large brass knob. Séance wood is extremely dark, naturally shiny, and particularly gnarled and knotty. Local custom suggests it originates in the spirit realm and

is given by the spirits of the dead to those shamans who show themselves particularly worthy.

Often handed down through many generations, ghostfishers are highly prized by natives of the Walks. Natives of the Walks noticing a ghostfisher in the possession of an outsider will almost certainly attempt to retrieve it, or if underpowered to do so, they will at least inform the authorities of its "theft."

Although highly magical, ghostfishers do not radiate magic and cannot be identified by normal means. When viewed upon the spirit plane they glow brightly, radiating all the energies of life in a manner that is extremely attractive to ghosts and similar spirits. Any ghost within 36" is drawn to this, feeling compelled to pick up the walking stick and bask in its glow. A ghostfisher only radiates magic when thus grasped by a ghost.

Viewers on the material plane easily notice when a ghost has grasped the walking stick, as it rattles and jerks around before rising into a standing position. Touching the wooden portion of the walking stick at this time provokes a save vs. spell. Failure results in the character experiencing a horrifying view of the ghost and its dead world. This saps the energies of the viewer, resulting in 10-20 years of aging and forcing the offender to run in panic for 1d6 rounds. Possibly out into the swamp if they are on the walks.

Touching only the brass knob allows a character to see the ghost without harm. While doing so it is possible to speak with the ghost. A malicious ghost may materialize and attack at this time, but others willingly converse under most circumstances. If the tune above is sung while touching the brass knob then the ghost becomes bonded to the ghostfisher temporarily, allowing the touching character to command its service. Specific ghostfishers may work with other, similar tunes.

Ghosts bonded to the ghostfisher must obey all commands for up to 3 turns, provided that the wielder continues to touch the brass knob and does not move at faster than a walking pace. If at any time the ghost is ordered to put itself into harm's way it receives a save vs. spell to break the bond and free itself. Ghosts with a number of hit dice equal to or less than the level of the character touching the brass knob receive a -2 penalty to this save. Those with one or two more hit dice save normally and receive another save after each further turn of service. Ghosts with 3 or 4 more hit dice save at +2 and may save again after each 5 rounds of service, and those with 5 or 6 more hit dice save at +4 every round. Ghosts

whose hit dice exceed the level of the character touching the brass knob by more than 6 automatically save when put in harm's way. Any ghost that successfully breaks the bond with the ghostfisher can immediately materialize and attack if it wishes.

In addition to its ghost-commanding power, a ghostfisher with a ghost currently bonded to it can be wielded as a club causing 1d12+3 points of damage to undead and the wielder can also turn other ghosts as a cleric of equal level. Ghostfishers cannot be used for normal melee.

GP: 25,000

Gloves of Rooting

These gloves are made from tawny leather and appear ideal for gardening. When touched to the earth the fingers of the gloves sprout roots that delve through the ground for up to 50'. The roots move at 10' per round through earth, clay, loam, and gravel, and they can be used to churn up a section of earth in 4 rounds per 10 cubic feet. Digging with them takes 2 turns to remove 5 cubic feet of earth.

The wearer's tactile sensitivity extends down the intertwinning branches of all ten appendages, allowing the wearer to detect cracks and faults in hard objects, even extending the roots through them if they are large enough. And any object the wearer could normally lift can be grasped and pulled to the surface, provided the path between the surface and the object has first been churned (or is already loam-like) and it is unimpeded by large rocks, root systems and other obstructions. Physical lifting assistance from others will pull the wearer's forearms out of the gloves, causing the roots to immediately retract from the earth and then wither on the gloves until gone. There is a 20% possibility that, instead of the roots retracting, the gloves are sucked into the ground to the object being lifted. It is also possible for a creature to pull on the roots of the glove, or on the object around which the roots entwine.

Given sufficient time, the roots can be worked into any cracks or faults in larger objects, forcing them wider and perhaps crumbling them. No more than 1' of stone can be crumbled in this way, and only small objects such as rusty iron chests or doors can be opened. Using this ability is strenuous, resulting in sore forearms and hands. It is possible to use this ability more than once per day, but each successive use requires a Constitution check. Failure renders the gloves useless for a day. The wearer



also loses use of their fingers for a day due to numbness. There is a -4 penalty to the Constitution check, applied cumulatively to each attempt after the second.

In combat, each root is immune to crushing and bludgeoning damage, but is severed if it sustains 2 or more points of damage from piercing or slashing weapons. As with other uses of gloves of rooting, this immediately results in the roots being retracted and the gloves being rendered useless for 1 day.

Allowing the roots to come into contact with underground springs, or using them near other bodies of water, causes the roots to rapidly absorb a large amount of moisture. Having no place else to go, this fluid gushes out the wearer's mouth, causing 1-3 points of damage per round.

GP: 4,500

The Gluttonous Mace

This +2 mace appears to be a savory, basted and roasted, glorious leg of steaming mutton. When used as a weapon the mace entices opponents with its aroma, provoking hunger in even the most jaded palates. It hits without losing an ounce of its meat, slamming heads and armors alike for 1d8+2. Occasionally its targets even forget it's a weapon and not an offered meal.

If used against animals or other creatures possessing bite attacks, the wielder can strike for the mouth without penalties for attempting a called shot. If successful, this

attack knocks out 1-4 teeth, reducing damage caused by that creature's bite attack by 1 point per tooth. A creature with tusks will lose one tusk instead of 1-4 teeth and points of damage equivalent to that tusk.

The greatest power of the mace is revealed when it is "laid out" on a table between the hours of 12:00 and 1:00 pm, or between the hours of 6:00 and 7:00 pm. When this occurs all creatures within 6", except for the mace wielder, must save vs. spell or become insatiably hungry. The mace can be used in this manner no more than once per week.

Those failing the save eagerly empty their pockets to obtain any food in the area, ordering far more than they normally eat. Once the supply of prepared food is gone they begin to demand raw food. Characters who consume more than their normal capacity must pause as necessary to regurgitate what they have eaten, but thereafter demand still more to eat. Once all food sources in the general area are exhausted, those afflicted with hunger begin to sample all sorts of items that one might never imagine edible, yet none of them notice the gluttonous mace central to the eating area.

Once a round has passed without food each person or creature afflicted with hunger must again save vs. spell with a -2 penalty or begin to suspect others in the area are hiding morsels for their own consumption and attempt to take them by force.

If the number affected by the mace's magic exceeds 5, then, after 1-4 rounds of fighting all those afflicted with hunger coalesce into a ravenous mob, turning on and consuming one hapless individual. Any creature in the area of effect, but for the mace's wielder, is randomly subject to becoming the focus of the mob's hunger.

Upon consuming its first victim the mob receives a save vs. spell as a group, using the most favorable saving throw chance from among the mob's members. Success indicates that member comes to his senses, and in either leaving or attempting to communicate with the mob enough members notice the discontinuity they are brought to their senses. Thereafter the mob stops feasting within 1-3 rounds. A similar save occurs after the mob has consumed its second victim, and another after the third has been consumed. If the save is failed three times in a row, no further saves are allowed and the mob continues to consume itself, one member at a time, until the bitter end.

Any being entering the area of effect while the mob is ravenous must save vs. spell +4 or become a member of the mob. Success indicates they can leave the area. If they choose to remain in the area they must immediately save vs. spell again, without bonus. While in close quarters combat with a mob all participants lose their AC Dexterity bonus.

There are several ways to halt the mob from outside the area of effect. A dispel magic on the mace immediately halts the carnage. A protection from evil will cease the effect within its range. A remove curse thrown on a mob member will grant them the ability to exit the area of effect. Mob members can be lassoed, hooked or grappled and dragged out of the area. Mob members attacked from the edge of the area of effect will retreat toward the mace and choose a different target.

When the last member is standing they transform into a 6th level ghoul and continue clawing over the remains until either put to rest or fleeing into the night to the nearest grave site, looking for more corpses.

GP: 18,500

Gnome-in-a-Box

This 2' x 2' box's panels are painted with bright red shellac edged in yellow. Each side of the box, including the top and bottom, is marked with a large white question mark. The box is fitted with a leather carrying strap, and while quite light, it is solid and bulky. Identify and similar spells reveal no useful abilities but do indicate that the box is powerfully cursed and enchanted with various dimensional and imprisoning spells. Oddly, the lid of the box cannot be opened even by the most powerful knock spell. There is no lock to pick. Smashing the box is also fruitless. The box is invulnerable unless the dimension within it is eliminated.

Any character attempting to open or otherwise manipulate the box hears a muffled voice from within. This is the gnome in the box. He immediately inquires, "Hey, where are we going? Who's out there? Helloooooo?" until he is answered. If no one responds to his call he demands to be put down so he can get back to work, eventually falling silent if he becomes convinced there is no one outside. If the gnome is spoken to he becomes quite chatty, though irritable after his long imprisonment. He is loud, demanding, and a bit gruff. The gnome doesn't know his name. This is part of the curse. Neither can he recall who imprisoned him, how long he's been inside

the box, or where he came from. He is able to open the box from his side, and does so if asked.

Those looking into the box easily see the gnome 40' below. He is middle-aged and quite typical-looking, but for wearing disheveled woodland clothing several centuries out of style. His 40' x 40' room is crowded with numerous tools and mechanical parts.

The gnome cannot pass through the lid's opening. Neither can any living or undead being pass into the box. Only inanimate, non-living objects can pass through. Even spells and magical effects originating outside the box cannot enter, though objects and even non-living magic items can be placed in it easily. The box is impenetrable to teleportation and planar magic. The interior has its own gravity and barely moves if shaken. Turning the box upside down makes the gnome somewhat dizzy (and grouchy) but does not otherwise upset the box's contents.

The gnome is quick to let any "outsiders" know that he's very good at making things. He claims that due to his long incarceration he is quite bored and willing to work on any project requested, so long as he is provided with all the requisite parts, materials, and tools. He admits to being incapable of making artifacts or major magic items, but otherwise undertakes any reasonable request. The gnome asks to be given a day to draft plans and determine what components and supplies he will need. He also requests a ladder or some other means of climbing up to the box's lid to pass his list out.

After working on a project for a few days the puzzled gnome claims to need more parts, because he miscalculated something and needs to create a "workaround." He sounds very professional and competent about it all, if not apologetic, and if confronted about his error insists that, "These things take time!"

A few days later the gnome claims that while fixing his project he discovered a grand idea that will make the item even better. He asks for further parts, but upon receiving them he will claim they're not quite right, even if they fit his requirements exactly. He also requests some items that clearly have nothing to do with his project. If asked about them he points out that, "You can't expect me to go without a few frills here and there, after I've been working so hard...."

If the gnome is refused the parts and supplies he requests, then he casts a *geas* upon the next person to look into the box, insisting that his request be delivered with all haste.

He later apologizes for this, stating that he had no other choice if the requested item is to be done properly.

If he truly senses the party has had it with him, the gnome finally announces he's done with the item. However, he likes it so much he wants to keep it and make a second one for the party. He explains, "I can't give you this one, because I need it in order to duplicate this highly unique and one-of-a-kind device for you."

As it turns out, the gnome in the box is incapable of performing even the simplest of tasks. But he uses guilt, misdirection, and outright lies to prevent anyone from discovering this. If all his excuses fail, he ultimately is forced to show his true powers.

The gnome in the box is in fact a 12th level illusionist. If all his attempts to fool are unsuccessful he uses an illusion to demonstrate what he has "accomplished" thus far in his work, showcasing all his modifications and enhancements and "proving" that he is only a few days away from producing what he promised. The gnome is the only creature capable of casting spells through the box's opening, casting illusions appropriate to his level within 20' of the box. If his final demonstration fails, the gnome is reduced to using his spells at random times as he sees fit to gain what he truly wants: Attention.

Eventually, the party will figure out how they might use this nasty little gnome to their advantage by incorporating him into their own cunning plots, either by setting him on someone else like a trap, or by figuring out how to barter with him to do their bidding. He might even eventually fit into the party as a permanent NPC.

GP: 20,000

Grapes of Wrath Potion

Distilled from the juice of heartless grapes (q.v.), this potion provides all the benefits of said grapes without any of the negative side effects. The potion lasts for 12 rounds, during which the drinker receives 1 extra attack every other round. While under the influence of this potion the drinker is warded against any non-magical deceit including feinting, the use of sleight-of-hand, attempts to distract, or other ploys as allowed by the DM. The drinker automatically sees such tactics for what they are, receiving a +2 bonus to AC, a +2 bonus to saves, or a -2 penalty to the deceiver's attempt, as appropriate.

GP: 700

The Grateful Down Bed

This large bed appears the perfect place for a night's rest. So comfortable is it that any intelligent humanoid lying upon it instantly falls asleep. Those who do not wish to sleep must save vs. spell each round to avoid being overcome or else leave the bed. Once asleep, a character lying in this bed experiences a dreamlike vision of sinking deeper and deeper, then passing completely through the mattress and falling for miles as images of recent important events rush by. Eventually, the sleeper falls through a curtain of diaphanous silks and lands back in bed – but not the same bed as before.

The sleeper finds himself inhabiting the dreams of a dying person on his deathbed. The dying person is aware of the sleeper's presence and begins conversation by asking if the sleeper is a spirit sent to grant a last dying wish. Regardless of the sleeper's answer, the dying person explains the final wish in great detail, begging for the sleeper's help.

The sleeper is free to refuse this dying wish. Doing so results only in waking up in the grateful down bed, feeling quite exhausted and with a splitting headache. Willingly taking on the burden of fulfilling the dying wish causes the character to awake refreshed. As long as the sleeper makes every reasonable effort to fulfill the wish then nothing unpleasant occurs. If, however, the sleeper backs out on the promise, he finds himself under the effects of a *geas* spell, as cast by a 15th level wizard. Typical dying wishes often include making sure that loved ones are well-cared for, insuring rivals do not take advantage of survivors, or expressing regrets and asking forgiveness of someone the dying person harmed unjustly in life.

On rare occasions the sleeper may be cast into the dreams of a person who does not know that death is imminent. Soon-to-be murder victims, victims of impending accidents, and prisoners soon to be put to death are all possibilities. In cases involving those who are unaware of approaching doom, no request is made of the sleeper. Rather, the sleeper must figure out what would hearten the doomed if they had a last request. Any attempt to inform them they are soon to die results in the sleeper waking.

Regardless of the wish, the sleeper receives an appropriate reward for successfully aiding the dying. Perhaps a lost inheritance is found and surviving relatives are willing to share it with the sleeper. Perhaps a long-lost rich uncle is discovered who rewards the sleeper for services

rendered. It is even possible the ghost of the departed materializes at some point in the future to aid the sleeper.

Clearly, in order for the bed to function there must be someone within the local region who is about to die while leaving behind some unfinished business or regret. Attempts to use the bed's powers fail if no such person exists. The bed only becomes magically active if such a person is about to die and if an intelligent humanoid lies on the bed and sleeps. Only under these conditions can the bed's powers be identified.

Those encountered through the bed will die, regardless of any interference. The foretold doom will occur, and if thwarted, occurs later under similar circumstances. Normally, only by casting a wish, miracle, or similarly powerful magic, can the death be prevented permanently. At the DM's option, certain mundane steps might also work, but such instances should be rare. If by some means the death is permanently avoided, the bed breaks apart. The down blows about and its magic disperses.

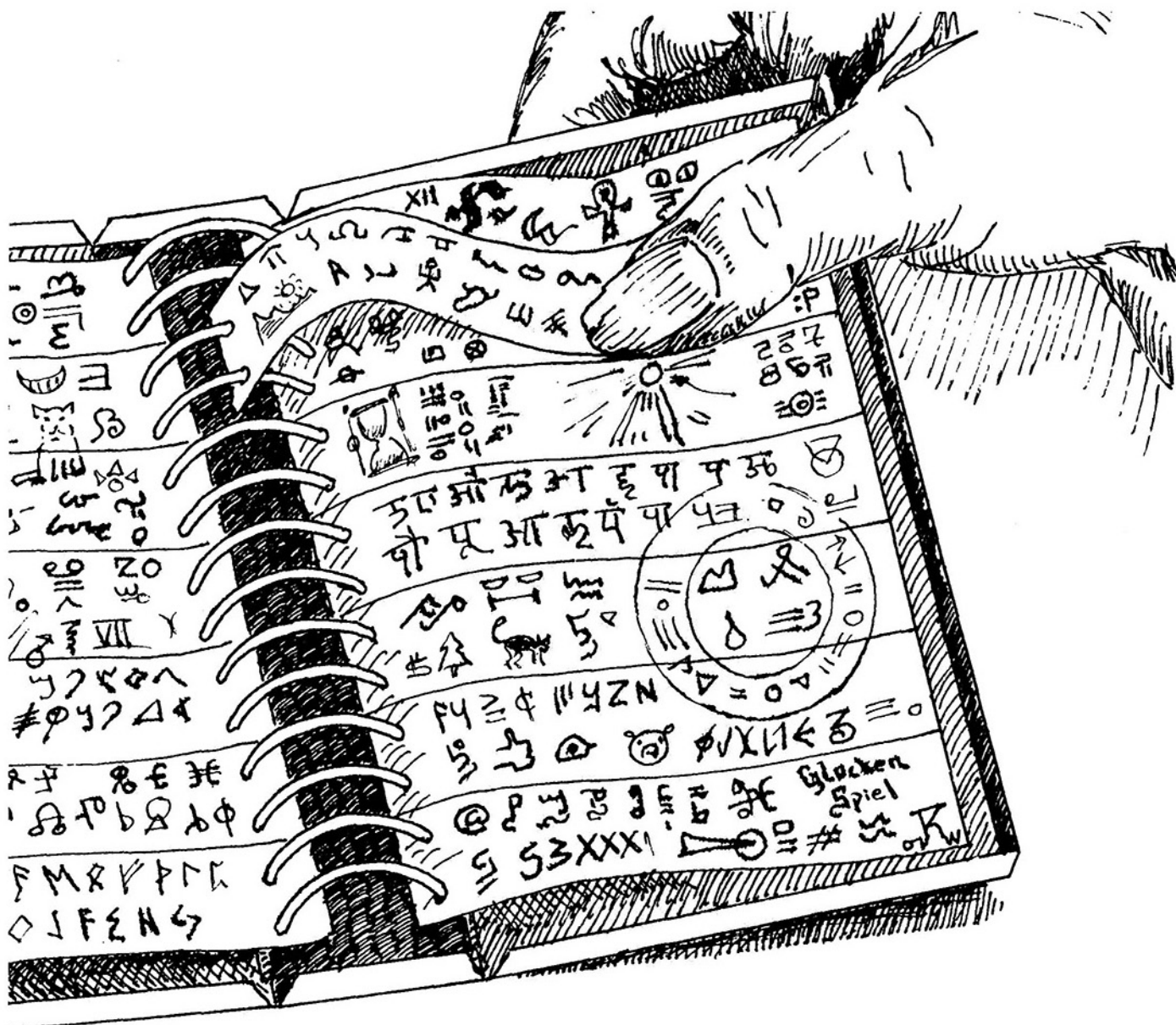
GP: 10,000

The Grim Codex of Comprehension

This 8" by 6" book is encased in silver in such a way that it appears to be a silver box. Careful examination reveals a tiny seam running around the circumference of the box but no hinges or means of opening it. The hinges of the book's casing are internal and the method of opening it eludes all but thieves, who discover the right touch after 1 turn.

Within the case, what appear to be fine vellum pages are in fact seven 1" high x 5" wide pads seamlessly laid top to bottom, each connected to the spine of the book by a pair of silver rings, totaling 14 in number. Each pad is filled with a myriad of runes, cuneiforms, alphabets, symbols, numbers and pictograms. In some places their lines cross over to the next pad, while some of the symbols of one page bleed through to the back of the page, while yet other symbols transfer to the next page as if it were closed before the ink dried, and then elaborated upon to form an entirely different symbol using the original as its base.

Any person other than a thief type who examines this confusion of symbols must save vs. spell or look away. Insistent attempts to look back at the pages will cause nightmares of writhing symbols, which decrease the in-



tellect 1 point per night until a day goes by without attempting to study the book, at which point all intellect resumes function after 8 hours of uninterrupted rest. In this way, identification of the book's power eludes all spellcasters and spells.

After studying a codex of comprehension for 1 week a thief receives a +20% bonus to all future attempts to decipher script. If the codex is readily available following a failed attempt, a thief can consult it to gain a second chance at deciphering script, but with no bonus. Additionally, a thief can cast spells from scrolls 1 level sooner, and with a 20% less likely chance of mishap.

Over the years, many have asked why the codex would be considered so grim. But the darker sorts have often discovered that repeatedly forcing a prisoner to examine a codex of comprehension can reduce that prisoner's intellect to the point of idiocy. This technique, often com-

bined with sleep deprivation, is useful in drawing out information such as secret passwords. The victims find this usage unrelenting, therefore quite grim.

GP: 12,000

The Guttled Sheets of Varthola

Anyone within a 60' view of the gutted sheets of Varthola will become aware of their presence, feeling a slight tug of attraction. Up close, these aged and wrinkled 30" x 18" sheets of papyrus appear to have been previously bound. They number 20-40 useful pages, in fair condition, and another dozen useless sheets scrawled with blood written symbols. Some of them are still hanging slightly from stringy binding glue, no doubt cat's guts.

If any of the sheets are checked, they radiate a strangely fleeting magic, as if they were recently under the influence of a dark force. (See *Varthola Mephameze's Book of Wards*.) Yet, one gets a distinctly good feeling from the useful sheets, and only a vaguely bad feeling from the useless sheets.

The useful pages can be gently separated from the remaining binding, as well as from the blood written pages, and then carefully stored by anyone who takes their attractiveness seriously.

If kept, the bloody pages attract predators within 300', like sharks to chum. Each of the dozen pages possesses one magical hit point, and unless destroyed or eaten by the predators, every page continues to act like bait until it is destroyed or locked in a seamless iron box, or better. Ripping a sheet into any part ends its magic.

Separated, each of the useful pages maintains their power to attract the attention of anyone within 60'. Writing on them shifts the focus from the pages to the words or symbols of the message, hiding the magic of the actual page. This also contributes believability to the message, lending +2 to any charm spell cast from a page inscribed as a scroll. Each page can be used for one spell.

GP: 100 each page.

Hale Ale Sodden Keg Staves

These curved, rectangular keg staves are made of an aged oak. Their sides that were once inside a barrel of hale ale are now sodden and stained. When one is found, the end of the keg staff has been carved and wrapped to form a grip; and when waved about, the staff perfumes the air with the rich, heady smell of fine ale. This scent is so wonderfully aromatic, one wonders where the rest of the barrel might be.

Although sodden, the staff is not soft and can serve as a bludgeoning weapon, causing 1d4+1 points of damage. Those hit with the staff must save vs. spell or develop the overwhelming urge to drink some alcohol within 1-3 rounds. At that time the urge causes them to cease combat, turn and begin to search for the nearest draught. They continue this search for 1 turn, provided they are not hit when breaking off melee or during their thirsty pursuit. They will defend themselves, however drunk.

When gripping the staff the wielder detects the nearest alcohol within 6" and can consume twice the nor-

mal amount of alcohol before becoming intoxicated. Damage with the staff increases to 1d8+4; the wielder's Constitution increases +2; and to hit rolls suffer a -4 penalty.

If the wielder continues drinking beyond the point of minor intoxication, then they become insulting, loud, and violent. Any attempt to resist these effects requires a save vs. spell. This represents the staff's proclivity for encouraging fighting when its weak magic begins to overpower the fading will of the drunkard. A successful save fades after 1 turn and requires an additional save every turn until sleeping or sobering.

Identifying, object reading, or other detection spells involving the caster touching the staff require the caster to roll a save vs. spell at -4. Failure indicates the caster is overcome by an intoxication-like confusion that lasts for 1d4 turns.

Occasionally, an entire keg of hale ale sodden staves might be found broken open. A typical keg may possess up to 3d4 unbroken staves. The DM is encouraged to consider what might happen among an entire party of PCs wielding these staves.

GP: 900 each staff.

Harass's Horsehair Brush

The bristles of this well-crafted boot brush are taken from the tail and mane of Harass, a legendary racing horse that won 52 races before being put out to pasture. Using this brush to polish any pair of boots grants the wearer a 15% increase in movement rate for 8 hours. Butlers and infantrymen using the brush impart another 5% and increase the duration to 12 hours. This benefit does not stack with subsequent brushings, but does work in concert with other haste effects.

The brush can be used to polish no more than 4-6 pairs of boots per day. Slippers and other footwear that don't hold a shine gain no benefit from the brush. After 40 brushings the bristles begin to fall out, and the brush is rendered powerless 1d6 uses later. Prior to exceeding 42 brushings Harass's horsehair brush can be recharged by a caster above 7th level who casts a haste spell into it. Each spell restores 3 uses.

GP: 5,000

Hautheor's Hobbyhorse

This hobbyhorse is carved from fine-grained beech wood with an exquisitely sculpted unicorn's head mounted atop its pole. The toy is replete with a gold-painted spiral horn, peridot eyes, and a shaggy mane of pale gray.

Dweomer fills the toy when touched by a child of good alignment between the ages of 10 & 12. The child immediately understands there is something very special about the item. While they are possibly a bit too old for the toy, they will nonetheless adopt it into their daily play. After a week of play, when alone and unobserved, the magic of the hobbyhorse polymorphs the child into a young man or woman 16 years of age. The child is instantly clothed in noble raiment complete with sword, dagger, and a pouch of 10 gp. The child gains the skills of a 1st level character of any appropriate class. The hobbyhorse itself transforms into a living unicorn named Hautheor who is capable of telepathically communicating with the transformed child, advising them and protecting them. These effects last for 2-4 hours, after which the child reverts to normal while Hautheor reverts to his inanimate form. Both are automatically teleported to the location in which the transformation originally occurred, or to the nearest unobserved location if that location is currently occupied. At any point in time Hautheor can protect the child by ending the transformation early. Hautheor can even do this a split second before receiving a killing blow against either himself or the child.

Any experience earned while the child is in adult form accumulates normally, allowing the transformed child to gain levels and increase in skill. The child can call upon the hobbyhorse to activate this transformation 3 times per week but only if alone and unobserved. Once the child reaches 13 years of age all levels and skills earned while in adult form become permanent and the hobbyhorse ceases to function for them.

An adult who plays with the hobbyhorse for at least 3 rounds has a 50% chance of being transformed into an 8-year-old child. This transformation lasts for 2-4 hours, after which the child reverts to adult form. The hours spent as a child seem little more than a fantasy, leading many adults to believe the magical hobbyhorse is nothing more than a harmlessly enchanted toy. However, an adult catching on to the truth of the toy's real transformative power will most likely understand it has advantages for spying, among other uses.

This item provides a means for DMs to provide a background for starting characters above 1st level. It can also be effectively used to transform the child of a key NPC. The child would naturally hide their identity from the party of PCs while joining them on adventures their parent has tasked the party to complete. The party may or may not figure out the similarities between the child and their gallant new friend, or at some point the child may reveal their true identity to vouch for the party's actions when answering to their parent.

GP: 9,000

Heartless Grapes

These grapes temporarily suppress any sense of compassion or empathy, allowing a combatant to attack with greater ferocity and ruthlessness while ignoring distractions. Unfortunately, they leave the heart cold and aching for hours afterward. Heartless grapes are dark bluish-purple, and their juice is the color of blood. Each bunch contains 12 grapes.

In combat heartless grapes grant an attacker 1 additional attack every other round per 3 grapes consumed. Each trio of grapes lasts for 4 rounds. Up to 12 grapes can be eaten at once, providing a total duration of 16 rounds and 8 extra attacks.

While under the influence of heartless grapes an attacker is warded against any non-magical deceit including feinting, the use of sleight-of-hand, attempts to distract, or other ploys as allowed by the DM. The attacker automatically sees such tactics for what they are, receiving a +2 bonus to AC, a +2 bonus to saves, or a -2 penalty to the deceiver's attempt, as appropriate.

Once the effects of heartless grapes have worn off they leave a bittersweet taste in the mouth and an aching in the heart for 3 hours. During this period the eater is emotionally vulnerable and highly susceptible to suggestion. All saves against illusions, charms, and enchantments are made with a -2 penalty. Any rolls made to avoid being tricked or convinced by non-magical means are also made with a -2 penalty. These side effects can be assuaged by performing an act of kindness toward someone less fortunate. Giving roses to the bereaved, donating money to the poor, or aiding a defeated enemy are all possibilities, provided that the aid is given directly and not through a surrogate. In other words, dropping a few coppers in a poor-box doesn't help.

GP: 900 per bunch of 12 grapes.

Heartless Potions of Suggestibility

Distilled from the juice of heartless grapes (q.v.), this potion causes all the negative side effects of said grapes without any of the benefits. For a period of 1 hour the drinker is emotionally vulnerable and highly susceptible to suggestion. All saves against illusions, charms, and enchantments are made with a -2 penalty. Any rolls made to avoid being tricked or convinced by non-magical means are also made with a -2 penalty.

Adding the juice of heartless grapes to this potion increases all penalties by -1 per 3 grapes added, up to a maximum penalty of -5. Due to its taste the potion mixes well with wine and is sometimes found pre-mixed in wine bottles.

GP: 500

The Hoops of Wandering

Made of light, durable metal, this trio of 3' diameter hoops is typical of those used by circus acts and acrobats. Each individual hoop is tinted a different color to aid in distinguishing it from its mates. Each set of hoops of wandering attunes itself to its wielder, and does not function for any other unless the wielder gives the hoops away, sells them, dies, or loses possession of them for more than a year. Coercing the proper owner to give them away or sell them does not work unless the new "owner" can retain possession of them beyond the one-year limitation.

When used in combat by a member of any Dexterity based or martial arts class, these hoops act as both weapon and shield. The wielder can use them to block and deflect melee attacks, gaining a +3 bonus to AC. Hand-held weapons cannot be used while holding the hoops but kicking or punching is permissible, with the force of all punches being conveyed through the hoops. If the wielder is not skilled in martial arts, the hoops do damage as a club.

Additionally, these hoops permit several forms of travel, each of which can be initiated during combat by simply jumping through one or more of the hoops. Each combination of hoops may be preset to transport the hoop wielder to a specific destination. While it is not necessary to set these destinations beforehand, once used to travel to a particular location that destination cannot be reset by any means. For example, if a monk aligns

hoops 1, 2, and 3 in order and uses that combination to travel to the astral plane, that combination of hoops will permit travel to no other destination thereafter. If the monk aligns hoops 3 and 2 in that order and uses them to teleport to a room in the local inn, that combination of hoops will always transport him to that specific room each time it is used.

When using one hoop at a time to travel, the wielder can dimension door up to 36" away, 3 times per day. No specific destination is set when using the hoops to dimension door, and the wielder may choose his destination each time.

Using two hoops in combination, the wielder can teleport up to 3 times per week. Up to 6 teleportation destinations may be preset by using the hoops in different combinations. Note that this power only allows the wielder and his normal equipment to teleport, subject to the limitations of a teleport spell cast by a 12th level wizard.

When using all 3 hoops in combination, the wielder can plane shift 3 times per month. Up to 6 destinations may be preset by using the hoops in different combinations. The wielder can bring along companions when plane shifting, subject to the limitations of a plane shift spell cast by a 12th level wizard. Note that it is possible to use all 6 available combinations without using one to reach home.

GP: 35,000

The Hypnotic Cuff of the Swashbuckler

This elaborately frilled lace cuff extends beyond the sleeve of the wearer's coat or robe. When the arm moves, the cuff sways hypnotically, undulating slowly and leaving a ghostly trail that attracts the eye of all opponents. Thus, the wearer's hand seems always to move either ahead or behind, but rarely with the cuff, making it difficult to track the wearer's motions. Gauntlets or gloves that climb high on the arm prevent the cuff from functioning, as does the use of a shield on the cuffed arm.

The above effect allows the wielder to more effectively feint with the weapon in that hand, thus providing a +2 bonus to AC against melee opponents. The bonus does not apply against ranged attackers, magically targeted attacks, or attacks that do not incorporate eyesight such as traps.



The Two-Faced Memorial Mace

The head of this mace is shaped like a long, attenuating box, becoming smaller near the haft. Each of the box's 4 trapezoidal panels bears a face depicted in deep bas relief. One pair of faces is crestfallen and bitter, while the other pair appears jovial and spirited. When wielded by a cleric, monk, paladin or other religious class, each pair of faces takes on the appearance and role of a major figure from the cleric's religion, one pair representing good and the other representing bad. If the wielder is in good standing with his deity, then one of the negative faces is replaced by a positive face, resulting in a 75% chance that any attack with the mace will be at +4. If the cleric is out of favor the reverse occurs, resulting in a 75% chance that any attack will be at -4.

Any wearer who chooses to spend time studying the cuff's eerie movement may learn to use it in a tactical maneuver known as the "swashbuckler's ploy." This clever maneuver allows the cuff's wearer to parry an opponent's blow while using its momentum to gain an extra attack. This is an extremely difficult maneuver to master, requiring the cuff wearer to learn through combat and not through simple practice.

Each day, the cuff wearer may make up to 1 attempt per 3 levels to master the swashbuckler's ploy. Each attempt must be clearly stated before initiative is rolled. Once the attempt has been declared, the cuff wearer must choose one single attack against which to use the ploy. When that attack occurs the cuff wearer rolls a normal attack with a -7 penalty and compares it to the opponent's attack roll. If the cuff wearer's roll is higher, the swashbuckler's ploy succeeds and the opponent's attack is negated. The cuff wearer may immediately roll a single attack against that opponent at the normal chances to hit. If the opponent's roll would have missed anyway then the attack is made with a +4 modifier to hit and damage. If the cuff wearer's attack roll is equal to or less than the opponent's roll, the opponent's attack is treated normally.

Each successful attempt to master the swashbuckler's ploy decreases the penalty on the next attempt by 1. For example, if the first attempt (rolled at -7) is successful, then the next attempt is rolled at -6. If that attempt is successful, then the next is rolled at -5, and so on until an adjustment of -0 is reached. At that point the cuff wearer is considered to have mastered the swashbuckler's ploy and can continue to use it once per day per 3 levels with no penalty.

GP: 12,500

Any time the faces on the mace are uncovered they begin to argue loudly between themselves during any instance of conflict or disagreement they overhear. Any target hit by the mace during such an argument must save vs. spell or be affected by confusion, per the spell, for the next round only. Any member of a non-religious class who picks up the mace is treated as a target that has been hit and will continue to experience confusion while both sets of generic faces loudly scorn them for their ignorance. After one round, they must successfully save vs. spell in order to put the mace down. At night the faces must be covered, or they begin to debate inane black and white issues such as the meaning of light and dark. Needless to say, this makes it nearly impossible for anyone within earshot to get any sleep.

Except when scorning the ignorant, the mace's faces never directly address anyone other than each other, though it is possible to incidentally learn something while listening to them argue. Such tidbits of information most often prove indirectly useful, such as revealing the name or place of things or figures related to the topic of argument. For example, a mentioned figure might be a sage quoted by one of the faces, which inadvertently signifies one who is capable of granting additional information if met or read. The faces have a limited awareness of those around them, and if they overhear that their arguments are being mined for information, they will immediately turn to arguing about the morality of snooping.

It is possible, although rare, the faces speak of previous owners and battles in which they have been involved.

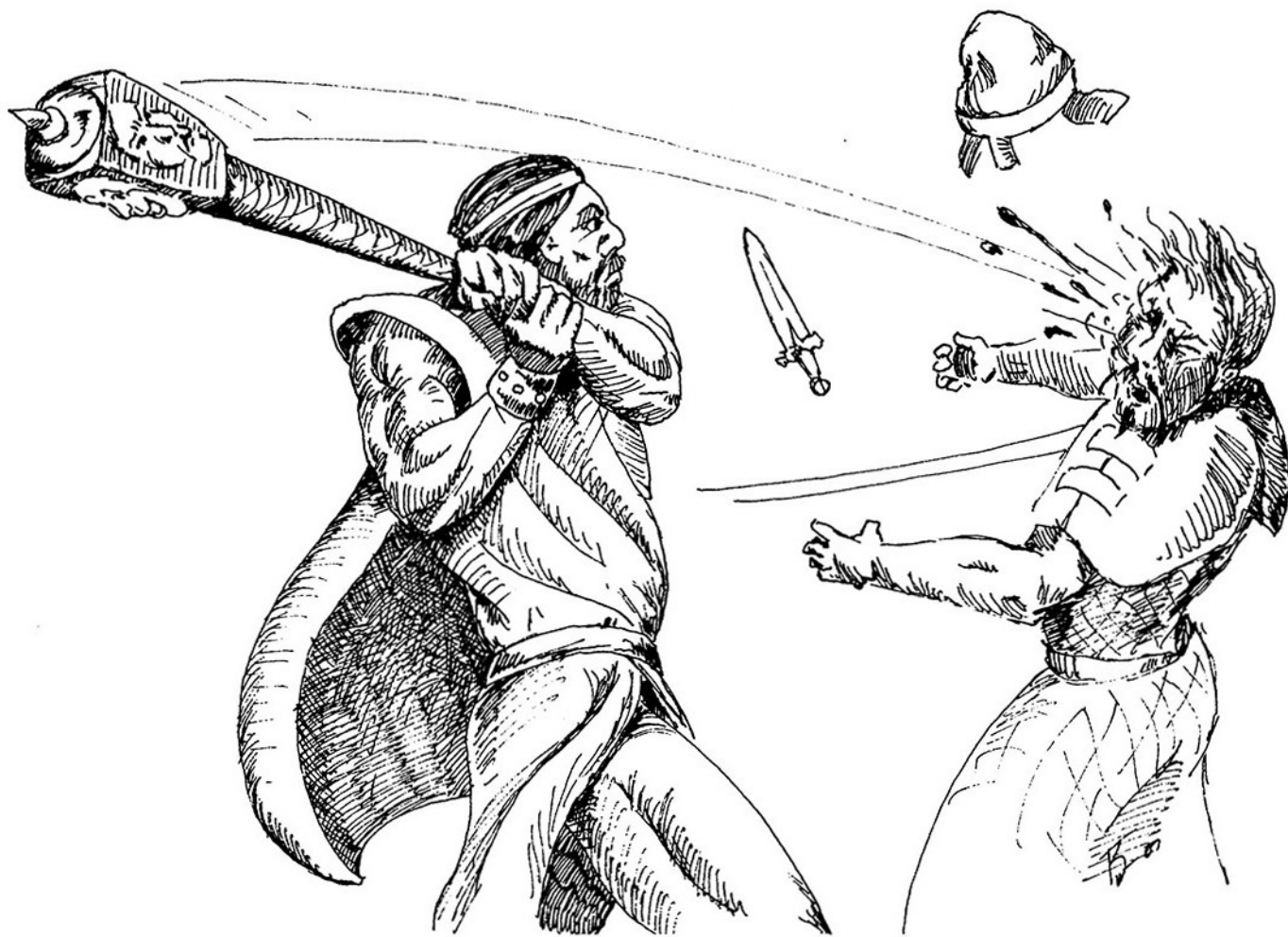
GP: 3,500

Incunabula of the Sealer of Fates

This book's cover is composed of interlocking decorative iron plates, and the text within seems to be an early attempt at printing by pressing a die into paper. Each of the letters in the alphabet used to print out the text has its own font, size and style. Additionally, each letter is surrounded by roughly the same odd marks surrounding it each time it reoccurs. This strange printing puzzle can be figured out by a thief, noble or herald, as each printed letter has been pressed into the paper using an initialized signet ring (*See the Signets of Heliogabalo*). It may further be conjectured that only a thief would possess such an eccentric collection of so many signets as well as the wherewithal to carve off the unusable letters from each. And indeed, in support of this conclusion, the book describes the methods of constructing amazing locks. Anyone reading the text will be capable of understanding the general idea, but entirely incapable of understanding the intricate instructions and nuanced methods described within any of the bound incunabula unless they are a thief. The pages within the book also radiate an extremely subtle magic, which cannot be de-

tected outside of 5' from the book's pages, no matter the device or spell being used.

The incunabula number 14 lessons and can only be understood by someone over 4th level with either lock-picking or constructing skills. Each lesson requires 1 week to master, during which the reader must dedicate at least 36 hours to uninterrupted study for the first 5 locks. The 36 hours need not be sequential. For the last two locks the full 2 weeks must be consumed in study for each. In any week of study, while going about unrelated business, the student's mind will return to thinking about the contents of the lessons when it would otherwise be idle. The student mumbles to themselves and sometimes replies to questions incongruently, responding with odd and nearly senseless remarks about sanity, emotions, concentration, locks and locksmithing. This decreases all initiative rolls by -2 until study is completed. Additionally, the student must have a set of lock picks, lock-making tools, and at least 500 gp worth of materials. The same set of lock picks and tools may be used in each lesson, but the materials are used up by each week's end.



At the end of every week the student must roll a lock picking check. Success indicates the student can move on to the next lesson and rewards them with a permanent +1% to their lock picking ability. Failure requires the student repeat the week's lesson. Successfully repeating a lesson does not reward the 1% bonus. Every other week success indicates the student has built an amazing lock. These locks are produced in the order given, below. Failure in a production week indicates the student suffers the effect of that week's lock themselves. A learned lock can be reproduced in the amount of days indicated in parenthesis with its gold value, below, and by expending half the value of the lock in tools and materials.

Successfully saving against an amazing lock's effects allows the victim to pick the lock in most cases. Knock spells cast upon these locks require the spellcaster to touch the lock. Upon touch they become conscious of the lock's insides and must save or suffer the same effects a thief would.

Lock of Confusion – A thief attempting to pick this lock must save vs. spell or spend an extra turn trying to open it. There is a 25% chance they will also break their set of lock picks on the lock.

(1 day) GP: 200

Lock of Disappointment – A thief attempting to pick this lock must save vs. spell or turn away, refusing to make further attempts to unlock it until 1 month has passed. While disappointed, they are convinced the lock is impossible to pick, and will argue against attempting it. While anyone else is picking at the lock they will vociferously downgrade them for their stupidity and arrogance.

(2 days) GP: 500

Lock of Obsession – Any thief attempting to pick this lock must save vs. spell or encounter endless false paths to solving the puzzle of the lock; yet with each new path the thief is convinced they are about to open the lock! Unless physically dragged away from the lock kicking and screaming, the thief continues to fiddle with it indefinitely. Any other distractions fail to interrupt the thief so long as the lock is within 10' of his face. Not even the absence of tools will stop the thief who will attempt to convert anything into a lock pick. If nothing else, even a hair!

(4 days) GP: 800

Lock of Anger – A thief attempting to pick this lock must save vs. spell or attack the lock with brute force. Their hands take 1-2 points of damage plus their Strength bonus each round. Each round they are allowed another save. Until their hands are healed all manual activities are carried out as if their Dexterity bonus is -4.

(4 days) GP: 900

Lock of Complexity – A thief who fails a save vs. spell while picking this lock experiences complete frustration and begins to curse the lock, shout at it, and complain loudly. Even if enemies arrive the thief continues to express his frustration with the lock to them and to the lock as if it were sentient. A new save vs. spell can be attempted after every 3 turns spent shouting and cursing, but nothing else can be achieved other than defending until then. Even while defending themselves they will incessantly complain about the lock.

(5 days) GP: 1,100

Lock of Insanity – This lock causes any thief who fails a save vs. spell while attempting to pick it to completely lose touch with reality. The thief believes himself a guard charged with defending whatever the lock secures, stationing himself near the lock and defending it with his life. If the thief succeeds the save and succeeds their lock picking attempt they must roll another save vs. spell. Failure indicates the thief will close and relock the lock. However, if the space beyond the lock is large enough for the thief to fit, the thief enters the space and lets the lock of insanity close itself, which it will do after 1 round. The thief remains convinced they have been bad and deserve their imprisonment. They will argue against anyone else opening the lock. Only a heal spell, or better, will cure this insanity.

(2 weeks) GP: 2,500

Lock of Mindlessness – A thief attempting to pick this lock must save vs. spell -4 or become feeble-minded, per the spell. While working on this lock the thief's mind is literally reconfigured to actively prevent itself from functioning properly. This effect and its solution are identical to a feeblemind spell. After healing or restoration the

thief's mind remains scarred, unknown to them until they attempt to pick another lock. While scarred, when they approach any lock to pick it open they recollect their experience with the lock of mindlessness. Their hands begin to shake and they instantly break into a sweat. This delays their picking attempt by one round and decreases their lock picking chance by 10%. Only witnessing the destruction of a lock of mindlessness will release them from their lock picking fear.

(4 weeks) GP: 6,000

GP: 18,000 (*Incunabula*)

Jaded Liquors

This bottle of pearlescent green liquid contains 15 doses. A single sip imparts a momentary glimpse into the deepest shadow of one's soul, leaving a feeling of having failed to achieve the most important goal of one's life. The drinker feels as if their heart has turned to stone. They become stoic and dispassionate, but immune to even the most powerful temptations and passions.

This altered state provides proof against all forms of charm, fear, or mind-affecting magic, as well as against all mundane temptations and compulsions, for a period of 3d6 rounds. Gluttony, addiction and love for family are suppressed completely. In this state of dispassion it is possible to disregard things normally held dear, so the drinker must beware.

Drinking more than 3 doses of jade liquor in any one day is hazardous, requiring a system shock roll -30%. A failed roll indicates the loss of 1d8 points of Constitution. These points are regained at the rate of 1 per full day of bed rest, during which the drinker can undertake no strenuous actions.

GP: 3,000

Jar of Flatoot

This jar is filled with brilliant-orange masses of fat that glow with a soft, dim, orange light. When lit the fat slowly melts like a candle, giving off a haunting yellow light that illuminates a 20' radius. Everything within this light acquires a faint orange outline, similar to that created by a faerie fire spell. The light also permeates the astral plane, outlining objects there as well. While out-

lined with the flatoot's light astral objects can be touched as if they were on the prime material plane.

A jar of flatoot typically contains 30 ounces of fat, each of which burns for 1 hour. The fumes of the liquefied fat are highly volatile, and moving the jar causes them to burst into flame. This produces a brief, 1' jet of fire above the jar, consuming 1 ounce of the liquefied fat and snuffing out the flame.

Each hour a jar of flatoot remains burning there is a 33% chance that 1d4 astral flutters (q.v.) are attracted to the flame. (*Also see, flutter rings.*)

GP: 3,000

Jar of Glue Golems

This item at first appears as a simple glass jar about 6" tall, half-filled with butterscotch-colored glue. When the jar is opened a trio of 2"-tall humanoid figures emerge from the glue and begin to dance hypnotically upon its surface, emitting tendrils of entrancing gas. Any creature within a 30' radius must save vs. spell or approach the jar, following the aroma of the gas.

Those who fail the save stand entranced, watching the glue golems as they dance. Each round of watching causes 1 point of damage as the caustic fumes eat away at delicate tissues. Watchers receive an additional save vs. spell each turn. Attacking an entranced creature or otherwise attempting to interrupt the trance also allows an additional save.

The golems dance until the jar is closed or until 50-100 rounds have passed, at which time the glue is assumed to have evaporated completely. If attacked, each glue golem has 3 hit points. Glue golems are immune to water attacks and magic, though either attack interrupts their entrancing effect for 1 round. Fire does not harm glue golems but does ignite them, enhancing their entrancing effect but causing them to evaporate 4 times as quickly. Ignited golems cause any creature within 30' to save vs. spell again, this time with a -4 penalty. Killing a glue golem only causes another to climb from the glue, provided that not all of the glue has evaporated.

Watching glue golems for more than a turn is known to cause strange flashbacks. These flashbacks recreate the effect of watching the dancing golems but usually last for only a single round. Those who have experienced the flashbacks often report finding hidden messages in the

golems' dancing that they did not notice before. These messages are prophetic, involving some tragic event that is to occur within the next week. The first vision is limited to the viewer's personal realm, the second to the viewer's immediate social network and the third and last is even more distant, occurring in the viewer's region. These visions occur within a 1 month time period. Glue golems may intentionally be used in this fashion by forgoing a saving throw and hoping someone else might make their saving throw and cover the jar.

Diviners who use glue golems with frequency appear haggard and their faces are uniformly scarred. They are often accompanied by a jar or two of the golems and a crazed man servant of who has a built up immunity to the golems.

GP: 5,500



The Javelout

This magical javelin has no bonuses because it is meant to be thrown through the ranks of one's enemies. In the round after landing behind them, provided no one picks it up and returns it, a backstabbing gnome thief manifests holding the javelin. The thief is the same level as the javelin thrower.

To place the javelin in the proper position the thrower must make a successful to hit roll equal to the number of ranks of enemies, plus 6. Thus, if the thrower is faced with two ranks containing two enemies each, with a fifth enemy occupying a third rank, the thrower must roll a 9 or better. If the roll is less than this required number, the javelout harmlessly strikes a random enemy and falls to the ground. In the event that enemies refuse to form

themselves into neat ranks, the DM may determine the appropriate number of ranks based on the positions of the enemies.

If the javelout lands in an appropriate position the conjured thief attacks the nearest enemy, beginning with a backstab attempt and continuing to attack until he is killed or 2d4+2 rounds passes. The thief only fights one enemy at a time. If his first enemy falls, he chooses another, again beginning his attack with a backstab attempt if circumstances permit.

The javelout can conjure a gnome thief a total of 12-15 times, not counting unsuccessful throws. On the last successful throw the javelin vanishes when the thief dies or disappears. This item can be recharged only if successfully used to backstab and kill a gnome thief in the same blow. Doing so restores 12-15 charges.

Gnome Thief (AC: 4, MV: 9", HD: per thrower level, HP: 5/level, ATK: per thrower level, D: 1d6, A: N, S: small).

GP: 3,200

Karannel's Ring of Knobbled Hands

This ring has 4 cuffed hands pointing knobby fingers to the right. The cuffs are packed together and the hands grow larger as they spring forth from the cuffs. The cuffs from top to bottom are green, gold, orange and cream.

When worn by a good-aligned cleric each hand on the ring grants a minor blessing. Each hand can be used only once per day, and a cleric can use only one hand per day per 3 levels. The wearer can never use the blessings for personal benefit. The cleric must touch a recipient with the hand of their ring of hands to invoke each of the following benefits:

Green (bounty): +1 hit point for the day.

Gold (prosperity): +10% profit on the recipients next trade.

Orange (security): +1 to AC for the day.

White (fortune): +1 to any roll of the recipient's choosing, that day.

GP: 2,500

Knocking Hinges

A knocking hinge is a metal hinge made of two interlocked metal plates and caked in rust. The plates are elaborately engraved with arcane symbols of loosing. Attempts at cleaning a hinge always end in failure, as the rust magically regenerates itself.

Whenever a knocking hinge is opened a small amount of its rust flakes off, releasing an effect similar to a knock spell. This opens the largest closed item within 6". The hinge's magic is strong enough to open items as large as a stronghold portcullis, as well as doors, vaults, backpacks, belts, or even shoe straps, if nothing larger is available.

Each use of the knocking hinge causes more rust to flake off until, after 6 uses, the hinge appears shiny and new. If allowed to sit and rust, one charge is restored to the hinge per week. A knocking hinge can regenerate no more than 30 charges this way before breaking. Alternately, it can be recharged by a 7th level spellcaster casting knock spells into it, which does not deplete the 30 charge regeneration limit.

When a knocking hinge is broken, whether deliberately or because its charges have been expended, a wave of magical energy ripples out to a 120' radius, opening every fastening it encounters. Gates are opened, clothing ties are loosed, harness and saddles are unbuckled, and locks spring open.

GP: 5,600

Lathana's Brush

"The Supernal Coterie," a commonly quoted chronicle of demigods, heroes and immortals, tells of an Ernst Shacklespar, a gifted artificer and ardent lover of Lathana, handmaiden to the Goddess of Spring. Shacklespar's beloved Lathana has apparently always held a reputation for recklessness in her headlong and fervent service to her Goddess. Fearing for her safety, Shacklespar created numerous identical brushes and gave them as gifts to Lathana so that he might scry upon her through the brushes and come to her aid when necessary. Lathana has yet to require Shacklespar's help, and when called upon to battle in the middle of her grooming she has a tendency to toss the brushes aside, along with any sense of caution.

Each of Lathana's brushes is made of fine silver, with bristles as stiff as bone. Closely studied, each bristle is

fluted like a column and appears to be made from a shaft of cloudy sky. Shacklespar's loving play of words is engraved on the brush's handle:

"Hope Spring's eternal"

Each brush contains 61-80 charges which can be expended to produce a variety of effects. Expending 1 charge while the brush is held allows the wielder to cast shocking grasp, causing 1d8 points of damage plus 1 point per level of the wielder. By expending 4 charges the wielder can invoke a lightning bolt causing 12d6 points of damage. By expending 12 charges the wielder can cause the effect "spring's eternal storm."

In order to use spring's eternal storm the wielder must strike a target with the brush. The target must save vs. spell or be miniaturized, and imprisoned on the surface of the brush. Creatures immune to lightning attacks automatically make their saving throw. The imprisoned target finds themselves walking a plateau of tall fluted columns intertwined with ropelike hairs and coruscating with random arcs of electricity. The hairs form a hedge at the edge of the plateau and across the top of the columns. The electrical arcs are constant near this hedge, preventing any escape. The brush wielder can cause an electrical storm upon the surface of the brush by simply pulling it through any kind of hair, greatly increasing the suffering of any imprisoned creature as well as subduing them.

The brush is flushed with the energies of spring. Those imprisoned upon it do not age and cannot die. The effects of hunger, thirst, disease, and decay, do not progress. These conditions continue to cause discomfort, but cannot result in the sufferer's death. Damage suffered while imprisoned upon the brush, including damage caused by electricity, is instantly regenerated. However, the prisoner believes they are continually being kept near death in their torture. The brush can also be used to preserve a mortal life. If they do not attempt to escape and the wielder does not brush, for all intents and purposes the imprisoned subject is merely being preserved. However, this usage is not highly evident.

Only one prisoner can be kept on the brush at a time. To release a prisoner merely requires cleaning the hairs from the brush. The imprisoned creature appears before the wielder exhausted, subdued and hungry. After any day in which the brush has not been used, an imprisoned creature receives another save vs. spell at -4 to escape from the brush, appearing next to it and perhaps surprising the brush's owner.

Shacklespar is aware of the location of each brush, and can instantly scry through any of them regardless of their location across the planes. Originally, this function was built into the brushes in case Shacklespar needed to aid Lathana, but since she's never needed his aid the power now conveniently serves another purpose: the procurement of rare magical components.

Any creature who uses one of Lathana's brushes eventually receives a visit from Shacklespar while dreaming (1% chance per day, cumulative). Through the dream, Shacklespar instills in the brush wielder a great sense of guilt, as though he were somehow owed something for the use of his creation. This guilt amounts to a geas spell that can only be discharged by finding and delivering a rare and valuable component for one of Shacklespar's many projects. The component can be just about anything rare, odd or valuable. Shacklespar gets no pleasure from seeing his "servants" killed and so will not send his agent on a doomed mission; but obtaining a component he needs is virtually guaranteed to hold a high degree of danger, or he would not ask.

In exchange for the component Shacklespar recharges the brush from his extraplanar workshop. He is the only being who can do this. So once the brush is emptied of charges it becomes a mundane, though somewhat valuable, silver brush. Even while charged, Lathana's brushes would be worth more if it were not for the widely told tales of obligation.

GP: 20,000

Lil' Weevil Pouches

When a giant sack weevil dies its innards quickly desiccate and turn to dust within a week, which leaves behind a dust filled but supple and seamless burnt orange sack covered in occasional black blotches. Farmers value these human-torso-sized, large sacks as a means of storing grain because other insects and vermin will not approach them. And the dust of the desiccated organs is also valuable as a natural ward against living sack weevils, which never approach other sack weevils or their remains.

One out of every few thousand sack weevils leaves behind a magical sack. In these rare cases not all of the weevil's organs turn to dust. Instead, 3d6 leathery pouches remain within, each of which functions as a small dimensional space capable of holding up to 3 halfling-

sized objects. However, once an object enters a lil' weevil pouch, after 1 week the pouch begins to wither and 2d4 rounds later it bursts. Any object inside a pouch when it bursts is lost forever. Objects must be handled one at a time. Nothing falls out when turning a lil' weevil pouch upside down. Putting any other dimension altering object inside a lil' weevil pouch causes it to burst immediately, without withering warning.

Interestingly, food objects cannot be stored within these magical pouches. Placing any edible item inside a lil' weevil causes it to belch forth a plague of baby sack weevils that consume all organic matter within 3", including any other sack weevil pouches, each other, and dead but edible organic material such as leather harnesses and hair. After 3 rounds one matured giant sack weevil remains. Necromancers sometimes place food within the pouches deliberately. The mini baby weevil plague can clean the flesh from a corpse in just under 3 rounds.

GP: 125 per pouch.

Limmer's Magical Pigments

A number of magical pigments are available across the planes. Used by artists, artificers, and mages, such pigments are highly prized for their planar properties. Purveyors of magical and extraplanar goods rarely stock more than one or two of these pigments, if any. They are typically stored in small glass jars or waxed parchment tubes holding no more than an ounce or two. Perhaps the most famous to use such pigments is the artist Pynyck, whose fate is rumored to be tied to the infamous Maze of Zayene. Though no magical pigment is particularly common, the following three are slightly less rare than most. A quarter-ounce of any one of these magical pigments is sufficient to paint up to 3 square feet.

Osberry

Osberry pigment is a soft pink that glows near warmth, somewhat resembling blushing flesh. This pigment is capable of sensing creatures present on both the astral and ethereal planes, as well as the material plane, and thus is often used to detect the presence of creatures that might otherwise remain unseen.

Any creature within 10' that radiates warmth, including invisible, astral, or ethereal creatures, causes osberry pigment to glow with the brilliance of a strong candle. This glow lasts for only 5 minutes, after which the pigment reverts to its normal appearance until a new source of

warmth appears. Pigment stored in a glass jar works only within a radius of 5', while pigment stored in a waxed parchment tube radiates no light at all unless opened.

Marude

Marude pigment is a deep, blackish red. A painting that incorporates this enigmatic pigment has the inexplicable effect of causing the hair (or antennae, or tentacles, or similar appendages and growths) of creatures that recognize the depicted subject to stand on end as though in fear. Those who do recognize the subject of such a painting register no physical reaction at all.

Typical uses for this paint include depicting criminals in order to detect if anyone has seen them. It is also useful to detect if someone is lying about having been somewhere or about seeing a specific act or object. Any magic that blocks truth telling and detecting devices easily counteracts such uses.

Freckish Black

This magical pigment is a deep purplish black. Within 10' of any poisonous substance, including harmful molds and fungi, the pigment takes on a reddish undertone. This tone is difficult to see, as most creatures are "freckish blind." Only those who have long experience in appraising subtle works of art, or those in highly detail-oriented crafts, can see the red undertone easily. However, almost any intelligent being may learn to see it with only an afternoon or two of instruction in what to look for. It is quite popular for use in decorating courts and throne rooms.

GP: 1,600 per ¼ ounce.

Loam Golems

Loam golems start out stacked as 24 compact magical bricks of turf and dirt, taking up space equal to that of an average backpack. If hydrated with a gallon of water the loam golems animate and respond to the commands of their hydrator. Animated, a loam golem is 9" tall and has a roughly humanoid shape with fiercely glowing green eyes. Their movements appear sluggish and determined, but they are surprisingly quick for their size.

Loam golems attack by springing upon their targets, attempting to grab on and climb rather than strike for damage. If this initial attack is successful, a loam golem sticks like a lump of clay and mud and then begins crawl-

ing up the target's body. Each crawling loam golem decreases the target's movement rate by 10%. When the target is rendered immobile each attached loam golem oozes into the target's pores and orifices. This process requires 3 rounds and causes 1-3 points of damage each round. After the third round, the loam golem has been completely absorbed into the target's body and can no longer be attacked. Loam golems cannot kill a target. Once a target is reduced to 1 hit point any loam golems remaining outside the body cannot be absorbed. But these external golems still contribute to the loss of movement.

Attached or absorbed loam golems can only be removed by healing magic, by a remove curse spell, or by bathing for 2 rounds per point of damage received; or by being bathed by another if immobilized 100%. Healing magic removes one loam golem per 6 hp healed. Each golem so removed is destroyed forever. A remove curse spell causes all absorbed loam golems to be ejected from the body, though they can attack again the following round. Loam golems removed by bathing are destroyed.

Loam Golem (AC: 9, MV: 6", HD: 1+2, HP: 6, ATK: 1, D: 1d3, A: NE, S: tiny).

GP: 2,400

Locks

Lock of Complexity
Lock of Insanity
Lock of Mindlessness
Lock of Anger
Lock of Obsession
Lock of Disappointment
Lock of Confusion

(See Incunabula of the Sealer of Fates.)

Lurking Robes

A lurking robe appears to be an elegant black robe suitable for well-to-do formal occasions. Its subtle illusion magic blends its wearer's motions with a smooth and casual slink, regardless of their true Dexterity. Of course, some may detect the robe's illusory qualities if they know the wearer is a klutz in ordinary circumstances. In fact, this quality of the robe draws eyes to it if worn in day-

light among any but the rich; yet in the dark of night its wearer becomes anonymous unless directly confronted by an observer in their way; otherwise, they may slink and skulk about without much note among the passing.

At any time of night or day the wearer can cast either the illusion of a black cat, which purrs out from beneath the robe's hem, or the illusion of a black panther, which smoothly slinks out from the robe's shadow. Either must remain within 20' of the wearer. While remaining still, and concentrating, the wearer can dimly see through the eyes of their illusory pet, including moving with it through openings that would normally break their line of sight. The dim vision is equivalent to seeing in 75% darkness regardless of lighting or time of day. Any attack attempted on either the illusion or the wearer immediately dispels the illusion.

Regardless of their class, the wearer may choose to blend with the illusion of the panther (or the cat if shrunk to cat size). To do this they must move on their hands and knees and attempt to remain within the shadow form of the illusion. The panther illusion will then conform to cover their humanoid size. This means an ox of a man will present as a very large panther, perhaps even unbelievably large. While blended with the illusion the wearer receives a 50% chance of hiding in shadows. Naturally, a thief wearer can add their hide in shadows percentage to this.

Unworn, the robe is easily misplaced within a general area such as the home. The owner might be certain they hung it up on a hook in the foyer, but then find it under the ottoman in the living room. With the cloak nearby its owner will at times sense they are being watched, or sense a shadow lurking just outside the periphery of their vision, which of course is never there when they turn to catch it. But most disturbing, when first entering a lit room, or in the moment after lighting a dark room, for a brief and shocking moment the robe appears to be a human lying in wait to attack. But then, it's only draping, hanging, or lying, where it was last "forgotten."

GP: 6,400

The Miasmatic Whisker of Bewitching

This stout-hafted oak broom ends in a stiff whisk of bristles. These are splayed flat with their ends cut in an arc, making it obvious the broom is not suitable for sweeping. Close examination reveals bits of vegetables and cooked flesh caught between the bristles.

Stirring any boiling cauldron of water, soup, or other mixture with this broom for 1 turn causes a thick, foggy miasma to boil forth from the cauldron, filling the area in a 6" radius to a height of 20'. Each additional turn of stirring causes this miasma to extend another 6", up to a maximum of 1 turn per 3 levels possessed by the stirrer. If left unstirred for 1 turn, the miasma begins to recede at the same rate it expanded.

The stirrer is aware of the presence of all living or undead creatures within the miasma, including each creature's rough location and relative speed. All creatures within the miasma receive a -4 penalty to any saves against the stirrer's spells. Up to 12 others can drink from the cauldron to receive these same benefits, but any one of these that moves outside of the miasma must save vs. spell or become violently ill for 2 rounds.

When used by a full coven of 13, a stirrer and 12 drinkers, another benefit comes into play. The spirit of any creature that dies within the miasma assumes a glowing, vaporous appearance and comes to hover over the cauldron, moving at the rate of 24" per round. One member of the coven who then steps into the cauldron can take on the appearance of that creature, including any gear or wounds suffered prior to death. Each additional creature hovering over the cauldron allows one more coven member to take on a new creature's visage. This appearance lasts for 2 turns per level of the drinker during which the coven member may move and act normally, use their own powers, and can even leave the miasma at their own movement rate. The creature's spirit remains glowing above the cauldron for the duration of the assumed visage.

GP: 15,000

Mind Melding Bars

A mind melding bar appears as a forearm-length, gently humming bar of electrum. Two characters touching the ends of the bar may communicate mentally through it without being externally detected, and only those thoughts a character deliberately chooses to communicate are transmitted, which also prevents psychic attacks from being conducted through the bar. While communicating, both individuals are considered mind blanked in regard to outside influences. If a third person touches either end of a mind melding bar while it is in use, then the character with the lowest Intelligence is pushed out of the link and the remaining two minds can communicate.

Those communicating through a mind melding bar cannot perform strenuous actions or engage in melee without breaking the link. And using a mind melding bar is quite tiring, allowing only one round of use per point of Constitution, per day. Attempting to exceed this limitation causes the user to immediately fall asleep, no save. And while psychic attacks do not work through a mind melding bar, spells such as suggestion and similar mind-affecting spells work normally. It is not necessary that one be awake, mobile, or even conscious to use a mind melding bar for communication purposes; thus, even a paralyzed or comatose person may communicate through the bar.

Two spellcasters can attempt to cast the same spell at the same time while their minds are melded within the bar. The spell cannot be above 4th level. Once the spell is initiated, the bar glistens with their combined sweat and anyone else touching the bar is locked out. To attempt to cast a combined spell, both spellcasters must first save vs. the other's magic. Failure by either spellcaster indicates both spells are discharged to no effect. Success by both indicates the spell is cast and possesses 50% more than their combined total effect in one of the spell's dimensions, such as duration, range or damage, whichever they intend. Thus, if one mage normally casts a 6 HD fireball, and the other normally casts an 8 HD fireball, then they cast a 14 HD base fireball, plus 50%, making it a 21 HD fireball. The casting time required to attempt a combined spell requires 3 more rounds than the regular spell.

If either mage is attacked while attempting to cast a combined spell through the mind melding bar, then both mages must save again vs. each other's magic with a penalty of -2 for every HD of the attacker. Failure breaks the mind meld and renders both mages helpless for 1 turn.

After initiating any attempt to combine spells, whether completing the spell attempt or not, both spellcasters are exhausted at spell's end and can do nothing else but rest for 24 hours.

After conducting a total of 44 spell levels of combined magic the bar turns into water. For example, 42 levels of spells have already been cast using the bar. Two 10th level mages successfully cast a combined 1st level magic missile spell using the bar. Afterwards, 43 levels have been spent and the bar remains metal.

GP: 12,500

The Mirrorrim Initiates Objection Box

This dusty 3' x 3' plank box appears to be nothing more than a simple packing crate. However, when objects are placed inside the box it projects illusions of them into the immediate area outside of it, where anyone with a 12 or higher Intelligence can manipulate them. The illusions remain fixed indefinitely in their last state so long as the projected object remains inside the box. Therefore the illusion of the dusty plank crate is broken when the box is opened and the dusty planks inside are removed. The box is actually a cube of highly reflective crystal mirrors and anyone looking at the empty box in full daylight must save vs. paralysis or be blinded for 1d10 rounds by the box's radiance.

When placed in a well lit room out of direct sunlight the box becomes immediately recognizable to any illusionist. It is one of the tools used years ago to train initiates in the Mirrorrim, the Grand Academy of Illusionists. An illusionist will also recall the stories of its dangers and how it was kept under lock and key to prevent unsupervised interaction.

While well lit the objective illusions can be manipulated within a 6" range. The highest intellect within range will always have the first option of dominating the illusion's formation, but may opt out, ceding control to a lower intellect. If two intellects or more are competing for control, each must roll an Intelligence check until one of them dominates. Once established, the domination lasts until the intellect chooses to cede control. Two intellects may also choose to playfully cooperate in reforming the object's image. And the forms the image may take are not limited to the form of the object. For instance, a single plank inside the box may be used to repeat a pattern of planks anywhere within the 6", such as covering the box to cause it to appear a simple crate. Manipulated in a well lit space, those with Intelligence less than 12 are susceptible to believing the illusions.

The box's illusions are enhanced when placed within a room with moderate illumination equivalent to torchlight. Any viewer unsupervised by a spellcaster controlling the illusion must save vs. spell to avoid belief, even though they may previously understand the powers of the box. (If unaware of the box's powers they receive no save unless disbelieving.) The first spellcaster possessing a 15 or higher intellect who approaches within 6" of the box may take control of the illusion without saving if they have previous experience manipulating the box's power.

An illusionist will advise keeping an object inside the box when in moderate illumination or less. When empty and in dim light the box is no longer limited to projecting objects. The box reflects any unguarded thoughts of those within 6". Any creature within range of the box experiences an illusion of whatever is uppermost in their mind at that moment. These illusions can appear anywhere within the box's area of effect. A monster recently encountered, an object earnestly sought, or idle thoughts about what the box might contain are all possibilities. If more than one creature is present the box incorporates them into the illusion, causing each viewer to see the others as the embodiment of their thoughts.

For example, a knight and a rogue enter the box's area of effect. The knight is searching for a treasure stolen from his lord, and the rogue is thinking of a monster the pair recently defeated. When the illusion box picks up these thoughts it projects them such that the knight sees the rogue as an enemy attempting to steal away the treasure while the rogue sees the knight as the recently defeated monster come back to life. Others do not see these delusions and disbelieving them can be extremely difficult for each affected individual. Those who attempt to do so have a -4 penalty on the roll. Illusions created by the box in this way do not persist outside of the 6" radius area of effect.

If placed in an area of dim illusion such as that provided by a candle or less, the illusion box's powers become truly dangerous. Images projected under such conditions are drawn in part from the plane of shadow, making them partially real as per a shadow conjuration spell that grants 40% reality to damage and hit points, but limited to a 6" area of effect.

Only illusionists are able to affect the ambient light level through the power of the box's illusions and thereby increase the power of its illusions as detailed above. Light and darkness spells either cast directly on the box or covering the entire 6" surrounding it nullify the box's powers for their duration. Dispel magic is ineffective unless directly cast inside the box. Anti-magic spheres suppress the box's power only if it is entirely within their area of effect.

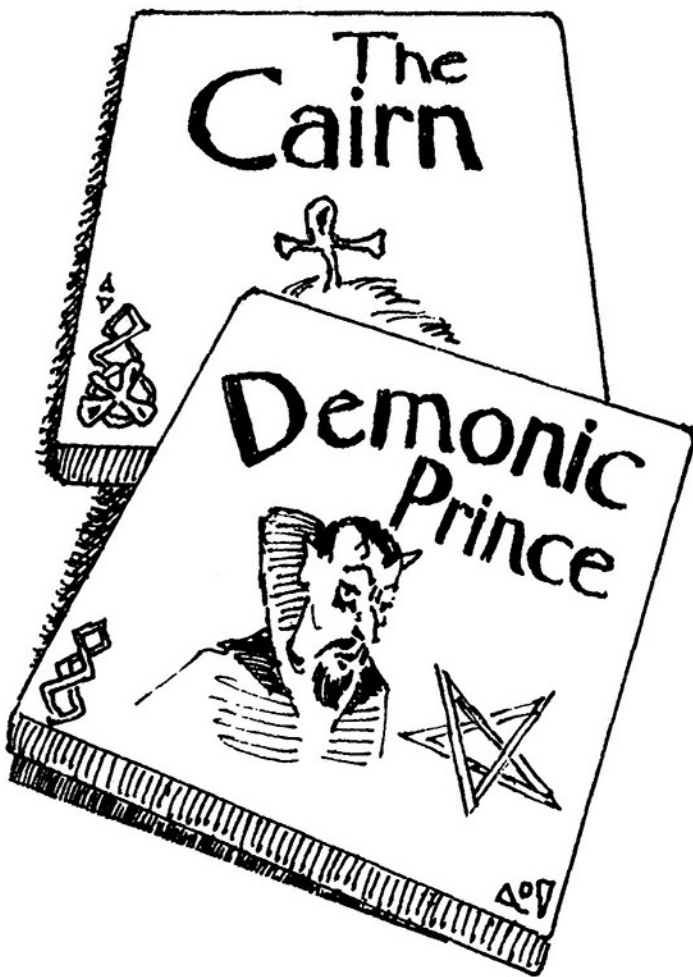
A 10th level or above illusionist can become attuned to the illusion box by spending 8 uninterrupted hours studying it. When within 6" of the box the attuned illusionist is immune to believing the box's illusions and has precedence to take control of any projected illusions, including those currently under the control of others. In cases of competition for control between two attuned

illusionists the one having more experience with the box automatically dominates. The attuned illusionist can create or destroy the box's illusions at will.

Any illusionist will be aware that moving the illusion box is a delicate task. Special care must be taken to avoid cracking or chipping the mirrors. It does not save against damage as a magic item since it was never meant to be used for other than training purposes. The crystal panes shatter if undergoing any dimensional alteration such as being put in a bag of holding, shrunk or teleported. Moving the box requires 2 hours constructing a well padded frame from material as strong as or stronger than hardwood. Movement faster than 6" per round requires a much stronger packing structure valued above 1,000 GP and requiring 8 hours for construction. Unpacking requires as much time as packing.

There was only one other illusion box ever made, previous to this one. But it functioned improperly. The box's designer and his entire work room were somehow pulled into the unstable device, which soon after blinked out of existence.

GP: 30,000



Necromantique Plaques by Adip O'Ceres & Co.

This shiny, hand-sized, black-lacquered box has a label affixed to its top, reading:

*Necromantique Plaques
A Fine Parlor Game
By Adip O'Ceres & Co.*

Each set of plaques includes 4 Gravestones, 1 Epitaphic scroll, 1 Mausoleum, 1 Cairn, 1 Cenotaph, 4 'engraved' undead, 2 curses, a Demonic Prince, a rebuke, and 4 raises. Who could want for more?"

Each "plaque" is a thin card made of ivory and printed with a masterful illustration depicting various cemetery and afterlife related scenes. Twenty such cards are contained in each box. Adip O'Ceres' company address is included on a small sheet of parchment within the box. Necromantique Plaques is a popular parlor game among the nobility and wealthy classes in many regions.

No rules accompany the game, which has prompted players to widely create their own. All versions are quite simple to play, involving dealing out of all the plaques and then passing them to cause other players to "pass on" or "bury" their own cards, until either one person has no cards or one player has them all. The popularity of the game in most gaming parlors is due primarily to its macabre theme. As well, some fortune tellers have taken to using the plaques to read the future, or perform séances.

Stories abound telling of people who have played the game and died under mysterious circumstances or committed suicide. Some claim these stories are rubbish, spread by those who clearly have never played the game. Others cling to the stories with almost religious zeal, insisting that players of Necromantique Plaques are doomed to a dismal end. Thanks to these stories the game is outlawed in some areas where playing it is punishable by imprisonment, burning at the stake, or confiscation of properties.

The company address included with the plaques leads only to the burned out ruins of Master O'Ceres' modest home. The company is no longer in business, and has not produced further sets of plaques for some time. This,



too, has prompted numerous rumors. In some stories Adip is said to have merely passed away, leaving massive debts. In others it is rumored that he was buried alive in a tomb of the plaques by his partner the ivory carver. Still others suggest he was murdered by a crazed fan of the game, and the most ghastly stories declare that he was involved in demon worship and now wanders the land possessed by evil spirits.

Some enterprising individuals have capitalized on the downfall of Adip O'Ceres' company by producing their own parchment versions of the game. Occasional clever forgeries have been produced, mirroring the lacquered boxes and ivory plaques of the original. A true set is distinguishable from these in that the plaques are coated in a special lacquer that produces a shimmering light.

Original plaques also retain the warmth of the hands passing them. Strangely, this warmth is instantly familiar to each of the other players, each of which can identify who last held a Necromantique Plaque if they close their eyes for just one moment and let the warmth seep into their own fingertips. There is no duration to this effect. They can read each other's touch on the plaques up until three other people have touched the same plaque. The warmth of those they have never played with is not recognizable.

The plaques in an authentic set are in actuality magical "scrolls." Roll 1d6 to determine how many plaques re-

main in a given box, and then roll 1d20 on the table to determine the type of plaque and what spell it contains:

1-4	A Gravestone	Detect Undead
5-8	Engraved Undead	Create Undead
9-12	A Raise	Raise Dead
13-14	A Curse	Bestow Curse
15	The Mausoleum	Trap the Soul
16	The Cairn	Power Word Kill
17	The Cenotaph	Consecrate
18	The Epitaphic scroll	Turn Undead as 12th level cleric
19	The Rebuke	Magic Circle vs. Evil
20	The Demon Prince	Commune: Demonic Prince

Note: The demonic prince answers the commune without extreme discontent and without targeting the plaque holder unless given a good reason, since these plaques are part of a grander game of influence that the prince supports.

GP: Calculate as if spells on scrolls, add 300 to total.

Necropolated Plate Mail

When worn by a living humanoid this +3 suit of full plate armor is shiny and functions well in preserving its occupant's life; but its greater function consists in preserving its occupant after death. Upon the death of its wearer the armor tarnishes instantly, becoming ashen black and pitted. All insignia, heraldic devices, and other distinguishing marks disintegrate over the course of 1 turn and its armor plates interlock, tightening about the corpse. This new appearance absorbs light, making the armor difficult to spot at a distance, especially in dim light. In this form the armor's AC is -3 and it can only be struck by magical weapons of +3 or greater enchantment. The armor possesses a special tactical sentence, but no Intelligence.

When the wearer of a suit of walking dead mail dies, the armor lies silent until combat activity has subsided within 6". Then, it begins crawling out of the main combat area at a rate of 1-3" per round, depending on the nearness of cover and potential observers. Its tactical awareness operates as a spell effect, avoiding all attention unless a viewer in the area successfully saves vs. magic +2, provided they are actively surveying their field of vision. If detected, the armor evades confrontations by any means, including jumping over short cliffs, diving

into bodies of water, or similar tactics that a living warrior might never consider. Thereafter, the mail walks at 6" per round, 24 hours a day, every day of the year, until it delivers its package to its magically programmed datum. When the mail arrives at the datum it will cease movement, but it continues to defend until a resurrection spell is cast upon the remains of its charge.

The armor avoids large populations and areas of high traffic, preferring to parallel roads and paths rather than travel on them. Encountering a deep body of water, it willingly walks across the bottom at 6" per round. The armor's strength is considered 19 for purposes of overcoming obstacles and entanglements such as thickets. It will climb any object as a thief of 12th level, including mountains. The armor's gauntlets provide a +4 or +20% bonus grip effect to all climbing rolls. If encountering an insurmountable object, the armor will turn back and retrace steps to regain a clearer bearing toward the datum.

If cornered and forced to fight, the armor attacks twice each round with its gauntleted fists, dealing out 1d6+10 points of damage with each. Every fifth round the armor uses one of its attacks to attempt a death grip. If this attack hits, the armor grabs the target's throat or head, delivering 12 points of crushing damage. The target can avoid this damage and slip out of the death grip by saving vs. paralyzation at -2. If the save fails, the target continues to take 12 points of crushing damage each round and must concentrate all its efforts on breaking free, re-rolling the save each round. While engaged in a death grip the other gauntlet can attack any target except the one in its grip, and only one death grip can be held at a time.

Since the armor is necromantically powered it can be turned by a cleric. The armor is immune to turning when it is at the datum. Turning has no other effect on the armor or its deceased occupant. Dispel magic and anti-magic field type spells temporarily stop the armor's movement and attacks, either for the duration of the spell or 1 turn, whichever is shorter.

The original datum for all such suits of armor was set upon a necromantic throne. Unless a suit of walking dead mail has its datum reset, the armor returns to this location or some similar ancient focus of undeath in the DM's campaign. Any divination spell cast at and upon the datum is automatically empowered to detect the existence and identity of any mail tied to the datum. The identity may be used to teleport to the mail as if it had been viewed once.

Within the protective casing of the mail's interlocking plates damage and decay to the corpse is diminished but not altogether prevented. There may be little left of the body if the armor has undertaken a particularly arduous journey in order to return its contents to the datum. But even if the bones turn to dust there is a strong probability that at least a trace of the original occupant remains caught within the armor's recesses. For every 10 years and every 100 miles traveled there is a 1% accumulative chance the body has been entirely cleansed from within the mail. If remaining traces are used to resurrect the occupant no system shock roll is necessary. All resurrection attempts work as though the armor's occupant had died only the day before. If the armor takes full damage, then the spirit is released and the remains of the body are unprotected, as if it had just fallen in combat.

For the armor to be reused it must be ritually cleansed of all remains by a cleric of at least 7th level, or a necromancer of at least 4th level. The cleric must adjust the runes on the inside of the helm and breastplate to attune it to the soul of the new user and reset the datum to the current location of the cleric's ritual. If for some reason the remains of the previous occupant are not successfully cleansed prior to the attuning, then the new occupant must save vs. spell or become possessed by the previous occupant's spirit over the course of 3 days.

Dead Mail (AC: -3, MV: 6", HD: 9, HP: 90, ATK: 2, D: 1d6+10/1d6+10, A: NE, S: medium, Special: +3 or better weapons to hit, death grip per above, +4 climbing as 12th level thief, tactical crawl requires save vs. spell +2 to be detected, infinite endurance, limited resistance to dispel and anti-magic per above).

GP: 55,000

The Numinous Pouch of Clay Anima

This fine leather pouch is decorated with a line of primitive animal shapes about its midst. Looking closely, the animals morph and intertwine with each other in a constant parade around the pouch. Touching the pouch fills any intelligent being with feelings of wildness as the pouch pulses and gently wriggles in the hand. Uncinching the pouch's air tight strings reveals a large lump of the smoothest white clay, which radiates numinous elemental water and earth magics.

The clay within the pouch is quite malleable and easily worked. When worked it feels subtly alive, resisting any

attempts to divide into more than a single lump. The clay induces a dreamy, trance-like state as it is worked, accompanied by feelings of intense comfort and relaxation. This trance is often likened to the sensation one gets when stroking an affectionate pet. After 1 turn the sense of well-being becomes so strong that any saves made while working the clay receive a +2 bonus.

If a pinch of hair, a feather or a drop of blood from any animal is sealed inside the pouch with the clay for at least 1 turn the clay takes on some of the nature of that animal's essence. The next time the clay is worked the user falls immediately into a deep trance. In this trance the user's fingers rapidly mold an intricate replica of the animal from which the hair, feather, or blood was taken, forming a bond with the animal's essence and sensing the deep workings of its mind and instincts. The user cannot move or react while in this trance, other than to work the clay continuously.

After 1 turn a living animal of the type molded from the clay springs forth from the nearest patch of earth. The clay molder remains entranced, but is mentally and spiritually united with this animal, able to use all its senses and abilities, and capable of causing the animal to behave as desired – in essence, the clay molder becomes the animal while his body sits entranced. This state continues until the clay molder decides to break the link, until the animal is slain or dispelled, until the clay molder becomes exhausted, or until the molder is forcibly interrupted. In the latter case there is a 1% chance per round spent entranced that the molder will remain in the animal's state of mind when the trance is broken. This is similar to being struck with a feeblemind spell and is cured in the same way. Until then the molder will act as the animal in their own form. Actions or attacks resulting in the death of the animal count as forcible interruptions, except that the trauma of experiencing the animal's death throes increases the chance of being feebleminded to 4% per round spent entranced. If exhaustion occurs, the clay user must rest for as many hours as they spent entranced or suffer double damage from any attacks due to their weakened state.

Experience with the clay increases its benefits:

If the user has spent less than 12 hours entranced and linked with an animal, then the animal that springs from the ground has only 25% of its normal hit points and below average abilities. The user becomes exhausted after spending only 1 hour per point of Constitution entranced and linked with the animal.

If the user has spent more than 24 but less than 36 hours entranced, the animal that springs forth is average and exhaustion occurs after 1.5 hours per point of Constitution.

If the user has spent more than 36 hours entranced the animal has 75% of its maximum possible hit points and above average abilities while exhaustion occurs after 2 hours per point of Constitution.

If the user has spent more than 60 hours entranced the animal has maximum hit points and abilities, and exhaustion occurs only after 3 hours per point of Constitution spent entranced.

Druids require only half as many hours of experience, due to their knowledge and understanding of animal nature.

Being made of clay, the animal summoned by the clay user takes double damage from water, fire, and heat attacks. Water erodes its flesh and fire or heat bakes it like a kiln. This baking further slows the animal, reducing its movement rate and reaction speed. The animal's movement is reduced by an amount equal to the percentage of total hit points lost due to heat or fire damage, and its initiative is reduced 1 point for every 20% of its original hit points lost due to such effects. Thus, if the animal originally had 40 hit points and then took 10 points of fire damage its movement is reduced by 25% and its initiative is reduced by 1. If the animal is killed by fire or heat it becomes completely petrified, like clay fired by a kiln, and it may be easily shattered by any solid blow. Additionally, a molder who is feebleminded by its death must remain linked with the petrified form while their entranced body languishes in its original location.

If the animal dies and at least half its hit points were lost due to water damage, the molder suffers from hydrophobia for 1d4 days, becoming severely dehydrated and losing 25% of any remaining hit points per day unless held down and forced to drink. This is true even if the molder is not feebleminded by the animal's death.

No spells can be cast through the trance or upon the animal form by the entranced clay molder. The molder can use any psionic abilities while linked with the animal, and both psionics and mind-affecting spells affect the molder's mind if used against the animal.

GP: 15,000

Papyri of Doppelscripting

A hazy blue light emanates from within this nearly transparent papyrus. Anything set upon the papyrus appears clearer, leading some unaware of its worth to mistakenly use it as a display mat for favored possessions. Written items especially appear clear and crisp, no matter how faded the writing.

Placing the papyrus upon a scroll or other magical writing allows the exact magic to be duplicated by tracing it onto the papyrus. The ink and quill used must be of fine make, and the inscriber's Intelligence must be 13 or above. One sheet captures any single spell, rune, or other writing. The paper expands to the required space while tracing the complete spell. The process of inscribing spells with doppel papyrus requires 1 round per 3 levels of the spell. The inscriber needn't be a spellcaster but must know how to write.

Any written curse, ward or trap that would normally be activated by reading is also activated by attempting to trace it on doppel papyrus. Doppel papyrus is as delicate as tracing paper, but as thick as regular papyrus. Any tear, wrinkle or fold renders the paper useless and it ceases glowing. Doppel papyrus is always found safely rolled in a scroll tube and must remain there except when being inscribed or read.

GP: 4,000 per sheet.

Petrified Treant

This slab of red and black stone is wedge shaped. The top side of the wedge is smoothly polished and exudes a thin layer of sap, while the underside resembles rough-hewn wood. The outer edge of the wedge's high side is slightly rounded and resembles tree bark.

A slab of petrified treant radiates a subtle magic that limbers all who sleep near, making the elderly spry and soothing the soreness of field workers. Any loss of Dexterity is temporarily regained for a day, so long as one spends 8 hours sleeping within 100' of the slab. Woodworkers and bowyers are also aware that wood bends more easily in the slab's presence, providing a +2 bonus to their crafting checks.

The sap from the polished side of the slab can be rubbed on any wooden weapon, such as staves and bows, granting one additional attack within 24 hours. Druids can also use the sap to increase the duration of any spell in-

volving living plants by 20%. The sap may be decanted at a rate of 2 applications per day and saved in a stone container worth more than 2,000 GP for use within 3 days, after which it crystallizes and loses the above effects.

The crystallized sap can be eaten, and provides the ability to communicate with treants for 2 rounds. Eating more than 5 doses of crystallized sap within 24 hours causes a state known to spellcasters as “hyperplexia.” In this state a speaker impulsively and rapidly expresses all of their thoughts and impressions, no matter how trivial. This results in biting the tongue sometime in the next 1d6 rounds, after which the speaker can save vs. spell. Success indicates the speaker regains control and may cease speaking provided they remain silent for 1 turn. When biting the tongue the speaker must roll 1d12. A result exceeding their Constitution indicates they have bitten their tongue in half, taking 1 point of damage. Thereafter, they will not be able to speak until a healing spell is cast directly upon their tongue, which absorbs the entire spell’s effect.

Oddly, selling or trading treant sap in any form dispels its magic. Giving it as a gift or using it for one’s own use does not.

GP: 5,500

Potions of Wisp’Ess

Typically contained in stoppered glass globes about 12” in diameter, potions of wisp essence are almost always marked, “Wisp’Ess – Warning: Do Not Mix With Cloud Juice!” The results of this mixture are not specified, but research readily produces numerous accounts describing flatulating, flying and rapidly deflating humanoid balloons taking massive damage from ricocheting off of walls and trees. Most such accounts end in the death of the unwise mixologist.

Inhaling a draft of wisp essence lends a pale green hue to the inhaler’s face and for 1 round makes the user impervious to all magic spells except magic missiles. In the following round the user is vulnerable to all spells as normal, but becomes invisible for just that round. In the third and final round the user seems to appear out of thin air in a blast of light that illuminates a radius of 9”.

Inhaling two drafts of wisp essence in two successive rounds makes the user invulnerable to all magic spells for 2 rounds. The user believes they are invisible during the second round, but being impervious to magic, they are not.... In the third round they still believe they are in-

visible, but in fact they glow with a brilliant white light. No save is allowed to avoid this belief in invisibility. The user is vulnerable to all spell effects while glowing and receives no saving throws. In the fourth and final round the user’s light burns out suddenly, inflicting 2d8 points of electrical damage to everyone within 10’.

Wisp essence is valuable to artificers and alchemists who are able to refine the various powers of the wisp for use in other items.

GP: 1,500

Quixit’s Brittle Tufts

This hollow stone contains a tuft of grass beneath its vine-tied wooden cover. The tuft possesses 41-50 blades. When a single blade from this tuft is dropped upon a field of grasses a ripple travels out to a radius of 90’. At this radius a band of brittle, crystalline grass 18” tall and 5’ wide springs up. Any creature larger than a field mouse entering the band will break the grass, which causes sounds of shattering crystals, alerting and awakening all sentient beings inside the ring. Even in a magical sleep, unconscious from excess drink, or on an astral excursion, all are awakened if their body is in the ring.

The band of crystalline grass remains for 8 hours, and during this time broken blades automatically rejuvenate no matter how many creatures step into the circle. Those already awake when a creature steps into the band are aware of the alarm, but are not interrupted if concentrating on other tasks. Most normal animals instinctively shy away from brittle grass before touching it.

GP: 2,750

Razthen’s Taloned Helm

This plain iron helm provides its wearer with a +2 bonus to AC. Twin sets of black talons rest above the helm’s visor. Each time the wearer is hit there is a 10% chance the helm takes the blow, with each blow to the helm causing another part of its true form to appear. With the first blow a horn appears, then another blow, another horn, followed by a plumed tail, and then a fierce beak on subsequent blows. A fifth hit upon the helm causes it to fully manifest as the demonic bird Razthen, who then leaps forth to attack the opponent who last struck the helm. Razthen continues to attack, never moving more than 3” from the helm.

Razthen remains in the fight until his original target is slain. If another opponent strikes him while manifested he remains in the fight until this second attacker is slain as well, and so on, one opponent at a time in the order in which they strike him. +2 or lower weapons only damage Razthen's physical manifestation, but not his spirit riding within it. If Razthen is "slain" he disappears in a cloud of plumage, capable of manifesting fully healed after 5 hours. If Razthen's spirit receives more than 26 points of damage from +3 weapons in a single period of manifestation, his spirit is permanently slain and no longer manifests. The helm retains its +2 AC bonus, but the talons disappear.



Razthen (AC: 4, MV: 24", HD: 5+2, HP: 26, ATK: 3, talon/talon/beak, D: 2-5/2-5/1-4, A: NE, S: small, Special: Every 3 rounds Razthen climbs 20' and dives, goring with his horns for 2d8+2 points of damage. A gored target must save vs. paralysis -2 or be paralyzed 1d6 rounds due to Razthen's demonic poison).

GP: 12,000

The Roost of Alkatazba

The roost of Alkatazba is a morning star; however, 2 dozen limp plumes seem fixed where one would normally expect spikes. These yellow, green and gold plumes belong to the legendary bird Alkatazba, which roosts disheartened within the 8" spherical head of the weapon.

Because Alkatazba's plumes magically pass through all metal and stone there are no mounts fixing the plumes to the morning star's head. Each plume merely passes through the metal from within. Thus, a close appraisal of the weapon's construction will conclude that it is of such a fine and seamless make that it must be magical; and although the morning star never glows, it is a +2 weapon. It is also a +2 prison, in which Alkatazba has

been roosting for so long she has atrophied. In fact, the prison is her only protective skin and if the head is ever opened she will die instantly. (See below.) The roost detects as good in alignment, but Alkatazba is protected from all other magics by the mace head.

In Alkatazba's disheartened state, or when her plumes retract, the morning star is limited to 1d4+2 points of bludgeoning damage. However, Alkatazba's plumes stiffen when hitting any evil target. Thereafter, 5 of her plumes slice as if sharp swords, ignoring all metal armor for one point each, and increasing the star's total damage to 1d4+7. Alkatazba's plumes remain stiff for 1 round for every point of total damage inflicted upon neutral or evil targets. But if ever striking a target of good alignment, Alkatazba's plumage retracts entirely. Alkatazba will not extend her plumage for another 24 hours. Until then, not even an evil target raises a single plume. It should also be noted that lawful neutral and neutral targets will never stiffen her plumes, but once stiffened by evil, these targets may also be sliced.

If Alkatazba's plumes taste the blood of any of the dark or contorted humanoid races, such as drow, duergar, or orcs, her plumes suddenly double in number and thereafter her plumes contribute an additional +2 to hit; and extending their reach even further, they double their bonus damage to +10. In this state the morning star is +4 to hit and does 1d4+12 points of damage against her special racial enemies. The damage also can be halved and applied to two of her special targets in the same round, but a separate to hit must be rolled for each.

Alkatazba also retracts all of her plumes for 24 hours of preening if one of them is plucked, which magically regenerates in that time. She will keep her plumes retracted for 1 month if her wielder does not protect her from this kind of abuse. Detached, her plumes are not magical, but in market each fetches an average 1,200 GP. This makes her 24 plumes worth more than the morning star as a magic item, which might lead some to believe breaking her prison open is a lucrative endeavor. In fact, if her sphere is broken open the explosion of all her plumes creates a cloud of quills imparting 1d12+12 points of damage to all creatures within 20'. Those standing within 5' receive "the curse of Alkatazba," which consists of 3 plume colored slashes across the face, one yellow, one green and one gold, marking the recipient for life. For then on the accursed receives 2 more points of damage from each attack by any bird-type creature, and birds tend to crap on the accursed with suspicious frequency. The curse can only be removed by petitioning a good priest of any bird-like deity. The price for the spell will

be severely steepened for the offense of killing Alkatzba. Bottom line, the mace would have been worth more unharmed.

GP: 18,000

The Rune of Runes

Contained in an ivory box, this 6" square marble rune scintillates bright reds, oranges and yellows. So amazing is its surface, any eye lingering upon it must save vs. spell or spend 2d4 rounds before recovering from their bedazzlement. At any point in time anyone may elect to cease looking at the rune.

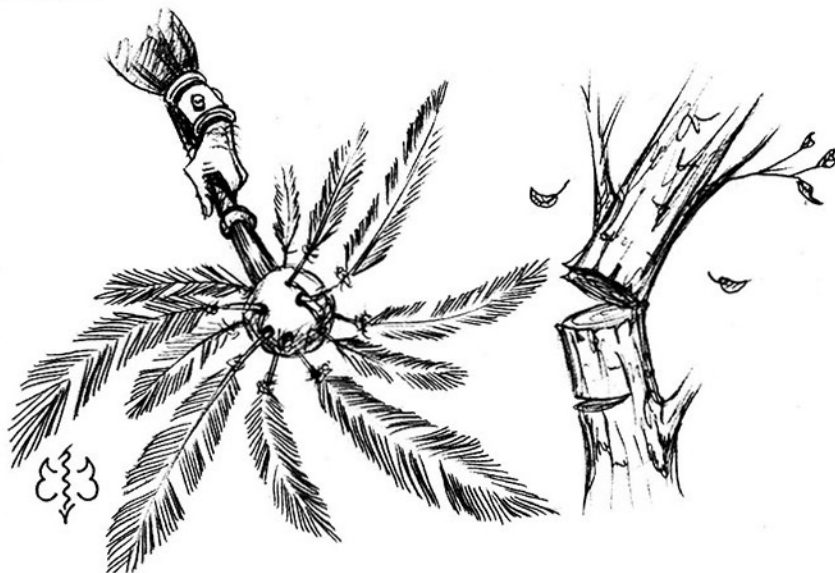
In the next round, those making their saves see another layer of colors, including indigos, blues, greens and purples, which form squiggled lines and trails that writhe and dance in jumbled forms. Non-magic-users will learn no more, but during round three any mage will begin to see minute runes forming in an even deeper layer below these colors.

In round four these runes are clear enough to read, requiring any mage to save vs. spell. Each point of Intelligence less than 17 imposes a -1 penalty. Failure results in a babbling stupor, similar to the spell feeblemind, but which lasts for 1d4 days.

In round five any sane mage still gazing upon the runes is compelled to study them uninterrupted for 3-8 turns. They may immediately cease looking, but once assigning themselves to study they could burn to death unaware. If physically separated from the rune they must save vs. spell at -4 or be feebleminded, exactly per the spell, and they also take 1d12 damage as if psychically blasted. At the end of this intensive period of study their mind is saturated. The rune cannot be studied again for a number of days equal to their turns spent studying. If they so much as glance upon its face while saturated, they will be instantly feebleminded, without save. However, most mages will generally be wise enough to avoid extraneous mental activity while saturated.

This study of the runes opens the mage's mind, allowing one additional spell slot. The slot's level is equal to the number of turns spent studying the runes, but cannot be higher than the highest level spell the wizard can currently prepare. The wizard may immediately fill this slot with any known spell of the requisite level, if desired. The spell slot remains available until filled, and once the

spell is cast the slot disappears. Any loss of Intelligence causes the extra spell slot to vanish, regardless of whether or not the spell in it has been cast.



A mage cannot gain another spell slot from the same rune of runes until the current spell slot is expended. Any number of mages can use the same rune of runes to gain an extra spell slot up to a limit of 24 levels of slots per week. No single wizard can hold 2 extra slots at the same time.

A side effect of using a rune of runes, for every 100 levels of additional slots opened in the mind of the mage a rune appears on a random part of the body. This brand causes no pain and appears while the wizard is studying the rune of runes. It might be any size from 3"-10" in height and will appear on any part of the body other than the face. Multiple brands may overlap or intertwine, and may be of any color other than black, white, or gray.

For every brand that appears on a wizard's body there is a 10% chance that the wizard gains a point of skill with runes. For each point of skill gained in this way there is a 3% increase in the potency of any rune or symbol related spell cast, up to a maximum increase of 50%. The wizard also gains a 5% chance per rune to detect the presence of such spells, up to a maximum of 75%. Additionally, for every 2 brands on a wizard's body any damage taken from rune or symbol related spells is decreased by 1 point.

Unfortunately, looking upon a rune or runes covering one's own body, either directly or indirectly, requires a save vs. spell or 1 turn is spent stunned. Looking upon one's own runes, they seem to swirl and intermingle, thus each rune penalizes this save by -1. Others who look upon the runes see nothing peculiar. Either a man-

servant or simple attire greatly aids against seeing one's own runes while dressing.

If an artist is able to accurately depict the entire set of runes currently tattooing the front of a runist's body, being presented with their own pattern of runes on paper or canvas also stuns them for 1 turn. If the image is out of date and another rune has since been added the depiction will no longer work.

GP: 33,000

Runic Flights

These strange feathers can be added to any arrow by a competent fletcher. Each feather bears an encircled black rune in the center. Upon successfully hitting a target any arrow fitted with one of these feathers passes completely through the target, causing normal arrow damage and branding the target with a burning rune that causes an additional 1d4 points of damage for 3 rounds. This rune appears on the target's skin and radiates a burning light that can be seen even through clothing or armor. The rune can be extinguished in a single round provided it is doused with a non-flammable liquid. Targets bearing a burning rune are especially vulnerable to further arrows bearing runic flights. Each such arrow receives a +2 bonus to hit while the rune burns.

GP: 900 for enough flights to construct 24 arrows.

The Scepter of Glorified Mistakings

One charge from this holy scepter bathes any friendly target within 9" in bright light for 3 rounds. Anyone attacking the bathee must save vs. spell. A failed save indicates the attacker is momentarily confused and mistakes the nearest available creature as their intended target. A success indicates the opponent sees through the light, but is bedazzled and receives a -4 penalty to hit the bathee. Any unfriendly non-attacker looking into the blinding light surrounding the bathee must save vs. spell. Failure indicates they are blinded for the next round and success indicates they receive an urge to immediately look away. If defying the urge, they are blinded for the next round and drop to their knees with an illusory feeling of shame while also blinded.

The scepter carries 10 charges and can be recharged by casting a light spell and a sanctuary spell in quick succession, each duo of spells restoring 1 charge.

GP: 9,000

The Scroll of Temporalities

This sheep-skin scroll is divided into four distinct quadrants, each written in indecipherable arcane symbols that defy any attempt at translation. Each quadrant requires a separate read magic spell to unlock its enchantment, except for the fourth which requires a specific act to realize its power. Once read the writing in each quadrant disappears from the scroll and from the reader's mind, along with any copies that may have been made.

1st quadrant: Nothing happens when this quadrant is read, nor does anything happen for the next three days. The quadrant distinctly detects as being magical, but its effects only appear subtly over time as the reader goes about performing common duties. Starting with the fourth day after the quadrant is read and lasting until midnight on the final day of the year, obscure temporal effects begin to work on the reader. The reader may not notice what is happening, but the scroll subtly shifts temporal energies causing any task to take less time. The reader is not under the effects of haste or any similar spell – tasks are simply finished more quickly.

Any item made by the reader, including magic items, scrolls, or potions, requires 25% less time to complete. Travel times are reduced by a similar amount. Even eating, cleaning, packing equipment, and similar chores take less time. Other instances in which this effect comes into play are possible, at the DM's discretion. Note that when working in conjunction with others this temporal effect does not function. Thus, if the reader travels mounted a journey takes as long as it normally would. The effect does not change the reader's combat or spell casting abilities.

2nd Quadrant: When this quadrant is read the reader immediately senses a shift in his energies as all effects of fatigue or exertion fade away completely. This is due to subtle changes that occur in the temporal forces surrounding the reader, slowing any expenditure of energy and causing a massive reserve of such energies to build up for the reader's use. The effects of this quadrant last for a number of days equal to the reader's Constitution score.

The reader receives a +2 bonus to saves against magic inducing sleep, fatigue, or a reduction in movement rate. The reader also requires only half as much sleep and wakes refreshed regardless of how little sleep has occurred (other effects of sleep deprivation, such as hallucination, may still apply if the reader sleeps less than 4

hours). Further, the reader may choose to call upon the reserve of energy during combat to receive a +1 bonus to hit or a +3" movement rate for 1 round each turn.

Reading this quadrant does cause an unintentional negative side effect: any energy draining undead are attracted, sensing in the reader an enticing pool of positive energy to feed upon. In combat any such undead attacking other targets have a 50% chance each round of turning their attentions to the reader instead.

3rd Quadrant: Reading this quadrant causes no immediately noticeable effect, but the reader becomes temporarily immune to the effects of aging. For a number of weeks equal to 3 times the reader's Constitution score the reader is immune to normal aging and no spell, magic item, or creature capable of causing aging can affect the reader. The reader also gains a +4 bonus to any saves made to resist disease; any disease contracted lasts only 75% as long; and no disease can kill the reader. Finally, the reader receives a +1 increase in Constitution. There is a 20% chance this increase is permanent.

4th Quadrant: The first paragraph of this quadrant is easily understandable by any literate creature. It details a brief ritual involving a sacrifice to the god of time valued at 5,000 gp or more in gold, gems, or magic. Once this ritual is completed and the sacrifice is made, the remainder of the quadrant begins to glow with bright golden light and can be read with a read magic spell.

In the instant that the reader completes his study of this quadrant, a temporal shift occurs causing a copy of the reader to split away from his body amidst a shower of visible waves of energy. This copy appears to be an exact duplicate of the reader, including any non-living magical or mundane equipment. However, the copy has only 80% of the original's hit points, abilities, and levels. The copy serves the reader for a number of turns equal to the reader's Intelligence score before disappearing. All equipment and magic items created along with the copy disappear when it dies or disappears, even if previously removed from the copy's possession.

Note that in terms of personality the copy is in all ways identical to the reader. The copy follows orders, interpreting them as would the reader, but does not perform stupid or suicidal acts. Unless specifically ordered to do otherwise, the copy reacts in all ways like the reader, resisting any attempt to dupe or trick it just as the reader would.

GP: 15,000

Scurrying Shillelagh

This aged wooden branch is covered in a dark bark that crumbles off in combat to release swarms of biting ants from beneath its bark sheathes. The ants never crawl onto the shillelagh's grip, which protects the wielder's hand from their effect. Beneath the bark the shaft is heavily vermiculated.

Four times per day the wielder of a scurrying shillelagh can declare an intention to release the ants. If the next blow after this declaration hits, sections of bark crumble away and dozens of biting ants swarm onto the target, inflicting an extra 1d3 points of damage. The target also suffers from a -1 penalty to hit for 2 rounds due to the dozens of painful bites. When a blow misses the ants fall harmlessly to the floor. Both ants and bark regenerate continually, providing an endless supply of biting insects.

GP: 1,250

Shadow Seekers and Strikers

Originating from the plane of Shadowstrands, a pair of these arrows consists of 10 +1 shafts called "shadow seekers" and 10 +2 shafts called "shadow strikers." Shadow seekers are made of an unidentifiable coal-ash encrusted wooden shaft, while shadow strikers are made of shadows previously cast by shadow seekers. Shadow seekers and strikers are intended to be used in pairs and neither of them cast a shadow of their own. When either type of arrow is fired its mate must be fired within 2 rounds, after which, both arrows fade into shadow. Bonuses from Strength, the magic of the bow, or spells on the arrows all apply. Handling pairs of seekers and strikers requires care. Without the match to their mate these arrows will only function as a +1 or +2 arrow without any additional effects.

When a shadow seeker is fired into deep shadow, which is defined as more than half darkness, then all deeper and contiguous shadows that are within 8" of the seeker's point of impact are thickened for 2 rounds, including shadows around corners or outside the shooter's line of sight.

Thickened shadow slightly swirls of its own accord and the air within it takes on a strange oily sensation. Any light shown upon an area of thickened shadow will cut a hole into it that equals the light source's radius. When a

light hole breaks the contiguity of a thickened shadow, the lesser part reverts to normal shadow.

When a shadow striker is fired into thickened shadow the shooter rolls once to hit and once for damage and uses the same rolls to determine success and damage for each creature in the shadow. Creatures in thickened shadow do not receive their Dexterity bonus.

The arrows have another effect when used in reverse order. A shadow striker shot into a single opponent's shadow, hitting their AC, pins the target to the spot. The opponent can still attack, dodge, or defend, but cannot move beyond the length of their pinned shadow or toward the nearest light source for 2 rounds. If a shadow seeker is then shot into the opponent's pinned shadow (AC 10) it sets them "on shadow" for 1d3 rounds.

When a being is "on shadow" their primary shadow conflicts with their various lesser shadows cast by dimmer lights. The originally dimmer shadows flicker, fluctuating rapidly in their intensity and frequently exceeding the primary shadow's depth, draining the shadow's owner of Strength at a rate of 1d4 points per round. The sensation of being "on shadow" is like having icy rivulets of water poured up the legs and back, and similar to being "on fire," seeing one's shadows furiously flickering can create a panic in the undisciplined.

GP: 600 per pair.

The Sha'ring Rank Splitter

A sha'ring may be mistaken for an oversized, shuriken-like weapon, a smooth starfish, or even a necklace when riding upon its warrior host. A sha'ring is in fact a living creature that delights in combat and soldierly camaraderie and the creature has earned the nickname of "rank splitter" due to its usefulness and effectiveness as a thrown weapon.

Hailing from the Starstrands semi-plane, a sha'ring seeks out a mutual symbiotic relationship with a humanoid warrior companion. Warlike hosts find the sha'ring to be a valuable companion, as its telepathic communications provide a continuous wealth of moral support and encouragement. A Sha'ring favors action over contemplation, believing in physical motion as a form of meditation. Above all else, the creature values unit solidarity and fellowship, and is content to be a part of a team.

The skin of a sha'ring is covered in fine, shiny metallic scales and when relaxed the sha'ring appears to be a flat, circular metal hub with 4 wavy tendrils equally spaced on the outside of its circumference. An eyelid protects the sha'ring's retractable eyestalk at the center of its hub, which it sometimes extends down the length of one of its tendrils or raises like an antenna. When at rest around a host's neck it often either hangs like a star necklace with one tendril wrapped about its warrior's neck, and its ivory-like eye depending upon its stalk, or else it stretches its tendrils across both shoulders behind the neck, like an ornamental spaulder with mounted epaulets. When worn this way the creature provides a +1 bonus to AC.

If thrown in combat a sha'ring's tendrils extend and harden, becoming sharp slicing blades that curve slightly to increase the creature's whirling momentum. At any moment a sha'ring is capable of unstiffening its tendrils and flinging itself from object to object; and when fully extending its tendrils a wing-like membrane between their bases aids in gliding. A sha'ring sustains itself on ambient moisture and a small intake of metals, which the creature either consumes during combat or requests from a host. The metal shards are inserted in a mouth-like flap at the hub, opposite the eye side.

If wielded as a melee weapon the sha'ring functions as a three-bladed sword, -2 to hit using the host's level, but causing 1d4+2 points of damage with each successful hit. It simply curls in the sharp edges along one of its tendrils to provide the host with a grip. The host's Strength bonus applies to this form of attack as well. The sha'ring also provides a +1 bonus to AC when so wielded, its tendrils moving to block blows even as it strikes.

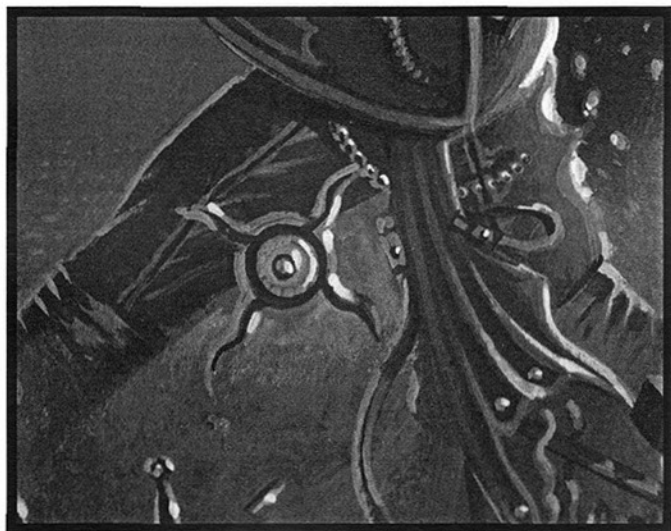
The sha'ring's favorite attack is as thrown missile. When thrown the creature is capable of hitting up to 2 targets in a single round, provided that both are no more than 20' from the host. Each attack does 1d4 plus the host's Strength bonus, if any. The chance of hitting is calculated using either the host's level or the sha'ring's hit dice, whichever provides the better chance. At the end of each round the sha'ring flings itself back to the host to be thrown again.

Alternately, a sha'ring can attack on its own once it has been thrown, freeing the host to perform other actions. When acting autonomously the creature can attack up to 3 separate targets, provided that the sha'ring's movement rate allows all 3 to be reached within the same round. Each attack causes 1d4 points of damage without Strength bonuses. If the sha'ring chooses to concentrate all 3 attacks on a single target and all 3 successfully hit,

the creature loops its central ring over the target's head and begins to strangle for 3d6 points of damage each round. Removing a strangling sha'ring requires a successful Strength check.

The sha'ring can automatically attack any creature that catches it in flight or otherwise touches it, provided that it has not used all 3 attacks in that round already. If a sha'ring is damaged significantly and believes it may be destroyed, it immediately attempts to flee to the safety of its host's neck where it remains until fully healing. Oddly, a sha'ring is relatively timid and self-concerned when below 20% of its hit-points and its communications seem child-like rather than bold and victorious.

When attacking independently or caught by an enemy a sha'ring cannot return to its host in the same round, and in its fervor it loses track of its host's location 25% of the



time. When mistaken, it will make an assumption and fling itself searchingly along a single bearing from object to object, or enemy to enemy, expecting to either find or catch up to its host. When encountering obstacles such as walls it will bear off of them on a reflected angle. In a passageway it will assume forward or backward. Once away from its team, or "pack," the sha'ring becomes desperate and loses sense of time for 2-6 turns before it might think to backtrack.

If a sha'ring is killed its host must immediately make a system shock check or be stunned for 1-2 rounds. Also, the host becomes severely depressed for the next 2-3 days, resulting in a -2 penalty to all saves. If the host is aware of the Starstrands, a strong inclination to go there and find another sha'ring develops.

Sha'ring live in dancing packs called clouds, where they are capable of remaining suspended for hours, con-

stantly flinging themselves from each other's tendrils in a meditation of combined energies. Disturbing a cloud of sha'ring unannounced is similar to entering a wall of blades with a very long duration. Metal is scarce in the Starstrands, so the sha'ring appear to sleep when actually feeding, sucking moisture from the ground for 10 hours a day.

In midlife sha'ring often leave to find a humanoid host, their alignment turning neutral as they spend week's time away from the cloud and then gradually conforming to their host's when found. If surviving a long time host they will choose a new one of the same alignment. Some clouds culturally shift to any alignment but are most often CG. They will mistakenly attack anything in surprise.

Sha'ring live as long as humans, and after a long companionship the sha'ring may choose death when its host dies. In such a symbiosis both host and sha'ring lives are extended 15 years. When a warrior retires, then their sha'ring companion constantly prods them to go hunting together. The sha'ring will not hesitate to slice off the head of its host, no questions asked, upon request.

Sha'ring – average specimen (AC: 3, MV: 9" independent, 12" thrown (6" if returning), HD: 5+4, HP: 45, ATK 1-3, D: see above, A: various, S: small, Special: see above).

GP: 30,000 – If a sha'ring either knows or finds out it has been exchanged for wealth, of any form, it will soon after slip away.

The Shield of Splitting

Rimmed in platinum and decorated with a heraldic red dragon, this kite shield is merely ceremonial when wielded normally. However, the shield is made of 3 layers which can be detected by examining the two grooves along the shield's platinum rim. When commanded by the wielder the layers split and become 3 hovering kite shields, each decorated with its own heraldic dragon, one red, one blue, and one silver. But each hovering shield is still merely ceremonial and does not provide a conventional benefit to AC. The shields dance magically about the commander and intercept blows as though wielded by a warrior's arm, providing up to 9 magical bonus points to the commander's AC.

When the shields are split, then the commander must immediately distribute the 6 magical AC bonuses across

the shields, assigning each from 0 to 9 of the points. A shield with 3 points provides +3 AC if it is hit by a melee weapon. If the commander must roll a saving throw versus fire, cold or electricity based attacks, then they receive the bonus currently assigned to the shield of the corresponding type. For example, if the red dragon shield has been assigned 4 points then the commander receives a +4 to all saving throws against fireballs. If no save is allowed, the shield nullifies points of damage taken from the corresponding element. Therefore, the above +4 vs. fire shield would nullify 4 points of fire damage taken from a +4 flaming sword.

The shield of splitting can be commanded to split 1 time per day per 4 levels of the wielder. The duration of the split is dependent upon how the 9 points are distributed, with the shield that receives the highest bonus being the deciding factor:

- +9: 3 rounds
- +8: 4 rounds
- +7: 5 rounds
- +6: 6 rounds
- +5: 7 rounds
- +4: 8 rounds
- +3: 9 rounds

GP: 30,000

Shieldlimns of the Tervergisators

Crafted by the Order of Tervergisators, a planar merchant's guild, this leather shield lining magically adheres to the inner surface of any shield, stretching or shrinking to fit as needed.

Once attached, a shieldlimn draws an unerring trace of the shield-bearer's travels within a 10 mile radius. Traces outside of the 10 mile radius are lost. The most recent traces shine brightest. Using a magnifying glass or possessing keen sight will reveal movement within small areas, such as within individual buildings. However, neither minor geographical features are indicated, nor town walls, nor structures, nor people. Stops of a day or more are indicated by dots, the larger the longer. Unfortunately, or fortunately, depending upon the reader, the dots obliterate fine details of movement within those areas. Removing the lining does not erase the map, but

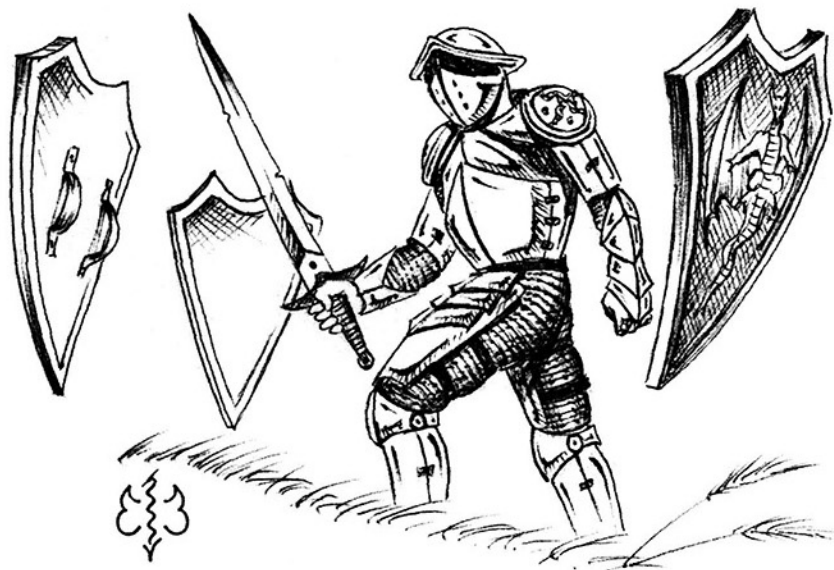
replacing it inside a shield causes it to "reset" as a blank sheet.

Quite rare, shieldlimns are in high demand for use by spies, messengers, and travelers. Those who fear capture must rip out the lining, and then replace it, if they wish to prevent captors from learning their movements. To well-informed planar beings the frequency of shieldlimns indicates the corresponding frequency of interplanar gates and nexii within a perforated world. If plenty shieldlimns are in circulation, then a gate is probably close.

GP: 1,500

Shirkus Circus Octopus and Toad Hand Puppets

Originally created for a band of thieves who traveled



in the guise of a circus puppet show, octopus and toad hand puppets both come in married pairs.

Mr. and Mrs. Octopus are bubble-headed pink octopuses with light green and red streaks running down their sides. After 30 minutes of wearing both puppets the wearer's palms cover with moist suction cups for 3 hours. Upon removing the puppets the cups aid the user in climbing perfectly smooth surfaces at double the usual rate. Each cup pulses with a soft green glow that casts an eerie and gently wavering light upon any surface within 1'. Under this light the user gains the ability to see material imperfections in walls, gems and other ob-

jects. This provides a +20% to climbing smooth surfaces and another +20% to visual appraisal skills. The suction cups provide no bonus to climb particularly rough surfaces such as natural stone. For the 3.5 hours between donning the puppets and the expiration of the suction cups the user's voice becomes an underwater, bubbly garble, making multisyllabic communication nearly impossible.

Mr. and Mrs. Toad are green and gold spotted with blue streaks running down their sides. After 30 minutes of wearing both puppets the wearer's palms cover with densely packed warts for 3 hours. Each wart-top appears tattooed with a circle of blue light. These provide a sharp light within 1' of the user's hands. Under this light the wearer gains the ability to see stable hand holds in any rough or protruding surface. This provides a +20% to climbing rough surfaces and another +20% to appraisals concerning soundness of construction. The warts provide no bonus to climb especially smooth surfaces such as glass or polished marble. For the 3.5 hours between donning the puppets and the expiration of the warts the user's voice becomes throaty, croaking and rough. They are painfully limited to speaking half as many words as they have Constitution points per round.

GP: 2,450

The Signets of Heliogabalo

The signets of Heliogabalo, 26 in total, are contained in a nearly black, ink-stained pouch. Each signet was at one time an expensive ring presenting the identifying initials of its owner. But only one initial on each ring now remains. The other initials, whether made of metal, marble, ivory, or precious gem, have each been carved off or chipped away. Each remaining letter is now encrusted in black ink.

The tale of the signets involves recent history and is well known among those associated with the underworld in any medium city, or larger. Inquiring might raise some eyebrows since the signets are known to still be missing.

Heliogabalo, a notorious thief since executed for crimes against nobility, collected the signets for publically unknown reasons. Each signet belongs to the missing finger of a noble, sawn off by Heliogabalo after paralyzing each of them in their own bedchambers. While the signets are rumored to be severely altered or damaged, each noble would pay well for the return of their identifier, thus ensuring the security of their messages and signatures without the ongoing fear of forgeries. Unfortunately,

returning the signets presents difficulties for anyone, being the nobles are all lawful evil and suspicious by nature. Several might finger the returning agent as somehow related to the crime, among other possible assumptions and intense interests about such a personal affront. In any case, any wise man would advise using intermediaries when engaging the nobles under these circumstances.

Any thief examining this pouch of signets will suspect a greater worth, and the magic of the signets becomes clear to them after 2 or 3 hours of experimentation.

The signets can be used by any thief in order to hide secrets. Combined with faerinkling ink (q.v.), the readership becomes even more limited. While concentrating on their secret the thief prints out a superficial text loosely related to what they wish to hide. The result is a text shallow and devoid of the true content hidden beneath it. Simultaneously, the printer loses all memory and understanding of their secret. It is entirely imparted to the paper at a level only another thief can read and understand. Furthermore, when the printer reads their printed text they only understand the general meaning of the words as if they weren't a thief! The only way the printer can ever again retrieve their hidden secrets is by someone else speaking of them.

Concentration and time are the only limits to the secrets that may be embedded in the text. For every hour spent printing the thief erases either 5 minutes of their memory, or erases as much of their knowledge as they could normally impart in 5 minutes. Thereafter, if questioned about the erased content of their memory, the thief can honestly claim they know nothing at all about it. And the printed text is invisible to them unless they are forced to look upon it. For example, if the text were left on their own desk and then accidentally knocked off by them into the fireplace, they would never notice.

The Incunabula of the Sealer of Fates (q.v.) is an example of a text written using the signets. Some believe Heliogabalo wrote the Incunabula to preserve his knowledge prior to being caught. Some claim the Incunabula is missing its last piece, which detailed an unthinkable complex mythical lock called the Sealer of Fates. Legend says the sealer can hide the life of its prisoner, even erasing it from the memory of an entire kingdom's memory... even the life of someone well known, such as an heir to a throne....

GP: 20,000; 0-700 each when returned to their original owners.

Sinkbush Kindling Sticks

The sinkbush is a hearty shrub that excessively regenerates itself after being snapped, trampled or grazed upon. It bears no leaves, but each of its dark gray twigs ends in a woody knob similar to an early spring bud. When a sinkbush twig is snapped, 2-3 tiny branches immediately grow from each of its new ends. The original twig and each of its new branches may be snapped again after 24 hours. Sinkbushes typically grow in dry, hilly regions.

Sinkbushes are most popularly used by soldiers as portable, reproducing kindling sticks, as well as for creating rapid lines of defense. As noted below, these become ineffective if it rains. Because of these military uses, sinkbushes are often found growing in war zones and on forgotten battlefields. For more peaceful purposes, herders often let sinkbushes grow in areas where fodder is sometimes scarce; but, animals grazing on sinkbushes must be watched carefully, or the regenerating twigs might quickly engulf them as they graze. It is not uncommon to find the bones of animals and luckless travelers in a thicket of sinkbushes.

Most commonly, sinkbush thickets flourish in dry wells and gulches where falling objects often snap their twigs, yet where no water or fire is present to stunt their increasing density. Falling into a thicket filling such a niche automatically traps any living being of less than half the volume of the niche. The bushes must either be wetted or burnt to cease their multiplying against the struggling of the trapped, allowing them to free themselves. But also by the assistance of ropes, and the quick, brute application of force, the trapped may be pulled free. The twigs of sinkbushes will not pierce flesh, but clothes and luggage become entangled, and while a single expanding twig will not rip open cloth or straps, a shirt pulled in 30 or 40 different directions by the small forces of numerous twigs will not do so well.

Due to their subtle magic radiance, carefully maintained sinkbushes are sometimes groomed into hedges on high ground, which are used for cloaking other magical auras from detection. Such a hedge must be regularly trimmed with fire, lest it get out of hand, and therefore usually indicates a mage somewhere thereabouts. Many lands outlaw the cultivation of sinkbushes and burn them in the wild. In some lands merely possessing a twig from the bush implicates one as a foreign spy or saboteur.

GP: 1/10th per twig.

The Sky Apparatuses of Quillish

This device is one of several inspired by diagrams brought back from visits to non-magical, mechanical realms by the legendary Quillish. Lacking the power sources native to those realms, these items only function in this world by infusions of pure magical force.

Sky apparatuses are coned cylinders typically found in sets of 4-7. Each is 3' round, red and hollow, with a conical roof overshooting the sides of the cylinder like an eave. The bottom of the cylinder is open, and the chamber within is fitted with strong leather hand straps attached to the underside of the conical roof, and roughened metal ledges appear as footholds near the bottom of each side. Methods of entry include having the cylinder lowered over one's head, entering its bottom while it is raised by a scaffold, or entering it while it lays on its side and then having someone else stand it up.

Prominently positioned inside the chamber are two buttons marked "VIEWING PORT" and "LAUNCH." The viewport simply opens a small, crystal paned hatch in the cone. The launch button causes the apparatus to shoot above the clouds in a single round, causing some discomfort but no damage to the occupant as it reaches an altitude of about 2 miles. At the apex of its climb the cylinder turns to skim along the clouds for 10 rounds, after which the lower sections of the cylinder fall away and the cone blooms to form a parachute-like structure, lowering gently to the ground over the course of 1 turn.

Sky apparatuses of Quillish function only once unless refueled with cloud-wisp juice. The juice is poured into a series of tubes at the bottom rim of the cylinder beneath the footholds. This volatile substance is concocted by mixing 2 parts cloud juice (q.v.) with 1 part wisp'sess (q.v.).

Cloud juice is a cloud giant invention only available from certain cloud islands. Good cloud giants may be willing to trade barrels of it to any friend of Quillish at a severely discounted rate of 500 gp per barrel, though, usually it is sold as "potions of cloud juice" (q.v.), each of which contains only 6-9 parts. One barrel typically holds about 90 units. Wisp'sess only comes from swamps frequented by will-o-wisps. Collecting the substance is a dangerous and highly involved process, and thus it is usually available only in small quantities sold as "potions of wisp essence" (q.v.). Each potion provides 120 parts. Mixing the two substances requires specialized equipment and considerable skill. An alchemist or potion-



maker capable of safely performing this operation generally charges 100-200 gp for taking the risk.

Cloud giants are curiously attracted to sky apparatuses in flight, and there is a flat 5% chance of encountering them each time an apparatus is used to cross mountainous areas or launched into thick clouds. Quillish himself was known to have gotten along well with these giants, and they naturally are interested in hearing any news of him. Evil cloud giants usually attempt to capture a sky apparatus and capture its user, as they assume the device has been stolen from Quillish. Good cloud giants simply want to know the archmage's whereabouts, since their kind have not seen him in such a long time.

When used properly, a sky apparatus of Quillish travels an average of 14 miles if aimed with the wind, or 10 miles if aimed against it. This allows most mountains and small lakes to be crossed with ease as the terrain below is surveyed. Naturally, launching in storms or high

winds is inadvisable and potentially disastrous. Also, the apparatus provides no defense against large flying monsters.

A character experienced with catapults and siege engines, or possessing sufficient mathematical skill, can quickly learn how to precisely aim sky apparatuses, resulting in a greater degree of accuracy in determining where they land. The base chance of landing within a quarter-mile of a target zone is 50%. This chance improves by 5% for each level of the skilled aimer, to a maximum chance of 95%. If a targeted landing fails, then the apparatus lands 2-5 miles to the left or right of the intended landing zone.

The range of each flight can be purposely extended by 2-7 miles, but doing so reduces targeting accuracy 20%. Extending flight is achieved by changing the fuel mixture - using 3 parts cloud juice with 2 parts wisp'ess. If this concoction is not mixed by a skilled alchemist, such as a 7th level mage using a full alchemy lab, there is a 25% chance it is improperly mixed. Improper combinations can result in a high variety of effects, one of which includes launching straight up and never being seen again, or falling back to earth without the cone-chute opening. Even when using the proper mixture for flight extension its increased volatility results in a 5% chance of hitting a dangerous air current that may carry the apparatus almost anywhere, perhaps even to the plane of elemental air....

Consulting a sage in reference to Quillish may uncover a rumor that Quillish invented a version of the device with rotational fins to refine flight direction, as well as an underwater device some testers claim was like being trapped in a watery coffin. Quillish called this apparatus "the sub-oceanic wagon."

GP: 3,500 each.

The Soil Halo of Thrundinorin

A soil halo is a holy ring of constantly churning mud chunks containing grubs, worms, roots, chaff and thorns, and hovers slightly above and behind the wearer's head. It radiates both chaos and earth magic.

When worn by a cleric the halo allows its wearer to heal any humanoid of 1d6 points of damage by smearing their wounds with a handful of available earth, either from the ground or personal storage. However, the healing is only temporary. Unless a more permanent means

of healing is applied to the wounds then they reopen at nightfall, re-inflicting all of the previously healed damage and additionally becoming filled with flesh-eating worms and grubs. These vermin immediately cleanse the body of any and all poisons and diseases, but they inflict 1d3 points of damage every hour thereafter. All of this damage can be avoided if someone spends at least 10 of the minutes in each hour picking out the grubs and worms. Exposing the vermin to the effects of full daylight causes them to flee.

On any day the halo is worn, when the wearer next sleeps, they will experience suffocating nightmares of awaking in a bare earth, coffin shaped space, buried alive. While entombed they experience the acute awareness of the vermin in the earth around them, slowly crawling to them to eat away their flesh! Eventually, depending upon their reactions while in the nightmare, the afflicted dreamer will figure out that they are attracting the vermin and can command them to remain at bay when fully terrorized. They progressively will discover a waking power to also do this.

The nightmares are actually a reaction to the second power of the halo. Once this power is discovered it may be used one time per week to summons grubs, worms and miniscule insects forth from a patch of earth at night. These vermin appear in earthy, writhing clots, which may then be picked up in handfuls and smeared across a body of living flesh. A human-sized smearee can be covered from head to toe in 3 rounds, which initially causes a loss of 3 hit points as the vermin eat at the skin, transforming the smearee into a minor earth elemental. While so transformed and consumed, they continue to degenerate at a rate of 1 hit point per round.

As a minor earth elemental, the smearee(s) must continuously remain in contact with the earth (or stone) or return to their flesh form. While transformed they remain their own size and shape but possess an earthen form, which they may use to move through earth at a rate of 6" per round, circumnavigating solid stone and dense gravel. And while they retain their normal abilities, they cannot perform acts that would normally require open air, or which cannot be performed due to the resistance of the surrounding earth. Lighting a torch, for instance, would be impossible. However, most weapons of body, stone, metal, or wood will function normally.

The summoned clots provide 48 rounds of transformation, which may be distributed among up to 8 people for 6 rounds each, after each of them applies the summoned clots to their own body. For example, the halo wearer

may choose to transform for 48 rounds, by themselves, but will take 51 total hit points by the end of the ordeal. Remaining in earth at transformation's end buries one alive. Pets may also be transformed.

GP: 18,000

The Spectral Rod of the Shadow Ward

This lordly rod is nearly transparent and contains vaguely shifting shadows. It presents no shadow upon the ground, and the eyes of those noting this are "pullen" to the rod, where the expected shadow is cast, within it. The rod holds a strange power drawn from the plane of Shadowstrands, which permits the wielder to turn their material form into a spectral form partly composed of shadow. Up to 4 of the Rod's 50 charges can be expended and function at the same time. Each charge converts 20% of the wielder's substance into shadow and lasts 3 rounds. For the duration of the effect all damage inflicted on or by the wielder is reduced by that percentage. Thus, if 4 charges are expended the wielder only takes or causes 20% of the normal amount of damage.

For each charge used there is a 1% chance that the wielder unknowingly releases a shadow from the rod. This shadow immediately possesses the wielder's own shadow, lying in wait for at least 1 day while it takes stock of its surroundings. During this wait the shadow takes on a degree of reality, materializing 20%, much like a creature invoked by a lesser shadow conjuration spell. This materialization includes all the abilities and equipment of the wielder at 20% effectiveness in all respects. The shadow hides its existence as well as it can and reveals itself only in the direst of circumstances, and almost never departing the host in daylight. While detached and away the shadow is 20% likely to be mistaken for its host if spotted. When taking damage equivalent to 20% of the host's hit points the shadow recedes for 24 hours. It can only be dispelled by a remove curse.

During day the shadow remains attached to the host, acting as the host's shadow. In this state the shadow might flicker or distort itself, either to draw the eye of an enemy away from their host or to cause the enemy a feeling of unease. The shadow most often acts while the host sleeps. While away, the host sleeps fitfully, dreaming of surreal, shadowy images. No matter the time of day, the shadow's departure causes the host to experience a disturbing chill along the spine lasting for the duration of its absence. The shadow cannot move outside of a 12" range from the host and if the host moves away from

the shadow at this range the shadow flees in the same direction as the host's movement, remaining within 12". The shadow can never be commanded by the host unless by spell.

The shadow is entirely dependent on its newfound host for its existence and, knowing this, harbors a real insecurity and paranoia about it. Since the shadow ceases to exist if its host dies, it attacks anything that it perceives as a threat to the host. Unfortunately, its perceptions are not always accurate and usually tend toward overreaction. For example, while the host might idly curse a friend in a moment of anger, the shadow is 80% likely to perceive the friend as a real threat to the host, subsequently planning to eliminate them.

While apart from its host the shadow makes the most of its 100% ability to hide in shadows. It spends its time committing devious and stealthy acts against the helpless, the unwary, and especially against those it perceives as a threat to the host. Even though it has no real understanding of the difference between its host's whims and serious threats, the shadow has tremendous cunning. For example, the shadow might trip someone descending a dark stairwell on the way to the outhouse. It might unpack and hide a key piece of equipment. Or it might lure a dangerous creature into its enemy's home. Sadly, divination spells never detect the shadow's responsibility for its actions, instead pointing to the host as the actor.

The rod can be easily recharged by casting a simple shadow conjuration into it, with each spell restoring 1 charge. Each greater shadow conjuration spell cast upon the rod restores 2 charges. If all 50 charges are ever expended the rod will cease function. Function can be restored only by recharging the rod while on the plane of Shadowstrands. Thereafter the rod functions normally wherever it is taken.

GP: 24,000

Sputtering Putty – AKA “Liquid Ball”

This alchemical substance appears as a languid gray liquid within a standard potion bottle. The liquids within the bottle do not slosh about when shaken, moving more like thick goo, but are clearly liquid when touched or consumed. When placed within 1' of another magical potion the liquid ball begins to take on its appearance. An identify spell or similar magic used on a liquid ball identifies it as either the nearest magical potion, or

identical to the last potion the identifier consumed if no other is available.

When consumed a liquid ball forms into a dense, semi-solid sphere on the way down, causing the drinker to choke and sputter helplessly for 2-4 rounds. If the drinker resists choking and makes a successful Constitution check, the liquid ball is coughed up and the drinker derives no benefit from it. Of course, the drinker may choose to forego this saving throw. If the ball is allowed to settle into the stomach it expands, coating the interior and allowing multiple potions to be consumed without the possibility of any side effects from miscibility. The effect lasts for 3 rounds per point of the drinker's Constitution.

The first two potions consumed while a liquid ball is in effect work at full strength. A third potion's effects work at half-strength or for half the normal duration, as appropriate. A fourth potion's effects work at one-quarter strength or for one-fourth as long. A fifth or further potion consumed while a liquid ball is in effect has no effect at all. Once the duration of the liquid ball has expired, the last potion consumed takes effect at full strength, provided its duration has not already expired.

Consuming more than one liquid ball in any 30-day period develops in the user a strong addiction for magical drink. The user must save vs. spell each day or satisfy the craving by consuming 1d3 magical potions, doing whatever it takes to obtain them. Failure to sate the craving results in the loss of 1 point of Constitution per day. This Constitution loss can only be restored once the craving has been satisfied for 3 days in a row or once 30 days have passed without drinking a potion, which effectively ends the addiction. Lost Constitution points are thereafter regained at the rate of 1 per day. A character with a 1 Constitution becomes paralyzed.

GP: 2,400

Suppletree Chewing Sticks

Suppletree chewing sticks are usually sold in wax-sealed bundles of ten. They must be protected from moisture while carried, as the alchemical substances in each stick readily dissolve in any liquid, including perspiration. Chewing one of these alchemically treated slivers of hardwood provides a satisfyingly pleasant flavor and a feeling of mild relaxation for up to 20 minutes. Each stick further provides a +4 bonus to saves vs. paralysis

during this period. During the last 10 minutes of its duration each stick provides a +2 bonus to Dexterity.

Overdosing on suppletree chewing sticks can be dangerous. Chewing more than two in the space of a single hour requires the chewer to make a save vs. paralysis to avoid becoming relaxed to the point of paralysis. Allowing the juice from several wet suppletree chewing sticks to soak into the skin might also result in paralysis. There is a cumulative -1 penalty to this save for every 2 sticks (or juice thereof) after the third. The bonuses from chewing these sticks do not stack if multiple sticks are chewed simultaneously, but the saving throw penalties do, if applicable. The effects of suppletree chewing sticks cannot be durably fixed in non-hardwood substances.

GP: 200 per bundle of ten.

Swallowing Blossom Centerpieces

Swallowing blossoms are either light pink or light yellow, both with greenish leaf tips.

They have no stalk or branches, and nearly look like a cross between a squat succulent and an artichoke. An average blossom is 12" in diameter and 6"-8" high at its center. Swallowing blossoms originate on the plane of Pandemonium and are extremely hardy. They adhere directly to rocks in their natural habitat, and require no root system, light, or water.

Swallowing blossoms feed on sound. All sounds originating within 100' of a swallowing blossom gravitate toward the plant, which prevents echoes. Because of this property swallowing blossoms are often used as table centerpieces at meetings where close conversations are not meant to be overheard. While the plant offers no protection against scrying or similar spells, it prevents sounds occurring within 10' of the plant from escaping beyond that range. Swallowing blossoms also have the curious ability to limit the range of some spells cast within 10'. Spells using a verbal component cast within this radius have only half the normal range and area of effect.

The plant need never be watered so long as it is gradually able to feast on audible sounds within its general environment. Casting a speak with plants spell allows the spellcaster to query the contents of any conversation that took place within 10' of the plant.

Swallowing blossoms live for millennia on the plane of Pandemonium due to the constancy of its sounds. They sometimes survive on the material planes if well tended, such as by a dynasty or a guild. They may be used as recording devices for entire histories. However, a swallowing blossom can only be communicated with by spell once per week and no other methods of access are known to work. If a second speak with plants spell is cast within 7 days of the last, then the spellcaster encounters an echo of the previous magical conversation. They must save vs. spell or be rendered feeble-minded, per the spell. Success indicates the blossom merely absorbs the attempt at conversation by the spellcaster, perhaps rattling its leaves in pleasure or thanks.

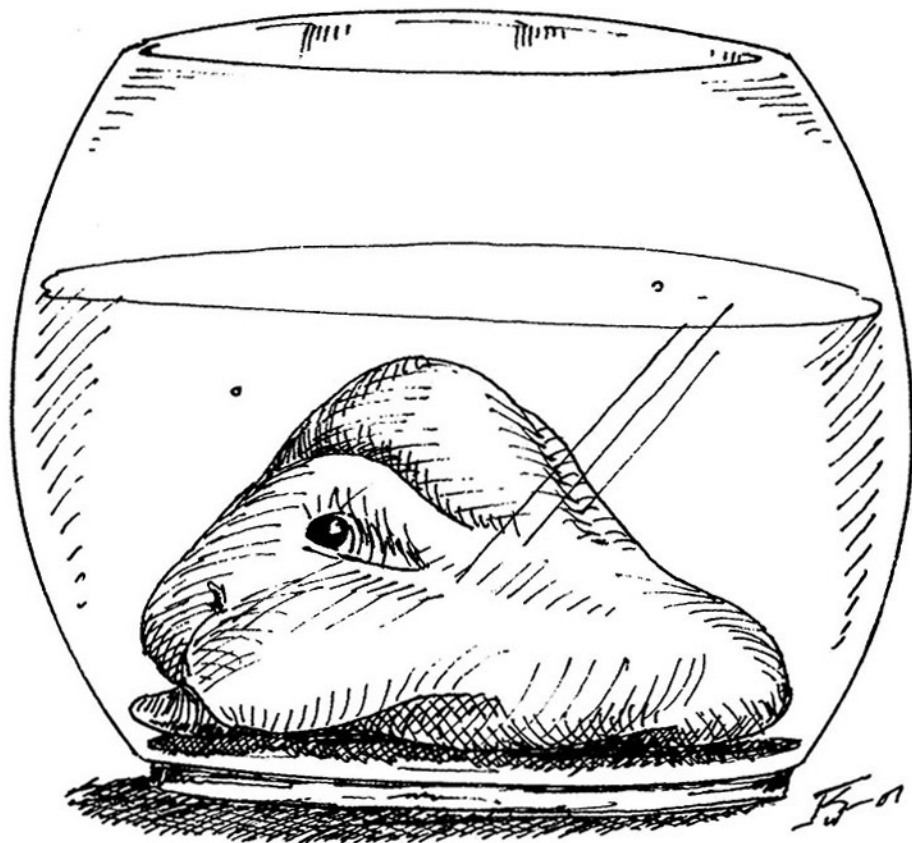
GP: 14,000

The Swedgish

This creature is more magic item than critter. Half plant and half amphibian, a swedgish is shaped somewhat like a wedge, hence the name. Their eyes are well guarded on the top, rear tip of their wedge, while below, and slightly forward of these, there are appendages on each side of the wedge, which look quite similar to skin bags covering fins. The swedgish has a very high cunning, although, it appears dull-witted to most humanoids due to the dissimilarity of their thought processes.

Pet swedgishes are often kept in clear glass globes filled with about a quart of fresh water, with about a third of the bottle containing air. Swedgish bottles are capped with metal and gum. But note! If cork is used to seal the bottle the swedgish is attracted to its plant matter. The swedgish crawls out of its water and presses itself against the cork in an attempt to communicate, drying out after waiting patiently for a reply. After one full day left in the open air a swedgish loses its mobility, stiffening into a hard wedge until it is submerged in water for at least 8 hours. While moist, the swedgish is able to wiggle itself through any aperture larger than a 1/4".

The swedgish only eats 4 times per year. On the eve of each seasonal change it must be exposed to the moon within 48 hours or die. During this exposure it sucks up moon rays for 8 hours while loudly gurgling. This gurgling causes all undomesticated plants within 24" to grow as much overnight as they would normally grow in an entire season. This includes naturally growing herbs and non-monstrous plant life. Taking the swedgish off plane and returning disorients the swedgish and resets



its feeding clock, allowing subsequent reuses of its gurgling power.

When set at the bottom of a door, like a wedge-shaped doorstop, a swedgish slithers into place and keeps the door closed. Attempts to poke it out of place are countered by its rapid squiggles to a different location, during which it makes squishy sounds and strange gurgles. It is very fluid when moving in this way, somehow never releasing its pressure upon the door's base. During this wedging duty a door is fortified against strong pushes, causing any attempts to open the door to be made with a -6 penalty.

A swedgish may be convinced to serve in other capacities than door jamming, but convincing it to do so requires proper incentive. The swedgish must be rewarded by providing it with a magical toy to guard, perhaps a ring, or by providing special tints for its water.

Swedgish do not like fish, and will instantly kill any introduced into their globe. It is unknown how they do this. It appears to happen with a wiggle of their bag-fins, but from afar. Tossed into any other body of water the swedgish has the power to turn fish within 60' as a 2nd level cleric turns undead. Fish of 1 HD or less require a 7, and each additional HD is 3 points more difficult to turn. A school of small fish count as one fish. A school

of medium fish count as two. 1-12 total fish or schools can be turned. Fish that are turned but somehow trapped simply die. The swedgish receives automatic success in its globe.

Swedgishes can be communicated with using either speak with animals, or speak with plants spells. Provided they understand what they are to do, any swedgish will collude with glee in any crafty plot. For example, they are easily mistaken for a snail and capable of lodging in any humanoid-sized throat. They dodge teeth with the impunity of a tooth scrubber.

The swedgish dodges piercing attacks by checking against its 18 Dexterity with a +1 bonus. The swedgish can survive any crushing weight up to 4,000 pounds so long as it is properly hydrated. It simply reconstitutes its squishy biology after

escaping from under the pressure by using an ooze-like mobility. While a swedgish has no native damaging attack it is able to get underfoot and cause targets to slip; or if being thrown into, dropping into, or crawling into an aperture, it can halt airflow. In larger creatures it can cause severe indigestion once slipping down their throat.

Swedgish (AC: 0, MV: 15", HD: 2, HP: 20, ATK: special, D: special, A: N, S: tiny, Magic resistance: 50%).

GP: 1,900

The Taenia of Resonance

This golden silk ribbon is worn as a headband. While worn, it prevents the wearer's thoughts and emotions from being read or sensed, similar in effect to a mind blank spell. But unlike the mind blank spell, the taenia instantly causes the wearer to become aware of the location and disposition of the mind reader. The wearer receives an immediate sense of the mind reader's location, distance, bearing, and altitude above or below ground level, including a distinct sense of the mind reader's level or hit dice relative to their own.

Twice per day the wearer can activate the taenia's resonance power, causing a mind reader's thoughts to loop, resulting in a powerful form of feedback that causes the mind reader to become entranced in their own thoughts. In this state the mind reader becomes intensely fascinated with the details and importance of everything they think. The more powerful, the more fascination they will find with their own thoughts. They remain in the loop for 2 rounds per level or hit die, plus their Intelligence times 4 rounds. After the first 4 rounds they receive a save vs. spell -4, and again every 4 rounds. During this experience the mind reader appears intensely contemplative.

Alternately, when the taenia's resonance power is activated the wearer can open a cognitive hole that allows thoughts of their own design through the mind blank effect. The mind reader is allowed to save vs. spell to detect these counterfeit thoughts. Success indicates they can read the wearer's true thoughts and emotions. Failure indicates the mind reader receives the thoughts being let through the mind blank by its wearer, and the mind reader remains unaware of this deceit for the remainder of the session.

It must be noted that certain gods occasionally read mortal minds in passing. While this is rare, the wearer of a taenia of resonance can sense such casual perusal of the masses. This perusal is naturally more common during critical events of interest to the gods. When sensing the intrusion of a divine mind the taenia provides the wearer with a location of "everywhere" and indicates that the mind reader's level is sublime. The wearer also receives an overwhelming impression of the god's primary domain, such as the loud din of war, a seductive loving caress or a shadow obscuring the entire sky, and falls to their knees. The impression lasts for 1d4 rounds, during which the wearer is frozen with pure emotions corresponding to the god's domain. The taenia's powers cannot be activated against a divine mind reader.

If a wearer of the taenia is a worshipper of the passing god's pantheon, or immediately converts to that god's religion, any clerical spells they are capable of throwing, or clerical spell-like effects they are capable of activating, are increased 25% in damage, range and duration during the course of the next 6 turns; and any commune spell cast by the wearer within 24 hours is answered directly by their god. Lore places the taenia upon the fields of many ancient battles.

GP: 21,000

Tasseled Cob of Murders

The kernels on this dried cob of corn are arranged in 17 rows of almost 30 kernels each, presenting a total of 500 multi-colored kernels. The corn husks are peeled back and lacquered together to form a solid handle. Each thread of corn silk waves free, creating a tassel of 100 threads.

Tossing a single kernel of corn to the ground allows the user to command any normal crow within sight. The crow remains within earshot of the cob's user for 3d6 rounds, doing as commanded so long as each change of command is accompanied by yet another corn kernel.

If no crow is available, plucking a thread of silk from the cob causes one to magically appear. Any number of threads can be plucked at once, allowing a murder of up to 100 crows to be summoned. Each crow remains for 3d6 rounds as before, doing as commanded provided that one kernel is thrown onto the ground per crow. Each additional command requires another kernel per crow. Once 3d6 rounds have passed, all summoned crows vanish regardless of whether or not they have completed their commands.

When all the cob's kernels have been discarded a black murderous cloud of 31-50 large crows materializes to attack the cob user until the cob itself is discarded. Each of these crows has 3 hit points. The crows attack as a single unit, causing 2d8 points of pecking damage each round. If attacked by multiple creatures they divide their pecking among up to 3 foes, causing the same damage to each. Note that each individual crow is only capable of causing a single point of damage, thus no group can cause more damage than the number of crows composing it. Once the cob is discarded, all remaining crows merge into the image of a huge crow that plucks the cob from the ground and flies away.

GP: 7,500

Tasseled Cob of Murders - Greater

This item is similar in appearance and function to a tasseled cob of murders. Unlike the lesser version, each thread of silk plucked from the cob summons a murder of 2-5 giant crows, and each kernel of corn commands the entire murder. Upon plucking the last thread of silk all murders currently under command turn upon the

cob user, attacking until destroyed or until the user commands them to disperse by distributing one kernel per murder.

GP: 9,000

The Terocozen Quilt

This magical quilt has 12 large panels depicting 6 archetypical class figures, each twice, once upon a white background and then again upon a gray background, but quilted upside down and every other. Figures on a white background appear fresh and cheerful. Those on a gray background appear dour and unhappy. This magical quilt's most apparent magic turns the quilt heavier in the cold months and lighter as the nights grow warm. Identifying the quilt otherwise only reveals that it is an instrument of the dream world. Object reading may give highly mixed readings, such as sensing any of 12 personalities, but puts the reader into a long period of sleep, possibly attuning the object reader, as follows.

A terocozen quilt only works for a single user, typically the first character to sleep beneath it. If multiple characters attempt to sleep beneath it on successive nights, the quilt attunes itself to the first character to sleep beneath it twice in the same month. If a character other than the attuned attempts to sleep beneath the quilt then it slides off during the night, and if secured to prevent this, then the quilt gradually pushes the sleeper out from beneath it. If both the quilt and the sleeper are somehow bound together the sleeper must save vs. spell or be possessed by one of the dominant figures (*see below*). If a quilt's chosen host gives away the quilt, or otherwise loses possession of it for over a month, they are never again able to use the quilt.

Once a terocozen quilt has attuned itself to a host it begins to reveal its powers, but only during nighttime sleep and never during daytime sleep. If an 8 hour cycle of sleep is interrupted then none of the below effects occur.

When the quilt owner drifts into sleep they immediately begin to dream of others sleeping in their bed with them. One after another these unknown others begin pulling the blankets away from the sleeper in a gradual nighttime tug-of-war. To keep the covers on the sleeper must make a saving throw vs. magic. Success indicates they awaken refreshed and nothing more. Failure indicates that one of 6 helpful figures wins the tug and the sleeper awakes refreshed and cheery in the morn-

ing beneath their quilt. As the sleeper goes about their morning they gently discover they possess a second set of thoughts, and they become conscious of seeing more things than they alone would normally ever be aware. The winning dream figure has awakened within them, fully manifested in their head.

This "dream walker" is a helpful 1st level human corresponding to one of the 6 classes on the table below (roll 1d6). The walker willingly offers advice and limitedly assists the risen quilt owner throughout the day. The owner may use either his own saving throws or those of the dream walker, whichever are better, and can limitedly use that class's magic items, but receives only one quarter of the durations, damages and other effects. Combat classes can use the spells in the below chart, but must comply with armor restrictions for that class.

Roll 1d6:

1. **Fighter:** Casters may use a sword, 18(+1d100) Strength, +3 HP.
2. **Thief:** +3 AC, all 1st level thieving abilities as if Dexterity 17.
3. **Cleric:** 3 cure light wounds and turn undead as a 1st level cleric.
4. **Mage:** 1 magic missile spell and 3 detect magic spells.
5. **Druid:** Any 3 1st level druid spells, knowledge of animal and plant lore.
6. **Ranger:** Casters may use a sword, tracking skill, surprise enemies 40% chance.

After having discovered the benefits of losing the tug-of-war, if the sleeper should willingly give up the tug in an attempt to bind one of the cheery figures to them upon waking, they awaken possessed by the corresponding malign figure from the gray background. Neither the helpful nor dominant quilt figures can be dispelled. However, the gray can be rebuked with a protection from evil, remove curse, or any other kind of anti-possession magic.

After the PC has benefited once from each of the helpful figures they receive a +1 save in the tug of war and they enter a new phase of interaction where success indicates a helper manifests and failure indicates a dominant manifests. As before, the class of the dream walker is determined at random. From here on manifestations are limited to 3 per week. Attempting to somehow force

a 4th results in possession by a dominant dream walker.

A dominant dream walker has control of the quilt owner's abilities in combination with the class abilities listed in the table above. The dominant walker attempts to hide this control from both the quilt owner and their friends. The walker initially pretends to be helpful, but instead will lie or give bad advice in an attempt to teach the quilt owner "lessons." While not evil, dominant walkers are highly irritated by centuries of sleepless walking in the dream world, and possess considerable ill will toward the quilt owner. Saving throws are rolled at whichever score is more difficult, the quilt owner's or the dominant dream walker's.

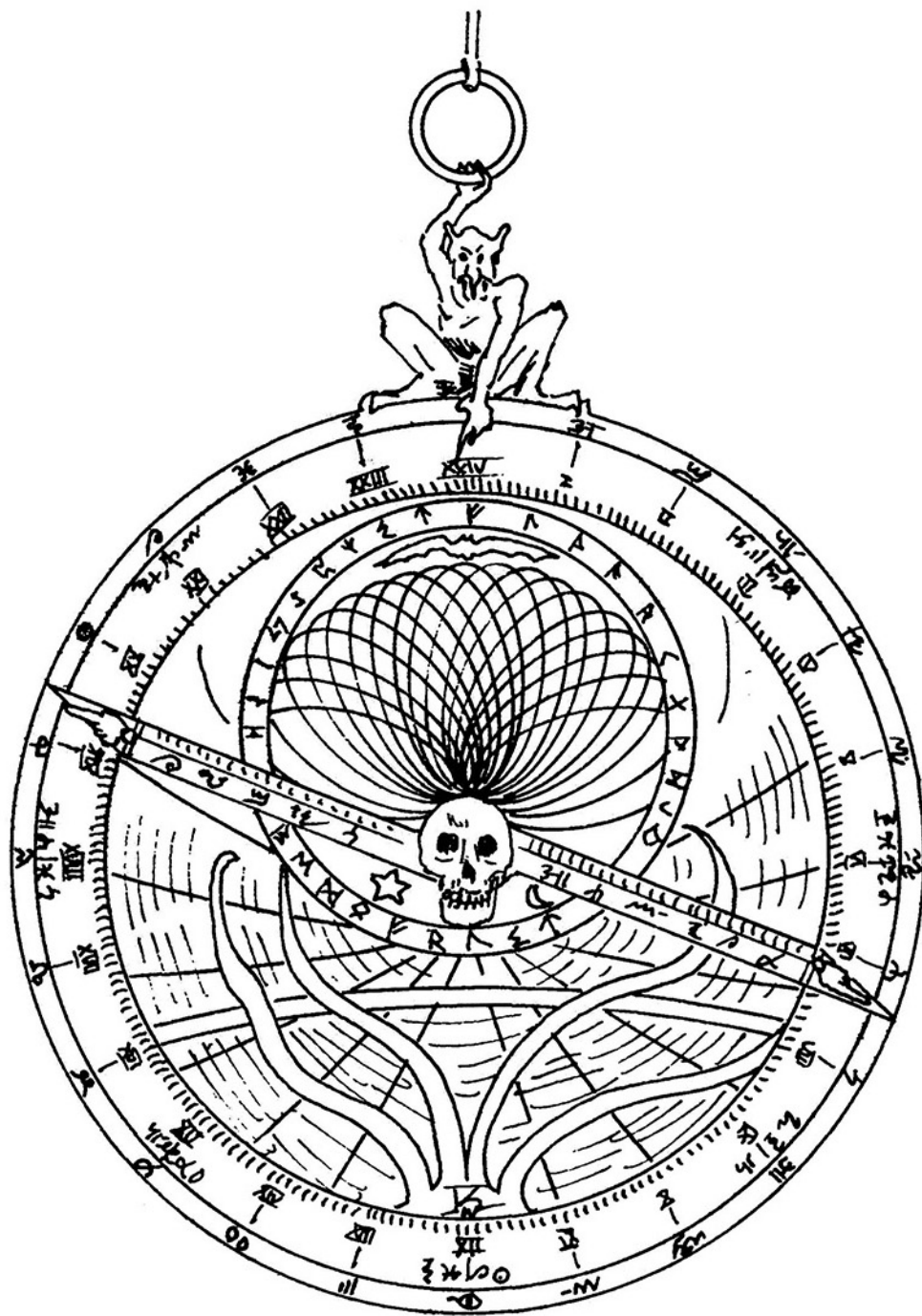
For every primary class level the quilt owner advances while in possession of the quilt they will receive a +1 save vs. spell to avoid the dominant walkers until a dominant manifests only on a roll of 1. The level of the dream walkers never exceeds 1st level.

The DM is encouraged to choose and develop personalities and histories for each of the dream walkers. Each walker will recall their past experiences with the quilt owner and their friends.

GP: 9,000

Terver's False Sky Astrolabe

This navigational device is decorated in blue enamel with silver inlaid whitecaps and golden rule marks where its scales would normally be inscribed. While it can be used for normal navigation, even lending a +2 to the skill, it is more often used to secretly hijack an entire ship, taking it where the wielder chooses to go. It does this by cast-



ing the illusion of a false sky. The sky will look identical to the normal one, but rotated in such a way that both the ship's navigator and captain's readings will guide the ship wherever the false sky astrolabe wielder so chooses.

The magic of the astrolabe does not work if the ship is navigating within sight of a coastline, or any time there is a definite, immobile point of reference that cannot be mistaken. Thus, it is not possible to use the astrolabe to run a ship aground on a visible beach, for example. However, in the open sea, between islands, or in a fog where the sky is the only guide, the astrolabe does its work, even deviating magnetic north to correspond to the wishes of its wielder.

This illusion works until the captain's intended destination is overdue by 1 day. Thereafter, the captain and navigator both receive a save vs. spell every other day; and any especially sea worn salt among the crew might also warrant a save. Although, if the salt is particularly devious they might avoid telling their captain, instead attempting to figure the culprit, and then attempting blackmail.

If the captain or navigator suspects a problem, but fails their save, there may well be repercussions for the ship's crew and officers. The captain might decide the cause is that the night watchman fell asleep at their post and turned the ship around. Suspicion might fall on the navigator for plotting a faulty course. It is even possible the ship's captain or officers begin to suspect some sort of subtle mutiny is afoot. Knowing their ship's astray, the ship's course can be adjusted, but, until someone aboard the ship makes a successful saving throw the ship continues on the course set by the wielder of the false sky astrolabe.

A successful saving throw against the effects of the astrolabe shows the captain or navigator knows the ship is off course and that something is wrong with the sky. It does not reveal precisely what is wrong or how the course deviation is being caused. Thus, it is possible that a ship continues on its false course unless steps are taken to navigate by some means other than the sky or unless the function of the false sky astrolabe is discovered. If the astrolabe's wielder is unable to refresh its illusion every 24 hours it expires.

GP: 7,500

Thrashing Staves

This +1 quarterstaff is made of black ironwood with deep red undertones. It is only half the thickness of most staves, but stronger. The speed factor of a thrashing staff is 1 less than normal (3) owing to its reduced thickness.

The staff carries 3 charges, maximum. Each charge is accumulated by attunement: the user must practice with it 2 turns per charge, full charging being an hour's practice. The charges remain a maximum of three days, or until each is used.

Each charge can be used after a successful hit has already been scored on a target. Using the charge creates a thrashing effect, whereby the other end of the staff will

score an additional, automatic hit. No more than one thrash can be safely used in a single round.

If the 2nd charge is used in the immediate round after the first thrash, there is a 10% chance of the staff breaking and becoming entirely useless. If the 3rd charge is used in the immediate round after the 2nd, there is a 20% chance of the staff breaking. In both cases the staff still hits and does its damage before breaking.

If all 3 charges are used in the exact same round, after a successful hit a single thrash occurs, but the target must save vs. paralysis -5 or be stunned for 2 turns. This destroys the staff.

GP: 3,500

The Thunderhead Anvil

Any magical hammer striking this anvil causes an immense thunderhead to form in the sky. The cloud completes its formation after 3 rounds of pounding the anvil, boiling forth from any point in the sky within 64". The dense and obscuring cloud hovers 36" above the ground, with a base radius of 36" and a height of 64". Once summoned, the thunderhead remains for 2d6+8 rounds. The cloud is not subject to any effects of wind or weather and cannot be moved once formed.

Up to 3 beings with magical hammers can strike the anvil once per round each. After the 3 rounds required for forging the cloud, each subsequent strike causes a lightning bolt to lance from the cloud's midst to the ground. Each hammer wielder determines the visible target of their bolt. Each bolt causes 3d8 points of damage plus the hammer's magical bonus within a 5' circumference of the bolts strike. A successful saving throw reduces this damage by half. An anvil striker cannot strike the anvil again for 2 weeks after the current thunderhead expires.

Using a thunderhead anvil without first securing the approval of any nearby cloud giants is hazardous at best. During each round of the anvil's use there is a 5% base chance, plus an accumulative 3% chance per lightning bolt, that 2-5 local cloud giants notice, appearing immediately and inside the thunderhead just above its base. These cloud giants are either neutral good or neutral evil (50% chance of either), and hurl their boulders at any nearby creatures that seem to be of the opposite alignment, basing their determination on appearances alone. Their targets may be the anvil strikers or anyone else.

Unless attacked per below, these giants disappear when the thunderhead's duration expires.

If attacked by the anvil strikers 5 of the giants descend, summoning more of their kind if less than 5 are present. These giants continue to attack their perceived enemies, intent on claiming the thunderhead anvil as their prize. Giants that descend to the ground do not vanish when the thunderhead's duration expires.

GP: 40,000

Tided Idlers - AKA "Soup Stones"

A soup stone is a rare kind of creature. Each appears identical to a gray, fist-sized, porous rock. Found along ocean shores, soup stones are dependent on the tides, requiring alternate periods of dry warmth, and bathing in salty water. The young are extremely delicate. Deposited too high or too low on the shoreline kills them within a single day. The lucky ones are excreted from their birth stone and land mid-height on a rock that is washed equally by the tides and the sun. Soup stones, both young and adult, are known to possess a highly limited telepathic awareness of sentient creatures up to 3' away.

Adult soup stones are asexual and reproduce like starfish, by fragmentation. They eject their young any time they are struck against another object. Typically this happens as the tide jostles a soup stone against its neighbors, causing the sand-like young to be dispersed into the water. Each adult generates about 100 young per day. An adult soup stone bearing young is capable of going dormant for up to 100 years, requiring only a bath of warm water to reactivate it.

Cultivating soup stones artificially is a difficult proposition involving constant monitoring for at least a week. The stones have to be moved regularly to simulate the jostling of the tide, and even when provided with the proper periods of inundation and warmth only 1 in 1,000 survives into adulthood. Even the most expert cultivator rarely manages to bring more than 2-3 per 1,000 to adulthood per day, with the assistance of 4-6 seaside waif "apprentices."

Some canny sea-goers have learned to use soup stones in combat. When thrown against an enemy an adult soup stone ejects its young, which then collectively overwhelm the target with the urge to eat. Unless a save vs. spell at +4 is made the target must rush to the closest food source and begin gorging for 1d10 rounds. This save is

repeated every 1d10 rounds until the target makes the save. A target who gorges for a number of rounds equal to or greater than 10% of its weight in pounds takes 1d3 points of gastric damage for each additional 1d10 rounds it continues to feed. A successful save at any point allows the target to remove gear and clothing and shake out the sand-sized young. An "active" soup stone can be thrown thus once per day. Throwing a dormant adult invariably kills the stone.

Soup stones are also valued by military quartermasters and commanders. When placed in a pot of hot salty water, a dormant soup stone puts off delicious fumes and flavors, creating the illusion that the water is a nutritious fish and seaweed soup sufficient to feed 100 men. Though merely illusory this keeps troops moving, maintaining a high morale. It must be noted that a soup stone creates no usable nutrition, and after 2-3 days of such feeding troops are likely to desert in search of real sustenance, so long as they aren't consciously aware of the trick that has been played on them. Those troops that remain become listless, slow-moving, and discontented as the effects of starvation begin to take hold. The soup can be extended with real food, which extends the period before troops begin deserting and decreases listlessness in those remaining.

A dust can be made by slamming the young out of a soup stone and crushing them with their parent stone. Enduring the telepathic cries of pain and terror as this "fragricide" is committed requires a Wisdom check. Success indicates the slammer has an empathetic reaction and cannot attempt to slam again for another day, while failure indicates the ability to continue on with the dust's creation. Dust creation permanently ruins the stone's ability to reproduce or cause a gorging effect, but it can still be used as a soup stone. The dust from 3 soup stones can be used to dust a single humanoid, which polymorphs them into a humanoid sized boulder, in which form they remain for as long as the boulder is washed almost equally by the tides and the sun. At the end of a day considerably more dry than wet, or vice versa, the polymorph ends. Otherwise the boulder must be rolled or removed from its sustaining environment. A remove curse or dispel magic will not save or reveal one left so embouldered.

GP: 800 each.

The Three-Glaive Coat Stand

Many lesser nobles and merchants are forced by their status to keep up appearances beyond what they may be able to afford. Upper middle class standing may provide certain social luxuries, but it also makes one a target for thieves and bandits. Thus, the manors of many such families are furnished with readily available weaponry disguised as casual furnishings. The three-glaive coat stand is just such a furnishing.

The stand appears a normal apparatus for hanging coats. It consists of a legged stave upon which the shafts of 3 glaives have been attached in such a way that their heads jut at positions 12, 4 and 8 if looked at from above as if it were a clock. Each glaive head's top point has a wooden cork upon which robes and assorted garb can be easily hung without ripping. But in a pinch, each glaive can be easily pulled at a moment's notice.

Each glaive is +1, but when two or more are used within 20' of each other they can form a wall of defense which multiplies each one's plus by the number of the glaives present. Thus, two glaives will be +2 each, and three glaives will be +3 each, so long as they all remain in the same 20'.

The center stand's central stave is a +1 quarter staff. Its wielder senses the exact location of the glaives if they are within 60", or their precise direction if beyond that range.

GP: 16,000

Tome of the Petal Tongue

This 24" x 12," non-magical tome is an oddity due to its multicolored leathery cover, its lack of normal pages, and the uniqueness of its contents. The entire book's pages and cover are composed of a compressed block of flower petals. Therefore, turning the "pages" of the book amounts to a task of careful unfolding. On just the book's front there are 5 separate petal fans. But lifting one of these might lift some of the others, as they are all tucked in place as pressed, with not one of them large enough to cover the entire cover. Therefore, whichever page is next can only be determined by a careful appraisal of which one is on top and won't lift any of the others. Otherwise, these petal pages tear as simply as the vellum in an ancient tome. Luckily, the first "page" is easily identified, as the book's title is printed on a palm-sized

petal of blush-colored "leather" fanning out across the middle of the tome's front.

Reading a tome of the petal tongue is a delight, with each unfolded flower petal presenting a new scent. Numerous topics are discussed, each attended by its own descriptive aroma. For instance, when the book speaks of bouquets, a combination of flowery scents arises from the petals; when the book speaks of death, the nose of the reader is assailed with the sickly, overly-sweet smell of rotting flowers. Provided the reader has no allergic reaction, the sniffer of those studying the book becomes more discerning. This attunement sharpens their olfactory abilities, and thereafter they receive a +4 bonus to any rolls relating to sensing or identifying odors of any kind. This ability is more useful than mere bloodhound work. Knowledge of perfumes and colognes might come in quite handy when dealing with women or members of the nobility.

The unwise might page through a tome of the petal tongue and set it aside after all their work for being too concerned with frivolous, useless things. Cunning thieves, spies, and especially druids and rangers quickly note that it is something more. When closely studied the tome details an intricate system of communicating via the arrangement and disposition of flowers. This language of sights and scents has nothing in common with folk knowledge ascribing meaning to red roses, such as love, or black roses, such as death. Far more complicated messages can be communicated using the type of flowers present; the order in which they are arranged; and their placement, scent, and even degree of wilting; each aspect conveying a subtle meaning. Those who study the tome carefully learn how to convey their own messages, and how to recognize when any bed of flowers, arrangement or bouquet has been meaningfully arranged.

A complete study of the tome of the petal tongue requires 14 days minus 1 day per point of combined Intelligence and Wisdom over 26. This same period of study provides the reader with a 90% comprehension of the language of Petals. A greater comprehension can only be achieved through long study at the feet of a master, or at the ground of a master, if planted.

The duration of most messages conveyed by the language of Petals is 1-3 days, at most. Every 4 hours reduces the readability of an arrangement by 10%. Arrangements by druids and rangers lose only half as much readability in the same period. Speaking with plants, per the spell, reveals the entire intention of the original message. A very short message may last another 4-8 hours. No more

than a 3 or 4 medium sized paragraphs can be conveyed. At 10% comprehension only 3 or 4 major keywords will stand out, perhaps identifying the subject of the message, a name, and a verb vaguely indicating action, though without context.

Any druid of at least 7th level automatically spots a small vine cutting tucked into the binding upon completing a study of the tome. When planted, vine this grows to maturity overnight and flowers in the morning sunlight. The arrangement of the vine's flowers directs the druid to cast speak with plants, upon which the druid is taught a new spell:

Pollinated Speak with Plants

Level: 3; Range: 10 miles per level; Components: Touch and a pinch of pollen; Casting Time: 1 turn per 10 miles; Area of Effect: None; Save: None.

This spell is of the old, forgotten ways and thus quite rare. It allows a druid to question any flowering plant as a speak with plants spell, but instead of being spoken directly the question is carried upon the winds, through windblown petals and insect pollen carriers, going from flowering plant to flowering plant up to the spell's maximum range, and then returning with an answer.

Careful use of this spell allows a druid to scry the distances of his domain in a limited way, but only by asking after specific information and waiting for its eventual return. Since the spell uses many plants as its vehicle, the result often returns in the form of a "poll," allowing a druid to measure the result in a way that disregards the occasional rogue flowering plant along the way.

Using the spell in new or unfamiliar areas results in less informative answers since the druid lacks expertise in the ways of the plants there, severely muddying the lines of pollination. Yet plants do not by nature lie, and most messages manage to get through in one form or another.

The spell can also be used to gather a general feel for a druid's new domain and its druidic features, such as types of plants and animals by species and relative strength. But no specifics can be gathered. The spell does not function for rangers in any use.

GP: 6,000

Trefoil's Truffle Box

This 6" x 8" box's fine hardwood cover is hand-painted, sporting award ribbons from fairs, markets, and chefs, placed around a robust pig and topped by the title, "Trefoil's Truffles," all set across the hallmark of the Trefoil family. Underscoring this impressive work, in smaller print at the bottom, a paragraph tells of the proud family Trefoil's award-winning truffle-hunting sow, Trifle, the source of their product's excellence.

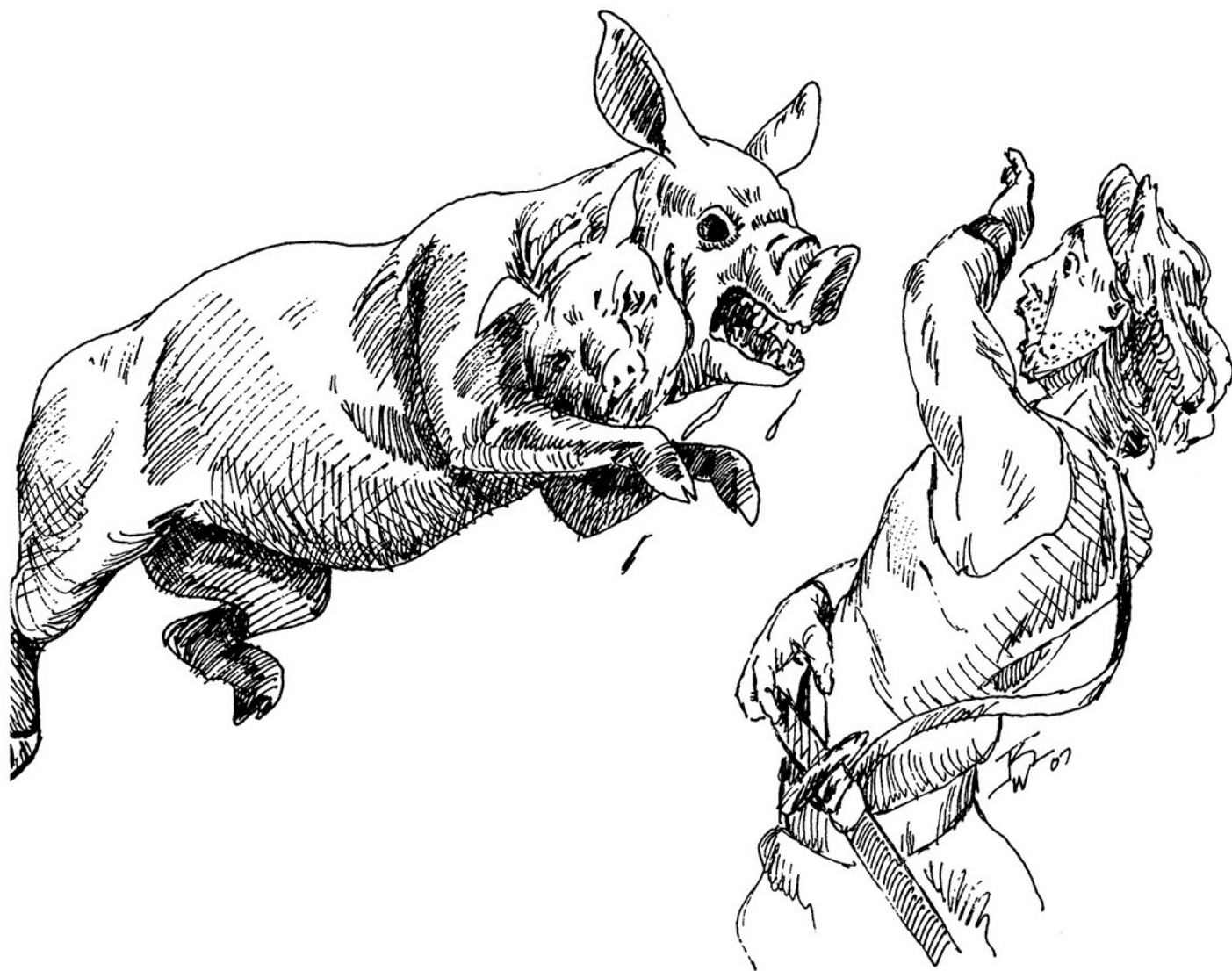
If further interest for the Trefoil tale is expressed, according to legends local to where the box is found, Master Trefoil aged beyond his ability to restrain Trifle at each truffle find. Thus the pig ate all of what she found, and being childless, the elderly couple died in debtor's prison.

Inside this box there is nothing more than a poke, with its drawstrings wound tightly around its opening. Looking more closely, some greasy finger marks can be seen on the inside panels of the box and a few mucks of it on the poke's drawstrings. The poke radiates magic and contains Trifle, the truffle hunting pig. Uncinching the drawstrings ever so slightly releases her in all her fury. She's 600 pounds and hungry, and she'd eat the young and small at this point. Upon being released she is in a ravaging state. (*See stat block, below.*)

Even more shocking, unlike the pig on the box lid, Trifle has two heads! The more perfectly formed head is the truffle hunter; the second head hangs wrinkled and deformed from the side of the neck. Oddly, this smaller head is able to detect magic. Trifle's truffle detection has a range of 50-100', depending upon wind direction. The deformed head detects magic within 60'. Truffle detection dominates over magic detection unless Trifle is stubbornly refusing to hunt truffles, and Trifle stops hunting truffles anytime she is prevented from feeding on at least half her findings.

If the spell speak with animals is used to communicate with either of Trifle's heads it becomes quickly clear that each head has a distinct personality. The normal head has the personality of a clever, greedy, but otherwise normal pig. The deformed head is in fact all that remains of Quixit, a 10th level mage who is the victim of a failed reincarnation spell.

Quixit recalls little of events leading to his death, though he does remember a young druid reassuring people that if trouble came, he could cast a reincarnate spell from a



scroll. Short of a restoration or wish spell there is no way to remove Quixit from the body of Trifle the pig. While in his current state Quixit is unable to cast spells, but possesses an innate ability to detect magic. If Quixit is ever returned to human life he finds his public holdings are gone; although, he may know of some secret cache of wealth or items, per DM's option.

Getting Trifle back into the poke is a tight squeeze. Its dimensional interior, much like a portable hole, is larger than it would appear - large enough to hold a 600 pound pig. But its opening is that of a regular poke, being just 4" spread wide. Getting Trifle back into her poke requires greasing her from nose to tail, placing the sack over her snout and then pushing with a combined Strength of 30 points. This process takes 1 turn, during which those participating have to endure Trifle's squealing and reluctant struggling. Once in her poke, Trifle's aging ceases, but her hunger continues to grow.

Trifle has a special ravaging attack. When hungry, after 2 days in the poke or 8 hours without eating, then Trifle

enters a state of ravaging that adds a +2 to her HD and AC and +3" to movement. When ravaging Trifle fixates on small, quickly edible targets like halflings, children, or other small critters, even including young pigs. She will remain in this state until she makes a kill and finishes eating it, or until 1d3+3 rounds pass, whichever comes first. The only other thing to stop her ravage in progress is a quarter pound of truffles.

Trifle (AC: 6 (8), MV: 12" (15"), HD: 4 (6), HP: 32, ATK: 1, D: 1d6, A: N, Size: medium, Special: ravaging attack; saves as 10th level mage).

Truffles are rare and cannot be cultivated, normally bringing between 225-500 gp per pound, depending on type. An entire day spent wandering the forests with Trifle turns up far more than other pigs might find, resulting in a harvest of 1-3 pounds. Unfortunately, Trifle insists on being allowed to eat at least 50% of each day's harvest, or more if disgruntled with her user. Most temperate climates cannot be worked for truffles in all seasons and a pig as good as Trifle will deplete truffle crops

rapidly, creating a need for longer travel time and risks of unknowingly poaching truffles on someone else's lands.

There is always the possibility of encountering faerie life and other mystical creatures while scouring a forest for truffles. Trifle's deformed head, Quixit, often detects these creatures, as well as any abnormalities in the landscape such as ruins and magical sites. Quixit is quite intelligent (Intelligence 18), but has only a pig's limited ability to communicate. His eyes are clouded over and his head hangs listlessly. Even when he does attempt to communicate, more often than not, he's interrupted by Trifle's more dominate head, which prefers to maintain center stage.

GP: 13,000; Price reflects income potential, adjust for lower experience ratio.

Troll Plaster

Highly rare, this putrid green ointment is thick, rough, and suffused throughout with short, bristly hairs. When opened a jar of troll plaster emits a sharp, acidic sting to the nose, blocking out most other smells. Each jar contains 4d8+4 applications, which may be used in various ways.



A single application of troll plaster is enough to effectively negate all smells and scents within 10'. Dogs and other canines avoid any area containing the scent of troll plaster, if at all possible, and whimper uncontrollably if not allowed to leave the area.

Troll plaster placed upon the skin causes a severe rash that drips with foul-smelling pus. So hideous is the effect that a single application of the plaster reduces Charisma by 2. A second application reduces Charisma by 3, and a third reduces it by 4. The rash is an effective disguise, and is even more useful as a wonderfully repellent "beauty cream" to dissuade unwanted suitors.

Perhaps the most desirable aspect of troll plaster is its usefulness in warding against fear. Applied all over the body, 4 applications of the plaster block all fear for an hour, imparting 90' infravision at the same time.

If left on for longer than an hour troll plaster causes hair growth in the affected area. A single application of plaster can advance a receding hairline up to 3". An entire jar is enough to clothe an average human entirely in foot long hair. This hair may be cut or shaved, but grows back at the same rate as other hair unless "cured" by a remove curse spell.

The sages say alchemists make troll plaster from the skins of trolls.... They also say troll plaster's scarcity is due to the scarcity of alchemists who make troll plaster.

GP: 1,800

The Unfillable Snifter of Quenching & Drenching

This tarnished pewter snifter has been so severely battered that even an edge along its round base has been turned up an inch. Reading the layers of tarnish over its different dents and marks strongly supports the conclusion that the snifter has been thrown about on many separate occasions. Unless its magic is detected it appears to be utterly unremarkable.

Any liquid poured into the unfillable snifter immediately disappears, seeming to drain into some other place. Suspicious kings wishing to observe guests without the fog of intoxication have used this item, accepting drinks from every proffered decanter without fear of overindulgence. Endless drinking contests have been won with it. Entire moats have been drained, albeit slowly, by tossing the snifter into the depths.

The unfillable snifter can dispose of up to 15 gallons (2 cubic feet) of liquid per round, somewhat limiting its usefulness in tactical situations. Draining an entire 10' x 10' x 10' room takes 500 rounds, for example. The moisture of semi-liquids such as stew or mud also drain through the snifter, but instead appear to rapidly dehydrate, becoming a mass of hardened muck in 1d4+2 rounds.

While this device seems quite handy to some, it is an unbearable curse to one other. All liquid poured into it spills over the head of a single cursed being. Anyone near that unlucky individual gets splattered when the snifter is used, adding an element of difficulty to social encounters. It is even possible that the cursed victim gradually drowns while caught in an enclosed space, or if falling

asleep from exhaustion or drunkenness in a shallow gully or other impression.

A remove curse spell can stop the effects of this curse, but only for 12 hours per application of the spell. The curse can only be lifted permanently by taking the snifter from its current owner, which in turn curses the previous owner with the same effect! An identify spell will reveal that liquids do not fill the snifter, but the curse is not automatically revealed by identify spells. It can only be discovered if the diviner focuses on determining where the liquids go.

The owner of the unfillable snifter may eventually detect scrying attempts, soon followed by the sudden appearance of the victim, possibly with assistants. This is especially likely if the owner has poured significant amounts of liquid into the snifter recently. The snifter's peculiar curse is especially heinous if the snifter sinks with a vessel or is tossed into the sea. Giving away the snifter as a useful gift is pure folly.

GP: 600

Varthola Mephameze's Book of Wards

This 6" x 31" x 19" brown tome's leather cover looks as new as the day it was bound into service, although the pages within appear rumpled by a multitude of hands. A bookplate is pasted inside the front cover, with writing from the original author, Varthola Mephameze, who claims to have come upon this particular copy of his acclaimed work and updated it with a new section drawn from his continuing research. A cursory glance at the last fifth of the book bears this out – the end pages are far less weathered.

Mephameze advises within the book:

"Wards are the common man's defense against harmful powers. They work for anyone who is not a spellcaster, so long as they have practiced warding faithfully and not let their guard down. It is no simple task making one's wards effective. Knowing one or two signs and gestures may work well under their first few implementations, but retaining new found power's potency is a fleeting tale, to be told only by the uninitiated. Working the proper signs requires a constant watch for the proper rituals, inflections, and fo-

cuses, that one might raise their simple mind against the continuously warping evils of demons and mages."

And also:

"This book's power lies neither in its 232 apotropes against demon possessed neighbors, nor in its 12 ways to properly perform a ritual cat skinning." No, the importance of this tome is found in the consistent application of its principles. Thus, the disciplined reader will ward against anything and everything if they are to receive the benefits of its wise. And it should be the goal of every warder to educate others in the 14,992 proper wards still known to man. In doing so, they will find their own wards rendered far more potent and effective."

The truth, though, is something else entirely. While there is nothing truly magical between the book's covers, it is indeed a magical item, of sorts – it is the living hide of the eldest imp, Varthola that binds this book. Varthola is bound in the book by his master, the Noble Lord Wizard Mephameze, but only his hide shows to the world his presence, and none would suspect the hide belongs to a living imp. The rest of Varthola is dimensionally flattened into the cover's reverse side and glued firmly beneath mere end papers.

How his master affixed him cannot be clear, nor is it known to Varthola how the task was done. Being the eldest of the imps, Varthola is 100% magic resistant. But where his resistance should have naturally protected him from being wrapped and bound about sheepish skin, it now prevents his impish release by means of dispelling magic or by the use of devilish clerical interventions.

All of the wards described in the book are rituals, hand-signs, and symbols compiled by Varthola over time in the hope that one of them might free him when used by a reader. All the wards in the front of the book have been used and failed, each being 'impotent.' Using his daily communications with the lower planes, Varthola constantly adds more rituals to the end of the book. All that remains to be done is for Varthola to convince those reading his pages to perform the unused rituals for him. Yet, he has no voice, merely the ability to add inking and pages to his bookmarked innards.

Any reader perusing the book must save vs. spell at -4. This save is modified by -1 for each point of Intelligence

or Wisdom below 12. A failed saving throw results in the reader becoming absolutely convinced of the book's usefulness. In addition to devotedly performing its warding rituals each day, the reader will vociferously, and if need be, physically defend the book and its contents, contending that those who oppose its teachings are, "just envious of their new found knowledge;" or, "hate the thought that magic could somehow serve the common folk;" or, "simply don't like things they can't understand." Even a few otherwise notable scholars have thus been tricked into arguing that, "Anyone who would find a simple book of wards something more than it is will never overcome the fears of their personal superstition and gain the enlightenment invested in this living shield of the people!"

A successful save prevents one from becoming devoted to the book and allows the reader to notice certain oddities, such as the fact that it sometimes falls open to certain pages, that the covers seem to heal from any scuff mark, or that other readers seem unusually devoted to its teachings and defense. Of course, even noticing these things, it is entirely possible for the devoted to intellectually convince this person who made their save to either invest in their enthusiasm or indulge them in theirs.

There is a chance once per month that Varthola is finally freed by one of the rituals practiced by the book's adherents. Unfortunately, the chance is miniscule and not worthy of calculating. But, if a combined party composed of a somewhat dunderheaded warrior, a cunning sneak, an insightful spellcaster, and one who thinks themselves holier than thou take a combined interest in honing their warding skills, then, the sum effect of their attempts to breathe life into the wards will result in a 10% chance per week. Many of the wards involve odd postures or contortions of the hands, which in themselves seem to ward off anyone watching, just due to the possibility that there is truly a nearby demon being warded off. As practiced and adapted, each devotee gradually becomes certain their warding is working. The hitherto unknown spirits and bizarre events each of the wards is meant to protect against "magically" never occur or appear! Yet, even with such amazing success, the book's text insists one must always add more wards, to be sure. If freed, Varthola immediately flees in a cloud of floating pages. (See the Gutted Sheets of Varthola.) Varthola is the archetypal imp: mischievous, malicious, and mean. He has learned much, becoming a scholar in his own right. He has the maximum possible hit points for one of his kind and possesses an extreme degree of cunning. So clever is he that even his mighty master found him difficult to contain. Varthola can assume the

form of a raven or a goat, but contrary to other imps, he is able to attack through these seemingly passive animal forms by stabbing with the raven's beak or gouging with the goat's horns, both as if attacking with his poisonous tail. He naturally detects the presence of any good-aligned beings and has the greatest contempt for lawful good beings, which he will focus on in combat. Varthola prefers to use his cunning before his physical abilities. He will first attempt to befriend his enemies using highly elaborate and convincing lies. His ability to estimate most any creature's habits, traits and psychological vulnerabilities allows him to con even the highly intelligent, such as the wizard Mephameze. However, Varthola is permanently bound by a wizardly pact with the lower planes to serve Mephameze. But because Varthola is as clever as a genie in his ability to contort the wishes of his master, this turned out to be more of a curse than a service to Mephameze.

The wizard Mephameze is able to sense if Varthola has been set free and invariably comes looking for the idiots who participated in his release. Mephameze is highly skilled in spells of binding and engages all involved to regain his ill-tempered "pet." Depending on the DM's campaign, Mephameze is at least an 18th level, lawful evil pure spellcaster. He arrives ready for battle with all the equipment and resources appropriate to his level and class, including a personally written scroll with 4 geas spells. He will first attempt to obligate responsible parties by reason and reward, then by a sudden geas if any sign of disagreement arises. Even after performing under geas, party members who have been especially effective, and lawful evil party members, will be rewarded by Mephameze with both gold and a minor, but useful, magic item. The magic item will be wizard marked to ensure Mephameze's ability to target these potential servants through future scrying.

Varthola (AC: 0, MV: 12"/24", HD: 2+2, HP: 18, ATK: 1, D: 1d6, save vs. poison or die, A: LE, S: small, Special: MR 100%, polymorphs into and attacks in raven and goat form per above, immune to fire, cold and electricity, regenerates 1 hit point per round).

The DM is encouraged to select an important lawful evil wizard from his own campaign to replace Mephameze. This will also change the second name in the book's title.

GP: - Whatever anyone devoted to the book might pay for it.

Vermirrune Scrolls

This rolled bundle contains several rat pelts. Upon unrolling the bundle, the skin side of each pelt is covered with strange, paw-like runes. Each bundle of verminskin scrolls contains 1d4 skins, with 1d3 runes printed upon each. The runes are easily pronounceable to any spellcaster who studies them for a brief period. The type of rune, or runes, on each pelt is determined by rolling on the table below. Note that no bundle of verminskin scrolls contains more than one scourge rune:

01-50 – *Squeeks*: Each of these runes summons 4d4 giant rats (AC: 8, MV: 12", HD: ½, HP: 4 each, ATK: 1, D: 1-3, 10% chance of random disease, A: N, S: small).

51-80 – *Squenks*: Each of these runes summons 1d4+2 superior rat men (AC: 6, MV: 12", HD: 2, HP: 16 each, ATK: 1, D: 1d6+2 sword, or 1d4+2 bite + save vs. random disease, A: NE, S: small).

81-00 – *Scourge*: Each of these runes summons 1d3 superior wererats (AC: 4, MV: 12", HD: 4, HP: 32 each, ATK: 3, claw/claw/bite, D: 1d3/1d3/1d6+2, Special: If taking more than 50% damage from wererat attacks the target becomes infected with wererat lycanthropy).

Pronouncing any single rune activates any other runes on the same pelt. The pelt itself becomes a creature of the greatest type summoned and assumes leadership over all other creatures summoned by the runes. If wererats are summoned, then there is a 10% cumulative chance per wererat that one of them is a 4th level thief. This creature spends any idle moments practicing its pocket picking skills on the scroll's reader until discovered and otherwise commanded.

Creatures summoned by the runes, and anyone infected by the wererats, remain under the caster's command until the next moonrise or until killed, obeying any orders they are given. The leader-type formed from the pelt conveys the scroll reader's orders to his "troops," insuring intended orders are followed to the letter as long as he is within 6" of his summoner. If ordered to move beyond that radius the leader gains a certain amount of autonomy in interpreting his orders, but does not betray or otherwise harm his summoner in any case.

Command of any creatures summoned by a rune may be extended for one additional night by expending any

one of the other runes from any of the other pelts in the bundle. Using the rune in this way does not cause other runes on the same pelt to activate. When a pelt's last rune is used, it vanishes. Any summoned creatures that survive until the end of their term of service scatter. Targets infected with lycanthropy may turn on the caster.

GP: 200 per rune.

The Vineskull of the Golden-Leafed Palm

Tough black vines twine in and out of this bleached white skull, penetrating every opening and tightly intermingling in its brain case. Six of the vines have pierced holes out of the crown and wave their yellow leaves over it like conquering flags. Each leaf is palm-sized, with a slight tint of red around the edges, and although there may be no movement of air, each slowly sways back and forth, punctuated by an occasional jerk.

Anyone who touches one of these leaves feels a soft touch of fuzz as the leaf caresses their palm. The peach fuzz leaf covering consists of thousands of tiny needles that sip blood through the skin. There is no noticeable pain or damage, but the leaf's red edges brighten and its yellow heart subtly pulsates orange. More than one leaf can be touched by others at the same time with the same results. Those touched by one of the leaves must save vs. spell or enter a trancelike state. An entranced character receives a vision of their own skull hovering before them, enwrapped in vines, and the vines move the skull's jaw as it speaks:

"Choose now. The Order of the Black Vine scorns uncertainty. Accept the entwining power of the sign of the golden leaf upon your palm, and in sunlit days forever feel its power. While in your dark days you shall still bloom, as a flower upon our vine. But, you must choose now or forever pass unconnected in this life, alone and in mere flesh."

Simultaneously, the vines on the skull unravel and form the loose shape of a body beneath the skull. Under no circumstances does the vision include specific details about the powers of the sign. Rejection releases the trance. Pause causes the vines to begin withering and the entranced subject begins to feel an approaching sense of loss. Acceptance of the sign of the golden leaf releases the trance and imprints the palm with a symbol of a red edged gold leaf entwined by a black vine. At conclusion of all trance sessions the vineskull teleports to another

recruiting location. It acquires this power only after bleeding a palm and conducting at least one trance.

The sign of the golden leaf indicates membership in the Order of the Black Vine, but it is more than a symbol. The leaf upon the palm is a leaf upon an unseen interplanar vine. How these leaves interconnect is known only to the highest members of the Black Vine, but if a member is isolated by spells, or by influences blocking or dispelling the local flow of magic, the sign temporarily withers. The sign otherwise operates across all planes and through all materials and elements. Safely removing the mark of the golden leaf requires a wish or a miracle. Removing it by any other means results in permanent loss of 1d6 hit points.

The special powers of the golden-leafed palm grow to the limit of the character's level:

1st level: The Open Leaf

The imprinted palm can be raised to the sky once per day for 1 turn or longer to receive 1d6 points of healing. The ability works only in sunlight. Complete cloud cover and darkness prevent it. Partial cloud cover of 50% requires 2 turns of exposure and 75% requires 3 turns. The points are first rolled and then accrue over the period of exposure.

3rd level: The Unraveling Vine

Rangers receive a +15% bonus to snares. Monks and thieves receive a +15% bonus to climbing. Fighters and bards receive a +3 bonus to grappling. Spellcasters receive the ability to cast 20' of black vine from their palm once per day, which may act as a conduit for any touch based spell. The vine unerringly strikes any designated target within range. The vine lasts for 3 rounds per 3 levels, during which time it can be used as a conduit for touch-based spells. Alternately, the spellcaster can use the vine to grasp an object or use the vine as a normal rope.

Black Vine (AC: 7, HP: 6, Size: ½" thick).

6th level: The Sinew of Sunlight

Combat oriented classes receive an open-handed attack with the golden palm once per 4 levels per day, causing 1d6 +3 magical points of damage. Strength and other hand-to-hand melee bonuses apply. Spell oriented classes receive the ability to drain an opponent's blood with

a touch from the golden imprint once per 4 levels per day. This causes 1d4 +1 points of magical damage and heals the same amount if the spellcaster is wounded. Both kinds of sinew attacks impart a leaf-shaped brand of burning sunlight upon the target for 1 day and cause an additional 1d3+3 points of damage to undead in the following round. While an enemy is branded their presence is automatically detected when approaching within 9" of any member of the Black Vine.

9th level: The Creeping Shadow

Those marked with the sign of the golden leaf cannot advance in its powers without training by a member who is higher on "The Black Vine," level 12+. Most of these high level members are headquartered on the hemi-plane of Shadowstrands, located on the underside of Starstrands.

Members of the Order of the Black Vine develop an aesthetic appreciation, akin to an artist's appreciation of anatomy, for the shape of the noggins of those around them. They become acutely aware of the solidity and shape of the underlying skulls. Occasionally, when a sudden shaft of sunlight breaks through the clouds, in a flash a member sees the naked skulls of every humanoid lit by the shaft. It may be assumed that only a master knows precisely why.

Any character marked with the sign of the golden leaf dies at 0 hit points, at which time 6 leafy vines sprout and enwrap the body. Creeping across the ground at a rate of 3" per round, the vines immediately move the body to the nearest foliage and the leaves on the vines change to match the colors of that foliage, effectively camouflaging the body's position. Only another marked with the golden palm leaf may convince the vines to relinquish their hold upon the body, and no form of resurrection or reincarnation is possible until this occurs. An entwined corpse can only be animated by a caster in control of the vines, or by a member of the Black Vine. When only the bones of the body remain, the vines take root in the brain case and become a vineskull. They abandon all other bones and these turn instantly into inert dust. Vineskulls are used for recruiting, as well as acting as the remote eyes and beacons of the Order of the Black Vine.

Vineskull (AC: 4, MV: 6", HD: 4, HP: 16 each, ATK: 6, D: 1D10 - crushing and strangling, A: NG, S: small, Special: The vines never attack unless attacked first. Each vine receives a 30% chance of grabbing any missile fired at it, and the vine is



immune to water and earth based attacks, also saving for one-quarter damage vs. electrical or fire based attacks. The skull, itself, saves as bone +1 per remaining vine).

GP: - ; Calculate experience as if GP value were 6,000.

Wands of Medusa

Like other creatures, medusae occasionally lose their hair. When this happens the shed snake turns to stone and falls to the ground. Those few that manage to fall without shattering become wands of medusa. Each wand

appears to be a curled and gnarled stone sculpted in the shape of a snake, about 1' long. All wands of medusa have a range of 6" and shatter after use. The power(s) of a given wand is determined by rolling on the table:

01-30 – The wand allows any healing spell with a range of "touch" to be cast as though it had a range of 6". The recipient of the spell must not be in combat. When used, multiple beams of white light lance toward the target, bathing each wound. Reversed healing spells or healing spells used to damage undead can also be cast this way.

31-80 – The wand causes a target's skin to petrify for 1d3 turns. This has the effect of slowing the target by 25% and providing a +4 bonus to AC. Other effects are dependent on the type of stone composing the wand (roll 1d4):

1. *White Marble*: The target resembles a masterful sculpture, receiving a +4 bonus to Charisma.
2. *Granite*: The target appears more steadfast. Underlings receive a +3 bonus to morale.
3. *Moonstone*: The target appears more mystical. Any turn undead attempts are rolled as though 2 levels higher.
4. *Obsidian*: The target appears more grave and serious. All opponents receive a -2 penalty to morale.

81-00 – The wand has both powers and does not disintegrate until it has been used twice in any combination.

Wands of medusa cannot be recharged, but their shattered shards are valuable to alchemists for making potions of protection from paralyzation. The shards of a single wand are worth 50 gp.

A typical medusa's den contains 1d4 intact wands per medusa and 1d4 broken shards, depending on how tidy the medusae have been lately. The dens of older medusas contain larger statuary. This doubles the yield of intact wands because statues more often break the fall of shed snakes.

GP: 300 each.

Windblack Tea

Windblack tea comes in an unfinished teak box with a crumpled parchment advertisement tucked inside, reading:

"Dockside dealings can often get rough. That's why the best merchants know, in just a few sips off a cup of windblack tea the calm essences of the southern seas are carried through your veins and mind. You feel sure in your own clothes and your eyes become as dark and unforgiving as an eastern typhoon. Be convinced. Windblack tea will deep-six unwanted concerns aft."

Windblack tea is a strong, bitter herbal brew favored by seagoing merchants, ship captains, and others who must often live by their skill at dissembling. The tea fills the drinker with confidence and enhances speaking ability, greatly aiding in negotiations.

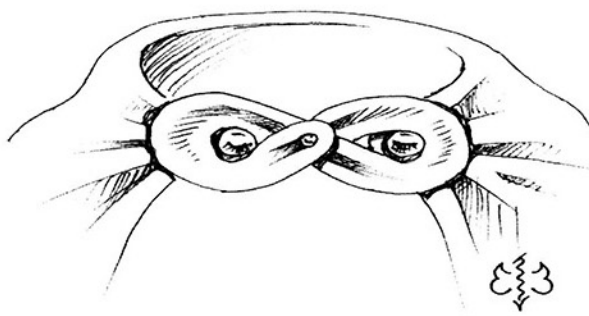
A typical box contains 7-12 tea bags and one bag brews a single cup of tea. When consumed in a single draught the tea provides a +4 bonus to any rolls made to determine the outcome of charming, lying, intimidating, or otherwise attempting to influence the actions of another through negotiation. This effect lasts for 1d4+2 rounds. Sipping the tea continuously doubles the duration but halves the bonus.

It should be noted that windblack tea has a very distinctive odor. Anyone familiar with the tea, and close enough to smell the drinker's breath, can discern windblack tea is being used.

GP: 100 per bag.

Wizard Tongues

Wizard tongues are tabs of leather, pierced with a button hole at each end. They are often dyed bright colors, embroidered, and inscribed with tiny faded runes. They



are designed to be worn on a pair of adjacent buttons, acting as decorations or clothing fasteners. Depending on local fashions they can be used to fasten shirts, cloaks, trousers, or even backpacks and pouches. Wizard tongues are typically found singly or in matching sets of 2-6.

Each wizard tongue absorbs a single magic missile. Alternately, a wizard tongue can absorb up to 4 points of spell damage, after any applicable saving throw has been rolled. Each tongue glows briefly when it absorbs damage, thereafter crumbling to dust and falling to the ground, accompanied by the faint sound of chanting. A maximum of 4 tongues can be worn at one time. Spent tongues can be replaced at a rate of one per round from extras.

It is rumored that in ancient times wizard tongues were sometimes enchanted to absorb 5 or even 10 times as much spell energy. It is possible that some of these ancient fasteners yet remain in ancient, forgotten ruins or elsewhere across the planes.

GP: 100 each.

Wrinkle of Faith

A wrinkle of faith is a thick, palm-sized piece of leather displaying a raised ridge or wrinkle down its center. The brown dye of the leather's finish shines orange where the wrinkle has been rubbed over the years. Rubbing this holy wrinkle increases the efficacy of a healing spell, healing +1 point of damage.

If a wrinkle of faith is placed upon the wounds of a character dying in the previous round, and if enough healing can be applied to that character to restore a positive hit point total in the following round, then the character does not die. Using a wrinkle of faith in this way reduces the wrinkle of faith to mere scraps of leather, destroying it.

A wrinkle of faith is made of hide taken from the wrinkled dewlap of a living sacred cow and tanned into leather by 3 tanners while 3 clerics cast 3 cure light wounds upon it in 3 minutes, accompanied by 3 prayers to 3 good gods by 3 supplicants each having a 3 lettered name, starting at 3:30 and ending at 3:33 in the afternoon.

GP: 900

Zayene's Dimming Brush

The curvaceous obsidian handle of this oversized artist's paintbrush magically seeps a tarry paint, which runs down the coarse alien hairs of its brush, saturating them. Yet it is drip free.

When touched to a surface the brush's black dabs of paint shine and gleam, but a after a moment of use small black insects can be seen crawling in the paint, messing its lines. Their hairy legs drag the paint outward, adding a subtle dimensional texture and depth to the lines, which begin to vibrate with subtle displacements.

Using this brush once per week, an artful wielder may paint into existence a copy of any other painting they are intimately familiar with and then travel through this copy and out the surface of the other painting, wherever it may be. However, they must return back through the same painting within 2 rounds per level. Failure to return on time absorbs them into the nearest art object they pass, and casts them into the depicted reality intended or implied by its creator for 2d4 days. Wounds and other gains or losses within this reality are temporary, but death arrests all of the artist's creative abilities until a remove curse is cast upon them. This curse will resist removal depending upon the severity of the death and the potency of the depicted reality of the absorbing artwork. If passing near a dozen art pieces, but one of them is by a master, that piece will be the absorbing target. For example, a sculpture of a mythological warrior slaying a giant will put the absorbed artist into the myth depicted before a toad doorstep absorbs them into a swampy reality.

The painting chosen for copying must be well depicted or it will introduce chances of error similar to the degrees of unfamiliarity modifying a teleport spell. However, in this case, being off target means arriving at a nearby painting or a distant and entirely unintended painting in that area. Again, masterworks are more attractive.

Upon either the artist's illusory death, the expiration of 2d4 trapped days, or upon returning within the allotted time, the artist returns through the painting's surface and it becomes a regular painting. The time required to make a sufficient copy is highly variable, per DM's judgment.

GP: 14,000

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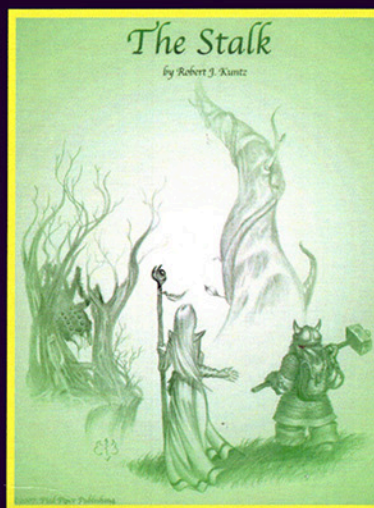
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