

THE QUILLS OF MEPHISTOPHELES



BY CEAZOR

A Tomb of Fantastic Quills Sourced from the Laboratories of Cania

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

I am Caralan, the scribe. Yes, just Caralan. When I took my station as a scribe, I found the need for a family name was gone. Scribes don't usually have many dealings with others and tend to live reclusive lifestyles. The reclusivity, I attribute, is the main cause of my downfall.

I spent the great part of 15 years at an easel, not a glorious life indeed, but I was content. It was safe work in a dangerous world. And I convinced myself it held meaning and that my actions had agency.

But as the years passed, I found myself growing more and more ambitious. When I looked at the master scribe, seated at the front of the crowd of scribes, I knew that chair would not be mine, nor did I want it. I began to grow discontent.

Then the day that changed my fate came. I awoke and after breakfasting on nuts and bread, the meal of a scribe, I sat at my easel. As I collected my thoughts and prepared myself for the day's work, my attention was taken by the slick black quill that stood in place of the goose feather I had left there at the end of yesterday's work.

I had the instinct to avoid it, but I grasped it anyways. That was when I blacked out, but not in the manner that is commonly correlated with the expression. I was still conscious, but all my surroundings were gone. I found myself in a soundless, lightless, void. Gone were the scratchings of the quills of my fellow scribes that had gotten a jump on the day's work, gone also, was the scents of ink, parchment, and body odor of a room of men that have unspokenly agreed that bathing was an inefficient use of time.

In the dark, I heard a voice. I won't relate the entirety of that conversation here, as it would reveal personal weaknesses that I would rather not share with all that read this tome, but I will relate the contract that was struck.

I often told myself, between the time of contractual binding and that of maturity, that the voice was that of Mephistopheles himself, but, in truth, there can be no certainty.

But an agreement with Mephistopheles was made, as I now pen this final note fully knowing my next destination is Cania.

Please, enjoy the tome I penned with my very hand, with the same black feather quill that started it all, that contains the collection of the quills from the laboratories of Cania.

I, the signed, hereby commit my soul to the service of Mephistopheles for an eternity to be called upon on the day of the death of my mortal self and to serve as seen fit by Mephistopheles. In return for this pledge, Mephistopheles will grant, the signed, access to all the knowledge and items found in a single laboratory of Cania for cataloging and sharing with whoever shall gain access to the tome the signed has penned in his mortal lifetime.

Caralan
the scribe

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page	Item
3	The Lying Quill of Truth
3	The Quill of Sloppy Speed
3	The Quill of Contracts
3	The Quill of Hunger
3	The Quill of Conditioning
3	The Quill of Mage
3	The Quill of Feather Fall
4	The Quill of Stone Ink
4	The Quill of Remote Ink.
4	The Quill of Spell Storing
4	The Quill of Styx
4	The Quill of Leech
4	The Quill of Elemental Attunement
4	The Quill of Stench.
4	The Quill of Standing
4	The Quill of Deep Trance
5	The Quill of Alignment
5	The Quill of Wisdom
5	The Quill of Parchmentless Writing
5	The Quill of Translation.
5	The Quill of Lockpicking
5	The Quill of Transmutation
5	The Quill of Warmth
5	The Quill of the Phoenix
5	The Quill of Sentience
5	The Quill of Silence.
5	The Quill of Calm Winds.
6	The Quill of a Big Black Dot
6	The Quill of Spectacular Triviality.
6	The Quill of Luck
6	The Quill of Illusionary Gender
6	The Quill of Avernus
6	The Quill of Ranking
6	The Golden Quill of Mephistopheles
6	The Quill of Glory
6	The Quill of Finding
6	The Quill of Relative Valuation
6	The Quill of Glibness
6	The Quill of Prowess

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page	Item
7	The Quill of Loopholes
7	The Quill of Redemption
7	The Quill of Quick Study.
7	The Quill of Summoning
7	The Demon Quills
7	The Quill of Asmodeus
7	The Quill of Zariel
7	The Quill of Dispater
7	The Quill of Mammon
7	The Quill of Fierna and Belial
7	The Quill of Levistus
7	The Quill of Glasya
7	The Quill of Baalzebul
7	The Quill of Mephistopheles
8 - 9	Credits and Legals

THE QUILLS OF MEPHISTOPHELES

The following list of quills is the catalog of Caralan the Scribe. Herein, is an indexed spectacular range of magical quills produced in the arcane laboratories of Cania run by the minions of Mephistopheles.

Some of the following items contain a description displayed in this manner for a suggested mechanical change for use in the Dungeons and Dragons 5th Edition (5e) ruleset. In cases where this description is omitted, there was either no suitable mechanic or a need for a specific 5e one. With all expansions, and even the base ruleset in my opinion, these descriptions are guidelines and are certainly open to edits, reworking, or complete changes by both the Dungeon Master and the Players at their table.

THE LYING QUILL OF TRUTH

This quill vocalizes what is being written for all except the scribe to hear. However, when writing the truth, this quill instead produces a lie and when writing a lie it produces the truth. This quill was an attempt to rid contract signings of deceit but was found to be more troublesome than expected.

In 5e, using this quill might grant a witness of a scribe an advantage on Insight checks.

THE QUILL OF SLOPPY SPEED

This quill allows a scribe to write at twice their normal speed getting twice as much done in the same amount of time. However, there is a 10% chance that unknown mistakes are made. When used to scribe spells to scrolls, a wizard should take care as the scrolls produced might fizzle, backfire, or be cast a completely different spell. This quill was an attempt to increase efficiency in the scribes of the libraries of Cania, but the margin of error was found to be unacceptable.

In 5e, a roll on any wild magic table, such as the table in the PHB on pg. 104 might be a good idea for when the 10percent comes into play. When scribing a scroll, or two, a DM can secretly roll for the 10percent and take note of scrolls that have errors.

THE QUILL OF CONTRACTS

This quill, when used to sign a contract, becomes bound to that contract and can't be used to sign any other contract. In fact, it doesn't hold ink any longer and can not even be used as a regular quill. In the event that the contract is breached the quill turns to ash. This quill was an attempt to help contractors keep dibs on their contracts, but was found to be more trouble than it was worth. The task of cataloging the quills was tedious.

THE QUILL OF HUNGER

By writing something about food with this quill, the scribe is freed from the burden of hunger. It does not free them from the obligation of nourishment, rather allows a being to continue their work. When the scribe stops writing, their hunger returns. This quill is designed to keep scribes at work, but it has caused the death of quite a few beings as they worked themselves into starvation.

In 5e, this quill might grant users freedom from one instance of a need for rations. But when they finally do eat, they must consume the missed meal.

THE QUILL OF CONDITIONING

When held in one's hand, it relieves the holder of discomfort caused by their environment. This quill is often given to scribes in harsh climates where they would otherwise require increased hydration.

In 5e, this quill will negate the need for extra water consumption from adventures that require this need from harsh environments

THE QUILL OF MAGE

When a scribe uses this quill to write out menial tasks, the quill attempts to go about the completion of that task. The quill is often used to complete mundane tasks such as cleaning in order to grant a scribe more time to work.

In 5e, this quill functions like that of the spell mage hand and requires attainment by a spellcaster that has learned that spell. It would then free up that cantrip spot for another spell.

THE QUILL OF FEATHER FALL

This quill is not really a quill at all but can function as one as any other feather might. However, it does store the magic of a single spell. When this feather is snapped in half, the magic is released and the user is granted the effect of the spell Feather Fall for as long as the user holds both pieces of the feather in each hand. This quill was designed to be used as a gift for people in the peril of falling in a hope they could sign their soul away for the benefit of being saved from a deadly fall. When too many souls were lost, as victims broke the quill before signing, the idea was discarded.

In 5e, this quill functions in a similar way as a scroll of featherfall, but has a duration of :until the caster drops either half of the broken feather.

THE QUILL OF STONE INK

This quill can use stone, dirt, or rocks in place of ink. The material is reduced at the same rate as if it were ink. This quill was abandoned as the frozen wastes of Cania are not plentiful in anything but snow and ice.

In 5e, it simply removes the need for ink in scribing. However a DM might find it interesting to add effects that speak of stone, dirt, or rock in the effect of the spell. Perhaps by adding bludgeoning damage to a spell that doesn't already have it.

THE QUILL OF REMOTE INK

This quill, once dipped in a bottle of ink, becomes bound to that bottle and doesn't need to be dipped again. The bottle of ink continues to be reduced, and when empty the quill can be bound to a new supply. This quill is a very common item found in the libraries of Cania but is only given to scribes that deserve this luxury.

THE QUILL OF SPELL STORING

This quill when used to scribe a spell scroll in the normal manner, instead produces a blank parchment. The spell is instead stored in the quill and requires further somatic materials to cast. The quill is consumed in the casting of the spell. There are a fair amount of these quills produced as they are consumables. They have the added benefit of being more durable than parchment scrolls.

In 5e, this quill will function the same as a spell scroll with the added benefit of being more durable (it's waterproof) but with the added need of somatic materials to use it.

THE QUILL OF STYX

This quill grants a scribe the ability to call forth a ferryman of the River Styx. Standing on the shore of the river, a scribe needs only write "Merrenoloth" and a ferryman will come. This quill doesn't grant the scribe any benefit in negotiations with the ferryman.

THE QUILL OF LEECH

When this quill is used to write the source of poison on an afflicted creature the poison is drawn out of the creature destroying the quill. This quill's usefulness is great but the actual name of the source of poison needs to be known.

In 5e, it's a good idea to require players to make skill checks, such as Nature or Medicine checks to know the source of the poison.

THE QUILL OF ELEMENTAL ATTUNEMENT

This quill holds chromatic energy. When used to draw an image of a chosen element, fire, lightning, etc, on a weapon, it grants the weapon a small measure of damage in that element when used to attack. The quill is consumed when used in this manner. This quill is often given in trades with the other Lords of the Nine.

In 5e, this quill can come in varying degrees of strength to suit the level of characters being given the item. For example +1d4 fire damage, or 2d6 ice damage.

THE QUILL OF STENCH

This quill, when used to write anything, lets forth an unbearable stench. The quill was an attempted design that went polar. Its intended use was to make the halls of scribes more bearable but was an error of some long-suffering soul that is undoubtedly sentenced to some unthinkable turmoil.

In 5e, there are a lot of possible adjustments, it could instill the conditions like frightened or stunned, give disadvantage on skill checks made in the clouds, or just be used in interesting role-playing situations.

THE QUILL OF STANDING

This quill allows the holder to rest while standing. This quill is often used by Mephistophelian scribes to rid themselves of the need for sleeping quarters. As a result, such scribes are able to spend more of their time at their stations.

In 5e, this quill could remove the need of armor to be removed during long rests, or lessens the chance of surprise when attacked while sleeping.

THE QUILL OF DEEP TRANCE

This quill allows the scribe to enter a deep trance while writing spectacular fiction, that allows them to gain the benefits of 8 hours of rest in 4 hours. It is physically damaging to exit this trance prematurely. This quill was another attempt to increase efficiency but it was found that the fantastic hallucinations were highly addictive.

In 5e, this quill grants a character a temporary trait comparable to the elven trance race trait with the added con that it's difficult, or impossible to break out of.

THE QUILL OF ALIGNMENT

This quill produces text that can only be read by a creature of the same alignment as that of the author. This quill was abandoned as most of the need for secrecy in the Nine Hells is in correspondences that are between the lords and their minions. And other lords seldom have difficulty producing like aligned minions to read intercepted texts.

THE QUILL OF WISDOM

This quill can be used one time to write out a single question. The quill will instead produce two answers on the parchment, one of which is false. The unpredictability of this quill has placed it in disuse.

In 5e, this quill works like a single spell scroll of the cleric spell Divination but instead of needing cryptic answers it supplies one true and one false answer. The DM might not want to simply write the same sentence twice with one of them having a “not.”

THE QUILL OF PARCHMENTLESS WRITING

This quill allows a scribe to write on nearly any surface effectively. Spells that are scrolled on alternative materials still consume the material when cast. This is often used in cases where the text wants to be hidden in plain sight.

THE QUILL OF TRANSLATION

This quill allows a scribe to write a single word, in any language that he is aware exists. A scribe may only use this once per day. The time limitation on this quill has caused it to be seldom used, but it is still in production.

THE QUILL OF LOCKPICKING

This quill is durable and can be used in the place of a lockpicking set. This quill is a favorite of the minions of Glasya.

THE QUILL OF TRANSMUTATION

This unique quill can be used to change the color of lead to that of gold. The change is only temporary but is indistinguishable. This quill was used by Glasya when she bought her souls in Minauros.

In 5e, a duration of a few minutes might be best, where days would generally give “tricksters” far too much time to make a getaway.

THE QUILL OF WARMTH

This quill, when used to write the word “warmth” in any language, grants the scribe immunity to natural cold. This quill is often used when scribes are required to traverse either Cania or Stygia.

In 5e, the quill will not grant the bearer immunity to spell damage, but allow them to traverse the tundra.

THE QUILL OF THE PHOENIX

When the bearer of this quill is knocked unconscious, it revives them, only marginally, but in doing so it sends forth an explosion of flame that does moderate damage to any creature nearby. This explosion consumes the quill and is involuntary.

In 5e, when a character is reduced to 0 hit points, this quill will heal them 1d4 damage and do 1d6 damage to any creature within 10ft. This effect happens without choice and in the first instance.

THE QUILL OF SENTIENCE

This quill, while being used to write, will produce messy penmanship when more than one devil is nearby the scribe. This quill is used in the Nine Hells when secret documents are being produced. It is designed to be used by a single devil, thus the need for detection of the presence of two devils.

In 5e, this quill will detect the presence of at least two devil's. However, it could easily be extended to include all fiends.

THE QUILL OF SILENCE.

When used to write, this quill creates a pocket of quiet. This quill is often used for tasks that require full concentration where interruptions might prove fatal.

In 5e, when used to write continuously this quill creates a sphere of silence 30ft. in diameter.

THE QUILL OF CALM WINDS

When writing with this quill, winds are redirected away from the scribe creating a 5 ft sphere of windlessness. This quill is used when the annoyance of wind on parchment becomes unbearable.

In 5e, this quill could either protect a user from spells that use winds to force movement, or to give resistance or immunity to thunder damage, or simply as a tool of convenience.

THE QUILL OF A BIG BLACK DOT

When this quill is used to draw a dot with a diameter of six inches it produces a portal that leads to one of the vaults of the Mephistophelian library. This quill is used to transport completed documents to the vaults for safekeeping.

In 5e, this quill creates a small portal than could be used to dispose of things. Retrieving items would not be possible unless the being were small enough to enter the portal. But who knows where it goes and what they will meet. The duration should again be limited, and may depend on its intended use.

THE QUILL OF SPECTACULAR TRIVIALITY

When this quill is used to write about things of a trivial nature, the writer is instilled with a great sense of fascination. This quill is given to scribes with tight deadlines that are asked to do mundane writing tasks.

In 5e, this quill could be used to charm or befriend a being, or at least incapacitate them by tricking them to put the pen to paper. a DC 13 wisdom check might be a suitable requirement to resist the charms.

THE QUILL OF LUCK

If this quill is used to write about another creature as it performs a task, it will grant the performer of the task a second chance on failed attempts at the task. This quill is often used by a pair of scribes that are not allowed to make a mistake, where mistakes would be disastrous.

In 5e, this quill grants the beneficiary one reroll (the new result must be kept) on skill checks but requires concentration on behalf of the player doing the writing.

THE QUILL OF ILLUSIONARY GENDER

When this quill is used to continually write the name of a creature known to the scribe, that creature will appear to be of the opposite sex. This quill is often used by the minions of Gladys and Fierna when a certain seduction is required to complete a task.

In 5e, this illusion will have a DC 15 Intelligence (investigation) check and the writer requires concentration. The duration of this spell is either until the writer stops writing, or runs out of parchment on which to write.

THE QUILL OF AVERNUS

This quill can be used to draw a landscape portrait of what a creature would have seen if they stood in the exact location of Avernus prior to the Blood Wars. This quill is nostalgia and was supposed to be gifted to Asmodeus.

THE QUILL OF RANKING

When this quill is used to write the unique name of any devil, it produces the rank of that devil. This quill is commonly found in the possession of greater devils that need to keep track of large amounts of lesser devils

THE GOLDEN QUILL OF MEPHISTOPHELES

This quill is granted to a devil that has served dutifully for its term of service and having received this quill is released from all obligations to Mephistopheles. Only one of these quills were ever made and sit on the desk of Mephistopheles. In the event that this quill is about to be given to a creature, it instantly turns to dust.

THE QUILL OF GLORY

This quill has the unique ability to illustrate scenes of ultimate glory where the characters of the glorious actions are the illustrators themselves. This quill is often carried by the minions of Zariel when attempting to lure great warriors into bargains.

In 5e, this quill might grant advantage on a Charisma (Persuasion) check against certain types of creatures.

THE QUILL OF FINDING

This quill can be used to 1st write the name of a certain object. Then it can be used subsequently to write the following question. "Am I closer to the "object name" now than before. After one hour it will reveal the honest answer to this question. This quill is often used by Dispaters imps in their endless search of lost lore.

THE QUILL OF RELATIVE VALUATION

This quill can be used to write down a number of coins that are exactly what a mortal will accept as a fair trade. Although the power of this quill is great in the hands of Mammon's minions, it often produces a value of zero, indicating that, currently, no amount of gold will sway.

THE QUILL OF GLIBNESS

This quill grants the author the ability to write verse that appeals directly to the heart of an intended individual. This quill is often gifted to mortals seeking influence by the minions of Fierna.

In 5e, this quill might grant advantage on a Charisma (Persuasion) check against certain types of creatures.

THE QUILL OF PROWESS

This quill grants the user a boon of temporary strength that can be called upon once a day by first writing down the task that required the increase in strength. This quill is often given in deals between the minions of Levistus and mortals.

THE QUILL OF LOOPHOLES

When this quill is used to craft contracts, the author can't help but install loopholes in the binding. This quill is often given to mortals by the minions of Glasya when they seem desperate targets for other Lords of the Nine.

THE QUILL OF REDEMPTION

This quill can author up an account of events that when seen in the light of the author's motives, causes the judgments passed to be recalled into question, and thus allowing for redemption. This quill is often given in deals made with Baalzebul and his minions.

In 5e, this quill might grant users an advantage on Charisma (persuasion) checks.

THE QUILL OF QUICK STUDY

This quill drastically reduces the required time it takes to study, by copying a text onto blank page. When the content is copied it is committed to memory, and the page returns to a blank page. This pen is often granted to skilled wizards when bargaining for allegiance to Mephistopheles. The recruit isn't aware that the time saved in using the quill will be made up a hundredfold in the afterlife.

In 5e, this quill might reduce the time required to prepare new spells, perhaps even allowing some spells to be swapped during a short rest.

THE QUILL OF SUMMONING

This quill can be used, as a lengthy ritual, to place the markings that will once become a gate for a desired Lord of the Nine, to enter the material plane. These quills are often found in the possession of high ranking cultists on the Material Plane.

In 5e, this might be a component needed in the summoning of a higher devil or even a lord.

THE DEMON QUILLS

This is a collection of unique quills that were each used to catalog the first entry of a single demon that was encountered in the blood wars. Bearers of these imbued quills are granted advantages when attacking the demon named by this quill. This collection is under lock and key, and will only be accessed in the event that it is clear that the Demons will overrun Avernus completely. These quills take the name of the Demon they have cataloged, for example, The Quill of Orcus

In 5e, there could be a whole slew of benefits, such as advantage on attacks against a certain demon, a bonus to hit and/or damage. Insights into the demon such as weaknesses and resistances.

THE NINE QUILLS

THE QUILL OF ASMDEUS

This quill grants Asmodeus the ability to write the duties of his Lords. When it is written with this quill it is. The lords are bound to their duties, as Asmodeus as written.

THE QUILL OF ZARIEL

This quill grants Zariel the ability to issue orders to her generals on the field that grant them with untamed fury. They, in turn, are able to motivate their soldiers to take part in the reckless tactics that Zariel is notorious for.

THE QUILL OF DISPATER

This quill grants Dispatier the ability to recall any design he has used in the past when designing new weaponry. It might be one of the major sources of Dispatier's ability to constantly innovate.

THE QUILL OF MAMMON

This quill is used by Mammon to keep account of his ledgers. It is faultless and never allows the production of incorrect calculations. When occurrences of error happen in mental math, this quill produces no writing.

THE QUILL OF FIERNA AND BELIAL

This quill is used by Fierna to produce enchanting verse, that few can resist the charm of. When in the hand of Belial, it produces nothing but accurate accounts of the laws of the Nine Hells.

THE QUILL OF LEVISTUS

The use of this quill is unknown as it has never been witnessed being used. It is locked in the ice with Levistus but undoubtedly holds some terrific and terrible power.

THE QUILL OF GLASYA

This quill grants Glasya a perfect recall of the laws of the nine hells but also highlights loopholes that beg to be taken advantage of.

THE QUILL OF BAALZEBUL

This quill grants Baalzebul the ability to catalog the vast store of knowledge under his protection. This never produces the same catalog number twice.

THE QUILL OF MEPHISTOPHELES

This black feather quill grants a scribe in the Material Plane the ability to enter into a contract with Mephistopheles. It takes the scribe to the black void where terms are discussed and agreed upon.

CREDITS AND LEGALS

REFERENCES

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- **Cover Art.** Dante finds himself lost in a gloomy wood, from Canto 1 of the Divine Comedy: Inferno illustrated by Paul Gustave Doré (1832-1883). The caption reads 'In the midway of this our mortal life, I found me in a gloomy wood, astray' Canto 1 lines 1,2.
- **Page 7 - Quill.** This image is a quill icon sourced from the Noun Project.

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