

The Holmes Art Zine

VOLUME  
ONE

# FANTASTIC EXCITING IMAGINATIVE



## A BACKWARD-LOOKING FORWARD FROM YOUR EDITOR

The version of the World's Most Famous Role Playing Game that Dr. Holmes edited was the set that introduced me to gaming. My friend got it for Christmas one year, and I can still remember walking in his front door, asking what he got for Christmas, and his telling me the name of this new game as we exited the entry way. My mind was racing then and there, just from the title – no need to even see the box or the components. But those blew my mind, too. Over the next few years I and other kids like me bitten by the gaming bug became ravenous for new material to inject into our games. Perhaps you remember the feeling...

If I could hand this little booklet to my 9-year-old self, I so gladly would, because I know how much use that kid would get out of it. But, alas, I can't; my time machine is still at the shop (new spark plugs, or something).

But I *can* hand it to you.

It was created by people like me, who still love that early game, even all these years later. The aim was to expand the world of play by drawing inspiration directly from the art within that battered, old rule book. We all chipped in because we know those kids need new material and new inspiration. And not a little bit because the game is just damn fun, still.

I heartily and humbly thank everyone who pitched-in to this project.

Happy Adventures, To One and All.



# FANTASTIC EXCITING IMAGINATIVE

## Additional Rules for Fantastic Medieval Role Playing Adventure Game Campaigns

**Playable with Paper and Pencil and Miniature Figures,  
or Pixels and Wi-Fi**

for  
The Kid in All of Us

### WANDERING MONSTER & CONTRIBUTOR TABLE

| <b>One Level Below Ground</b> | <b>Die</b> | <b>Two Levels Below Ground</b> | <b>Die</b> |
|-------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| Paul Wolfe (1)                | 1          | Orc Tribe Scouts (3-16)        | 1          |
| JV West (1)                   | 2          | Unigoyle (1-3)                 | 2          |
| Rival Magic-User & Party (1)  | 3          | Denis McCarthy (1)             | 3          |
| Robert Fairbanks (1)          | 4          | Iguanadyte Troops (1-8)        | 4          |
| Chris Holmes (1)              | 5          | Rouqitnaam (2-4)               | 5          |
| Zenopus (1)                   | 6          | Queen Harpy (1 + retinue)      | 6          |
| Shane Ward (1)                | 7          | Sleeping Skeletons (1-6 x100)  | 7          |
| Dwarven Mercenaries (1-3)     | 8          | James and Robyn George (2)     | 8          |
| Gnobolds (1-2)                | 9          | Grandpa Chet (1)               | 9          |
| Regal Lizardmen (1-6)         | 10         | Holmes Basic on G+ (500+)      | 10         |
| Tony A. Rowe (1)              | 11         | Full-Bellied Dragon (1-2)      | 11         |
| Skull Dwellers (1-4)          | 12         | Gelatinous bygrinstow (1)      | 12         |

## ENTRIES Inspired by THE FRONT COVER

### **Wand of Dazzling Light**

b

This magic item impairs one or more creatures, depending on their level. The effect of this wand is possible out to a range of 120 feet. It affects creatures with lower Hit Dice for a longer duration than those with higher Hit Dice. The possible duration is measured in rounds. Subtract the number of Hit Dice from 11 to determine the number of rounds a creature is affected, if there are two targets half the result, etc. Those affected suffer the loss of half of their armor bonus and a penalty of 2 to hit for all attacks.

### **(Color) Dragon Shield**

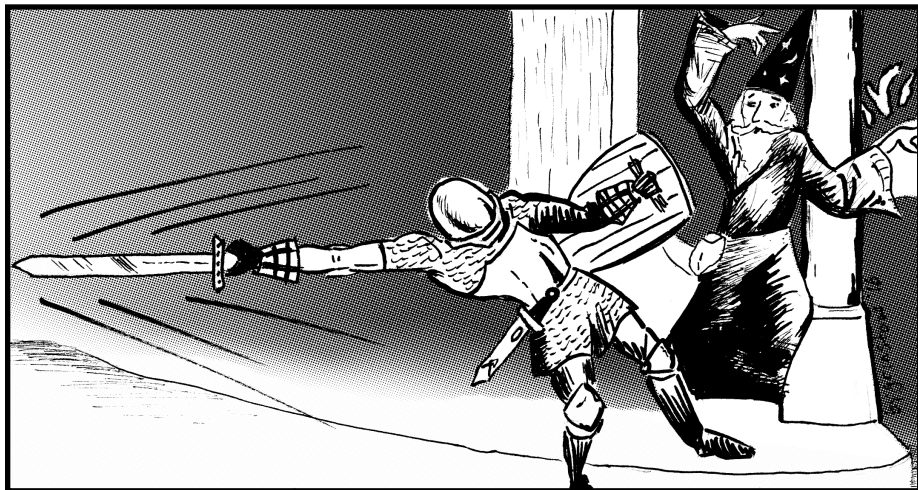
b

This magical *shield +1, +2 vs. dragons* grants one extra saving throw for the bearer, when a saving throw vs. breath weapon is failed — provided that the type of dragon inscribed on the shield when it was enchanted is the same type the character is facing.

### **Captain's Chest**

b

This magic chest will hold up to five times the capacity of it's apparent outward dimensions. When full, it is no heavier than it should be if it were an un-magicked chest. However, it's capacity fluctuates with the tides, losing a bit of space at high tide and reaching full capacity at low tide.



## The Yellow Sword

PW

The Yellow Sword is a sword +1, until the wielder is outnumbered two-to-one or more in battle. Once the odds are thus stacked, the DM rolls 1d6 each round of combat. On a 1, the sword begins pulling the bearer away from battle, effectively becoming a cursed sword -1. Additional effects of the cowardly sword are left up to the DM, however, if the bearer flees the battle, he is affected as if by a Haste potion. Unfortunately, while under this effect, the bearer cannot attack — only flee at two times his speed for 7-10 turns. At the end of this time (or when the overwhelming battle ends), the Yellow Sword becomes a sword +1 again.

## Unigoyle

JVW

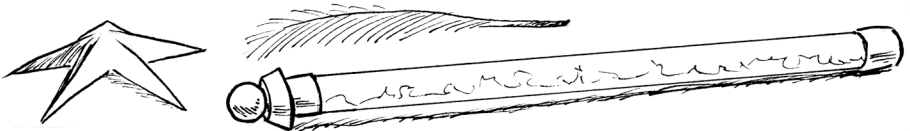
Move: 150 feet/turn  
Hit Dice: 4  
Armor Class: 5  
Treasure Type: C

Alignment: chaotic evil  
Attacks: 4  
Damage: 1-4 points each

The unigoyle is a wingless gargoyle with a single horn on its forehead. It moves rapidly, crouching and running like a wild beast. It can run across any rocky surface, including walls and ceilings, at its full rate of speed. It attacks first with claws and teeth, saving its deadliest attack for a later round of the combat.

After the first round of combat the unigoyle may use its horn to impale its target. If the horn hits with a natural roll of 16 or higher the target has become stuck, taking double damage. On the following round the creature will dash up the nearest wall, carrying the impaled character and dealing another 1-4 points of damage per round. The unigoyle will eventually sling the character off its horn, dropping it from as high a point as possible to watch it go splat. An impaled character can make an attack against the unigoyle at a -2 penalty to hit. If hit, the creature will immediately drop the character.

Like gargoyles, unigoyles can only be hit with magic weapons.



## **Magic-User Spell: Calm**

b

Level 2; Range: 120 feet; Duration: 2 rounds + 1 per level of the caster

This spell seeks out the most violent or threatening foe and calms their fury. Those struck by the seeking light of the spell will only take violent action on a 2-in-6 each round, but will always defend themselves to the best of their abilities.

## **Six Orc Tribes**

b

*Warmachine:* Better organized than others of their kind, this tribe of orcs have superior equipment. Consider them equipped with Leather and Shield (Armor Class 6), and that 20% or more of their number are outfitted with Chain Mail and Shield (Armor Class 4). 60% of the time, their leaders wield swords +1 or the result of a die roll on the Armor and Weapons chart in the Magic Items section.

*Fangtooth:* As normal for orcs, but they all have Thieves' abilities. Choose classification A, B, or C as best suits your purposes, or assort them randomly among the tribe members.

*Blood Sky Brotherhood:* As normal for orcs, but 20% of their members are shaman who can turn humanoids as clerics of the 3rd level turn undead (Skeleton=Halflings, Zombie=Fighting Men, Ghoul=Elves and Dwarves, Wight=Clerics, Wraith=Magic-users and Thieves). Saving throw vs. spell applies for player characters.

*Iron-Arms:* Obsessed with contests over who is strongest among them and constantly working to improve their strength, this tribe of orcs have 2 Hit Dice and a +1 on their attack dice. Subtract 2 for Reaction Table rolls.

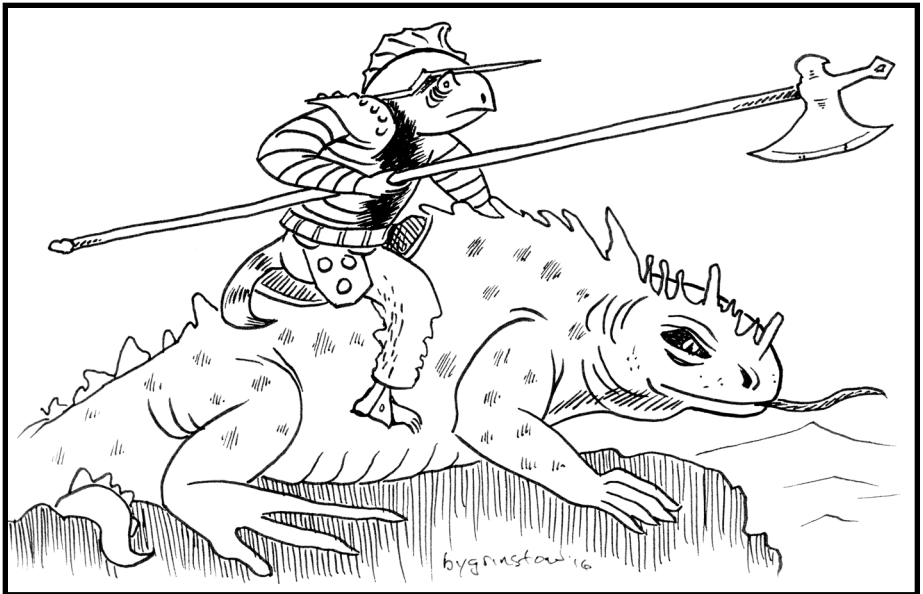
*Bas'Lisk:* This tribe drinks the blood of basilisks and carrion crawlers as often as possible. If they have been able to consume this blood within the last month, their touch turns other humanoids to stone for 1-6 turns.

*Howlers:* 20-50% of this tribe are lycanthropes. Roll a four-sided die to determine the type, as follows: 1) orcwolves, 2) orcrats, 3) orcbears, 4) orcboars (use standard lycanthrope stats for these members, when transformed; 1-in-4 can transform at-will). All members wear pelts and tooth and claw adornments of the selected type.

## Deformities & Personality Conflicts for Individual Orcs

SW

| Die Roll | Trait  |
|----------|--|
| 1        | Missing An Eye   |
| 2        | Has a Short Tail   |
| 3        | Has an Actual Pignose! It's Even Pink.   |
| 4        | Was married once and holds a secret grudge (she left him for a much uglier orc). |
| 5        | Feels like an outsider, is a better gardener than a warrior.                     |
| 6        | Really Bad Acne  |
| 7        | Purple Hair!   |
| 8        | Son in law of a warlord, will do anything to make the "old man" happy.           |
| 9        | Prefers dwarven mead to Orcish Ale.  |
| 10       | A Very Skilled Dancer  |
| 11       | Crossbreed between an Orc and a horse (Orctaur).                                 |
| 12       | Very small wings, that won't quite lift him off the ground.                      |



## Regal Lizard Man

Z

Move: 60 feet/turn (on foot), 90 feet/turn (mounted)

Hit Dice: 1

Alignment: Neutral

Armor Class: 4 (armored), 5 (natural)

Attacks: 1

Treasure Type: Individuals P; H in cities

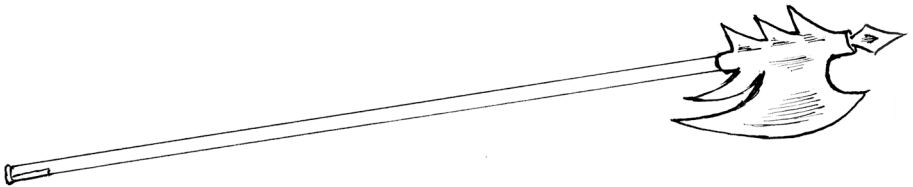
Damage: 1-6

Civilized lizard men who dwell in distant arid regions in strange cities of rock spires. The back of their heads are crowned in spikes, hence the "regal" nickname given to them by the rare humans who have met them and survived. They view aquatic lizard men in much the same fashion that humans view cavemen – primitive brutes.

Regal lizard soldiers wield halberds and javelins, and wear elaborate crested helms paired with an armor of segmented metal strips. Their cavalry ride giant war lizards (HD 4, AC 4, AT 3 D 1x1-8 (bite), 1-3x2 (claws)), decorated with the skulls of vanquished foes. They patrol their territory in groups of 20, each mounted on a war lizard, and led by a leader with 2 HD, an AC of 3, and doing +1 damage.

Their diet favors cacti and insects, particularly giant ants, the ingestion of which renders their blood foul-smelling and caustic. When in need they can squirt this blood from the corner of their eyes. This drains 1 hp from the regal lizard man. If a person is hit they must save vs poison or be stunned for 1 round. They generally only do this if a battle is going against them and they wish to withdraw.

Author's note: Based on the Regal Horned Lizard of the American Southwest.



## Iguanadyte

RF

These semi-aquatic humanoids though often confused with lizard-men, are actually herbivores (algae and kelp farmers,) and are not water-breathers. Iguanadytes inhabit tropical to arid, coastal regions and islands, although inland, jungle and desert varieties are rumored to exist.

Organized into loose, warlike, tribal-societies, iguanadytes frequently raid coastal villages and shipping lanes (iguanadytes are powerful swimmers, able to hold their breath for 2-5 hours,) and are known to be both slave-raiders and head-hunters. For every iguanadyte encountered, there is a cumulative 10% chance, that an iguanadyte heavy cavalry will also be present.

### **Iguanadyte Footman**

Move: 90 feet/120 in water  
Hit Dice: 2 + 2 hit points  
Armor Class: 6 or 5  
Treasure Type: K, Q

Alignment: chaotic evil  
Attacks: 1  
Damage: 1-6

The ferocious rank and file of iguanadyte military society, footmen are most often encountered in eel or shark-skin leather armor and gain a +1 to armor class due to their underlying, natural hide. Footmen equip the scimitar (sword), and either light-crossbow (1/2 range underwater 30/60/120,) or trident (spear) and tortoise-shell shield. Iguanadyte footmen receive a +1 to all morale rolls if heavy cavalry is present.

### **Iguanadyte Heavy Cavalry**

Move: 60 feet/120 in water  
Hit Dice: 3 + 3 hit points  
Armor Class: 3 or 2  
Treasure Type: M, Q, S

Alignment: neutral evil  
Attacks: 1  
Damage: 2-11 or 1-6

Shock-troops and field commanders, directing their soldiers from the backs of giant (dire) marine-iguanas, the iguanadyte heavy cavalry is fearsomely effective both on land and in the water.

Larger and stronger than iguanadyte footmen, these brutish commanders are most often clad in giant-clam or tortoise-shell armor, sporting ornate helmets, fashioned from conch-shells or shark-jaws, to identify rank and status. They are fond of halberds, lances and pole-arms and receive a +1 to all damage rolls with these weapons during mounted attacks, javelins and shields are the preferred weapons for ranged combat. For every iguanadyte heavy cavalry present, there is a 25% chance one will be a raid-shaman (as heavy cavalry but treat as 4<sup>th</sup> level Cleric for weapon and spell-casting purposes.)

## **Iguanadyte (Heavy) Mount**

Move: 90 feet/180 in water  
Hit Dice: 4 + 4 hit points  
Armor Class: 5  
Treasure Type: nil

Alignment: neutral  
Attacks: 1 claw + 1 bite,  
or 1 tail  
Damage: 1-6 or 3-12

These giant, marine-iguanas are domesticated, trained and naturally equipped, specifically for amphibious warfare. Able to travel long distances underwater (2-8 hours) easily ambushing unsuspecting victims; their long, hooked claws and spiny, armored hides, perfectly suited for scaling the sides of wooden ships, or crashing through the defenses of coastal-villages. The iguanadyte mount, attacks with either a claw/bite attack, or a fearsome tail-slap (3-12 hit points and save vs. wands or be stunned for 1 round).

The hide of these creatures is valued for shield and armor production and can bring 100-400 g.p. in a large settlement. Rare and more exotic varieties of these reptiles (and their masters) are said to be venomous.

Inspired by PAGE SIXTEEN

## **Wizard Wear**

TAR

*Why do magic-users wear robes and conical hats?*

This style of clothing is a clear indicator of the wizard's stoicheiotal (magic-using) status in society. The wearer is seen as an experienced practitioner of the arcane arts. The conical hat reflects a focus on knowledge and learning. The robes give an air of scholarly authority. Long robes do not inhibit elaborate spellcasting movements but are almost impossible to perform manual labor in. This fact is often used by wizards as reason why they can't carry their fair share of party gear during an overland adventure.

The color, style, emblems, and sigils on a robe and cap denote guild membership, rank, and magical specialty (generalist mages wear blue, illusionists wear yellow, etc.). Within many city limits, arcane magic may only be used by members in good standing with the local mage's guild and clothing is a clear sign of guild status. Spellcasting while impersonating a sanctioned wizard is considered a crime.

Magic-users often have different robes and caps for different occasions. They reserve their finest robes and hats, often in a stately gray fabric, for important functions. These include meeting with royalty or attending official duties such as presenting expert testimony (of a divinatory, hypnotic, or necromantic type) in a court of law. While traveling, they often don a soft, wide-brimmed hat that keeps sun and rain out of the eyes and lends an air of mystery to the wearer. This hat mimics the headgear worn by Odin, the god who brought rune magic to mankind, when he would wander the world. Robes can be bundled to keep warm or loosened for extra ventilation, depending on the weather. They also work as impromptu sleeping bags when roughing it under the stars.

The true origin of magic-users wearing conical hats is now lost to time. It is said that the shape helps direct the arcane energies from the other world into the wizard's brain. Another theory is that the pointed headwear keeps the mind focused and aids in learning and memorization. Many aging wizards swear by its ability to conceal an ever-expanding bald spot.

"Magic robes," as they are commonly called, often have no inherent enchantment. Some sew concealed pockets into their inside sleeves. This allows one to quick-draw a magic wand, spell component, dagger, or even a handy tarot deck (for fortune telling or playing solitaire). Such sleight-of-hand requires no spell slots but still works to impress. Protective spells may be embroidered into inner lining for hidden defenses. Self-conscious, low ranked mages may sew elaborate, fake protective spells into the outer fabric in order to appear tougher than they actually are.

Sorcerers have no allegiances to guilds or cares for societal norms. They often wear outlandish, colorful clothing as befits their uncouth spellcasting style. Wizards see them as erratic and unstable and they see wizards as uptight and humorless. Needless to say, wizards and sorcerers do not work together and are rarely seen at the same social functions.

## **Magic-User Spell: Elmer's Glue**

JRG

Level 2; Range: 10 feet; Duration: 3 turns

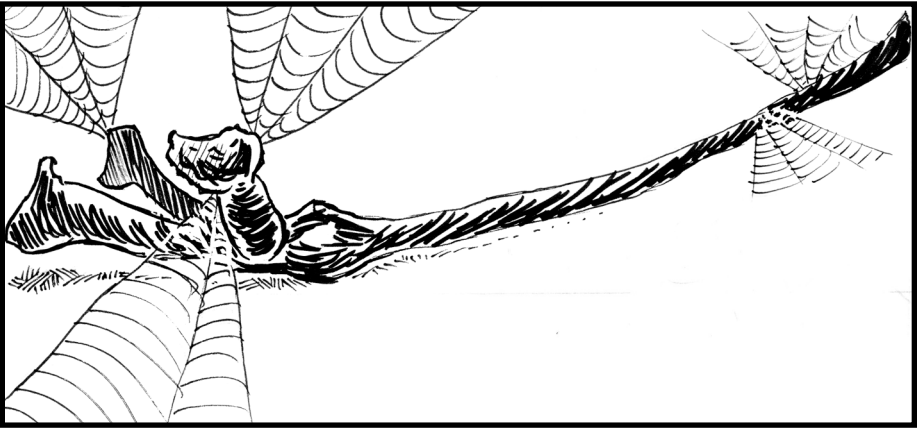
A spell which allows the user to produce a magically sticky substance against a single man-sized target (or smaller part of a larger target's body, i.e., a foot, etc.). The white substance thereby created is enough to adhere the target (or affected body part) to any adjacent surface for the spell's maximum duration, noting that a successful saving throw reduces this by half (1 turn). The spell was created by the minotaur wizard Elmer.

## Forked Staff

b

This staff, when wielded by a magic-user or cleric, can cause magical effects to "split" and strike more than one target, for any spell that can only be aimed at a single individual at a time. Spell-casters of the 1st through 3rd level of experience can strike two targets at once, and those of the 4th level of experience or higher may strike two targets or three targets at once.

Additionally, this staff can be used to protect a magic-user or cleric and his allies by reducing the number of targets within the effect of a spell that affects multiple characters at once. Thus, if an evil sorcerer strikes at the party with a sleep spell, a magic-user with a forked staff can reduce the number of his allies affected by 1 (if he is of 1st through 3rd level). Who will be immune must be stated before saving throw rolls are made.



Inspired by PAGE EIGHTEEN

## "Gore" — Axe of the Minotaur-Queen

RF

*Ivargh the Indispensible whirled about and was sprinting, before the frenzied screams of his companions could become echoes.*

*Dropping the ball of trailing-string he dashed back the way he'd come. Un-shouldering his shield-sundering blade, the burly fighting-man sprinted back toward the party's temporary camp. He followed his own fading foot-prints and the dim line of colored string through the unlit, labyrinthine tunnels, possible for a human like Ivargh only due to the vision enchantment bestowed by his helm.*

Rounding the final fire-lit turn, Ivargh skidded into camp cursing, his enormous scimitar at the ready. The sight, as expected, was a brutal one; scarlet drops patterned the walls of the small cavern and the four blanketed forms arranged around the fire were motionless and black with a wetness that slowly spread in the flickering light.

The creature looming over the bodies was yet another Minotaur, though smaller and somehow... different. And was that the same, strange black axe that the previous Minotaur had wielded, the one they had left behind because Father Dergo had detected a curse?

And four bodies but all six bed-rolls? Had someone snuck back to...  
The creature was charging—

“Gore” is said to have been the favored implement of Murzh, the despised, one-armed, chief executioner of the Theocracy of Xulg, some later texts and lore seem to place the weapon with the minotaur-queen of the Ruined City of Ghroind instead.

Regardless of its origins, this artifact is a 2-handed, single-bladed, headsmen’s axe (battle-axe) of plain but brutal aspect. Made of simple black oak and black iron, multiple sets of minute, eldritch runes adorn its head and haft.

*Battle-axe +1, +3 vs. chaotic* — the wielder can see 90 feet in the dark, may cast a *strength* spell once per day (self only), and is immune to *hold person* spells while the axe is held.

*Curse:* Once per day, the owner of “Gore” must win a saving throw vs. magic wand or undergo a savage and hideous, bovine transformation — becoming a “minor-taur” — and suffering the following conditions:

Alignment becomes lawful evil (though berserk).

Intelligence becomes 6, and Wisdom becomes 8.

Gain 3-18 hit points and 2-8 Strength, both for the duration only.

Move becomes 120 feet/turn (even for dwarves and halflings), and if given an unimpeded 20 feet to charge a creature, the minor-taur can gore with its (newly-grown) horns for +1 to hit and 2 dice of damage, as a bonus attack form, three times per transformation.

While in this feral and berserk state, the character is a threat to friend and foe alike, and can be under the control of the DM for the duration (3 to 12 turns). Otherwise a saving throw vs. magic wand must succeed each round, to avoid attacking allies (if in range) that round. “Gore” cannot be disposed of normally, requiring the curse to be removed by a cleric of a high level, or the equivalent.

## A Smattering Of Typical And Atypical Gear For Dwarven NPCs b

| Item                       | Roll | Item                                | Roll |
|----------------------------|------|-------------------------------------|------|
| Extra-Large Flask          | 1    | Dwarven Rope <sup>1</sup>           | 7    |
| Pick Axe Clan Brooch       | 2    | Stone-Sundering Hammer <sup>2</sup> | 8    |
| Axe +1, +2 vs. goblins     | 3    | Dwarven Boot-heels <sup>3</sup>     | 9    |
| Locket w/snip of hair      | 4    | Goldfinder <sup>4</sup>             | 10   |
| Meerschaum Pipe            | 5    | A Lady's Silk Handkerchief          | 11   |
| Gold & Platinum Beard Comb | 6    | Case of endless quarrels (10/day)   | 12   |

- 
- 1 *Dwarven rope is 25% less likely to break through wear and tear than typical rope.*
  - 2 *A stone-sundering hammer is designed to chip away at stone more effectively. By chipping at a surface, it's an improvised short range weapon, hitting up to four opponents within a 10' span, doing a half die of damage to each, out to 20'.*
  - 3 *These apparatuses attach to normal boots and increase stability on uneven stone surfaces, such as those found in cavern systems and mountainsides.*
  - 4 *A sort of non-magical divining rod for gold. Probably not more than superstitious.*

## The Brothers Grymthral

RF

Claiming kinship with the clans of the Scattershale hills (who vehemently deny even distant relations), this trio of dwarven brothers has a reputation as much for ruthlessness and unpredictability as they do for their adventurous heroics and mercenary efficiency, contracting as professional enforcers, "repo-men" and free-lance, dungeon-delvers.



b

## 1. Torvald the Badger

Crisscrossed with scars and tattoos, this red-bearded and black-hearted middle son of clan Grymthral is Torvald – “the Badger of Ravenskrag” – who is counted among the most cunning, ambitious, and savage of the few survivors (exiles) known to have been supporters, vassals, or relations of the now fallen “House Maulgrym” (a House stricken from the histories).

Class: Dwarf                      Level: 3rd (Swordsman)      Alignment: chaotic evil  
S16 I9 W9 C17 D13 C9, Chainmail & Shield (plus magic below), Hits 28  
Saves (see below): Spells: 14, Wand: 11, Poison: 10, Petrify: 12, Breath: 14

Note: +1 to hit w/ missile-weapons.

Languages: Common, Dwarven, Gnomish, Goblin

Wealth: 54 GP, 19 SP, 8 EP, amethyst worth 25 GP, bag of gold-dust 40 GP

| Location      | Possessions   |
|---------------|---|
| Worn          | Back-pack, Chainmail, Helm                              |
| Belt-pouches  | Whiskey-flask, tinder-box, small mirror and loaded dice |
| Backpack      | “Dungeon-gear” (50’ rope, 6 iron-spikes, etc.)          |
| Carried/slung | Shield, Light Crossbow                                  |
| At belt       | Case/10 quarrels, Silver dagger                         |
| Boot          | One normal dagger in each                               |
| Shield        | Spare hand-axe (strapped inside)                        |

### *Magic Items:*

*Xorn-Bone Whetstone:* May be used once per day to sharpen a single, edged weapon, granting +1 vs. goblins and kobolds, lasting 1 turn per level of the whetstone’s user.

*“Raven Wing”* (+1 if thrown,) This hand-axe acts as *Ring of Protection* while held. This ebony, wing-bladed authority-symbol of the (one time) ruler of Ravenskrag Keep is Torvald’s most prized possession.

*Harness of the Crag-Badger:* (dwarf only) 1/day while underground the wearer may choose to undergo a feral transformation, assuming some of the features, ferocity and blood-thirsty tendencies of the giant, crag-badger, granting; +2 HD, +2 strength, constitution, and dexterity (Max: 18), but also suffering a -4 intelligence, wisdom, and charisma, and a 25% chance per round to attack nearby allies for the duration of this berserker-like effect (1-10 rounds/level).

Each use of the harness has a 25% chance to require the wearer to save vs. wands or remain in the frenzied, battle-mad state, until either a bless or dispel magic spell can be cast on the subject or they succumb to exhaustion (collapse and sleep for 2-8 hours, no save).

## 2. Ulryk the Unlovely, The Beast of Shrikesburg

Rescued from a life in the gladiatorial slave-pits of some distant kobold kingdom, Ulryk, the youngest of the trio, is an adoptee to the once proud Grymthral clan, brought home by Rangvald and Torvald's father from places unnamed.

Believed to be both disfigured and mute, Ulryk has never been known to publicly speak or to ever show his(?) face. Though seemingly quiet, obedient, and dim-witted, Ulryk is well known for explosive bursts of overwhelming violence and rapaciousness, though some have claimed that this behavior sometimes seems contrived.

Class: Dwarf                      Level: 3rd (Swordsman)    Alignment: chaotic neutral  
S18 I9 W16 C18 D9 C3, Chainmail, Hits 32  
Saves: Spells: 12, Wands: 9, Poison: 8, Petrify: 10, Breath: 12  
Languages: *Ulryk is not known to speak*  
Wealth: None

| Location | Possessions   |
|----------|---|
| Worn     | Backpack (x2), Chainmail  |
| Backpack | 6 Large sacks, 12 small sacks, 30 days iron-rations, cook-pots, fire-wood, ale-keg, etc |

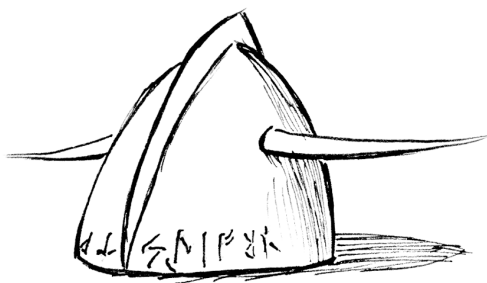
### *Magic Items:*

*Helm of Whispers:* Cast ESP (as a 3rd level magic-user) once per day. Usable by a dwarf or halfling only.

*Bracers of Protection:* Grants +2 to armor class and +2 for all saving throws

*"Quarrel Breaker":* A two-handed, Dwarven *claymore* +1 (1-10 damage), which while brandished, makes all attackers visible to the wielder. Such creatures receive a -1 to hit w/misile attacks against the wielder.





### 3. Rangvald of Vulturespire

The eldest (by far) of the Grymthrall trio, Rangvald was a seasoned warrior and adventurer long before his "brothers" (some say nephews) had lengthened their beards.

Rangvald, though older and a bit creakier these days, remains a spry (and sly) leader and the "brains" of the trio. Usually striving to be the voice of reason and pragmatism, he stays vigilant, ready at a moment's notice to deter or minimize the random acts of public violence, vandalism, and other civil-disobediences that his brothers are sometimes prone to.

Class: Dwarf                      Level: 4th (Hero)                      Alignment: neutral

S14 I13 W12 C16 D13 C9, "Plate Mail", Hits 33

Saves: Spells: 13, Wands: 10, Poison: 10, Petrify: 12, Breath: 14

Note: +1 to hit w/ missile weapons.

Languages: Dwarven, Common, Gnomish, Goblin, Kobold

Wealth: 172 GP, 19 PP, platinum pendant (75 GP)

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| Location     | Possessions  |
| Carried      | Spear +1   |
| Worn         | Back-pack, diamond "signet"-ring (125 GP)  |
| Back-pack    | "Dungeon-gear", two potions of extra healing (2-16 hits), one of gaseous form, and two of poison |
| At belt      | Hand-axe, Silver dagger  |
| Hidden       | 2 Daggers (Poisoned*), jeweler's eye, marked cards   |
| Belt-pouches | three vials of holy-water, three flasks of oil   |

#### *Magic items*

*Drake-Scale-mail*: Treat as plate-mail but encumbers as chain-mail (dwarf or halfling only).

*Cleft Shield of the Spire-Guard*: Another Grymthrall family heirloom; acts as large shield +1, +2 vs. normal missiles. Additionally (while equipped), the wielder is "invisible" to (only) infravision.

*Helm of the Spire-Guard*: This dwarven helm doubles the distance a dwarf or an elf can see in the dark, and allows a dwarf or a halfling to cast the shield spell as a magic-user of the first level once per day.

## **Gnobolds**

b

Move: 105 feet/turn

Alignment: neutral

Hit Dice: 1½ (2-12 hit point each)

Attacks: 1

Armor Class: 6

Damage: 2-5

Treasure Type: J, L, M; D, Q(x5), S in lair

Fused by life-magic from a remote source, gnobolds are a hybridization of gnolls and kobolds. They have become the preferred minions of some bands of gnolls, who may enslave from 3-18 of the diminutive, dim-witted hyena-dwarves. When found beyond gnoll influence, they are found singly – or rarely, in pairs – since they dislike even their own company.

## **Rival Magic-User**

b

Move: 120 feet/turn

Alignment: neutral

Hit Dice: 2

Attacks: 1

Armor Class: 9

Damage: 1-6

Treasure Type: R, S, T

Found with a retinue of 2-12 bodyguards (use Bandit statistics) and 30% of the time a cleric of the first level, this exploring wizard may have pilfered the dungeon's best treasure just before the player characters arrived! He can cast 2 spells of the first level and 2 spells of the second level. His staff draws missiles of any sort to it when they would have struck him on a 3-in-6.

## **Eihwaz Wunjo's Spellbook**

b

This spellbook is written in obscure cyphers. It requires one week of research and the expenditure of 10-480\* gold pieces to crack the code of a single page. Each page acts as a scroll, with one very significant difference: when the scroll is cast, there is a 1-in-4 chance that the runes do not fade from the page and the magic of that page may be cast again! At a minimum, the book should contain the following spells: hold portal, light, protection from evil, shield, mirror image, locate object, calm & elmer's glue (spells from this volume), and any others of the referee's desire or invention.

---

\* Roll one six-sided die and multiply by ten. Then multiply the result by the roll of an eight-sided die.

## Harpy Axe

Z

If this hand axe is thrown and does not strike a target within its range (30') it will return to the thrower's hand, up to three times per day. Harpies are said to enchant these so they are reusable during aerial combat.

## Harpy Bones

b

Harpies enchant the bones of their fallen, making weapons of them. They strike like a mace for 1 six-sided die of damage, and can be made to emit *cause light wounds* once per day, out to a range of 20'. The damage takes the form of the pecking marks of a large eagle-like bird.



## Queen Harpy

b

Move: 60 feet/turn, 180 feet/turn flying

Hit Dice: 5

Armor Class: 4

Treasure Type: none; B(x3), I(x2), Q in lair

Alignment: chaotic evil

Attacks: 2 claws + 1 weapon

Damage: 1-6/attack

Twice as large as a normal harpy, a queen harpy has enough strength to easily lift an average-sized man and carry him for up to 4 turns. They lead a roost of from 4-32 harpies, and they can guide their roost in tactical plans, granting them all +1 to attacks and damage for the first 1-3 rounds of combat. A queen harpy has a 30% chance to be able to use the spells *curse*, *detect magic*, *resist fire*, and *speak with animals* once each per day.

## **Seven Uses for the Many Heads of a Hydra**

b

- A hydra could live atop a steep plateau. The characters might be searching the plateaux to find something else, only crossing paths with a hydra unexpectedly. Or they could be actively seeking a hydra to get some of its teeth (for that necromancer that hired them). What makes the encounter interesting is that it happens while they are climbing up the side of the plateau, so they are hampered by being mid-climb – but the hydra itself is also hampered, since it must use some of its heads to hang on to the cliff face while it gets in position to attack the characters.
- An enchanter has a hydra trained to grab characters instead of biting to kill them, grabbing them in its mouths in such a way as to make it very difficult for them to strike back at the creature. The hydra can carry multiple characters over to deep holding cells set into the floor (each designed for individuals), set them down inside and withdraw its head(s) back out before the characters have much time to react.
- Mounted upon the pipes of a pipe organ, the heads of a hydra emit unearthly sounds when the organ is played. When played with the proper knowledge, the sounds can be used to varied affect, including summoning strange beings, altering physical laws, opening passage to other dimensions, altering physiological make up, and other, stranger purposes.
- A cleric who severs a head from a hydra and buries it in a blighted area can reverse the blight. If a village is stricken by drought, the cleric buries a hydra head near the village, and water will return within 1-6 days. Crop failures can be overcome, flooding can be diverted or drained away, plagues can be negated, and so on.
- The blood from a hydra's severed head is especially poisonous. When applied to weapons, it can kill creatures of four legs or more with a single strike if they fail a saving throw vs. dragon breath. Against those of less than four legs, it does an extra die of damage if they fail the saving throw. After one successful hit, there is not enough poison to be effective any longer and it must be re-applied to have this effect again.
- "Hydra-head stew" is not a culinary treat of any sort, the meat being foul through and through. But boiling down a hydra head in 50 gallons of water, reducing it all to 10 gallons does make a substance that will

paralyze a hill giant, slow a stone giant, cause a frost giant to fall asleep, weaken a fire giant (loss of 1-4 HD and 1-3 in accuracy), turn a cloud giant as incorporeal as steam, and intoxicate a storm giant. Durations as follows: hill giant 1-12 rounds, stone giant 1-12 rounds, frost giant 1-10 rounds, fire giant 1-8 rounds, cloud giant 1-6 rounds, and storm giant 1-4 turns. The exact effects of this "giant's bane" beyond the obvious are up to the referee, and may vary from batch to batch of the bane.

- And lastly, there is of course the fact that necromancers can enchant the teeth of a hydra such that when they are planted in the ground they "sprout" in the form of animated warrior skeletons 1-6 rounds later, under the control of the necromancer. Each of a hydra's heads holds 10-40 teeth.

## Hydra Lore

b

- Any individual who singlehandedly kills a hydra with nothing but fire, gains 1 to their strength score. This could be done as an ongoing struggle (it need not be a single combat encounter).
- Some hydras (1-in-6) exude noxious, poisonous fumes as they exhale. These will slow a man, elf or dwarf down until they return to fresh air. For each round for each combatant exposed to the hydra, roll a single six-sided die and if it comes up a 1, the individual cannot act that turn.
- The stars associated with the Hydra can lend it aid during the hours of darkness when under clear skies. This takes the form of rays from the sky, and cause healing effects, damaging effects against assailants, and other "good luck" effects (from the hydra's perspective).
- Hydras that have not been attacked for more than 20 years gain the ability to regenerate when a head is chopped away, gaining two heads in the place of the severed head. It takes four rounds for these heads to appear. If the hydra has gone more than 40 years without being attacked, it can regenerate three heads from one that is severed. It takes three rounds for these heads to appear. In any case, the maximum number of heads a hydra can bear is 50.
- Hydras produce eggs, but also reproduce by budding off a tiny hydra that eventually grows to full size.
- 10% of hydras have an "immortal head" that cannot be cleaved away.

## **Manti-Lore**

b

According to the *Cairn Tome*, a collection of ancient, though fragmented legends and histories, manticores arrived upon this mortal world by some unknown effect when the comet *Rani* passed closely by, over 1500 years ago. The original faces of the manticores were beautiful to behold, to the point of pain, as in heartache. At this time, they apparently weren't killers at all, but travelled the world and performed good deeds (perhaps predominantly mediation). A wicked sorceress called the *Ice Matron* plotted to steal their faces and ruin their reputation. Her cohorts tricked the manticores and swapped faces with them, leaving the manticores disgusted by the sight of their own brethren, and vowing to kill all humankind on sight.

All manticores found in the world today are these self-same manticores from an eon ago! A dead manticore will eventually revive, which is why smart adventures resort to *cremation* of the remains, in order to slow the process of return.

Because manticores are undying, their original faces must still exist, even if the stealers of those faces have long since turned to dust. If found, restoring the original face to a manticore apparently involves some *minor arcane totemic* symbol and an incantation built from a rearrangement of the manticore's name and the name of the original face-stealer. Achieving this will leave the character with a powerful and abiding ally for life.

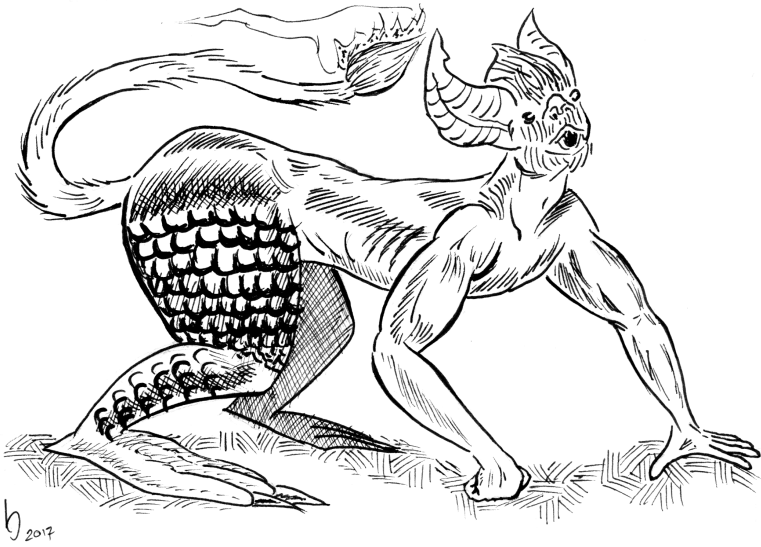
## **Rarely Used, Little-Known Power of the Manticores**

b

Any manticore *can emit* or create at a distance a sound so beautiful that mortal creatures cannot help but pause and turn to face the source of that beautiful sound. Characters and creatures will pause for 1 round after the sound, taking no other action than to listen and turn to face the source (if possible). Manticores can create this sound in the air, up to 30 feet away from themselves. They are loathe to use this power however, since it reminds them of their former selves.

*"They get their information from Wiki-scrolls then want a riddle. When I tell them I'M NOT A SPHINX, they finally look up 'manticore.' And THEN it's 'Voice like a trumpet, eh? Whaddaya do – toot?!' Of COURSE I eat them! Wouldn't you?!"*

– Grandpa Chet



## Rouqitnaam

b

Move: 120 feet/turn

Hit Dice: 3 + 1

Armor Class: 7

Treasure Type: A + D in lair

Alignment: chaotic evil

Attacks: 1

Damage: 1-6

A bizarre creature with the hind parts of a dragon, the fore-body of a man, and a head like that of a bat. It has a lion's tail, from which they can flick either fire balls or ball lightning for 3 dice of damage, up to three times per day. Harrowed by constant pain, they seek any relief or solace, all the while being on a hair-trigger for violence. Their favorite prey are elves.

## Mr. Teacoin

b

Move: 60 feet/turn

Hit Dice: 6

Armor Class: 6

Treasure Type: A-C

Alignment: lawful evil

Attacks: 1

Damage: 1-6

Mr Teacoin is not a typical halfling. He appears to be an adventurer, and a somewhat reluctant one at that. He can commiserate with any adventuring party whose path he might happen to cross (by accident or design). His war-horse is quite heavily laden with bags and satchels and such (assuming good rolls on the Treasure tables). He is in fact a were-manticore.

## Sleeping Skeletons

b

Move: 90 feet/turn

Alignment: neutral

Hit Dice: 1/8 (1 hit point each)

Attacks: special

Armor Class: 7

Damage: none

Treasure Type: nil

Even animated skeletons can be subject to the degradation of time and moulder away to nothingness. But before they are completely gone, they can still be a threat.

The individual bones of an animated skeleton, can each animate when they can no longer act in the semblance of humanoid life. They can roll and tumble, as if drawn by unseen strings, to chase down targets. What was once a single, cohesive creature is now 1-100 tiny monstrosities, acting as a cluster of doom. Spending a round to attack them and smash each and every one, a normal attack roll is made. On a successful hit, roll double the normal damage dice – each point of damage destroys one individual bone.

While they can't deal damage directly, they can swarm an explorer and lock themselves into place against each other, reducing the target's movement and actions by half, so long as half their starting number is still active.

At any number above a quarter of the starting number, they can swarm upon a target's weapon arm, causing a penalty of 2 to attack rolls, or spoiling spell casting on a 2-in-6 chance. This effect can also negate the AC bonus from a shield, or ruin Thief's Abilities by 20%.

At any number remaining, a few of them, or even just one, can roll under an adventurer's foot and cause them to fall prone, unless they succeed at a save vs. death ray. The game's referee is encouraged to use sleeping skeletons in further creative ways.

They are often found mixed in with fully animated skeletons.

## Sword of Demon Banishment

b

This magical *longsword* +2, +3 vs. *demons* has the particular property of permanently barring a demon's essence from the earthly plane of existence by being left in the vanquished creature's body. Other outside forces cannot resurrect or revive the demon, if the sword is left in place. Other such swords exist, targeting other sorts of trans-planar and/or resurrecting creatures, such as devils, elder entities, and demi-gods.

## Scabbard of Spells & Magical Wonderment *Holmes Basic on G+*

Each of the major decorative features on the scabbard holds a magical effect, usable one time and then extinguished forever. Many such scabbards exist, of differing powers. Most powers are infused into the weapon and discharged by it's use, though some simply affect the bearer of the item when the power is activated. Roll a 12-sided die for swords, axes, and the like, or a 6-sided die for daggers and similarly sized weapons, to determine randomly how many magical decorations a given scabbard has, then roll on the charts below to identify the magical effects of those decorations. Many variations on the weapon-bearing item are possible, such as quivers or even pommels.

Roll 1 twelve-sided die: 1-4) Use Chart One, 5-8) Use Chart Two, 9-11) Use Chart Three, 12) Use Chart Four. Or you can roll one of each die type, to generate four random powers for any given magical scabbard.

Die

Roll *Magical Powers – Chart One*

- 1 *Sleep, as the spell, on the next creature struck with the weapon*
- 2 *Slow-falling, as a feather, for 2-12 rounds*
- 3 *Cure Light Wounds*
- 4 *Purify Food and Drink*
- 5 *Water Walking for 6 turns*
- 6 *Light*
- 7 *Protection from Evil*
- 8 *Bless*
- 9 *Mirror Image*
- 10 *Secret Door and Trap Detection for 6 turns*

b 2017



| Die Roll | <i>Magical Powers – Chart Two</i>  |
|----------|--|
| 1        | Transforms into any melee weapon desired, lasting until it is about to be sheathed again or for 3 turns, whichever comes first |
| 2        | Scabbard transforms to fit any bladed weapon (permanent change)  |
| 3        | 1st level cleric spell, changes randomly every 48 hours  |
| 4        | 1st level magic-user spell, changes randomly every 48 hours  |
| 5        | 2nd level magic-user spell, changes randomly every 48 hours  |
| 6        | 2nd level magic-user spell or 1st level cleric spell, changes randomly every 48 hours  |
| 7        | 2nd level cleric spell, changes randomly every 48 hours  |
| 8        | Weapon is considered magical for "to hit" purposes, effectively "+0"   |

| Die Roll | <i>Magical Powers – Chart Three</i>   |
|----------|---|
| 1        | +1 weapon; +2 vs. chaotic/lawful (opposite of wielder) for 3 turns.   |
| 2        | +1 weapon, can detect chaos/law (opposite of wielder) for 3 turns.  |
| 3        | Summon any one creature from 1-1 hit die to 1+1 hit die, fights for the owner of the scabbard until killed or dispelled by magic. |
| 4        | <i>Fear</i> , as the wand   |
| 5        | <i>Cold</i> , as the wand   |
| 6        | <i>Fire Ball</i> , as the wand  |
| 7        | <i>Healing</i> , as the staff, for 6 rounds   |
| 8        | <i>Cancellation</i> , as the rod  |
| 9        | <i>Telepathy</i> , as the helm, for 1 turn  |
| 10       | 12-foot ladder, or 100 feet of rope   |
| 11       | Weapon gains +1 to the chance to hit and to damage for 1 turn   |
| 12       | Weapon gains +2 to the chance to hit and to damage for 1 turn   |

#### *Magical Powers – Chart Four*

*When thrown:* for 1 turn this gem bursts with extremely bright light rays in all the colors of the rainbow and emits loud, ethereal music, after which it disintegrates. The dust left behind has the following property:

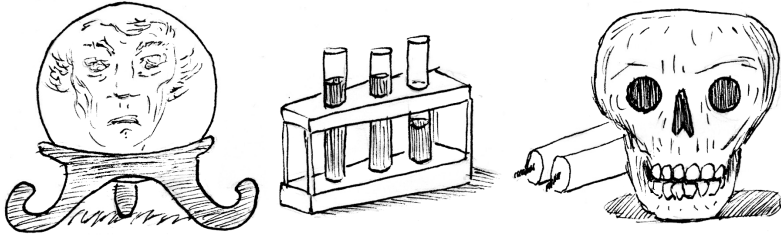
| Die Roll |  |
|----------|--|
| 1        | The sparkly dust is inert and valuable                         |
| 2        | The sparkly dust is irritating like tear gas                   |
| 3        | The sparkly dust is irritating like mustard gas                |
| 4        | The sparkly dust is hypnotic and distracting                   |
| 5        | The sparkly dust is super slippery                             |
| 6        | The sparkly dust is actual fairy dust that can make people fly |

## Scabbard of Many Toothaches

GC

The fabled Scabbard of Many Toothaches is mainly a normal everyday sword. But the SCABBARD...

From the detachable pinwheels at its non-pointy end to its container of minty, waxed floss at the pointy end, the SMT (as its friends call it) is a miracle of chocolaty goodness. Towards the pommel are eight Girl Scout Thin Mint Cookies (four to a side) followed by 14 shoe buttons – because EVERY traveling swordsman needs to carry replacement buttons.



Inspired by PAGE THIRTY-SEVEN / THIRTY-EIGHT

## Orb of Entrapment

b

This powerful item can be employed only by clerics or magic-users. It can be made to capture an individual creature, imprisoning that person or monster utterly and completely, until such time as the orb itself is shattered, setting them free. When entrapping a creature, they get a saving throw vs. magic wand, which is modified in their favor by their number of hit dice, but which is also penalized by the level of the cleric or magic-user wielding the orb. Clerics will most often tend to use the orb against demons and the like, while magic-users will tend to use it against rivals. Any number of attempts can be made, one per round, until a capture is successful. Only one occupant is allowed. Orbs of entrapment discovered while occupied are most likely to contain horrible devils, mighty warlords, unscrupulous sorcerers, or potent dragons.

## Lhankmharrhiahn Distillation

b

This special tincture is a great boon to thieves and of special import to halflings and dwarves. For those with Thief's Abilities, it improves them all by 20% for a duration of 1-6 turns ("hear noise" is improved by 1). For halflings and dwarves who have pursued the fighting man class, it grants them Thief's Abilities equivalent to the first level for 1-3 turns.

## Fake-Out Poison

b

Used by unscrupulous thieves to run scams, the bottle actually contains ghost pepper-infused vodka. The thief will have it tested by some stout local individual, who, once having touched it to their tongue, will confirm that it must surely be poisonous. However the thief has made themselves immune to the fiery alcohol and can drink it in huge gulps and collect all the money bet upon the feat.

## Wand of Enhanced Turning

b

Built around the finger bone of a elevated devotee of the same god the cleric worships, this wand boosts the cleric's ability to turn the undead. The cleric either rolls three dice for the turning check itself, or three dice for the number of creatures turned, always counting the better two of the three dice for the selected purpose. They must decide to which purpose the wand will be used before any dice are rolled.



## Skull Dweller

b

Move: 30 feet/turn

Hit Dice: ½ (1-4 hit points)

Armor Class: 7

Treasure Type: N

Alignment: neutral

Attacks: special

Damage: none

Small, resilient imps that make their homes inside of skulls, a skull dweller will fight fiercely to protect their claimed homes. They fight by scurrying over the bodies of those disturbing them, and their touch causes numbness in flesh-and-blood creatures and characters. The affect of this numbness is down the referee's interpretation of the circumstances, but could be expressed as a rising penalty to attacks and other actions, all the way up to complete immobility, given enough contact with the skull dweller.

## Candle of Recall

b

This simple-looking candle can open new vistas for magic-users... By placing the candle on a skull and lighting it, it emits a scent related to the life of the former 'inhabitant' of the skull, a spice of their homeland, the timber of their frequented forests, or the like. Any magic-user sleeping in proximity to this candle and its scent will awaken with new knowledge! They may gain an extra chance at a spell they previously missed out on if the candle rests on a magic-user's skull (e.g., another roll on the % Chance To Know Any Given Spell chart). The sleeper may gain insight into a dungeon or wilderness region they themselves have not explored, if the deceased had visited the site during their life. They may learn how to contact beings of power, demigods, or extra-planar allies if the deceased had contact with such creatures. The possibilities are as endless as the knowledge of those passed....

The magic-user should begin the session of use with a question in mind, based on what they know of the deceased. If the area of knowledge sought turns out to not be within the experience of the deceased no knowledge is gained. Each candle will only work for a 1d6 sessions, and each use subtracts a year from the end of the magic-user's life span (represented, if you like, as a 1% chance of death when using the candle).

Inspired by PAGE FORTY-FOUR / FORTY-FIVE

## Bottomless Sarcophagi

b

Crypts and caskets and coffins, all with their attendant undead waiting within to pounce on player characters, are nothing new in RPGs. But here's a shocking little twist to spring: not only is there a waiting skeleton or ghoul in each sarcophagus, but the bottoms of each sarcophagus are much lower than floor-level, so there are 2-12 monsters in each of them!





## BONUS!

### **Full-Bellied Dragon**

(Inspired by art on this page by CH 2016) b

When a dragon has had a full repast, it functions differently than a hungry dragon would, due to the lengthy metabolic processes of digestion. In short, they are sleepy and slow. Make the following adjustments to dragons that are encountered when "full":

Roll a four-sided die, minus 2: this is how many breath attacks the dragon can perform that day (while the remainder of their usual attacks are used for digestion). Damage for breath attacks is 2 points lower per die.

Drop the dragon's Move by 30% from lethargy.

Whenever the dragon is using its claws to attack, roll 1 six-sided die and if the result is a 3 or higher, it only uses one claw (again, lethargy).

Impair their Armor Class by 2 points, in general, and by 3 points when surprised.

They can nearly always be surprised in the first round. In the second round, they are still surprised on a 3-in-6, adjusted up or down by the circumstances of the attack in the first round, placement of attackers, etc.

If using the Reaction Table, move 2 points closer to a 7 result.

They will forgo the pursuit of characters who flee, 4 times out of 6.

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Dr. Holmes himself said the game was "fantastic, exciting, and imaginative." We all heartily agreed then, and we all heartily agree now. Still under the spell of that blue-covered book all these years later, we created a plethora of new elements to inject into games run with those rules (or honestly, any similarly straight-forward such rules).

Herein you will find well-over **50** new ideas for your game – all of it inspired by the art in the original book! New spells, new magic, new monsters and new threats, new directions to explore, and plenty of new twists on the classics.

Warm up your dice – *Adventure is here!*

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*Ideas that IMPACT your game...!*