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TREASURE VAULT™

a game-master's aid for
all role-playing systems

by Steven D. Howard

including "The Spirit Boat" by Stephen Peregrine



a collection of 26 unusual items
with 38 interlocked personalities
in 57 suggested scenarios for
any role playing game system



All-System
Catalyst
Series™

8520

Produced by **BLADE** a division of Flying Buffalo Inc.

TREASURE VAULT™

**a game-master's aid for
all role-playing systems**

*a compendium of
26
thoroughly described and very interesting items
(magical and otherwise)
plus 38 interconnected non-player characters
in 57 suggested scenarios
for use in any role-playing game*

*written by Steven D. Howard
"The Spirit Boat" written by Stephan Peregrine*

*front cover and interior illustrations
by Stephan Peregrine*

Produced by



a division of Flying Buffalo Inc.

DEDICATION: This book is dedicated to Vandi Williams,
one of my favorite people in the entire world.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: The author wishes to acknowledge the following: Vandi Williams, Mike Voss, and Bill Blake, for being such good sports about their caricatures; Tom and Judy Howard (my parents), for putting up with me while I wrote this and for all their support; Clair and Helene Howard (my grandparents), for the gift of the electric typewriter which made the latter part of this book much easier to put on paper; everyone I've ever played D&D® with, for various ideas and inspirations; and especially Mike Stackpole, for all his help, support, and patience in dealing with a first-time author, and for giving me the chance in the first place.

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Introduction

Welcome to the Treasure Vault. In this musty chamber are kept twenty-five of the most intriguing magical, valuable, or just plain interesting items in any fantasy role-playing game. These items include weapons of great power, jewelry of great beauty, and other mystifying artifacts. Be warned, however. There are some fraudulent and misleading items as well.

The Treasure Vault is one of the Catalyst series of books, and it is intended as a "catalyst to spark your imagination." Since it is designed to be used with any

role-playing game (at least those with a fantasy/medieval outlook), all the entries are presented without game statistics of any kind. It is up to the individual GM to translate these items.

Most of the items listed here have some sort of origin or background material involving "ancient history." If these clash with a particular system (for instance: if your world has no orcs, there couldn't very well be an Orc War), change or delete them so that they fit. Remember, change the item to fit the world, not the other way around.

GM Guidelines

Since *Treasure Vault* is a generic role-playing aid, no game specifics are included. As an aid to translation, I use the following system, based on the one used in *Blade's Citybook*.

BASIC FORMAT

All items in *Treasure Vault* have five subheadings: *Appearance*, *Legends*, *Powers*, *Personalities*, and *Scenarios*.

APPEARANCE, in addition to giving a basic description, often includes an estimate as to the relative value of the item. If specific amounts are given, they will be in gold, silver, or copper pieces, using the conversion standard of 10 copper pieces to 1 silver piece and 10 silver pieces to 1 gold piece. A gold piece has the purchasing power of one dollar in 1980's America.

LEGENDS will give the common knowledge and rumor about the item. This should be related to players through Non-Player Characters (NPCs) without too much difficulty or effort on the players' part.

POWERS details the exact powers of the item, or lack thereof. It may also include the true version of stories given under *Legends*.

PERSONALITIES contains all NPCs connected with the item. These can include the item's maker, current owner, past owners, their associates, or anybody else.

SCENARIOS gives two or more situations in which the item might figure into a campaign.

FIGHTING PROWESS

Players often wind up wanting to fight with NPCs, so a rating system is necessary. Statistics for NPCs are given in the format used in *Citybook*, which is described below.

This six-level ranking system describes how well a particular NPC can fight. In some cases, fighting prowess is given in terms of a specific weapon or weapons (e.g. Tandy Gilliam is "good" with a bow, "average" with a short sword, and "poor" with anything else). In other cases the rating is overall (e.g. Xark Redgar is "fair" with any weapon).

Percentages are given in order to roll randomly and to show how a particular character compares to the rest of the population. Thus, about 40% of all fighters will be *poor*; only 4% would be *excellent*. These are the rankings for fighting prowess:

- POOR.** Unfamiliar with combat; easily killed or wounded. (01-40%)
- AVERAGE.** A run-of-the-mill fighter. No Conan, but not *usually* killed with a single blow either. (41-59%)
- FAIR.** Better than average, with at least some formal training. (60-74%)
- GOOD.** A seasoned warrior, with good knowledge of tactics and various weapons. (75-84%)
- VERY GOOD.** Definitely a person to have on your side in a fight. (85-95%)
- EXCELLENT.** This person rarely worries about being bested in combat. He is virtually on a par with the Epic Heroes. (96-100%)

MAGIC ABILITY

Certain NPCs in this book are manipulators of arcane forces (i.e. magic). To determine the extent of magical talent, a system similar to that of fighting prowess is used. Once again, the percentages show how this NPC stacks up against the general population of magicians. If no magic ability is listed, none exists. The rankings for magic ability are:

- POOR.** An apprentice sorcerer at best. Has a good chance of miscasting a spell. (01-40%)
- AVERAGE.** A competent mage, but not too frightening. (41-59%)
- FAIR.** More effective and with a wider range of spells. Still not much of a threat to the world. (60-74%)
- GOOD.** Knows numerous spells and how to use them to good effect. (75-84%)
- VERY GOOD.** Very formidable. Not a person to meddle with unless you like being a frog. (85-95%)
- EXCELLENT.** Can easily command a number of known spells. Knows seven ways to turn a person into chewing gum in ten words or less. (96-100%)

In order to represent the wide number of spells available and the multitude of magic systems in the gaming field, the "Eight C's of Magic" (developed by Michael Stackpole) are used in *Treasure Vault*.

- C1. COMBAT MAGIC.** Any spell used primarily in an offensive or defensive nature during combat.
- C2. CURATIVE MAGIC.** Any spell used to heal wounds, cure diseases, stop poison, etc.

- C3. CLAIRVOYANT MAGIC.** Any spell used to detect things: secret doors, traps, magic, invisible things, etc.
- C4. CONVEYANCE MAGIC.** Any spell used to get from one place to another: teleportation, levitation, telekinesis, etc.
- C5. COMMUNICATION MAGIC.** Telepathy and other mind-reading spells, translation, magic reading, hypnosis, etc.
- C6. CONSTRUCTION MAGIC.** Any spell which uses matter or energy to "build," such as wall spells, protective fields, stone-shaping spells, etc.
- C7. CONCEALMENT MAGIC.** Any spell which serves to hide or mislead: invisibility, illusion, shape-changing spells, etc.
- C8. CONJURATION MAGIC.** Any spell which produces a condition or entity: light spells, weather control, demon-summoning, etc.

Weapons and Armor



An adventurer usually finds arms and armor a necessary part of his life, as much a part of the world as water is to a fish. Many of the items listed here are magical. A character must know how to fight with a similar weapon in order to use the item described in combat. However, anyone may use the non-combat aspects of an item so long as that is not disallowed in the description.

THE RONDOLIM (Tunadhom's Axe)

Appearance.

The Rondolim appears to be an ancient, rusted battleaxe, worn and bent from years of use. The owners of most weapon shops would be ashamed to have it in their junk piles.

When in the hands of a dwarvish warrior, however, the Rondolim takes on its true form. It has a golden-edged steel blade, as sharp as a razor, atop a handle of bone, carved with exquisitely detailed bas-relief representations of a dwarvish army. In this form it would bring a king's ransom, but only from a dwarf (since it will become worthless when in the possession of any non-dwarf).

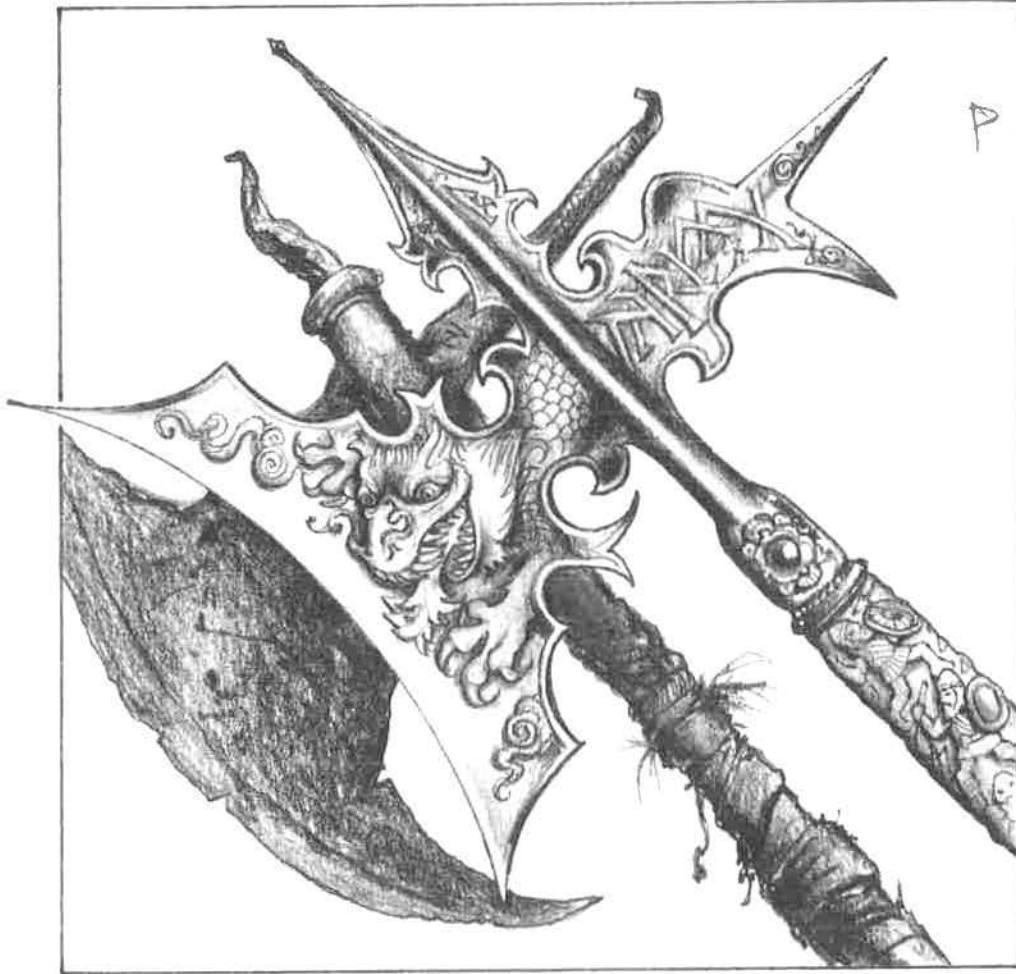
Legends.

Tunadhom was a dwarvish general of great renown. He was hailed as a genius by even the elves for his sweeping victories in the Orc War. Once, outnumbered and low on supplies, he wiped out three hundred orcish and goblin troops by starting an avalanche from his mountaintop vantage point.

Tunadhom always fought with the Rondolim, an heirloom from the Early Dwarvish Empire. Rondolim is Old Dwarvish for "Killer of Orcs." With it, Tunadhom slew nearly two thousand orcs and goblins, without once suffering so much as a scratch. Tunadhom died at a ripe old age, of stomach ulcers.

Powers.

The Rondolim may only be used by a warrior of full Dwarvish blood who has been trained in the use



of the battle-axe. When in the hands of such a redoubtable fighter, it achieves its true form and gains the following powers:

First, it glows red if orcs are within fifty feet of it. The intensity of the glow is related both to the number of orcs and to their proximity to the wielder. A trio of orcs hiding behind a tree forty feet away would not give as bright a glow as two orcs directly behind The Rondolim's wielder, but would give more of a glow than ten orcs exactly fifty feet away.

Secondly, any time it is used against orcs, the wielder's fighting prowess is raised to Very Good (or to Excellent if it's Very Good already). GMs take note: in most games, this will translate into an improved chance for the wielder to successfully strike the orc.

Third, the blade becomes red hot upon touching orc flesh, causing severe burns. The burns so caused are approximately equivalent to those which would be caused by an average size torch applied to flesh

for about ¼ second. This power will also affect any orc trying to touch The Rondolim, inflicting the same burning damage.

It is possible that, upon hearing the legend of Tunadhom, players will assume the axe has powers against goblins and that it confers some protection in combat. Neither conclusion is true. In addition to being a military genius, Tunadhom was also incredibly lucky.

Personalities.

TANDY GILLIAM. *Human.*
Ht: 5'2". Wt: 100 lbs. Age: 19.
Fighting prowess: good with bow, average with short sword.

A slim, blonde-haired, somewhat attractive girl, Tandy makes her living as a traveling storyteller and musician. She wanders the countryside, always on the lookout for a new story or song.

On a recent trip to Dwarf Island, she discovered the legend of Tunadhom and The Rondolim,

with the additional fact (known only to her and those she tells) that The Rondolim currently looks like something you wouldn't use to fight a chair. She is using this legend to stir up enough local interest to make her a drawing card for any inn she visits.

Tandy is a fun-loving soul, and she enjoys a good joke. She particularly enjoys the effect that her stories and songs have on so-called "jaded adventurers," who usually go off at a run the minute she utters the word "gold." Tandy tends to be overly sensitive and self-effacing at times, and she can pout for days on end if she feels like it. Although not above a brief romance, Tandy will resist the urge to "settle down" for as long as possible. Music is her first love, and she is one of the finest lutanists in the Three Kingdoms.

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. The orcs in the mountains are preparing for battle. The dwarves are terribly outnumbered. The situation looks hopeless – unless

the legendary Rondolim can be found. Some say it is buried with Tunadhom on remote Dwarf Island. Some say it lies abandoned at the foot of Mt. Domani, the site of Tunadhom's farthest thrust into the Orclands. Still others hold that it is in the possession of the orcs who have attempted to destroy it but have thus far failed. The only thing anyone knows for sure is that time is running out for the dwarves. The situation is open for a band of fearless heroes who can find the Rondolim and save the dwarves. (This "scenario" could actually be the basis of a major campaign, months in duration.)

Scenario 2. Tandy Gilliam comes to town with the story of Tunadhom, conveniently passing along (for a goodly sum, of course — she's no fool) her knowledge as to the Rondolim's current appearance. For the next eight weeks or so, the local dwarves (and others) will be rummaging through every trash heap and junkyard in sight, looking for it.

THE SWORD OF DEQ

Appearance.

The Sword of Deq appears to be little more than a finely crafted longsword with a plain hilt. Due to its fine workmanship and the unusual sharpness of the blade, the sword would probably fetch two to three times the value of an ordinary longsword. It would, of course, be worth considerably more to someone aware of its magical nature.

Legends.

The sword plays a minor role in the moderately well-known "Ballad of Deq." Deq was a mixture of hero and rogue, usually tending toward the latter. He possessed, among other wonders, a magical sword, which is called by his name. Although the powers of the sword are not noted implicitly in the legends (since Deq much preferred to use his magical sling, Eyeseeker), it is known that he stole it from an assassin and the assassin's employer. The sword is rumored to glow in the dark.

Powers.

The Sword of Deq is also known by the name Avenger, although few sages have made the connection due to lack of evidence. As such, it has one major power. It will improve its wielder's fighting prowess by one class *if* he is battling someone who

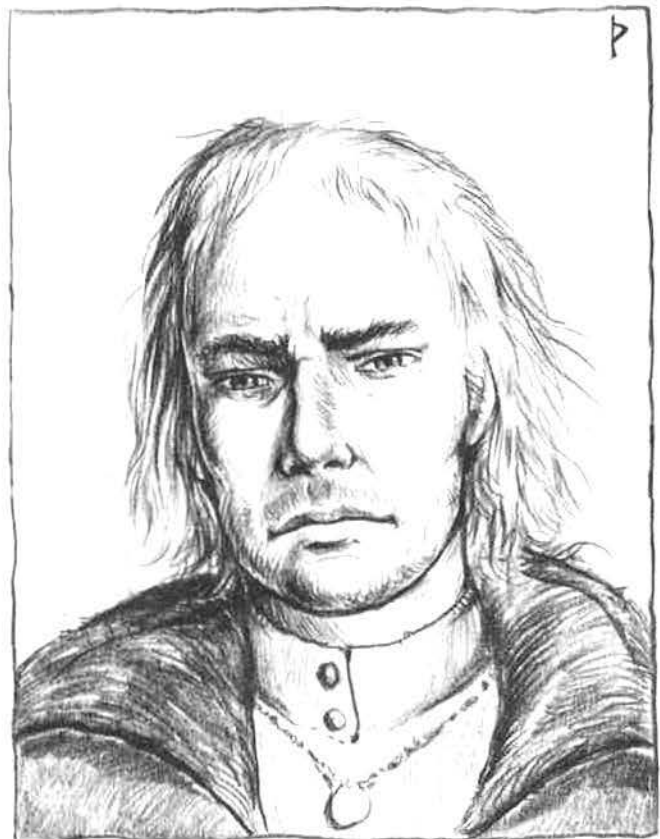
has tried to harm him in the past. In other words, as long as the wielder of the Sword of Deq does not initiate deadly combat, he gains this power. At other times it is a normal sword. It only glows (with light equal to a good lantern) when the power is in effect.

Personalities.

KELMAN "BONES" TREBONIC. *Human. Ht: 5'10". Wt: 175 lbs. Age: 45. Fighting prowess: average with sword, poor otherwise.*

Bones, so named both as a pun on his surname and as an indication of his physical build, is a long-legged but thick-boned man with steel-gray eyes and thinning silver hair. Bones makes his meager living by selling swords, mostly second-hand and at a few gold pieces each, from his tiny storefront. He has recently come across a sword of incredible balance and sharpness. It is marked at 50 g.p., but Bones will haggle down to 30.

Bones is a man of little intuition and less imagination. It has never occurred to him that this sword (*it is* the Sword of Deq) is anything but a well-



Kelman "Bones" Trebonic

made weapon. He distrusts magic and magicians, and will not consent to any spell-casting (not even a magic detecting spell) until after a sword has been paid for and removed from the premises.

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. After hearing the "Ballad of Deq," the players wander into Bones' Second-Hand Sword Shop and find the sword. They, of course, want to find out if the sword is magical, while Bones wants nothing to do with spell-casting. This should lead to a good role-playing situation, with the players trying to convince Bones to let them cast the spell, and Bones trying to get them to buy it first.

Scenario 2. A minor villain-type, whom the player have previously defeated in combat, buys the sword and sets out after them, with the vengeance power of the weapon in full effect.

THE STAFF OF THE SIGIL

Appearance.

The Staff of the Sigil appears to be an extremely elaborate ebony quarterstaff engraved with human faces in various expressions, mostly shock and fear. The staff might bring 50 g.p. on the open market.

Legends.

The staff was created by a secret band of wizards known as the Brotherhood of the Sigil (see also *Skull of Doom* and *Robe of the Sigil*). According to legend, they used the staff to eliminate a number of their enemies. A member of the Brotherhood carrying the staff would visit to the victim; the victim was never seen again. The legend also speculates that the faces on the staff are those of its victims, remaining as "trophies" for the Brotherhood.

Powers.

The staff has one major power, usable by anyone who is proficient in the use of the staff and has a magical ability at level *Good* or better. This power, enacted when the intended victim is struck by the staff and his true name is spoken by the staff's wielder, is possession. The victim is banished to a "pocket dimension," an extra-spacial prison, and is in a state of suspended animation. The victim's face at the moment of contact with the pocket dimension is added to those on the staff. This power can be reversed by striking the staff against the ground and speaking the name of the person to be released.

Once the person is released, his face is removed from the staff. Note that neither power can be used unless the target's true name is known.

Personalities.

DUKE FORTINBRAS V. *Human. Ht: 5'6". Wt: 220 lbs. Age: 58. Fighting prowess: poor.*

Duke Fortinbras was a very fat, gray-haired little man. He was the first victim of the staff, and his chubby little face can be seen at the very top. The expression is one of sheer confusion. Fortinbras was a selfish, hedonistic, and altogether despotic ruler. He had a great fear of magic and outlawed all forms of it. Should he be recognized (from a portrait, for example) and brought back (by striking the staff to the ground and saying "Fortinbras the Fifth"), he will be very indignant and downright antagonistic toward the wizard who rescued him. He has been rescued from the staff on three different times since his imprisonment 75 years ago. Each time he was returned to his limbo-like prison by his rescuer, who couldn't put up with him any longer.





Corman D'Arsell

CORMAN D'ARSELL. *Human. Ht: 6'. Wt: 180 lbs. Age: 40. Fighting prowess: fair with staff. Magic ability: very good, C1, C3, C5; good, C4, C7.*

Corman is a tall, lean, dark-haired fellow, and very attractive. He is the current owner of the staff and is using it for his own evil purposes. Quite recently, several members of the royal court have disappeared after a conference with Corman D'Arsell, chief advisor to King Hewar (and reported lover of Queen Iris) of Darkhold. Corman is a man of grace, culture, and refinement. He has great personal magnetism, and many consider him a trusted friend. He is thoroughly evil however, and he will kill anyone, friend or enemy, who gets in his way. His next plan is to kill or imprison Hewar, marry Iris, kill her, and gain sole rulership of the mineral-rich province of Darkhold.

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. The players, in Darkhold for whatever reason, stumble across D'Arsell's plot. They are now presented the difficult task of convincing someone that the ever-popular Corman D'Arsell is the myster-

ious force behind the rash of disappearances. If they're not careful, they could disappear, too.

Scenario 2. The players are part of an army sent to lay siege to Darkhold. When (if) they reach the palace, they will find the place in shambles, the aftermath of D'Arsell's attempted takeover. Hewar has discovered that D'Arsell and Iris are lovers and has ordered the execution of both. The Palace Guard, divided between the king and D'Arsell, have erupted into a miniature civil war. The players have the happy task of sorting this all out.

SWORDS OF THE ELEMENTS

The swords of the elements – Aireon, Firebrand, Earthor, and Waterrel – were forged in ancient times by the legendary Elemental Lords so their chosen champions might do battle. Each has special powers to combat the devices of the other three. Because of this, every battle between the Elemental Champions was a draw. The Lords wearied of this rather quickly, and so allowed the swords to fall into the hands of mortals. Specifics on the history of each sword after this time can be found in the appropriate *Legends*.

In order to function properly, each sword must be "charged" by a specified procedure (detailed under *Powers*). This charging will last 48 hours, at which time the sword will need to be charged again.

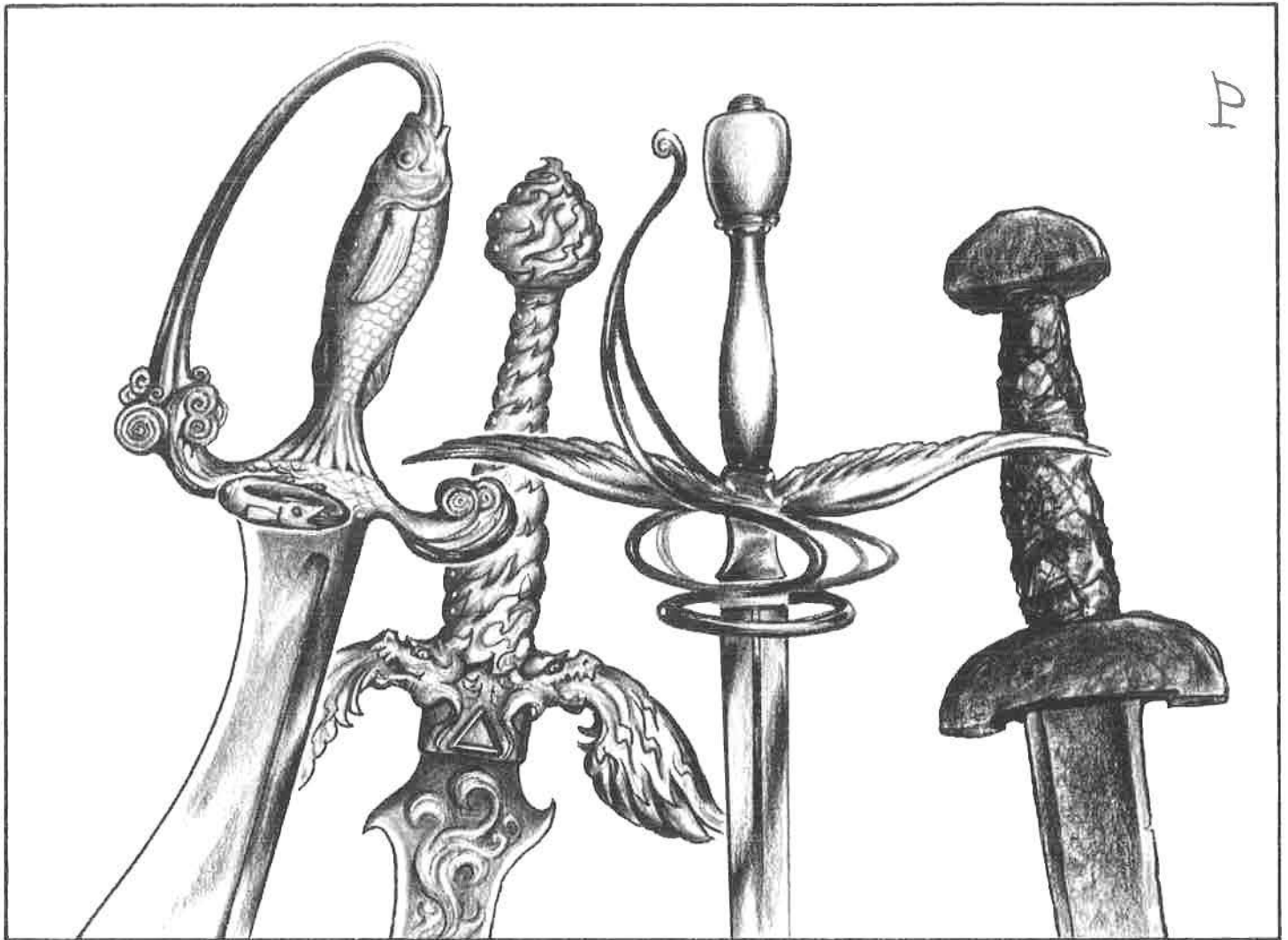
Due to the conflicting nature of the swords, no person can own more than one of them. Should someone who already possesses an Elemental Sword claim another, both will become as normal swords until one or the other is gotten rid of in some way.

Each sword can only be destroyed by a combination of the other three, bound together by magical means. Thus, Aireon could be destroyed by a magical force combining fire, water, and earth. This would be a very difficult effect to create, and could only be attempted by someone with a magic ability of Excellent.

Aireon

Appearance.

Aireon appears as a finely-wrought, delicate dueling sword or rapier. Its hilt is small, and the



handguard is in the shape of a pair of bird-like wings. Aireon seems worth about 20 g.p. on looks alone.

Legends.

After the abolition of the Elemental Champions, Aireon was placed atop a high mountain for whomever was brave enough to surmount it. It was first found by the wandering holy man, Dardan. In obedience to his sect's non-violent code, he attempted to destroy the sword (or to beat it into a plowshare; stories differ). Finding he could not, he cast it into the Dark Sea where, much to his amazement, it floated. (See *Powers* for an explanation of this phenomenon.) It was found by Rexmit the Pirate, who has kept it ever since.

Powers.

Aireon was created by the Lord of the Air to combat the Champions of Fire, Earth, and Water.

Consequently, it is imbued with powers to overcome these elements. It confers to its bearer, as well, immunity to the effects of water, fire, and earth. Therefore, neither the sword nor its wielder can be burnt, submerged in water, struck with a dirt ball, etc. In addition, the sword can extinguish small, non-magical fires, absorb small amounts of water, and dig small (man-sized) holes in the earth. Offensively, the sword can create a strong, gale-force wind which lasts for a maximum of three minutes, driving away smaller foes, and causing larger ones to be pummeled with whatever debris is between the sword and the target. This last power can also be applied to the sails of a ship, or to the ground to slow the wielder's fall.

To charge Aireon, it is necessary to hold it in a strong wind for ten minutes, or simply expose it to fresh air for one hour.

Personalities.

REXMIT THE PIRATE. *Human. Ht: 6'2" Wt: 200 lbs. Age: 37. Fighting Prowess: Excellent with rapier, dagger; otherwise good.*

Rexmit (Rex to his friends) is a tall, handsome blond with harsh features which somehow give him the profile of an "artistic type." Rex is a likable enough guy, if one ignores the way he makes his living. Since finding the Sword of Air (as he calls Aireon), he has become a rich man, using Aireon's magical wind to propel his ship at twice the speed of his victims and pursuers. If he is caught, he'll just grab Aireon and dive into the water, hoping fervently to be rescued before the forty-eight hours are up.

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. The players, on a ship at sea, are victimized by Rexmit and his dozen-or-so henchmen. They can be captured, impressed to service as cabin boys, or they could even join the pirate crew!

Scenario 2. The players, either at sea or on an island, spot an apparently drowning man, clutching madly at his floating rapier. The man, of course, is Rexmit, and the forty-eight hours are up. The players can rescue him, or just the sword.



Rexmit the Pirate

Firebrand

Appearance.

Firebrand is a broadsword of fine steel with flames carved along the blade. The hilt is in the shape of a flame as well. Firebrand looks to be worth around 25 gold pieces.

Legends.

After the end of the Elemental Champions, the Lord of Fire placed Firebrand at the heart of an active volcano that went dormant for just three days every hundred years. It was recovered by the famous barbarian, Konig, who returned it to the volcano just prior to his death. His page, Dorgil, made brief note of the volcano's location and bizarre period of activity in his *Diary of a Page*.

Powers.

The Lord of Fire imbued Firebrand with certain powers, as did the other Lords, to combat the other

three elements. Firebrand and its wielder are immune to air, earth, and water. They cannot be drowned, buried alive, or swept away by a high wind. Firebrand also has a limited power to offset the other three elements. It can dig small holes in the earth, absorb small amounts of water, or calm small gusts of wind. Firebrand's major power is to burst into flames at its wielder's command. These flames will cause severe burns to anyone hit by the sword (unless he or she is immune to fire). This power can also light torches, set fire to buildings, etc. The flames remain until the wielder orders them away.

Firebrand is charged by being held in a volcano for ten minutes or in a normal fire for one hour.

Personalities.

BARBELEI. *Human. Ht: 5'8". Wt: 137 lbs. Age: 27. Fighting prowess: good with broadsword and rapier, otherwise average.*

Barbelei is extremely attractive with her flame-colored hair and captivating gray-green eyes. She is a direct descendant of the last Champion of Fire and sees the Sword of Fire as her birthright. She is quite obsessive about it and will stop at nothing to get it.



Barbelei

Until the sword is hers, she sees such things as laws, religion, and loyalty as unimportant distractions which can get downright annoying at times (especially laws). She is attempting to retrieve the copy of *Diary of a Page* from Nerweal the librarian by pretending to be in love with him. As soon as she finds out where it is being kept, she will kill him and steal the book. The book is extremely valuable and copies are rare; it is the only written record of the life of Konig.

NERWEAL THE LIBRARIAN. *Human. Ht: 5'5". Wt: 110 lbs. Age: 78. Fighting prowess: poor.*

Nerweal, who passes himself off as a librarian, is actually a very powerful wizard. He knew what Barbelei was up to even before he met her and is determined not to let her find the book. He wants to retrieve the sword for himself, even though he cannot use it, for he knows people who can and would pay a good price. Unfortunately, the volcano won't enter a dormant stage for another 19 years. Nerweal plans to overcome this by forcing the volcano into its dormant stage early. Part of the spell he is working on involves the blood link that Barbelei

has with the Champion of Fire.

Nerweal is a wizened, hunch-backed old man with disheveled white hair and beard. He loves using people as pawns and won't hesitate to use Barbelei or the players.

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. The players encounter Nerweal and Barbelei, and are lured into Barbelei's plot against the wizard. Unless they discover his true nature, they can be talked into waylaying the old man and stealing the key to his magical book cabinet. This will get them into a *lot* of trouble.

Scenario 2. The players discover a previously unknown copy of *Diary of a Page*, possibly in the library of a deserted castle, and they set out on their own to discover the secrets of the volcano. This will probably lead to a confrontation with Barbelei and/or Nerweal.

Earthor

Appearance.

Earthor is a broadsword made of iron. The hilt is rough and slightly suggestive of rock. Earthor probably wouldn't bring more than ten gold pieces. It is a truly homely (if that word can be used) weapon.

Legends.

After the disbanding of the Elemental Champions, Earthor was hidden deep in the earth, in a cave deeper than even the dwarves had ever been. It was eventually discovered by Torvil, the dwarven hero, who sold it to a gypsy trader named Fargo. Fargo was never seen again, but the sword showed up in the hands of Abness Frond, a veteran warrior, some months later. Frond will not say where he got the sword, only that he did not steal it.

Powers.

Earthor, like its companion swords, has been imbued with certain immunities to the other three elements. Hence, Earthor and its wielder cannot be harmed by air, fire, or water. They are immune to drowning, being burnt, and strong winds. Also, Earthor has limited power to destroy the other elements. It can extinguish small flames, absorb small amounts of water, and calm small gusts of wind. Earthor's major power is usable but once per day. It enables its wielder to cause the earth to open up

and swallow one creature. Unless protected from earth-based magic, the creature is trapped six feet beneath the earth and will suffocate in two minutes unless rescued. The sword can also build things like bridges, ladders, and walls of stone, provided there is sufficient earth nearby to serve as raw material.

Personalities.

ABNESS FROND. Half-elf. Ht: 5'6". Wt: 130 lbs. Age: 50. Fighting prowess: good with any type of sword, otherwise poor.

Abness is a fairly typical pre-middle-aged half-elf. His hair is long, blond, and braided in the back. His not-quite-human eyes are deep gray. His slim body is quite muscular, particularly in the arms, shoulders, and chest. Abness makes his living as a swordsman. He does several different sword tricks, including fighting with a sword in each hand, juggling swords, and fighting three opponents at once. He is taciturn and secretive, altogether an uncommunicative sort. If pushed, he will reveal a little of his past and allude to "friends in high places."

Abness *does* indeed have friends in high places. He has a natural rapport with birds. He can speak with them, and they will obey his instructions to the best of their ability. He is loathe to use this power in front of others, as he knows there are wizards who would love to dissect his brain to find out his secret method of communicating with birds. He obtained Earthor when his best friend, an eagle, brought it to him. He doesn't know where the eagle got it.

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. The birds have been behaving strangely lately. The players, attempting to figure out the reason behind this strange avian behavior, stumble across Abness, who will use Earthor to protect his secret, thus perhaps attracting even more attention to himself.

Scenario 2. The players find out Abness' secret and are blackmailing him by threatening to turn him in to the Wizard's League. He decides to use Earthor to "shut them up," in more ways than one.

Waterrel

Appearance.

Waterrel is a short sword with handguards in the form of two crests of a double wave. The hilt itself is

in the shape of a fish. Waterrel would bring around fifteen gold pieces based solely on its appearance.

Legends.

When the Elemental Champions came to an end, the Elemental Lord of Water hid Waterrel in a grotto deep below the ocean. It was retrieved by the merman Alita. He gave it to his son, the half-merman, half-human Qalii. It was in Qalii's hand that Waterrel returned to the surface world. Waterrel was supposedly buried with Qalii at sea, but rumors abound as to its "actual" location. The most popular of these rumors is that Markande Seth, captain of the ship *Gossamer* where Qalii's last rites were held, substituted a duplicate sword and kept Waterrel for himself. Another theory is that Qalii had a son, who would be a quarter-merman, and that he has the sword.

Powers.

As do the other Elemental Swords, Waterrel has the power to resist the other three elements. Thus, Waterrel and its wielder cannot be burnt, buried alive, or overwhelmed by a strong wind. Also, Waterrel can counteract small amounts of fire, earth, and air, to the extent of extinguishing small



Markande Seth

fires, digging man-sized holes, and calming gusts of wind. Waterrel's major power is to emit a stream of water which can be either freezing cold or scalding hot, according to the wielder's choice. The water hoses out with tremendous power. The impact is sufficient to move creatures which are roughly human-sized away for as long as the burst is maintained (to a maximum of one minute), or to immobilize larger creatures for an appropriate amount of time. This water, being magical in nature, will douse magical fires.

The wielder can also change the shape of the blast, from a stream to a cone, at will. The cone-shape loses a great deal of impact but covers a larger area. In cone-shape, the water blast will immobilize human-sized creatures and overwhelm smaller ones.

Waterrel must be charged by holding it in a waterfall (one not less than twenty feet high) for ten minutes or immersing it in water of any sort for one hour. An interesting property of the sword is that if it is charged in fresh water, the blast will be fresh water, but if it is charged in salt water, the blast will be salt water.

Personalities.

MARKANDE SETH. *Human. H: 5'10". Wt: 160 lbs. Age: 91. Fighting prowess: average.*

Markande is a weathered old sailor with a wrinkled, leathery face and hard, calloused, time-worn hands. His blue eyes still hold a slight sparkle of youth, and he has a full head of light gray hair. He has retired from the sea and spends a good deal of his time in various inns and pubs, smoking his ever-present pipe and telling tall tales. He knows that his first mate, Treglish Frendls, stole Waterrel from Qalii's body, but he likes to be mysterious about it. He doesn't know what happened to Waterrel after Treglish's death, but he likes to be mysterious about that, too. He has drawn up a number of false treasure maps as practical jokes. He gives them to strangers, with much secrecy.

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. The players, hearing the legend of Waterrel, seek out Markande Seth. He gives them a "treasure map" which he claims leads the way to Waterrel's hiding place. It actually leads to: a junkyard, a deserted island, the middle of a desert,

or anything else the GM comes up with.

Scenario 2. Waterrel, the only Elemental Sword still "at large", is found in the lair of a dangerous monster by the players. Upon discovering its powers, they immediately start water-blasting everything in sight. One of the owners of the other Elemental Swords hears about this and, for his own reasons, decides that it would be advisable to eliminate Waterrel's new owner(s).

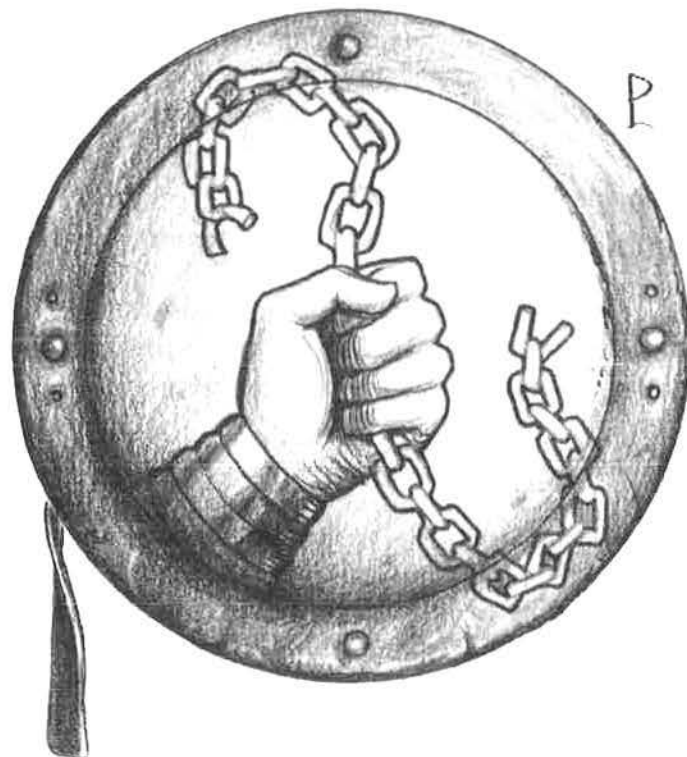
KONIG'S SHIELD

Appearance.

Konig's Shield appears to be a normal round shield, about two feet in diameter. Emblazoned on the shield is a fist clutching a broken chain. There is nothing about the shield which would increase its price above that of an ordinary one.

Legends.

Many years ago, a tribe of mountain-dwelling barbarians were captured and enslaved by a group of power-hungry wizards. Konig, a member of that barbarian tribe, was working in a silver mine when



he dug through to a big cavern where he found the shield. Seeing the broken-chain emblem as a good omen, he decided to take the shield for himself. What happened next is not clear, but it is known that Konig led the barbarians in a revolt against the magicians, who were powerless to stop them. Konig went on to become a famed adventurer and a great leader of men.

Powers.

The shield has two distinct powers, both usable only by a warrior or a priest who is noble and pure of heart. Anyone else will find that not only will the shield not have its expected powers, but it will actually work against him. Any blow which strikes the shield will be passed on to such a wielder, doing twice the expected amount of damage.

The shield's first beneficial power is that it confers upon the wielder an almost god-like amount of personal charisma. So long as the wielder has a just and righteous cause to fight for, followers will be drawn to him like bees to honey. These followers will, until the fight is over, believe in the cause as much as the shield's owner does. They are released from its power as soon as the immediate goal is accomplished, and cannot be affected by its power again.

The second beneficial power is the shield's high-power magic resistance which it passes on to its wielder and his/her followers. This power, as with the first, is only in operation when there is a cause at hand. This magic resistance effectively treats all spell-casters as though their magic ability rating were "poor" (GM's will have to decide just what this means in terms of their individual game systems).

Personalities.

XARK REDGAR. *Human. Ht: 6'. Wt: 220 lbs. Fighting prowess: fair. Magical ability: good, C2, C3, C8.*

Xark is a warrior-priest, tall and burly, with jet black hair and a thick but well-groomed beard. He is of that rare and most dangerous species, the true believer. His zealous faith is infectious, even without the shield. Since finding the shield, his persuasive charm has become nigh-irresistible. Xark serves any deity the GM chooses, but it should be one of Justice, Honor, etc. Xark is very active in spreading social reform and endorsing human (or creature) rights. His main weakness is that he tries to do too much. In this area, he walks a close line to the deadly sin of Pride.



Xark Redgar

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. The player characters pass a street corner where Xark is preaching. Seized with a great fervor, Xark uses the shield to impel his listeners to help him destroy the nearby temple of a rival god. The players may or may not be captivated by the shield's power, but they are caught in the mob anyway. Just to make things interesting, one or more of the players worships this rival god.

Scenario 2. The players, hearing of Xark's sudden increase in popularity, contrive to find the source, steal it, and use it for their own ends. Even if they are successful, the shield will work against them, since their motives are selfish and therefore impure.

HELM OF POL

Appearance.

The Helm of Pol is an overly ornate helmet with an equally baroque visor. It is painted a dull black with various and sundry animal patterns. The visor is designed along the lines of an animal face of some

sort, but it's hard to tell what sort. The overall effect is tacky at best, and it will probably bring only a fraction of the price of a regular helmet.

Legends.

Pol was a successful warlord who lived around a century ago. He was well known for his tactical expertise and strategic insight. Having spent as long as two or three days planning an elaborate battle plan with various contingencies and alternatives, he would don his distinctive helm and lead his troops to battle. On the field, he seemed to almost be able to detect an attack before it came. His final battle, however, seemed to reverse his earlier pattern. All his normal routines worked against him. His elaborate battle plan was stolen by an enemy spy, and his distinctive helm singled him out for enemy archers. His strategic genius seemed to fail him as well, for he could not formulate a new plan. His armies were overwhelmed, he was slain, and the helm was lost.

Powers.

The Helm of Pol has great magical powers, although none but Pol ever knew their true extent. When worn with the visor down, the helm confers vision equal to noon on a cloudless day. Darkness or blinding lights will have no effect on the wearer. Most importantly, however, the helm provides the wearer with a "sixth sense" or premonition of danger. The premonition is general in nature, along the lines of "There is danger directly ahead," rather than "There's an assassin with a poisoned dagger behind the third tree on your right."

There is a drawback to wearing the helm, however. The sixth sense tends to overwhelm the normal (even genius-level) human brain, dulling the other brain functions. Thus, complex plotting and spell casting are impossible, as anything more mentally strenuous than reading a few lines in a clear hand will cause blinding headaches.

Personalities.

SHARONA DEL FANKES. *Human. H: 5'2". Wt: 105 lbs. Age: 47. Fighting prowess: average with dagger. Magical ability: good: C1, C3, C5.*

Sharona is a fairly competent mage although she tends to pursue rather trivial or unpromising lines of research. She has a profound interest in the unusual and the bizarre, and she can often be found at small

curiosity shops or estate auctions. Sharona, rather on the plain side, has nevertheless had quite a succession of suitors. She is currently engaged to Marin Vell, the owner of a small bookstore.

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. Sharona hires the player characters to obtain the helm. She feels that the helm could be used to retrieve some of Pol's "psychic energies." Of course upon donning the helm, she will find that the helm's powers prevent this, and she will be sure that the player characters have plotted against her (that is, she will after she takes off the helm, so that she can think about it).

Scenario 2. The players discover the helm's thought-blocking process and decide to have their characters use the helm as a "lie detector" during interrogations of captured persons by forcing it onto the head of the prisoner. In this state, the subject will be unable to tell a lie, as it will produce a headache of immense proportions. How the victim reacts to this is, of course, dependent on his personality, but nobody would be too happy about it.



The Helm of Pol

Jewelry



The adventurer's quest is often in search of gems and jewels, precious coins and gleaming ingots of metal. The jewelry described in this section ranges from an exquisitely crafted brooch to a seductively lovely diadem, from a bit of crystalline lava to the emerald eye of a god. All represent the things an adventurer's dreams are made of.

THE LOST RING OF LAROC

Appearance.

The ring is sized to fit a human's finger, made of gold with a bloodstone signet in the shape of a stylized capital "L." Engraved on the inside are the words, "The house of Laroc shall not fall." It is obviously very valuable, worth around 500 g.p.

Legends.

The royal family of Laroc is barely remembered today, save by story-tellers and sages. The Larocs ruled a large kingdom of artisans and craftsmen beyond compare until they were overrun by barbarous orcs and goblins about 300 years ago. While they were in power, they had a set of five rings which

were identical except for the stones. The stones were: a bloodstone (the lost ring), a ruby, an emerald, a diamond, and an onyx. The four other rings are in the possession of Floribar Heavypocket.

Legend has it that anyone possessing all five rings can communicate with any or all of the members of the late Laroc family to learn the secrets of their empire. No living Larocs are known.

Powers.

In spite of the legends and widely-accepted rumors, the rings have no magical powers, separately or together. They are, however, exceedingly beautiful, and the full set would be priceless.

Personalities.

FLORIBAR HEAVYPOCKET. Gnome. Ht: 3'4". Wt: 80 lbs. Age: 107. Fighting prowess: fair with

dagger, sling, or short sword; otherwise poor.

Floribar, with his gnarled gnomish face framed by thick white hair, hardly appears to be the shrewd, careful character that he is. Floribar is a gem-cutter and jeweler. He is very talented at recognizing quality jewelry but rather average at making it. His one exceptional talent in this area is in free-floating mountings. He can make rings, necklaces, and the like with stones that lift to reveal hidden compartments or that rotate in their mountings. Because of this, he is much sought after by those preparing magical rings as well as thieves and spies. He has a 75% chance of detecting counterfeit jewelry, and a 95% chance of detecting a counterfeit Laroc ring since he is so familiar with them. Floribar is mostly honest, but he is not above switching gems and settings so that stolen goods cannot be traced. This last costs quite a sum, usually one-third of the value of the materials involved.

"ANTONI LAROC." *Human. Ht: 5'10". Wt: 150 lbs. Age: 38. Fighting prowess: average with rapier.*

Antoni's real name is Tony Beldragar. He is a petty thief and small-time con man. When he heard



"Antoni Laroc"

of the lost ring of Laroc, he remembered a story of hidden gems in the attic of his family home, one with a bloodstone "L." After buying the house and evicting his brother and sister-in-law, he found the ring. Seeing this as his chance to make it big, he sought out Floribar, studying all the history about the Laroc family he could find on the way. He now knows more about the Laroc family and their kingdom than even Floribar. Win or lose, he's bound to be remembered in song and story for years to come, either as the long-lost heir who retrieved his family fortune or as the most daring con man ever.

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. Floribar hires the characters to find the other ring for his collection. He believes it to be in the family's ancestral home, cleverly named Castle Laroc. He has a map detailing the location of the castle (rumored by the locals to be haunted), but nothing else.

Scenario 2. The characters are sold a convincing counterfeit of the lost ring which they try to sell to Floribar. Floribar doesn't like being cheated.

Scenario 3. Antoni Laroc, claiming to be the last of the Laroc family, shows up. He has the lost ring to back up his claim. He demands that Floribar turn over his "family treasure." The characters are hired by Floribar or Antoni to guard or steal the other four rings, respectively.

THE DIADEM OF HARMON

Appearance.

The diadem is normal-sized and will fit on the head of the average human female. It is made of platinum in a pattern of interwoven vines and flowers. Three prominent flowers at the front of the diadem have large opals at their centers. It is quite beautiful and is worth around 5000 gold pieces.

Legends.

The diadem was fashioned for Harmon, the beautiful conquerer of much of the continent some seventy years ago. She was, in addition to being a great warrior and leader, exceptionally beautiful, and legend has it that she conquered more lands with her beauty than with her sword. She is also reputed to have never appeared in public without her diadem, which her personal bard called "the

crowning glory of her beauty.”

The diadem disappeared in the tumultuous revolution which led to Harmon’s death. Its current whereabouts are unknown.

Powers.

The diadem has one minor magical power, hinted at in song and story. When wearing the diadem, any female becomes more attractive, with a minor charm-like effect on men of the same race. This amounts to little more than a fascination or infatuation with the wearer. This power is resistible by those of sufficient experience and/or will-power; it is naturally ineffective on eunuchs and has reduced effect on those seriously sworn to celibacy (though it could be a test. . .).

Personalities.

CERI SLYNAR. *Half-elf. Ht: 5’2”. Wt: 100 lbs. Age: 31. Fighting prowess: average.*

Ceri is a fairly typical half-elf, although she displays little of the frailty and daintiness associated with that race. Her long blond hair and hard blue eyes give her an almost human appearance. Ceri is rather plain-looking, though by no means homely.

Orphaned at an early age, Ceri has lived her entire life fending for herself. She trusts practically no one, and she has a deep hatred towards male humans. She will never willingly put herself at a disadvantage, especially if this would put a man into a more propitious position.

Ceri owns a little pawnshop near the waterfront. Most of her stock is old weapons and cheap jewelry, but occasionally she comes across something of value. She recently purchased the diadem from “a small, dark, shifty-eyed man” for a fraction of its obvious value. She was taken with it and has not sold it, nor does she intend to. She often wears it in the shop, but never when anyone can see her. She has a strong notion that the diadem was stolen and has therefore carefully avoided mentioning it to anyone.

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. The player characters see (somehow) the diadem in Ceri’s shop. Having heard the legends of “Harmon the Warrior Queen” (an advantage they have over Ceri who knows nothing of it), they are



very eager to buy it. Suspicious soul that she is, Ceri refuses to sell. Characters will have to get it the hard way or let it go by.

Scenario 2. A male half-elf (or elf, or human) among the party decides, either to get the diadem or honestly, to strike up a romance with Ceri. She, of course, is quite resistant to his affections.

TELEMAR’S RUBY

Appearance.

This is a very large, almost perfectly cut ruby. It is nearly the size of a man’s head and the stone itself is almost flawless. It is recognizable by a slight irregularity in one face, spoiling the symmetry of the dodecahedral cutting (it has the shape of a twelve-sided die). Telemar’s Ruby has been appraised at 20,000 gold pieces.

Legends.

Telemar was a human mercenary who fought on both sides during the Orc War. At the time of the legendary battle at Mt. Domani, Telemar hid in a cave, fearing that his “double agent” status had been revealed. It was there that he “found” the ruby. He was quite proud of it and made it the focus of his new castle, built with money borrowed using the ruby as collateral. The ruby was stolen from him on his deathbed, and it has shown up only sporadically since.

Legend has it that the ruby bears a curse of certain death to its owner. Skeptics, among them owners of the gem, point out that everyone bears a curse of

certain death and that Telemar was not in possession of the ruby when he died. The traditional response to this last argument is, "That's part of the curse!"

Powers.

There is a curse on the gem, but not a curse of death. The curse is simply that the gem will be stolen prior to the death of its owner.

Personalities.

S'SLEHMAR. *Human. Ht: 5'. Wt: 98 lbs. Age: 57. Fighting prowess: poor. Magic ability: poor, C1.*

With her short white hair and matronly appearance, S'Slehmar bears little or no resemblance to her great-great-grandfather, Telemar. She has spent most of her adult life trying to retrieve her "birthright," the ruby. She was an apprentice wizard for a time and showed some promise, but her obsession with the ruby caused her to leave off her studies. She knows a spell or two, but that's all.

In recent years, S'Slehmar has gotten quite senile, accusing everyone she meets, friend or stranger, of stealing, concealing, or attempting to destroy the ruby. Thoughts of the ruby occupy her every waking

moment, and she probably dreams of nothing else. Few people believe her any more when she claims to have located the ruby.

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. The players, meeting S'Slehmar for the first time, are intrigued by her story and the fact that she has traced the gem to the big castle overlooking the lake. They set out to retrieve it, only to find that the castle is owned by the local warlord who has never heard of Telemar, S'Slehmar, or the ruby.

Scenario 2. S'Slehmar actually finds the ruby! The curse takes effect immediately, and it is stolen. She hires the player characters to find it. If they believe her, it will be hard – to say the least – to get anyone to believe *them*.

THE STONE OF FIRE

Appearance.

The Stone of Fire is a roundish, irregular piece of crystalline lava. It is a translucent red, and when held to the light it appears to have a tiny flame at or near its center. It is about the size of a man's fist. There is little demand for flawed lava stones, so it is effectively worthless despite its beauty (the value of a gem depends on rarity, not beauty).

Legends.

The Stone of Fire dates back to the age of the Elemental Champions (see *Swords of the Elements*, page 11). It was created as a joint effort of the Lords of Fire and Earth. It was wielded by the Champion of Fire and nearly killed the Lords of Air and Water. At this point, the Lords of Air and Water combined forces to create a hurricane which scattered the Elemental Champions to the four winds and placed the Stone of Fire on a deserted island.

The Stone of Fire was found some years later by the great adventurer Paritobes Spring. He used it to burn down the stables of the barbarian hero Konig. Paritobes paid for this act with his life. The Stone of Fire has not been seen from that day.

Powers.

The Stone of Fire can start magical fires at a distance of up to fifty feet. Even creatures or things normally immune to fire can be harmed by this magic flame, though not as severely as those not so



S'Slehmar

protected. The stone can only be used by those magicians who are able to cast fire-based spells.

Personalities.

CHARGA THE FIERY. *Human. Ht: 6'. Wt: 175 lbs. Age: 42. Fighting prowess: average with dagger and staff. Magical ability: fair, C1, C4, C8; good with fire-based spells.*

Charga is quite an impressive character, with his fiery red hair and beard and his flame-decorated robes. Charga is a wizard who specializes in the use of fire spells. He is quite the pyromaniac, and he sets things (or people) on fire as often as he can. He has made it his mission in life to accumulate every fire-related artifact or weapon. He has not yet acquired the Stone of Fire (or *Firebrand*, page 13), but he has quite an arsenal of wands, staves, and braziers with various effects.

Charga's personality matches that of the element he has chosen to represent. He has quite a temper and is avaricious to the last. He goes through companions quickly and is currently traveling alone.

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. The players come across the Stone of Fire and Charga the Fiery, in that order. A smart GM can surely figure it out from here. . . .

Scenario 2. Charga meets up with Barbelei (see page 13). Since each of them is in possession of certain items the other would very much like to have, woe to anyone (including player characters) in the vicinity when things "heat up."

Scenario 3. The player characters very foolishly allow Charga to join their party. He attempts to run the party, keep all treasure, and is quite ferocious toward those who put up objections (some players might see themselves in this "mirror" and it should teach them something).

THE GOLDEN OWL OF ILGEN

Appearance.

The Golden Owl is a brooch such as might be used to fasten a cloak or toga. It is all gold with small diamonds for eyes. It is of a size which would allow it to be held in a man's fist and would bring in excess of 1750 gold pieces on the open market, providing the seller could explain how he acquired it, of course.

Legends.

The Golden Owl was created about 100 years ago at the request of the great wizard Ilgen. According to the diary of the goldsmith Benis, Ilgen was very specific in his instructions, and even insisted on two identical diamonds for the eyes.

Ilgen fought many magical battles – and some physical ones as well – wearing the beautiful Golden Owl prominently on his robe. Several sources have reported that he would, when in a position of weakness, touch the owl and whisper to himself. He would then rejoin the fight with renewed vigor.

Powers.

There are no magical powers imbued in the Golden Owl of Ilgen, despite earnest belief to the contrary. Ilgen's exacting specifications of the owl were merely an outgrowth of the caution and careful planning which influenced every aspect of his long life. The apparent strength he gained from the owl was actually the resulting adrenaline surge when he told himself that if he lost this fight, the owl would fall into the hands of his foe.

Personalities.

GILEN. *Human. H: 5'5". Wt: 150 lbs. Age: 64. Fighting prowess: poor. Magic ability: good C1, C4, C7, C8.*

Gilen is the grandson of Ilgen, as can be attested





Gilen

to by his high forehead, thin but long silvery hair, and flashing blue eyes. Like his grandfather and his father Nigel, Gilen is a sorcerer. He has taken it upon himself to unlock all the secrets of his grandfather's legacy. He is currently attempting to find the key phrase to the Golden Owl's powers and the method his grandfather used to make it impervious to magic-detecting devices. The thought that it might not be magical has not even entered his mind, and he would laugh at anyone suggesting it.

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. Gilen somehow gets it into his head that the secret of the Golden Owl lies in the ancestral home of his grandfather's arch-rival, the necromancer Swardem. Unlike Ilgen, Swardem is reported to be alive (well, at least not *dead*) and kicking. Gilen hires the players to go to Castle Sludge where Swardem lives (or exists) and retrieve his grandfather's "lost records," which of course do not exist.

Scenario 2. The Golden Owl is stolen. Gilen, sure that this is the work of Swardem, hires the player characters to retrieve it.

THE EYE OF GAMEL

Appearance.

The Eye of Gamel is a large (average diameter six inches), oval-shaped emerald. It is flat on one side and rounded on the other, and it is vaguely eye-like when seen from the front (curved side). The Eye of Gamel is worth approximately 1000 gold pieces. It has no identifying marks other than its unusual shape.

Legends.

At the base of Mt. Friante in the Dwarven Mountains is a temple built by human worshippers of Gamel, a mountain god. In front of the temple is a 20' statue of Gamel with an emerald for his left eye and a gap where a similar emerald could fit for his right. The right eye has been missing for 250 years, having been lost during the siege of the temple by godless barbarians. It reappeared nearly 200 years later in the treasury records of King Farelis III. According to his records, it was paid as a tribute from a northern province. Later, when the Kingdom of Farelis was conquered by Harmon (see *Diadem of Harmon*, page 20), the stone was given to the Warrior Queen in exchange for pardoning the life of Farelis' daughter.

According to priests of Gamel, the stone has no mystical or divine powers. However, they seem very anxious to retrieve it (and have seemed so for over 250 years). This would appear to indicate more than just stubborn pride, for which Gamel and his followers are well known.

The current whereabouts of the Eye of Gamel are unknown, but most reliable sages opine that it is still in one of Harmon's secret treasure troves.

Powers.

There are no mystical, divine, or magical powers to the Eye of Gamel. The priests' undying persistence in attempting to retrieve the Eye can be attributed to the natural desire not to be identified with a god who couldn't even get his idol's eye back.

Personalities.

ABEL BAR-TARKIN. *Human. Ht: 5'9". Wt: 165 lbs. Age: 53. Fighting prowess: fair. Magical ability: good C1, C2, C7; very good when in the mountains.*

Abel bar-Tarkin is a priest of Gamel. His thoroughly bald head, steel-gray eyes, and thin black



Abel bar-Tarkin

mustache make him quite an impressive figure. Abel has been tracking down the Eye of Gamel for nearly three decades. It has become the sole driving force in his life, superceding even his devotion to his god. He believes that if he retrieves the Eye, he will be promoted to a place of prestige in the church of Gamel. From that position he plans to go about setting up a theocracy, with himself as the earthly head, in the name of Gamel. Toward this end, he will use nearly any means, provided they do not violate the accepted code of honor. Pride is one of the attributes shared by Gamel and all of his servants.

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. Abel finds an ancient document mentioning the location of one of Harmon's treasure troves. He recruits the player characters to help him find it and, he hopes, the Eye. Should the party accept this proposal, Abel will insist upon leading the party, examining all treasure, and following every trail which might conceivably lead to the Eye. This could include such things as tunneling through a wall to get at a "blank spot" on the dungeon map.

Scenario 2. The player characters discover the Eye and announce their intentions to sell it to the highest bidder. Interested parties might include Floribar Heavypocket (see page 19), Tandy Gilliam (page 8), Ike Moss and Wil Lake (page 29), or anyone else who is interested in the valuable and the unique. Abel, not being a rich man, will attempt to coerce, steal, or swindle the gem away. If he knows where the gem is and how to get it, he won't be as worried about honor as he usually is.

THE HEARTSTONE OF OLMA

Appearance.

The Heartstone of Olma is a normal-sized ruby. It is almost spherical and has a smooth, polished surface. At times, a flash of light will reflect from the jewel in an unexpected way, thus revealing its magical nature. The Heartstone, as a jewel alone, is worth some 5000 g.p.

Legends.

The Heartstone was found – and named – by the rogue wizard known as Nagan the Scarlet around twenty years ago after he slew the flesh-eating demon Olma. He sold the gem to the demon idolatress Salome Tamarina who used it to resummon Olma from his dark dimension. Olma was slain again by Sir Rancilladon of Strandle. Sir Rancilladon is a member of the Knights of Strandle, a group of powerful men who go about rescuing maidens, slaying monsters, and doing other knightly deeds. The Knights of Strandle have a resident magician, the wizard-adept Chembly. Chembly is currently in possession of the Heartstone.

Powers.

The Heartstone of Olma houses the demon Olma. It is a bridge between his dimension and our own. Olma uses the Heartstone to project his physical form to the space around it in our dimension, so the Heartstone is at the center of his body. The projection process, unfortunately for Olma, requires the cooperation of a magician or wizard on this side to ensure that the transfer will be complete and on target. While Olma could project without such help, he would be likely to wind up in the form of a small animal and as far as three miles from the Heartstone. When Olma is in our dimension, touching the Heart-

stone with iron or steel will send him back instantly.

Personalities.

CHEMBLY. *Human. Ht: 5'8". Wt: 140 lbs. Age: 107. Fighting prowess: poor. Magical ability: excellent in all 8 C's.*

Although he may well be among the top five living wizards, Chembly hardly looks the part. He wears the clothing of a common laborer and is clean shaven. His white hair is still long and thick, and his face is nearly free of wrinkles. He retains not only the quick wit and sharp tongue he was well-known for in his youth, but the agility and stamina as well. He has, of course, used magic to lengthen his life-span and to reduce the effects of aging. Chembly is quite the joker, but he will brook no foolishness in important matters of life and death proportions. He has carefully kept the Heartstone in a steel box to which he holds the only key. He is reported to have a huge collection of magical potions and scrolls.

SIR RANCILLADON. *Human. Ht: 6'. Wt: 182 lbs. Age: 29. Fighting prowess: very good with lance and broadsword, otherwise good.*

Rancilladon, one of the youngest of the Knights of Strandle, is also one of the most idealistic. His blond hair and handsome face make him a favorite of queens, dowagers, and princesses. Rancilladon honestly believes that every human being is basically good and pure. For this reason, he has never killed a human although he's rung up quite a body count of demons, orcs, trolls, and even a dragon or two. His idealism will probably fade with age, but at the moment his fervor and integrity are unrivaled.

SALOME TAMARINA. *Human. Ht: 5' 7". Wt: 136 lbs. Age: 26. Fighting prowess: average. Magical ability: good C1, C2, C3, C8.*

Salome was told by her father, a fatalistic philosopher, that all humanity is destined for evil. Salome, 14 at the time, decided that there was no point in delaying the inevitable and joined a coven of demon worshippers. With her beauty and natural magical talent, she rose quickly through the ranks to earn the title of Princess. Salome is totally evil and will do anything she deems necessary to achieve her immediate goal. She has decided that she must have the Heartstone back and has begun plotting how to get it. Recently while attempting to divine the future of the Heartstone, she saw a vision of her future self:



Salome Tamarina

old and toothless, dressed in rags, beauty and magic both gone, a pitiful old crone at the mercy of the world. This has given her pause and has tempered her once ebon-black soul with a trace of self-doubt. The end results of this vision remain to be seen.

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. Salome, forgetting about her disturbing vision for a time, undertakes to retrieve the Heartstone from the last man she saw with it, Sir Rancilladon. Player characters can be brought into the fight either as Salome's hired thugs or as companions of Sir Rancilladon. Perhaps one or more of the player characters are applying for membership in the Knights of Strandle. This fight could prove (or disprove) their worth.

Scenario 2. Salome is determined to offset the destiny of her vision. Having heard of Chembly's amazing lack of aging, she attempts to get at his secret. Chembly, convinced that she is after the Heartstone, prepares for a major battle. Player characters can become involved as in #1 above.

Miscellaneous



In this final section will be found the oddities, the unusual, the out-of-the-ordinary – strange things the owners put much value in but the uninformed overlook as worthless or, at best, peculiar in the extreme. But successful adventurers all learned long ago that being uninformed is a peril as real and as dire as facing down a hungry dragon.

TELEPORTING COINS

Appearance.

These coins appear to be (and essentially are) the normal coin of the realm. They come in gold, silver, and copper denominations. The coins are only discernible from regular coins by magical detection.

Legends.

As these are a recent invention, their legends have not yet been written. When or if the story of their powers is discovered and spread, they will no longer be useful. There are a few rumors abounding in the merchant sector, most supposing that someone (they have no definite suspect in mind as the "incidents" take place at busy periods) is using "disappearing" or illusionary coins.

Powers.

These coins, invented by Norin Trefoil, have the ability to teleport up to a quarter of a mile from a purse, pocket, or cashbox back to Trefoil's hand whenever he wills it. The magical energy in the coins tends to wear off with time so they must be "recharged" once a week. This is a long and complicated process so Trefoil only has twelve coins: two gold pieces, five silver, and five copper. If the coins go for more than a week without being recharged, they will gradually decrease in power (and range) until a month has passed since the last recharging, at which time they will become normal coins again.

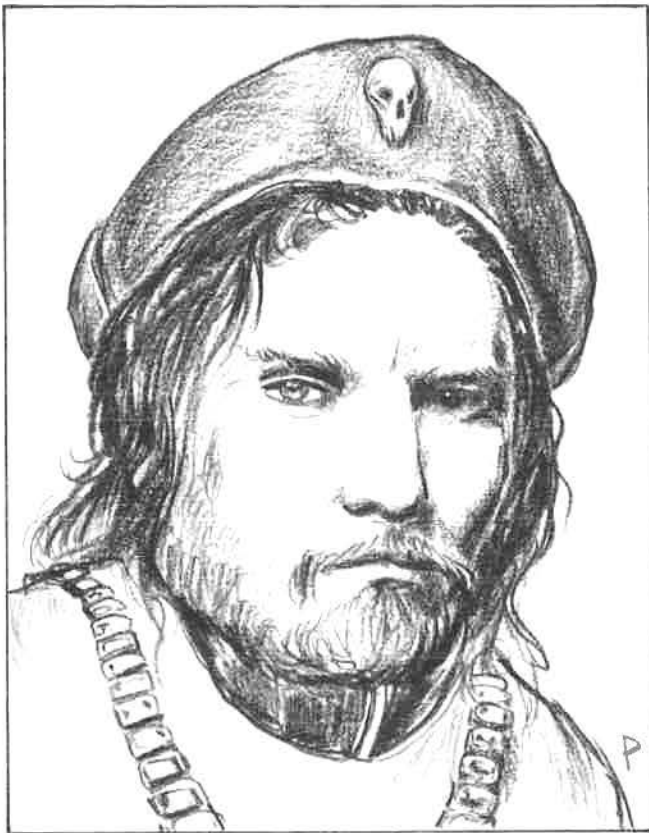
Personalities.

NORIN TREFOIL. *Human. Ht: 5'7". Wt: 150 lbs. Age: 62. Fighting prowess: average with staff. Magic ability: very good C1, C3, C5, C8; excellent in C4, C7.*

Despite his short stature and small frame, old Trefoil is quite an imposing figure with his jet-black eyes and thick silver hair. Reputed to be among the ten greatest living wizards, Trefoil is cunning, shrewd, and very misanthropic. Most people tend to avoid him as he is apt to “zap” anyone who doesn’t agree with him. He is quite proud of his teleporting coins, but he is also very jealous of their secret. Should anyone somehow get one out of range, he will seek it out immediately, convinced that they are rival magicians after his secret. Trefoil, shunned by society for years, has no respect for it or its trappings. He is quite unimpressed by titles, knight-hoods, or even royalty. The only person Trefoil has been known to converse with non-violently is his lackey, Shul Garr.

SHUL GARR. *Human. Ht: 5'. Wt: 145 lbs. Age: 42. Fighting prowess: poor. Magic ability: poor, C1, C4.*

Shul is a true unfortunate. The illegitimate son of a petty noble, he was spurned by both his father and his mother. Growing up in a temple orphanage, he was bullied by bigger children. He has a natural fear/resentment of those more powerful than he.



Shul Garr

Shul is Trefoil’s secretary, which means he stoops and fetches for the wizard. Shul is not truly evil, but he is dominated by Trefoil’s malevolence. Trefoil has taught him a few basic spells, but nothing that Shul could use against him.

If given a fair chance, Shul might redeem himself. He knows of Trefoil’s teleporting coins and is quite tired of hearing the wizard brag of his cleverness. There is a chance that Shul will rebel against Trefoil, but only when Trefoil is in no position to squelch him (such as when the party has Trefoil cornered at the top of his tower and Trefoil orders Shul to help him).

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. The basic way for characters to get involved in this scam is for Trefoil to purchase something from the players, or they receive a teleporting coin as change in a store Trefoil has just left. When they put the money away, it vanishes.

Scenario 2. The players are in a shop when Trefoil walks in and buys something with a teleporting coin. When the coin is gone, the shopkeeper accuses *them* of stealing it.

MORDIN’S MYSTICAL MIRROR

Appearance.

The mirror appears as a well-made but entirely normal mirror of silvered glass in an oaken frame. The frame is carved with magical appearing runes which are, in fact, meaningless. The whole thing measures about five feet high by three feet wide.

Legends.

The only source of legends on this mirror are its current owners, Wil Lake and Ike Moss. The story, as told by them, goes as follows: The great and powerful wizard Mordin, in an effort to take over the Sarilian Empire, wanted to discover the secrets of its rulers. To this end, he constructed the magical mirror that could see into the past. Upon his death, the mirror was sent to a little known Sorcerer’s Guild from which Wil and Ike bought it.

Historically, there is an air of truth to this story. There was a sorcerer named Mordin who tried to take over the Sarilian Empire through blackmail and subterfuge, and he did leave most of his possessions to various Sorcerers’ Guilds. There is no record of anything resembling a magic mirror.



Powers.

Again, there is some truth to Wil and Ike's story. The mirror does reflect the past. Unfortunately, it only reflects what happened five minutes ago at the mirror's current location (this is how Ike and Wil demonstrate the mirror's authenticity). They are asking 10,000 gold pieces for it, but they will settle for 5000. On the off chance that it is purchased, they will throw in, absolutely free, the command book detailing two dozen "Magical Words and Phrases" to be read in various sequences in order to "change the setting" in both time and distance. The phraseology of the book is complicated enough for a dim-witted buyer to get so confused as to give up and for those of average intelligence to conclude that the mirror's failure to "change settings" is their fault for misreading the instructions.

Personalities.

WIL LAKE. *Human. Ht: 5'10". Wt: 170 lbs. Age: 25. Fighting prowess: fair (sword, dagger, and blackjack).*

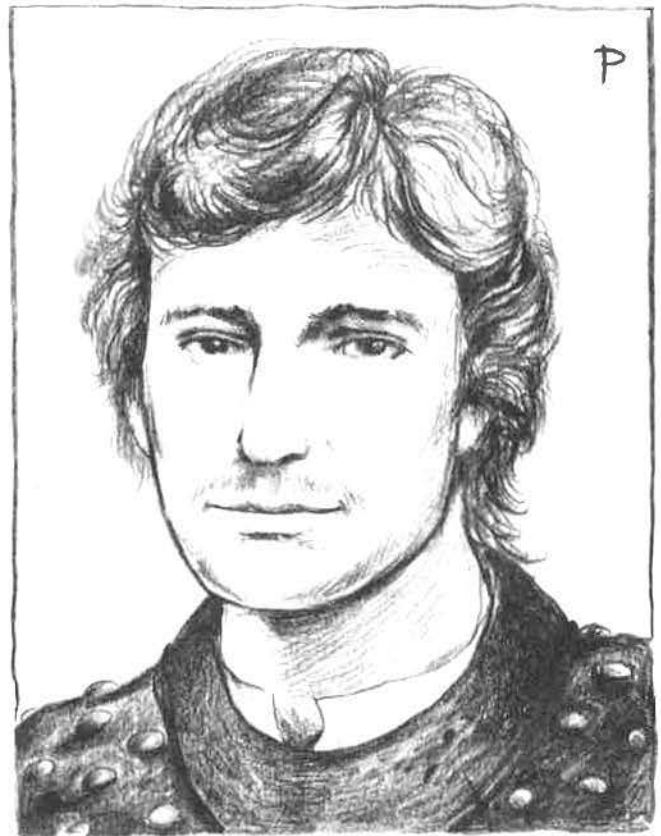
Wil is a thief, nothing more, nothing less. He doesn't pretend to be anything else except when it's

really necessary. If he should choose to conceal his identity, for whatever reason, he has a 25% chance of fooling anyone who's seen him before and a 75% chance of fooling a stranger. Although he prefers the adventuring life, Wil spends a good deal of time working on get-rich-quick schemes with his partner.

Wil is handsome, with thick light-brown hair and a gallant attempt at a mustache. He is a whimsical, likable fellow although he tends to be narrow-minded and obtuse at times. Wil loves good stories and bad puns, and his favorite hobby is ridiculing and belittling Ike.

IKE MOSS. *Half-elf. Ht: 6'. Wt: 160 lbs. Age: 30. Fighting prowess: fair with bow and sword. Magical ability: good C1, C3, C4, C7.*

With his blond hair and exceptional height, Ike does not look the typical half-elf. He comes up with most of the far-fetched schemes that Wil and he attempt, and usually blames Wil if they don't work out. Ike is very knowledgeable in the arts arcane, but he is incredibly lacking in tact and discretion. He feels that the misfortunes of others are deserved but that his own are always caused by his companions, especially Wil.



Wil Lake

BARON THROKMORTON. *Human. Ht: 5'. Wt: 150 lbs. Age: 52. Fighting prowess: poor.*

The baron is a minor noble who would very much like to become a major noble. He plans to achieve this envied status through blackmail, specifically with Mordin's Mystical Mirror, which he has heard of through paid spies.

If he buys the mirror and discovers it doesn't work, he will be much more concerned with anonymity than with justice. He will prefer to get his money back quietly than to engage in a public lawsuit.

Throkmorton is, flatly, a coward. He might not have the courage to use the mirror even if he bought it and it worked. He does all of his business through disguised middle-men for fear of being found out.

Scenario Suggestions.

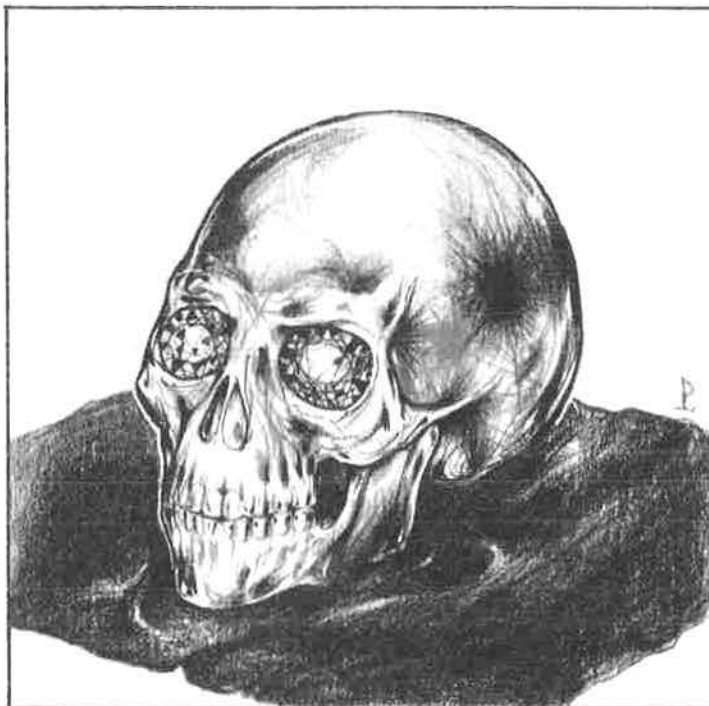
Scenario 1. Wil and Ike make their pitch to the player characters. If they buy the mirror, find that it doesn't work, and try to find Wil and Ike, they will discover that those worthies left town within hours of selling the mirror.

Scenario 2. Baron Throkmorton gets his courage up and buys the mirror. Upon discovering that it doesn't work, he hires the player characters to track down Wil and Ike, in the interests of getting his money back. Wil and Ike, knowing the baron's reputation for gutlessness, will threaten to announce the baron's intentions unless he leaves them alone. If threatened with summary execution, Ike will calmly announce that he has a written record of the transaction specifying not only the place, time, and the name of the buyer but also his speculations on what the buyer (Throkmorton) intended to do with the mirror. This will be magically prepared to materialize in the hand of every bellcrier in town the instant either Wil or he dies. Of course he's bluffing, but Ike is a good bluffer.

THE SKULL OF DOOM

Appearance.

The Skull of Doom looks like a full-size, fully articulated human skull. It is composed entirely of crystal with blue diamonds set in the eye sockets. The curvature of the pate focuses light through the diamonds, making them appear to glow. The workmanship of the skull, the cut of the diamonds, and



the skill with which the diamonds were set combine to make the Skull of Doom very valuable indeed. Even without its magical properties, it would fetch upwards of 10,000 gold pieces.

Legends.

Countless years ago (so the legend goes), a group of ten magicians got together and formed the nucleus of what is today known as the Brotherhood of the Sigil (cf. *Staff of the Sigil*, *Robe of the Sigil*). With the priceless skull hidden away in their tower somewhere, the Brotherhood began to prosper, both monetarily and politically. Legend has it that they attained nearly ruling status in their country because they knew the secrets of all of their adversaries. Eventually this cadre of wizards was defeated through the use of siege warfare and mining.

The skull showed up some years later in the possession of Herval (later called the Mad Magician). He used it to battle his arch-rival, the magician Xanig (later called the Plutarch), but was defeated. It is rumored that the powers of the skull drove him mad and that Xanig stole it from him with little effort. Both Herval and Xanig are still alive, but both are very old and neither can (or will) relate the true story.

Powers.

The skull is used to view far-off places, rather like a crystal ball. A magical incantation is inscribed on

the inner surface of the jaw, to be read when the power is desired. By reading the incantation and naming a location, anyone able to use the skull (details below) can watch what occurs in that area for up to an hour. Only visual images are generated, not sound. Also, the user can only view events as they happen. He cannot see the future or the past.

Anyone skilled in magic may use the skull, but those with expertise in C3 are more capable than most. At the GM's option, characters who rank Fair or better in Magical Ability C3 may have a chance to perform other feats, such as hearing a scrap of conversation (after which the skull goes blank) or casting a spell through the skull to affect those being watched. Also, such a person may be able to detect the magical aura when someone else is watching them with the skull or a similar object.

Personalities.

HERIVAL THE MAD MAGICIAN. *Human. H: 5'7". Wt: 150 lbs. Age: 93. Fighting prowess: poor. Magic ability: very good with C3, otherwise good.*

With his wrinkled old face and wild white hair, Herival quite fits his role of "the Mad Magician." He



Herival the Mad Magician

often bursts out with unexplicable strings of gibberish, which he recites at a lightning pace while running about the room like a maniac. All of this is a carefully calculated act. Herival has, in the words of Shakespeare, "put an antic disposition on" to achieve his purpose. He desperately wants to get the Skull of Doom back from Xanig before either of them dies. He hides behind his mask of madness and occasionally sends forth a group of bold adventurers to attempt a siege on Xanig's castle.

This driving obsession has clouded out every other aspect of Herival's life. He eats and sleeps sporadically and hasn't spoken to his relatives in years. He has an easier job of pretending madness every day, for he may soon go totally insane (which his relatives wouldn't mind since Herival has quite a stash of magical goodies and gold).

XANIG THE PLUTARCH. *Human. Ht: 6'. Wt: 200 lbs. Age: 97. Fighting prowess: poor. Magical ability: good in C3, C5, C7; otherwise fair.*

Xanig has, to say the least, aged more gracefully than his rival Herival. He forsook the study of magic shortly after stealing the skull from Herival in favor of the more immediate rewards of political power. He has, through magic, influence, and wealth, built himself up a powerful political base in a small duchy of Darkhold. His tastes are far more varied than those of Herival as he is a connoisseur of art, food, and wine. Though he rarely uses the Skull, he will defend it to the death (of his bodyguards and lackeys).

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. Herival manages to convince the player characters of his sanity and sends them to steal the skull from Xanig.

Scenario 2. Herival's heirs are growing tired of the old man's rantings and ravings so they hire the player characters to get rid of the old boy.

Scenario 3. The players, having met Herival and heard his stories, decide to use the theft of the skull as a diversion to overthrow Xanig's duchy.

CHALICE OF ST. TREML THE OBTUSE

Appearance.

The chalice is six inches high and three inches in diameter at the top. It has a short stem and a wide

base. It appears to be only an ordinary glass chalice, such as might be purchased for a few gold pieces.

Legends.

St. Treml (pronounced like “tremble” without the “b”) was a very powerful, very devout priest of the god of healing (or any god of the GM’s choosing). His epithet “the Obtuse” comes from his detached view of the world about him, which sometimes made him a bit slow to react. Legend says that one day Treml was performing a ritual service to his deity when a warrior stumbled into the temple, obviously in need of healing. Treml, reacting quickly for a change, interrupted the service to help the injured man. The church elders rebuked him, but the deity was pleased and rewarded Treml with a magical chalice of healing powers, the whereabouts of which have been unknown since the Saint’s demise over ten years ago.

Powers.

When held by a priest of Treml’s sect, the chalice will, when filled with holy water, yield forth a healing draught of great potency which will cure disease, wounds, blindness, poisoning, and insanity.



— Csorican Sobor —

This draught must be drunk directly from the chalice within five minutes of its creation or it will lose its efficacy and become bitter-tasting water. Only one such draught can be prepared per day. In addition, no servant or worshipper of a deity opposed to St. Treml’s god can benefit from drinking the draught. Although it appears to be normal glass, the chalice is in reality virtually unbreakable.

Personalities.

PEER KRISTOL. *Human. Ht: 5'. Wt: 100 lbs. Age: 51. Fighting prowess: average. Magical ability: very good in C2, C3, C5.*

Although a diminutive and somewhat comical-looking man, Peer is nevertheless the leader of one of the Three Kingdom’s most powerful sects, that to which St. Treml belonged. Of late, a splinter group led by the priestess Csorican Sobor has sprung up, claiming to be the only true followers of the god of healing. Peer, naturally irked at their impudence, has set out to find the Chalice of St. Treml to prove that his is the only true faith.

With his expressive blue and gray eyes, Peer is a natural leader and a very persuasive speaker. His faith in his god is the only important aspect of his life since food, shelter, and the like will be provided for by a grateful deity or denied by an angry one.

CSORICAN SOBOR. *Human. Ht: 6’2”. Wt: 135 lbs. Age: 47. Fighting prowess: average. Magical ability: average C2, C8.*

Csorican is just as disadvantaged by her unusual height as Peer Kristol is – which is to say not at all. Her long black hair and cold green eyes do little to offset her imposing height, but her insecure smile is just disarming enough to enable her to appear almost harmless. She is not harmless, however, being one of the most aggressive, determined cult leaders alive. Her devotion to her god extends only as far as is necessary to keep up appearances. In fact, religion is just a tool to her, a method of achieving power. Her followers are more devoted than she, however, and will probably react with typical religious fervor to any attacks upon Csorican, whether physical or philosophical.

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. The temples of Peer Kristol and Csorican Sobor are engaged in a winner-take-all race to discover the chalice. Player characters are involved

either by religious devotion or as hired swords.

Scenario 2. After years of searching, followers of Kristol have found the tomb of St. Treml. Believing it to contain the chalice, Peer begins to finance an expedition to open the tomb, which is located deep in the Orclands. As soon as this begins, Csorican hires spies to join and sabotage the expedition. Player characters can be hired by either side (or both!).

AIRWALKER'S CLOAK

Appearance.

Airwalker's Cloak has been magically disguised so as not to appear any different from a normal cloak, even under magical detection. The cloak is of a size to fit a small to medium size man. It is made of soft wool in a light brown color. There are no pockets and no clasp or brooch.

Legends.

Airwalker was a magician of great renown. He took his name from his ability to fly apparently at will. Rumors abound as to the exact nature of the magic, but most agree that Airwalker was rewarded by a grateful godling or had some physical mutation enabling the flight. Airwalker himself attributed the power (in public, anyway) to his highly ornate and oft-mentioned jewelry, specifically his beautiful gold-and-jade necklace. The necklace is now in the possession of the Sorcerer's Guild who have found no magical properties to it or indeed to any of Airwalker's possessions. They discarded the cloak long ago, and it is currently for sale at Feeble Buckingham's Consortium for the reasonable price of three silver pieces.

Powers.

As most readers have deduced by now, the cloak was Airwalker's method of flight. Actually, it was Airwalker's more-than-human coordination and physical condition that enabled him to fly, *per se*, as the cloak provided only resistance to gravity. In short, the wearer of the cloak can levitate at will. Once he is above the surface of the ground, he must have something to push against, just like any other moving object. Airwalker's apparent flight was actually a perfectly calculated experiment in physics and spatial geometry. By pushing off with just the right force and turning his body at precisely the right

moment, he was able to simulate flight. Additional control was provided by spreading the cloak like a glider to increase wind resistance. The cloak's wearer can control his level above the ground and, to a lesser extent, his relative position (face up, prone, upright, etc.) through force of will alone. Any other activities, like moving, require the use of physical means of some sort.

Should a player character wish to attain the level of mastery exhibited by the late Airwalker, he or she must be in excellent physical condition and have exceptional coordination. In addition, he/she must spend a great deal of time (around two hours a day, every day, for three months or nearly 200 hours) in practice. Only after this practice period is over will the character have any chance of performing aerial maneuvers. The degree of mastery will increase with continued practice, of course; somewhat less obviously, mastery will diminish with disuse.

Personalities.

FEEBLE BUCKINGHAM. *Human. Ht: 5'2". Wt: 115 lbs. Age: 50. Fighting prowess: poor.*

Feeble is, to put it succinctly, very aptly named.



Feeble Buckingham

He appears quite average although a little on the portly side. His blond hair is thinning and his skin is gradually wrinkling. He lacks all forms of strength: physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual. In short, Feeble is a wimp and a pushover. Local thieves ignore his Consortium because it's too easy and pickings are slim. His lack of character doesn't exactly inspire confidence in customers, so he doesn't do much business. When he does, it's usually not to his advantage.

Although not altogether unattractive, Feeble has never had the nerve to approach a woman and thus remains a bachelor. He would be more susceptible to flattery from a woman than to threats from a thief, which is saying something.

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. The player characters discover Airwalker's Cloak by a previously undetected tag with the unmistakable symbol of an "A" with wings sewn into the hem. Naturally they buy the cloak (or if they know Feeble, they'll just walk off with it) the cloak. This is a good way to "give away" a minor magic item to characters who may desperately need it in an upcoming adventure.

Scenario 2. Feeble himself discovers the cloak's powers. Frightened at first, he later begins using it in series of "daring second-story robberies." The player characters are victimized or hired by victims to put a stop to this mad rampage of crime.

GRIMOIRE OF ARGOND FARSEEKER

Appearance.

The Grimoire of Argond FarSeeker appears to be a rather large (12" high, 5" wide, 3" thick) book with a leather binding. There is a clasp of bronze which would appear to lock the book, but the mechanism has been ruined so that it will not clasp properly. The pages are done in the best hand with light gilding in certain passages. All in all, it would be a credit to any bookbinder or scribe.

Legends.

The origins of the book, as the origins of its author, are shrouded in antiquity and mystery, and likely to remain so. Argond FarSeeker was a magician of no little reputation. He once claimed to have explored every square inch of the known world, and

there is little reason to believe that this was an exaggeration. He appears in legends and tax records from all over the world and has even become a folk hero to some. When he was alive, Argond was not so heroic as history would have one believe. His main objective in all of his travels was just self-aggrandizement. He is known to have overthrown governments, slain prominent rulers, and imprisoned other magicians. His grimoire, however, was reported to be a storehouse of magical knowledge, albeit containing several magical protections and a false spell or two. There is no mention of the typical "Wizard's Curse" associated with other magical tomes.

Powers.

The grimoire is, in fact, a storehouse of magical knowledge. Although the exact contents are up to the individual GM, it should hold spells of above average (but not astronomical) power with a few ringers thrown in, such as spells that backfire or otherwise fail to deliver as advertised. Any precautions, such as guarding spells, should be taken as appropriate to your game.

Personalities.

OLVER THE BOOKSELLER. *Human. Ht: 5'7". Wt: 150 lbs. Age: 40. Fighting prowess: average. Magic ability: poor, C1.*

Olver is a caricature of a bookseller, with his thin



bespectacled face and pronouncedly receding hairline. Olver dabbles in the mystic arts, but just enough so that he can appraise the value of magical books like Argond's Grimoire, which he recently acquired at a private auction. Realizing its great value, Olver is going to hold on to it for awhile. He can use but a handful of spells in the book, but he is earnestly studying those. Olver is a strong-willed, independent sort. He brooks no foolishness at his shop and promptly turns over would-be thieves to the city watch.

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. The player characters, learning of Olver's recent purchase, endeavor to relieve him of his treasure. If they are unsuccessful (which is a good possibility since Olver is a man of precaution) Olver will call the watch and have the rogues arrested.

Scenario 2. Olver, deciding that he has waited long enough, announces a public auction of some books, notably the Grimoire of Argond FarSeeker. Lots of interested parties show up, including most of the powerful wizards in this book. Such a gathering can only prove to be as intriguing as it is dangerous.

WILDITH'S QUILL

Appearance.

Wildith's Quill appears to be a normal quill pen made from the feather of an exotic bird of some kind. The tip is quite sharp and practically unbreakable. Although it is quite colorful and well-made, it would not be considered particularly valuable unless its magical properties were known.

Legends.

Wildith was a moderately well-known alchemist and scribe. His formulas for magical inks of various sorts are still widely used today, fifty years after his death. His quill is less well known, although in his lifetime it was widely rumored to have various magical powers such as writing by itself, taking dictation, and even storing magic spells. These speculations would only be found in a book written at the time or from someone who heard them fifty to seventy years ago.

Powers.

Wildith's Quill does indeed have a great number of magical uses depending upon the ink with which

it is filled. Any ink can be used, but only the *Writing Power* will be gained if common ink is used. This *Writing Power* can also be obtained using any of the inks detailed hereafter. All of the inks are available from a competent alchemist at approximately the stated cost.

WRITING POWER: When the command "Write" is uttered, the quill will write whatever that person says until he says "Stop writing." Only normal English (Common Tongue) words will be scribed. Nonsense syllables, magic spells, other languages, and the like will just be ignored.

TRANSLATING POWER: A special ink known as "linguist's ink", can be bought for around 50 gold pieces a dram. If linguist's ink is used in the quill, it will translate between any two commonly known languages, both of which must be stated before the quill begins writing. This ink also allows writing in foreign tongues if no instructions are given beforehand. The command to translate is simply "Translate to . . ." whatever language is desired.

WIZARDLY POWER: This power requires the ink known as "wizard's ink," which sells for about 100 gold pieces a dram. When this ink is used, magical spells can be written down, provided that they are read aloud, of course. Note that this will *not* record a spell as it is being cast. This ink will also behave as linguist's ink with regard to little known or magical languages.

CARTOGRAPHY POWER: This power requires that ink known as "cartographer's ink." Cartographer's ink sells for 100 gold pieces per dram. When cartographer's ink is used, Wildith's Quill will draw an accurate map, in a given scale, of an area around the Quill, up to a radius of ten feet. If the scale is small enough, this will detail such things as walls, doors, and furniture. It will not map anything that cannot be normally seen from the quill's location.

ALCHEMICAL POWER: The final power of Wildith's Quill is only usable if the special "alchemist's ink" is used. This will allow any of the above powers, plus it will keep track of a conversation involving up to seven people in up to seven different languages. It will keep track of who said what (noting this in the margin) if so instructed. It will either translate the conversation into English (Common) or leave it in the original languages, as directed. This final application will also record dialectal or mispronounced words. Nonsense sounds will be approximated as

well as possible. Alchemist's ink is very rare and costs upwards of 200 gold pieces per dram.

Personalities.

FINNIWAC VON BROCH. *Human. Ht: 5'7". Wt: 150 lbs. Age: 39. Fighting prowess: poor. Magical ability: poor in C5.*

Finniwac is a well-to-do alchemist. He is quite skilled and can easily manufacture any of Wildith's magic inks. He runs short on ingredients quite often and will give a substantial discount if the customer provides the more esoteric raw materials: things like dragon blood, unicorn horn, demon ichor, and so forth. Finniwac is not a very likable fellow, and his appearance does little to enhance his image. His stringy hair is usually unkempt and in sore need of washing. His eyes are very close, and his nose is enormous. There's nothing really terrible about him; he's just anti-social. He has few, if any, friends and is not inclined toward making new ones.

DORMAN TWEED. *Human. Ht: 6'. Wt: 205 lbs. Age: 23. Fighting prowess: average. Magical ability: poor, C5.*

Dorman is Finniwac's apprentice. He is also every-



— Finniwac von Broch —

thing his boss is not. He is handsome, friendly, and well-liked. He is working for Finniwac to put himself through magic school. He will be helpful and courteous to customers, despite Finniwac's policy of treating his customers like dirt. He will readily befriend a party of player characters, especially one including an experienced magician.

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. The player characters obtain Wildith's Quill from its previously unknown location. After figuring out its powers, they go to Finniwac, hoping to obtain some alchemist's ink. Unfortunately, Finniwac is out of the rarest ingredient of all: the eye of an undead wizard. If the player characters retrieve this item, which will provide sufficient power to make ten ounces of the ink (in combination with the other ingredients, of course), they can have a dram of the ink for free.

Scenario 2. The events occur as in the previous scenario but in a different order. The players are hired by Finniwac to get some rare ingredient or another. Upon finding a suitable sample of the substance, they also locate Wildith's Quill. Finniwac might show them how to use it, and he might not, depending on his mood at the time. If he does tell them, it will cost them plenty. Finniwac knows all about Wildith and his quill from his studies in alchemy.

Scenario 3. The players are hired by Finniwac to retrieve the quill. Finniwac is on a "collecting binge," picking up everything he can that once belonged to a famous alchemist.

THE LUTE OF MINART

Appearance.

The Lute of Minart appears to be a lute of the highest quality. The lute itself is made from a particularly resonant strain of cherrywood. There are six courses (twelve strings) of silvered catgut. It otherwise conforms to the standard description of a lute. Based solely on appearance and tone quality, the Lute of Minart would bring around 250 gold pieces if sold.

Legends.

Minart, royal lutanist to three kings, was one of the greatest musicians who ever lived. His teaching style was widely adopted after the great success of

his two most noted pupils, Tandy Gilliam (see page 8) and Ilian Thorn. He is reported to have owned a number of magical instruments, including a recorder that destroyed ghosts and spectres, a mandolin that hypnotized its listeners, and a nose flute that released magical lightning bolts. The lute, which he created along with an unknown wizard, is his crowning achievement. It reportedly enhances the skill of its player to a near-perfect level, almost to the level of Minart's own skills. Minart is still alive although he no longer gives performances. Age and disease have ravaged his body, and sources indicate that he is not long for this world. He has said that on his death the lute will go to one of his star pupils but he refuses to disclose which one, saying "that would spoil the suspense!"

Powers.

The legends and rumors about the Lute of Minart are true as far as they go. The lute does raise its player's musical skill until it is nearly on a par with Minart's own. In addition, when played by a highly skilled lutanist (rated *Good* or better), the following effects can be created:

A) The user can duplicate any song he has heard two times or more, in the same form as it was heard.

B) The user can automatically find a rhyme for any rhymable word he ends a sentence with. (Some words one simply cannot rhyme!)

C) When using the lute, the skilled musician can cause those around him to either remain silent or sing "backup" during his solos.

D) Once a day, the user can summon forth a troupe of twenty highly talented dancers who will dance to his music.

Note: although this item is of little use on the battlefield or in the dungeon, just think of how much money could be made with it in a city! Furthermore, the encouragement to *role play* that it offers should not be lightly overlooked.



Personalities.

MINART THE MASTER BARD. *Human. Ht: 5'9". Wt: 100 lbs. Age: 89. Fighting prowess: none.*

Despite his gaunt face and emaciated frame, Minart is still a striking figure with his mane of white hair and his commanding voice. Far from his outward appearance, Minart is as youthful at heart as he was at twenty. He is enjoying the rivalry between his two favorite students immensely and is sorry that he won't get to see the big fight when his will is read.

Minart's will provides two conditions whereby Tandy or Ilian can claim possession of the lute. The first is to convince the other to renounce his or her claim to it. The second is to beat the other in a public contest of music, poetry, and satire to be held at some appropriate holiday or festival.

ILIAN THORN. *Human. Ht: 6'. Wt: 190 lbs. Age: 24. Fighting prowess: poor.*

Ilian is quite a charming fellow with his deep blue eyes and winning smile. He will soon be revealed to be a shallow man, however, as he is out for his own advantage in all things. He is not really evil, just selfish. He doesn't kill casually, or steal, but he is devious and not above cheating at a business deal or a "friendly"

game of chance. Few who know him well call him friend, although he has a circle of female admirers and lovers. He once tried to add Tandy to this latter group and was promptly rebuffed. He bears her no ill will for this, but he is quite jealous of her musical skill, which outstrips his by a safe margin.

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. Ilian sinks to a new low and hires an assassin to bump off the ailing Minart. Tandy, visiting the old man, learns of this plot and hires the player characters to protect Minart. Afterward, she publicly accuses Ilian of the deed. This will place her in danger, so she may retain the characters as her bodyguards.

Scenario 2. Minart dies, either of natural causes or at the hand of Scenario #1's assassin. Since Tandy and Ilian will each be loathe to give the other the lute, the contest proceeds as planned. Ilian knows that he cannot hope to best Tandy in a fair fight, and so he attempts to turn the balance in his favor. He hires the player characters to aid him in his dastardly scheme. This will probably include such things as stealing Tandy's lute strings, putting vinegar in her wine (to make her voice hoarse), or any other nastiness the GM can dream up. Note that Tandy will be on her guard against just this sort of tomfoolery and chicanery, so the player characters must use caution lest they be caught.

through a series of owners, eventually being lost in the Orc War. It showed up a few times after that, but its current whereabouts are unknown.

Powers.

The robe has one magic power: it allows its wearer to detect and determine the magical properties of any item held in his hands. The chance to do this is based on two factors: the wearer's magic ability and the obscurity of the magic. In short, a character with a magic ability of "poor" would have no more than a 40% chance to determine a fairly common power but at best a 1% chance for a little-known or unique one. If the roll is not made, a false power may be "found," depending on the GM's judgment. The Robe of the Sigil cannot be used to determine the magical/spell-casting abilities of a living being.

Personalities.

JORDAN ANISE. *Human. Ht: 5'5". Wt: 150 lbs. Age: 57. Fighting prowess: average with staff and dagger. Magic ability: good, C1, C3, C5, C8.*

Jordan hardly looks like a sorcerer. Indeed, he looks like a common merchant or perhaps an artisan

THE ROBE OF THE SIGIL

Appearance.

The robe appears to be of the normal sort often affected by magicians and their ilk. It is a dark red color and has the traditional hood and voluminous sleeves. Due to the fine stitching and some gold used to trim the sleeves, it would fetch upwards of twenty five gold pieces. It is sized to fit a man or woman around 5' 6" in height and of slender build.

Legends.

The robe was created by a secret brotherhood of wizards known as the Brotherhood of the Sigil (cf. *Staff of the Sigil*, *Skull of Doom*). According to the stories, whenever a Brotherhood member was seen wearing the robe, he was investigating some new-found source of magic. Nothing else is said about the powers of the robe.

After the Brotherhood died out, the robe passed



Jordan Anise

of some sort. He is quite thin and rather unimposing. His hair is graying and thinning at about the same rate, but his clear blue eyes still have the sparkle of youth. Jordan Anise is a man with a dream. He wants to see the Brotherhood of the Sigil reformed, with himself at the top. Toward this end, he is seeking to collect for himself all of the surviving magic items created by the Brotherhood, starting with the robe. He will do nearly anything to get it, and he will not take kindly to someone trying to interfere.

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. The player characters find the Robe of the Sigil in the lair of some fearsome monster. After slaying the loathsome beast, they return and traipse about town displaying their new-found goodies, including the robe. Jordan sees or hears about them and sets about obtaining it for himself. At first he'll attempt to buy it. If that doesn't work, he'll start using his magical abilities.

Scenario 2. The robe shows up on the back of some very powerful wizard (any NPC wizard in this book, or a mage of the GM's devising will do fine). Jordan begins gathering a small army of mercenaries and adventurers (including the player characters) to assault the dwelling of this powerful wizard and take the robe.

THE SPIRIT BOAT

Appearance.

The Spirit Boat is a small carving of greenish ivory; it is shaped like a high-prowed canoe carrying several vaguely human-like figures and is worn on a leather thong like a pendant.

Legends.

Little is known of Spirit Boats though a few rumors from very arcane sources imply that similar things have existed on different planes. In Prince Rrau's own dimension, there are more legends. The Spirit Boat is said to have been fashioned from a fragment that the god Hrong Hrong struck from the left tusk of the Star Behemoth (the great mystical monster that haunts the abyss between universes). This sacred relic was a gift to Prince Rrau from the cat-shamans of Smoke Isle. It was their hope that this treasure would be of use to him in his war with the unearthly forces that sought to usurp his kingdom.

Powers.

The Spirit Boat can, at the command of its owner, assume the form of a full-sized sea canoe. It can carry three average-sized persons comfortably; more than six would risk sinking. In its expanded state, the Spirit Boat seems ghostly and transparent but is quite solid to the touch. Although its small, square sail can be raised like that of a normal sea canoe, this vessel can magically move without sail or paddle — again at the command of its owner. When not in use, the boat will resume the form of an ivory pendant.

Perhaps the most peculiar power of the Spirit Boat is its ability to travel not only the seas of this world but also to the spirit realms. It can easily sail (or fly) through the lower, middle, and higher astral planes. However, it cannot travel to other universes or sail the skies of the material world. And being a holy object, it will refuse to enter any of the demon-worlds.

Personalities.

PRINCE RRAU. *Feline bipedal humanoid. Ht: 5'11". Wt: 170 lbs. Age: young middle age. Fighting prowess: excellent with rapier and similar weapons, otherwise very good all around. Magic ability: uncertain.*

Prince Rrau is an unintentional visitor from another universe. His world is one in which cats have evolved into the dominant life form; humans do not exist there. Prince Rrau's people have adapted to life in their snowy homeland by evolving thick coats of white or gray fur; Rrau is exceptional with his coat of short, sleek black and white.

While defending his realms from an army of supernatural invaders, Rrau was sorcerously blasted out of his world and into this one. In his native universe, Rrau was a powerful wizard-warrior, but here, due to the subtle differences in the dimensional fabric, his magical powers are often ineffective or reduced. One of his chief desires is to retrain himself to be the great wizard he once was. His main goal is to find a way — through science or sorcery — to return to his world and destroy the enemies of his people.

Unaffected by the change in universes is his natural speed, stealth, and concentration. Highly developed are his feline night-vision and keen sense of hearing, and he retains the skill-at-arms of a fighting prince. His weaponless self-defense technique approximates "tiger-style" kung fu (GMs may wish to add damage done by unsheathed claws).

Sadly, he knows that his people must yearn bitterly for him to return. This often subdues an innate good humor, but he finds spiritual strength by meditating on the god Hrong Hrong. The only human Rrau completely trusts is his friend Helga; with other humans he is wary, being an alien in an alien world.

HELGA. *Human. Ht: 5'2". Wt: 120 lbs. Age: 32. Fighting prowess: good with dagger, poor otherwise. Magical ability: moderate.*

Soft-spoken and wise, Helga is a forest-witch and priestess of a coven of goddess-worshippers. She has a vast knowledge of herbalism and natural medicine. Her special talents include the preparation of antidotes for rare toxins. Helga owns a small farm and supplements her income by raising cart-ponies and by selling the occasional magic charm.

Prince Rrau nearly died from the shock of being shot out of his universe and from injuries suffered in his last battle there. Helga, wandering deep in the

woods in search of herbs, found the strange cat-warrior almost lifeless. Conquering her fear of the unknown, she had him gently taken to her home where he was brought back to glowing health. She now plans to help Rrau return to his world. To this end she is resolved to advance as far as possible in esoteric magic and science.

Scenario Suggestions.

Scenario 1. An accomplished thief has stolen the Spirit Boat on the behalf of a fanatical collector of occult objects. For a small fee, the thief is happy to tell what she knows of the boat's whereabouts: the name of the city in which the nameless collector resides and a brief description of the collector himself. To help them recover the boat, Rrau and Helga hire experienced searchers (i.e. the player characters). Of course, difficulty in finding the collector may be in direct proportion to how much the GM has allowed the collector to learn of the boat's powers.

Scenario 2. A friendly nature-sprite has informed Helga that a certain wicked necromancer-king plans to steal or bamboozle the Spirit Boat away from Prince Rrau. Rrau decides to let the situation develop, suspecting that somewhere in the evil one's castle may lie the magic he requires to get home. The necromancer has made quite a few enemies in the course of his long and unwholesome life; the player characters are among them. So, eager for vengeance and weird loot, the fearless player characters enlist to help balance the odds in the upcoming confrontation with the necromancer and his army of spies and undead shock troops.

Scenario 3. While overhearing a conversation between Prince Rrau and Helga in a used bookstore, the player characters come upon a scrap of information that seems to indicate the location of a secret library. The library once belonged to an ancient cosmologist who may have known how to convert a Spirit Boat into a vessel capable of making the jump from one universe to another. Unfortunately, the road to the library leads through lands beset with plague, bandits, and civil war. The player characters accompany Rrau and Helga on their quest, knowing full well that such a library might contain other information of extreme value. If successful, the player characters may even sign on for a trip into the Other Universe.



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