

# The Genius Guide to: WHAT'S <sup>IN</sup> MY POCKET? PART DEUX



**PATHFINDER**  
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

Sometimes a GM wants to spark some interest and mystery via some object the player characters find. Even without handing out a major magic item, a GM can make a world seem more in-depth by providing some colorful items that suggest they have a back-story behind them.

To assist in such efforts, this second volume of *The Genius Guide to What's in My Pocket?* provides some more odd little items, none of which will be of great use to players, but all of which might pique their interest.

These items were designed to encourage players to ask questions and to act as starting points for GMs who wanted to introduce some new story hooks. The accompanying story seeds are creative notes and ideas rather than specific story elements, and they are best used by GMs who like creating stories and rumors on the fly. Even if one of these items doesn't encourage further investigation when found, it may provide another great opportunity for a GM to create a colorful background when characters attempt to sell it.

In most cases, it should be obvious whether an item is a minor valuable or essentially junk. Ultimately, it's left as an exercise for the GM to decide which is which – while mithral shards may be valuable in one campaign and a rat jawbone worthless, it would not be difficult to conceive of an economy that reverses those valuations.

When magical, the items list their aura, caster level, and construction requirements.

Since these items are designed more as starting points for creative GMs than fully fleshed ideas, they aren't really designed to be randomly selected. Instead, we recommend a GM glance through the list when wanting to add a bit of spice to a treasure trove, or when PCs demand to know what's in a giant's pockets. If a GM does wish to use this list to generate random and odd treasure items, roll 1d20. On a result of 01-19, use the corresponding numbered item on the list. On a result of 20, roll 1d12+19 and use the resulting value (from 20-31) as the item number.

# THE LIST

## 1. LIBRARIAN'S FRIEND

**Aura** transmutation; **CL** 3rd  
**Slot** —; **Price** 250 gp; **Weight** .5 lb

### DESCRIPTION

A *librarian's friend* appears to be an iron plank, approximately two feet long, four inches deep, and half an inch thick. One side is ridged or textured.

When someone steps on the *librarian's friend* and speaks the command word (often engraved on a blank side or edge of the item), the plank rises slowly from the ground, textured side up, to a height of up to three feet. The character standing on the *librarian's friend* controls the height mentally, and can vary the height while standing on it, including lowering it back to the ground. A user can invoke the command word up to three times per day, and each levitation lasts up to three minutes.

A *librarian's friend* supports up to 200 pounds of weight. If this weight limit is exceeded, it drops to the ground or simply never levitates—although that still consumes a daily use of the item. Although the plank only moves up and down, it will move side to side, like a librarian's ladder moving along a bookshelf. The plank resists any attempt to move it forward or backward.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *levitate*; **Cost** 125 gp

### STORY SEED

A *librarian's friend* could generate curiosity from your players if placed in the treasure of an illiterate creature, or of a creature far too large to use it.

## 2. HAWK OF THE SUN

**Aura** transmutation; **CL** 11th  
**Slot** —; **Price** 500 gp; **Weight** —

### DESCRIPTION

A *hawk of the sun* looks like a brass hawk the size of a human child's fist. If shaken, it rattles softly. The beak is hinged, and there are wooden wheels on the bottom.

When a command word is spoken, the *hawk of the sun* rolls across whatever flat surface it's on for 1d3 feet, then the beak opens and the toy emits a metallic version of a hawk's scream. This sound is roughly as loud as calm speech. The pattern of moving and screeching repeats 1d4 times per activation. Repeating the command word halts the behavior.

A *hawk of the sun* cannot pull or push any significant weight.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *animate object*; **Cost** 250 gp

### STORY SEED

A *hawk of the sun* is an unusual item for races or creatures not known for fine workmanship. It may indicate the presence of children, but would be disturbing if found in an environment where no children should be present.

## 3. LAUGHING SWALLOW

**Aura** transmutation; **CL** 11th  
**Slot** —; **Price** 600 gp; **Weight** —

### DESCRIPTION

A *laughing swallow* is cylindrical, with the swooping wings and split tail of a swallow. The forward end is balsa wood, carved to look like a bird. The cylindrical body is made of layers of laminated paper. From tail to beak, a *laughing swallow* is about eight inches long, with a two-foot wingspan. The wings and tail are silk, with brass wire and rods providing stiffening. It has 2 hp and 1 hardness. They are often brightly, if unrealistically, painted.

When a command word is spoken, the *laughing swallow's* wings flap. If tossed lightly into the air, it flies around wherever it was tossed from. The circular flight has a six-foot radius. It does not change altitude, but flies at whatever height it was tossed to, with a soft flapping noise. The flight lasts 1d6x10 seconds, after which the *laughing swallow* glides to the ground.

The *laughing swallow* cannot carry any significant weight.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *animate object*; **Cost** 300 gp

### STORY SEED

*Laughing swallows* are delicate toys, so they would generate interest if found among clumsy races. They also make no sense (and therefore generate interest) if found among the treasure of creatures not smart enough to understand toys. Finally, your players might take an interest if their characters found a *laughing swallow* in a place where open air and broad horizons are rarely seen, such as deep underground.

## 4. SHAM KERCHIEF

**Aura** conjuration; **CL** 3rd

**Slot** —; **Price** 150 gp; **Weight** —

### DESCRIPTION

A *sham kerchief* appears to be a large white silk handkerchief. Activation of the *sham kerchief* requires two steps. First, a user must wave or drape it over a hand-held object. Second, the user must speak the command word. When activated thusly, the *sham kerchief* teleports the object into a pocket, pouch, or backpack on the user.

The object may be up to one cubic foot in size. The user determines where the object goes, but must choose a receptacle large enough to contain the object – otherwise the receptacle bursts. The object's destination must be on the user's person. It must be a pocket in her current clothing, or a pouch or pack that she's wearing.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *prestidigitation*; **Cost** 75 gp

### STORY SEED

*Sham kerchiefs* are very popular among sleight of hand stage performers and street thieves. Finding one in a king's treasure vault or among the remains of a legendary rogue might raise questions about how it got there, or why a legend would need such a simple trick.

## 5. ELDRITCH BEACON

**Aura** divination; **CL** 3rd

**Slot** —; **Price** 200 gp; **Weight** .5 lb

### DESCRIPTION

*Eldritch beacons* are small, distinctive pieces of artwork. As such, the prices listed here are the lowest possible. They are usually made to custom specifications, so that when one is given as a gift, the recipient will always keep it nearby. Even if made as a piece of jewelry, it does not occupy an item slot the way that magic rings, bracelets, necklaces, and crowns do.

*Eldritch beacons* make divinations easier. They often serve as targets for *locate object* spells and they also provide a +5 bonus on any check required by a divination spell used to locate them.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *locate object*; **Cost** 100 gp

### STORY SEED

Who carried it to where the characters found it, and who was tracking that person? Did the owner know he (or she) carried an arcane beacon? If the carrier did know, perhaps the characters find it at the end of a gauntlet of monsters and traps, left there purposely to turn the tables on any trackers.

### SPECIAL THANKS

To Susan J. Morris (@susanjmorris on Twitter), who was one of my players years ago and gave me the seed of the idea for these.



## 6. MEMORY ORB

**Aura** illusion; **CL** 3rd

**Slot** —; **Price** 350 gp; **Weight** 1 lb

### DESCRIPTION

These items are highly polished stone or crystal spheres roughly three inches in diameter. Forgetful people prize *memory orbs* for their ability to record lists, recipes, and important messages.

*Memory orbs* have two command words, one for implanting a short message and one for retrieving the last message implanted.

An implanted message must be twenty words or less. Only one message can be implanted at a time.

Some people keep several, each made from a different material, so that they can record several messages. They know, for example, that the quartz crystal holds recipes, the marble sphere holds lists of names, and the sandstone sphere holds a daily schedule.

When a user retrieves a message, the *memory orb* speaks the message exactly as it was recorded. The *orb* is just as loud as the original speaker is, and uses the same language.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Items, *magic mouth*; **Cost** 175 gp

### STORY SEED

The mystery of these items should lie less in where they're found, and more in their contents. It's entirely possible that the most recent owner just thought they were pretty or decorative, and didn't realize they contained information. Why would a troll need pasta recipes? What do the hobgoblins have to do with the lord mayor's meeting with the head of the thieves' guild, and who recorded one ominous snippet of a very tense meeting?

## 7. STYLUS OF THE MASON

**Aura** transmutation; **CL** 3rd

**Slot** —; **Price** 100 gp; **Weight** —

### DESCRIPTION

A *stylus of the mason* is a steel stylus, triangular in cross-section and about six inches long.

These magical styli cut shallow marks in stone and clay, no more than an eighth of an inch deep. They can mark other substances, but require real effort to do so – like ordinary styli. They will not make a deeper mark into one of their existing marks. They are always sharp, and surprisingly hard to break (hardness 20, hp 10).

Because the *stylus of the mason* is always sharp, an owner may be tempted to use it as a weapon. If so, treat it as an improvised simple weapon that does 1d3 piercing damage.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Items, *magic weapon*; **Cost**: 50 gp

### STORY SEED

*Styli of the Mason* have existed since before paper, but are no longer in common circulation. Finding one engraved or decorated in an ancient style might indicate that the possessor was once in the ruins of a similarly ancient place, such as a lost city or a mythical dungeon, or bought it from someone who was.

## 8. DRAFTER'S DELINEATOR

**Aura** transmutation; **CL** 3rd

**Slot** —; **Price** 100 gp; **Weight** —

### DESCRIPTION

A *drafter's delineator* is a very expensive charcoal stick used for drawing, and therefore only useful to architects, draftspersons, and engineers who must make marks and writing every day. Over the course of their careers, a *drafter's delineator* can pay for itself. It appears to be a sharpened wooden rod, six inches long and burned at the tip.

A *drafter's delineator* is always sharp, and never wears down. The marks it makes are ordinary, and can be smudged or erased normally. It is surprisingly hard to break (hardness 20, hp 10).

Because the *drafter's delineator* is always sharp, an owner may be tempted to use it as a weapon. If so, treat it as a simple improvised weapon that does 1d2 piercing damage.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *arcane mark*; **Cost** 50 gp

### STORY SEED

The appearance of a *drafter's delineator* can be intriguing if the possessor is not known for intelligence or planning, such as finding one in possession of a supposedly illiterate groom who is actually a spy. As an alternative, consider using it to indicate that the possessor was planning and diagramming something unusually elaborate -- a hobgoblin chieftain's plans for a new siege weapon, for example.

## 9. NOBLE'S TABLE

**Aura** evocation; **CL** 3rd

**Slot** —; **Price** 250 gp; **Weight** 3 lbs

### DESCRIPTION

A *noble's table* first appears as a highly polished plank of birch wood, one foot by two feet, and two inches thick. When a user speaks a command word, the *noble's table* floats four feet above the ground and supports one hundred pounds.

A gesture along the surface of a *noble's table* expands its size. It can quadruple its length and width, unfolding in one-foot increments. The weight limit remains the same.

Wealthy people who enjoy outdoor activities (like hunting, fishing, or falconry) often prize *noble's tables* for refined outdoor dining.

Treat a *noble's table* as having hardness 10 and hp 20.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *floating disk*; **Cost** 125 gp

### STORY SEED

A floating table in a chamber used by creatures not known for magical ability should pique your players' interests. On the other hand, if your campaign includes an arrogant noble with a penchant for hunting exotic creatures, a *noble's table* could indicate his presence, or be a marker for anyone trying to find him.

## 10. NEEDLE WORKER'S JOY

**Aura** transmutation; **CL** 3rd

**Slot** —; **Price** 100 gp; **Weight** —

### DESCRIPTION

Joy in needlework does not fade with age, but the ability to thread a needle does. The *needle worker's joy* solves that. It looks identical to an ordinary needle and has no command word. To activate it, a user places a thread against the needle, and the *needle worker's joy* threads itself.

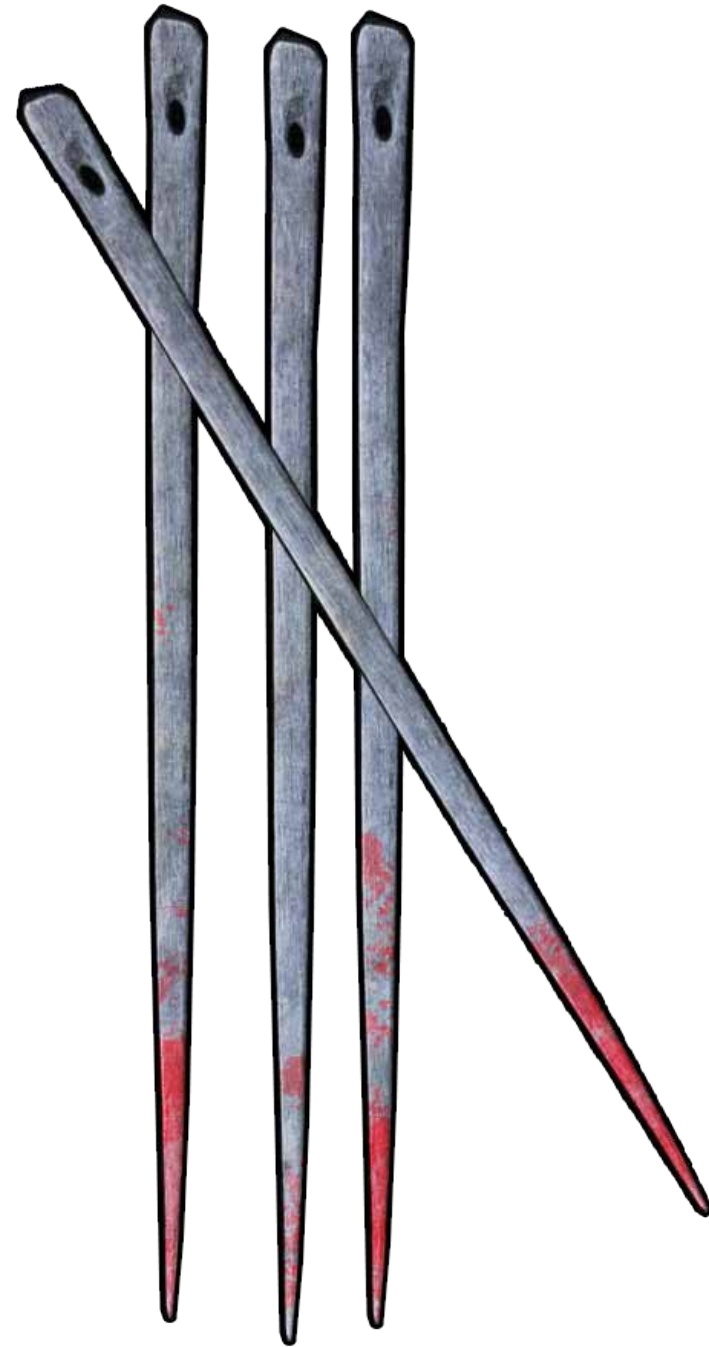
Treat a *needle worker's joy* as having hardness 15 and hp 5.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *prestidigitation*; **Cost** 50 gp

### STORY SEED

There's no reason for a *needle worker's joy* to be in the hoard of a creature with hands too big to use it, or conversely among the hoard of tiny or even fine creatures who could thread it easily. A *needle worker's joy* might signal the presence of the creator of elaborate and prophetic embroideries.



## 11. WEAVER'S WONDER

**Aura** illusion; **CL** 3rd

**Slot** —; **Price** 120 gp; **Weight** —

### DESCRIPTION

The *weaver's wonder* is a shuttle made of flowering dogwood and twelve inches long. A weaver using this item winds yarn onto its bobbin. Then, while weaving, the weaver can change the color of the yarn at will, allowing for elaborate patterns without the need for exotically dyed yarn, or for changing the bobbin with every color change.

Treat a *weaver's wonder* as having hardness 10 and hp 15.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *color spray*; **Cost** 60 gp

### STORY SEED

There's no reason for an ettercap or drider to own a *weaver's wonder*, so the presence of one should signify something to your players. For example, a spider-worshipping drow with levels of oracle might own one, weaving visions into tapestries.

## 12. ORNITHOLOGIST'S INDEX

**Aura** divination; **CL** 10

**Slot** —; **Price** 1000 gp; **Weight** .5 lb

### DESCRIPTION

This magic item appears as a clear crystal cube, three inches on each side. A wooden frame runs along every edge.

No command is necessary to activate an *ornithologist's index*. If held toward a bird's song for a full round, the crystal displays a three-dimensional still image of the singing bird inside itself. The image remains for one minute. Bird lovers prize the *ornithologist's index* for its ability to provide an image of unseen birds, and its assistance in identifying bird species by showing details of appearance. Using the index takes a full-round action, and grants a +5 bonus on Knowledge (nature) checks to identify birds and bird-like animals (but not magical beasts).

The *index* has hardness 2, hp 5, and so is relatively fragile. The loss of even 1 hp gives the *ornithologist's index* the broken condition.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, 10 ranks Knowledge (nature), *identify*; **Cost** 500 gp

### STORY SEED

If the characters are searching for a lost bird-watcher, an *ornithologist's index* might be a marker on the trail. Otherwise, it's most interesting if found where there are no birds, if it is already opened to a page about valuable or extinct birds.

## 13. MINSTREL'S CHAPBOOK

**Aura** divination; **CL** 3rd

**Slot** —; **Price** 500 gp; **Weight** .5 lb

### DESCRIPTION

A *minstrel's chapbook* appears to be a slim book with silk-wrapped wooden covers. When opened, the pages are blank. If someone plays music near the book and then opens it, a left-hand page shows musical notation and the facing right-hand page shows lyrics. Pairs of pages continue, showing songs similar to the one played. The displays last until another song is played near the closed book.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *arcane mark*; **Cost** 250 gp

### STORY SEED

Any intelligent creature with sonic abilities might prize a *minstrel's chapbook*. Harpies, for example, might relish such a prize – and could send agents after a bard known to possess one.

## 14. CELEBRANT'S DISPLAY

**Aura** illusion; **CL** 3rd

**Slot** —; **Price** 250 gp; **Weight** 1 lb

### DESCRIPTION

A *celebrant's display* is a rosewood box with brass hinges and latch. The box is eighteen inches deep, twenty-four inches wide, and twelve inches high.

If a *celebrant's display* is open and someone speaks the command word, the box creates a five-minute fireworks display.

Such displays are very loud (+10 to the DC of any Perception check made to listen nearby). They can be very bright (+5 to the DC of any Perception check made to search or spot anything for 1 minute after the display ends). However, they are entirely illusionary – they create no heat, do no damage, and produce no smoke.

A *celebrant's display* can be used once per hour.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *pyrotechnics*; **Cost** 125 gp

### STORY SEED

Any adventurer who brought such a display into a monster's lair hoping to use it for a distraction would face a grisly end if the monster or monsters turned out to be deaf, or blind, or both. Who was that adventurer? Did he or she leave behind any family? Is there a reward for the return of the *celebrant's display*?

## 15. LIAR'S COMB

**Aura** enchantment (charm); **CL** 3rd

**Slot** —; **Price** 120 gp; **Weight** —

### DESCRIPTION

This is a horn comb with a sterling silver spine. When an intelligent creature sees the comb, it must make a DC 11 Will save, or become convinced that the *liar's comb* is worth far more than it actually is. This charm effect lasts until the comb and the affected person are apart for at least a week.

*Detect charm* reveals the truth of this object, as does *dispel magic* and *identify*. Any affected person who can see the comb when any of these spells is cast gets another save.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *disguise other*; **Cost** 60 gp

### STORY SEED

The saving throw DC for this item is very low. Only the weak-willed are likely to fall for its charm. Such a person might foolishly believe that a *liar's comb* was valuable enough to use as a bribe for a more powerful creature. Such a creature would likely see right through the comb's charm, and be incensed by the fool's effrontery. Your characters might find one in a dragon's hoard, next to the remains of the fool.



## 16. MASK OF THE MUSTACHE

**Aura** illusion; **CL** 1st

**Slot** eyes; **Price** 300gp; **Weight** —

### DESCRIPTION

Putting on this false mustache activates its *disguise self* ability. It functions as the *disguise self spell*, but the wearer cannot change his apparent species and the disguise must include facial hair (regardless of the gender assumed by the disguise).

The effect lasts just 10 minutes and can only be used once per day. After that, the wearer returns to his (or her) original appearance, albeit with a slightly silly looking fake mustache.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *disguise self*; **Cost** 150 gp

### STORY SEED

A spy has made numerous dramatic escapes recently, vanishing into crowds of people. Perhaps she owns a *mask of the mustache*.

## 17. PANOPLY OF ETERNAL

### STYLE

**Aura** illusion; **CL** 1st

**Slot** body; **Price** 460 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

### DESCRIPTION

This appears to be an ordinary suit of clothing. It includes pants, tunic, vest, jacket, and shoes. Each *panoply of eternal style* has a label sewn in the collar of the tunic, embroidered with the command word for the

suit. Generally, they appear to be of an old-fashioned or archaic cut.

If a character puts on the panoply and speaks the command word, it immediately transforms into a fine suit of clothing in the correct style for the region, gender, social station, and any event the wearer is attending in the same day. It appears to be of the best material, and in either the most current style or the style of any one region or time of which the wearer is conversant.

The command word functions once per day, and the effect lasts twelve hours. The character can end the effect early by speaking the command word again, or by removing the clothing.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *disguise self*; **Cost** 230 gp

### STORY SEED

The interest created by this item will depend heavily on how it is encountered, and who is wearing it. Why would an archon, devil, or skum need a set of current, fashionable clothing? For that matter, why would skum? Why did the swashbuckling dandy's clothes change to such dull, ordinary garb? Can't he afford real fancy clothes? Where did the merchant's wife get a suit of clothes in such an ancient style? She wore a beautiful ball gown at the party last night...

## 18. SPICE JAR

**Aura** abjuration; **CL** 1st

**Slot** —; **Price** 100 gp; **Weight** — (empty), ½ pound full

### DESCRIPTION

This glass jar is two inches in diameter and four inches high, with a metal cap screwed down on the top of it. Small organic matter kept in the jar remains fresh indefinitely. Cooks prize *spice jars* highly for their ability to keep herbs and spices fresh.

*Spice jars* are no more durable than ordinary glass objects.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *endure elements*; **Cost** 50 gp

### STORY SEED

A master chef claims to have been robbed when returning from a trip. Among the things stolen were his *spice jars*. When the heroes track down the robbers, they find a band of giants. Why would giants have a kitchen sized for medium-sized people? Why is the chef's monogram on clothing in a nearby bedchamber? Who occupied the prison cells near the kitchen? You know, some people have disappeared in town recently. What has the chef been feeding people?

## 19. ETERNAL LACE

**Aura** transmutation; **CL** 1st  
**Slot** —; **Price** 100 gp; **Weight** —

### DESCRIPTION

This is an eighteen inch by eighteen inch square of very delicate, fine lace. Despite its appearance, it has hardness 4 and 10 hp. It does not suffer or become dirty from exposure to the normal rigors of environment or temperature. It is affected by attacks and magic normally.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, mending; **Cost** 50 gp

### STORY SEED

The best place for this item is somewhere dank and wet, because that makes the very existence of the *eternal lace* remarkable. Under such conditions, it should be rotting and falling apart. Instead, it's clean and as fresh as the day it was made. In an aquatic lair, characters find a piece of *eternal lace* on prominent display. Similarly, if a famous figure was well-known for wearing lace even in the most unpleasant of conditions went missing, finding this lace might be considered a clue to his whereabouts.

## 20. SHAVING KIT

**Cost:** 12 gp; **Weight** 1 lb

### DESCRIPTION

This mundane kit includes a straight razor, a shaving brush, a soap cup, a bar of shaving soap, a leather strop, and a very small whetstone for sharpening the razor. A

leather case holds all the items. The material of the leather may be more valuable than the shaving kit itself, if it's from an exotic species.

### STORY SEED

Finding a shaving kit in the possession of, say, a demilich could evoke several responses. First, it's funny because a demilich has no hands. Second, it's strange, because a demilich never needs to shave. That leads to questioning why the demilich has it. Perhaps it regretted the choices that brought it to its undead state.

## 21. COPPER CHAIN

**Price** 1 sp; **Weight** —

### DESCRIPTION

Five inches of fine copper chain, with flat links.

### STORY SEED

Perhaps it was once part of something like a watch chain, a child's toy, or a piece of costume jewelry.

## 22. PRETTY FLORAL

### BONNET

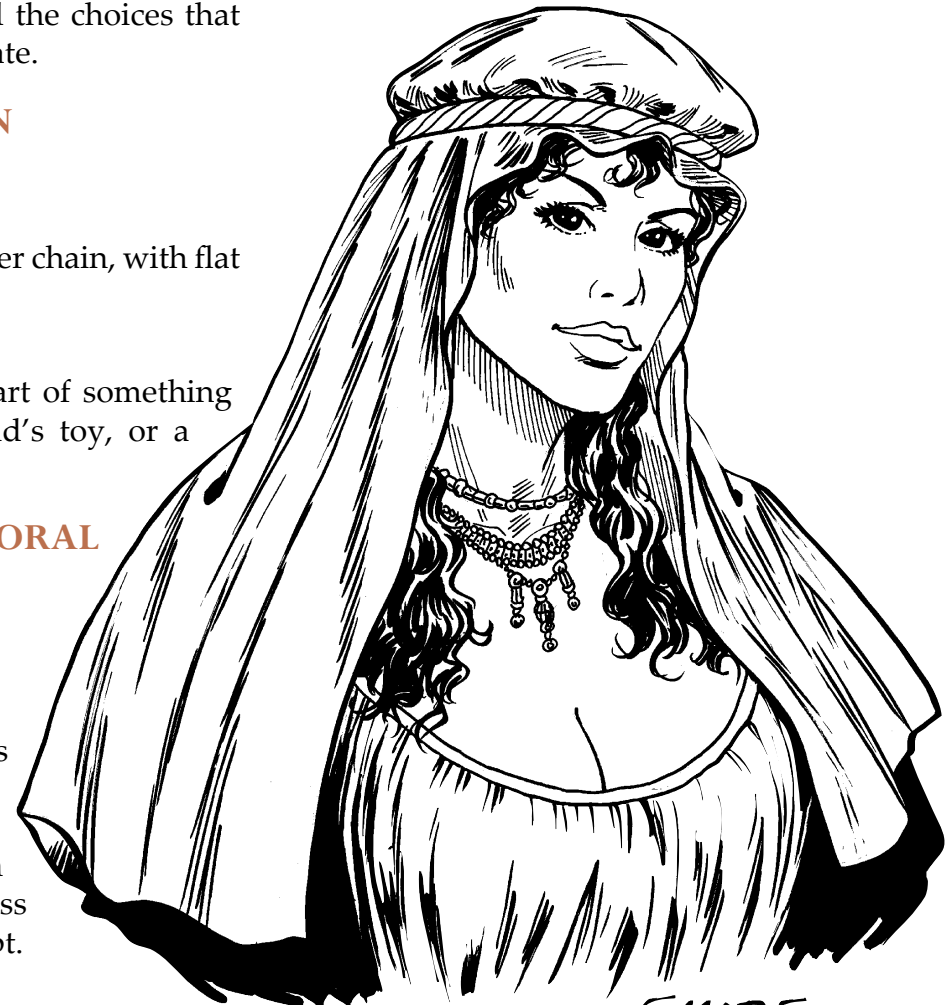
**Cost:** 18 gp; **Weight** 1 lb

### DESCRIPTION

This woman's apparel is a wide-brimmed, pink hat with a floral embroidered band and a white ostrich feather. It has no business being in a dungeon or crypt.

### STORY SEED

Pretty floral bonnets are distinctive. Success on a DC 11 Knowledge (nobility) check recognizes the hat as belonging to a local noblewoman. What was she doing in the disreputable place where the characters found it? Is she a victim, or the brains of the sinister plot? Alternately, who was disguised as her and whom was that person trying to fool?



## 23. BLOODLINE PORTRAIT

**Aura** illusion; **CL** 3rd

**Slot** —; **Price** 1000 gp; **Weight** 1 lb

### DESCRIPTION

This small (a few inches on a side) portrait sits in a teak frame. The portrait shows a well-known local person wearing ancient clothing. If that well-known person has suffered a recent injury, the portrait shows it as well. In fact, the painting is linked to the person and always shows the person's current appearance – save the clothing, which is always a style long out of fashion.

Success on a DC 15 Knowledge (local) check recognizes the subject of the portrait.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *mirror image*; **Cost** 500 gp

### STORY SEED

If the PCs confront the subject of the painting with the painting, the subject has no memory of ever having sat for a portrait. Is this the portrait of some ancestor? If so, why does it show the appearance of the current person?

## 24. GAMING TILES

**Cost:** 1 gp/tile; **Weight** —

### DESCRIPTION

These non-magical items are part of a set of gaming items appropriate for your game world. They are made of exotic wood or ivory, as appropriate. For example, they might be teak domino tiles with crystal chips instead of painted dots.

2d4 tiles are present when found.

### STORY SEED

ADC 15 Knowledge (local) or Knowledge (nobility) check could identify the former owner of these distinctive gaming tiles, raising all kinds of interesting questions about who she gamed with, and what she might have lost...

## 25. RAKE OF THE GARDENER-KING

**Aura** conjuration; **CL** 1st

**Price** 301 gp; **Weight** 2 lb

### DESCRIPTION

This rake has an ash handle with adamantite tongs. When used to rake a lawn or a planting bed, the gardener can choose to irrigate the plot as he or she rakes it. Doing so requires the use of a command word that is usually carved into the handle, and allows an area up to ¼ acre per day to be treated as if it had the perfect degree of hydration.

If a character uses the rake as a weapon, treat it as an improvised two-handed melee weapon that does 1d6 points of bludgeoning and piercing damage.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *drench*; **Cost** 150 gp, 5 sp

### STORY SEED

This is, quite obviously, a ridiculous thing to make, own, or use. Only the most decadent property owners would insist their groundskeepers use such a thing. If no such nobles or merchants exist in your

world, this must be from the past. Is it a clue pointing in the direction of a city that was swallowed up in a sandstorm that lasted a whole year? Perhaps fungus-men revere it as a relic of some mad prophet or deity.

## 26. BOTTLE OF THE BLOODSUCKERS

**Aura** conjuration; **CL** 3rd

**Slot** —; **Price** 250 gp; **Weight** —

### DESCRIPTION

This clear glass test tube has a cork stopper and a wax seal. Close examination reveals that the tube contains 1d4+1 live mosquitoes.

The mosquitoes carry disease. At your discretion, the disease may be as simple as malaria, or something far more exotic and deadly. The mosquitoes are starving, and immediately attack the nearest living creature, but they do not attack the carrier of the test tube. They also fly around in a 10 ft. radius from that creature for 1d10 minutes. When a character enters or begins his turn in this area, the character must succeed on a Reflex save (DC 12) or be exposed to the disease.

*Bottle of the bloodsucker* is no more durable than any other glass object. Once the mosquitoes are released, the bottle becomes nonmagical.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *summon swarm*; **Cost** 125 gp

### STORY SEED

A bottle of the bloodsucker spreads death and terror. If opened in a compassionate nation, the resulting disease might lure a flood of healers and clerics into a trap, or away from the relics and treasures they normally guard. It might explain a past pestilence, alert characters to the presence of an agent of a foreign power, or be found abandoned because its owner found a more effective, and horrible, way to reach his goals.

## 27. EXAMINATION BOX

Price 20gp; Weight .5 lb

### DESCRIPTION

This cedar box, when opened, reveals a dead frog pinned to the bottom panel. When the lid is open, the sides also fold down flat.

This is a portable dissection tablet.

### STORY SEED

Depending on how long it's been where the characters find it, the frog might be freshly killed, or dried out.

If you wish, a DC 15 Knowledge (local) check identifies who in the local area teaches using such boxes.

## 28. WEATHER STONE

Price —; Weight —

### DESCRIPTION

When found, this rock is carefully protected in a felt-lined box or a cloth bag, or perhaps clutched in the hand of a corpse.

A successful DC 15 Knowledge (local) check recognizes this as a weather rock, sold

by a traveling huckster who recently visited the area. The huckster claimed that the weather was a boon to farmers and could predict the weather. Simply leave it outside for a few hours and, if it's wet, you know it's going to rain. If it's warm, you know it's sunny, and if it's cool, you know that colder weather is coming, and so on.

### STORY SEED

Obviously, a weather stone is a complete rip-off that preys on the gullible. If found with the seller, who did he trick into buying it, and was his death the buyer's revenge?

## 29. WORRY BEADS

Price 1 gp; Weight —

### DESCRIPTION

A tied rawhide strip holds these smooth polished wooden beads in a simple loop. The beads are ordinary. Some worry beads are dyed or painted, and some show the basic beauty of the wood grain. The devout pray their concerns into the beads.

### STORY SEED

A DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the religious affiliation of the former owner of the beads. Knowing that fact might raise questions about what such a person was doing dealing with the creatures who have it when the player characters find it.



## 30. MOTHER'S APRON

Price 7 sp; Weight —

### DESCRIPTION

A simple homespun apron for a Medium-sized humanoid, this item is slightly threadbare but clean. Needlepoint and some frills on the hems suggest a feminine owner. The single pocket on the front of the apron holds rocks.

### STORY SEED

Depending on the story that you want to tell, there might be enough rocks to weight down a suicidal drowning victim, or there might be just a few shiny valueless rocks that the owner was holding for her children.

A DC 15 Knowledge (local) check identifies the owner as a missing local woman.

## 31. CHICKEN-BONE TOTEM

Aura varies, see text; CL —

Slot —; Price 5 gp; Weight —

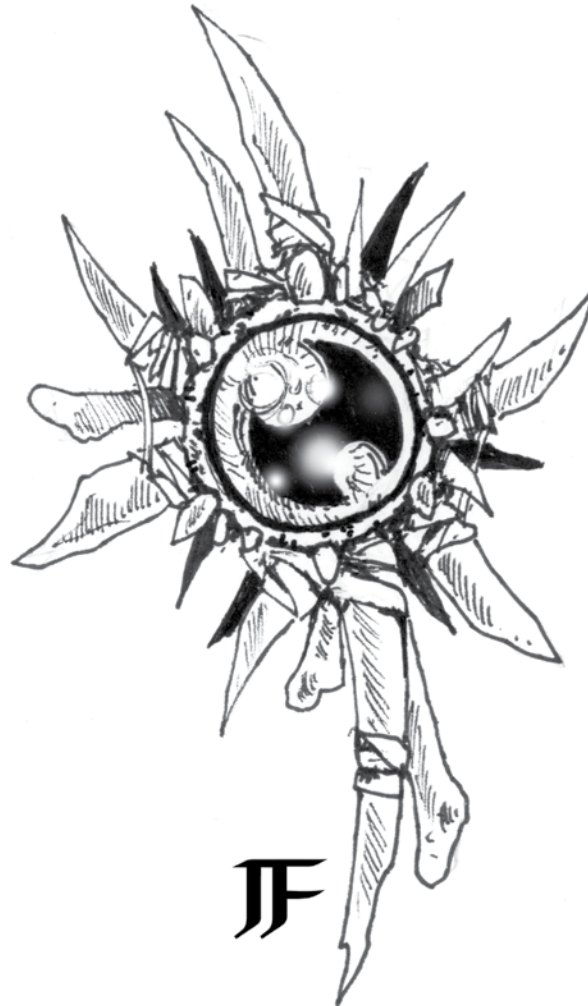
### DESCRIPTION

This is an intricately carved bone. The carvings represent religious and mythological symbols, creatures, and events or stories. Each one focuses on a single deity in your pantheon.

Levels of artisanship vary. Some are quite crude, and some show tremendous skill at carving tiny details.

You may, if you wish, use a bone from a larger animal (or intelligent being) instead of a chicken bone. Unless the creature that provided the bone is particularly powerful or exotic, don't increase the price but do increase the weight.

*Aura:* These items radiate a faint alignment aura based on the deity to which they are dedicated. A chicken-bone totem devoted to a Lawful Evil deity would radiate faint auras of both Law and Evil.



## DM TIPS:

- Keep track of each item handed out. Know where it was acquired, when, who acquired it, and (if sold) who it was sold to and when. Follow up occasionally.
- Not every item needs to be a story hook, but any item could be.
- Make skill rolls to identify an item in secret. Be generous with hints. Knowing what skill identifies an item allows for metagaming.
- Incongruity is good. A troll could have an envelope of dried rose petals, while a sophisticated aasimar might have a vial of blood or a necklace of chicken bones.
- The skill checks to recognize an item are suggestions. Clever players may come up with other ways to identify them, or may create their own interpretations.
- Don't use more than one item unless a treasure hoard is truly vast (e.g., a dragon's hoard).
- Avoid using multiple items in a single adventure.

## CREATIVE THINKING

If you give out one of these items, your players are going to come up with some use you didn't anticipate, and that aren't covered by these rules. When that happens, remember DC 25.

A DC 25 check is beyond the realm of ordinary people, even if they rolled a natural 20, so it's a good measuring stick when the rules say that something is impossible, and players try to take advantage of that.

For example, a clever PC decides to use the *librarian's friend* to raise a portcullis. She puts one end of the item under the gate, and stands on the other end. She activates the item. You, as the GM, know that the Strength check DC to lift the portcullis is 25 and you decide that the portcullis and the PC together easily weigh over 200 pounds. You'd be fair if you said that the *librarian's friend* rose to the level of the lowest cross bar, and then deactivated and tumbled to the ground.

Alternately, because the *drafter's delineator* is so hard to break, a desperate PC might hammer it into a floor as a spike to hold a door closed. If someone tries to break through that door and succeeds on a check to break down the door (minimum DC 25), then the door breaks as the magic item is destroyed.

## MAGIC ITEM SOURCES

In some cases, an item may be remarkable because it represents a level of magic use unknown in your current game world. Possible sources for such items may be story seeds themselves. Such sources could include:

- An ancient forgotten age when monstrous beings from beyond the stars ruled the world
- A previous age when gods and heroes battled for the destiny of mortal races
- An intrusion from another world – either an expedition from another planet, or a planar incursion
- A rift in time allowing items from some wondrous future to tumble into the past

## CLARKE'S THIRD LAW

"Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic." – Arthur C. Clarke

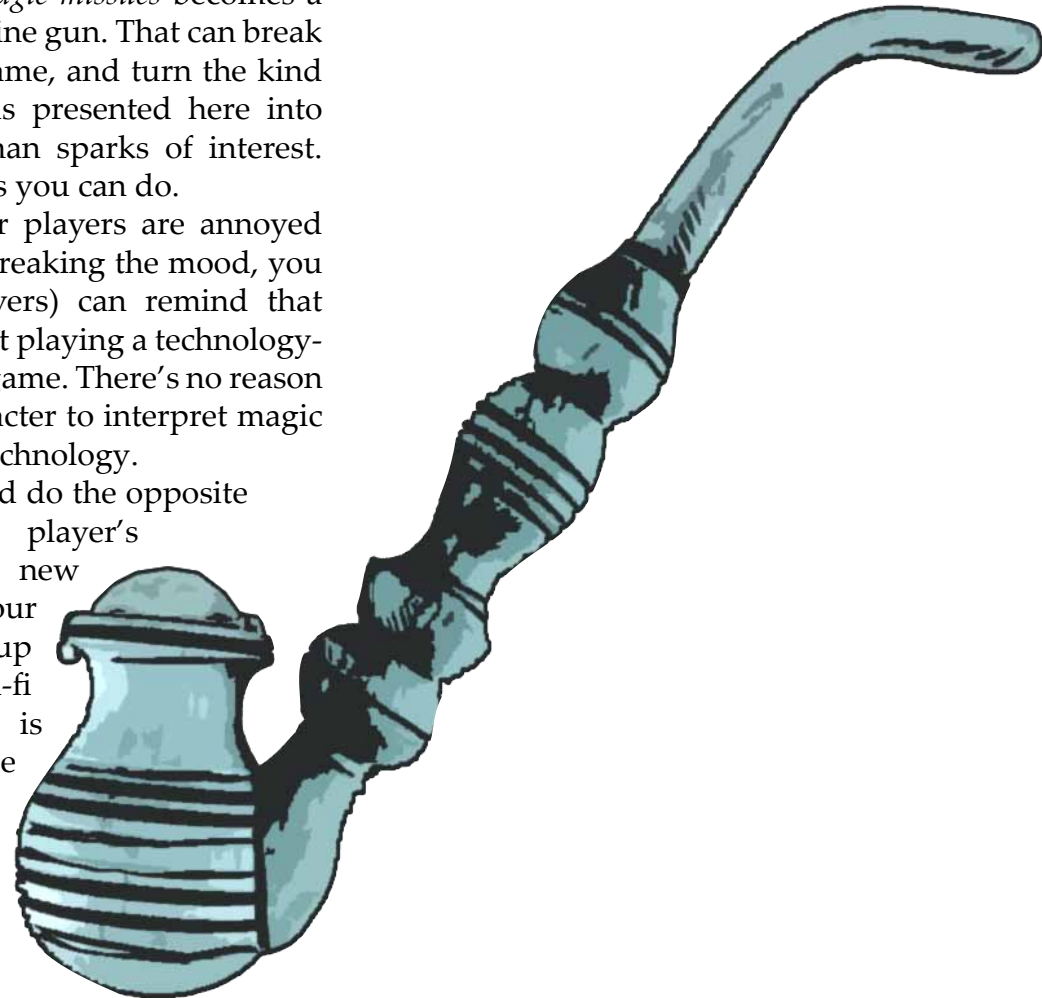
No matter what you do, some player is going to try to treat a magic item as if it were a piece of technology. This is particularly true of "quirky" magic items with few obvious uses in combat, such as many presented in this product. The player sees *slippers of spider climbing* and thinks "suction-cup boots." A *wand of magic missiles* becomes a Thompson submachine gun. That can break the mood of your game, and turn the kind of background items presented here into annoyances more than sparks of interest. Here are some things you can do.

First, if the other players are annoyed by the technophile breaking the mood, you (and the other players) can remind that player that you're not playing a technology-based adventure or game. There's no reason for his (or her) character to interpret magic items as advanced technology.

Second, you could do the opposite and accept the player's interpretation as a new way of seeing your game. If your group enjoys the sci-fi explanations, this is the way to go. Maybe all this time that they thought they were on a planet they were really on board a slower-

than-light starship. Maybe they've been wandering the ruins of a fallen, far more advanced, civilization. Go with it, and come up with science-fiction explanations for magic.

Be sure to talk with the technophile, one on one. That player may be bored, frustrated, or just not entertained. It may be time to change things up if something is happening (or not happening) in your game for that player. Alternatively, it may be that something is up in that player's life and he (or she) just can't "get into" the game right now.



## WE ERR ON THE SIDE OF AWESOME!

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