



Staves of Ascendance



by Rich Redman



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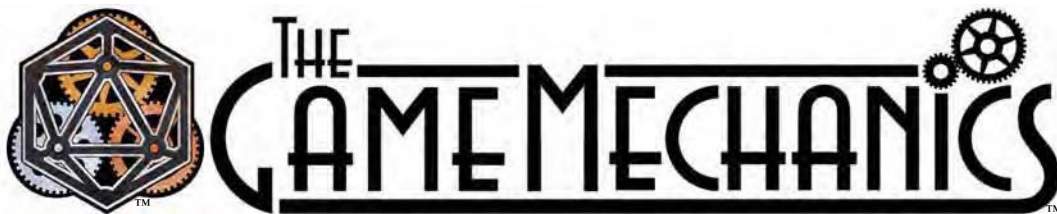


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Introduction

Welcome to *Staves of Ascendance*—a sourcebook for magic staves and rods for d20 System fantasy games.

The staff is a fixture in many depictions of wizards, including Merlin and Gandalf. Combative characters, like Robin Hood and Little John, were also famed for their mastery of the staff. Rods are multipurpose tools, coveted for their adaptability and usefulness, but often passed over due to their expense compared to armor or weapons.

In d20 System games, staves and rods such as the ones in this book would be considered minor artifacts. They possess mighty magical abilities, enough to make an ordinary man into a hero, an ordinary hero into a master of worlds—and ordinary player characters into someone special.

What's in This Book?

Magic staves and rods in fantasy games are usually temporary tools, at best. A player character gets a magic staff, uses up the charges, then discards it and seeks another. But you just don't see this sort of thing in legends and folklore. Those wizards tend to keep the same staff for most of their careers.

Staves of Ascendance gives player characters reasons to hang onto those magic items. The legendary staves and rods found in this book are powerful enough to still be useful at higher

levels—but they mete out their powers bit by bit, so that the DM needn't worry about putting too powerful a weapon into the hands of a low-level character. *The items grow in power as the wielders advance in level.* Additionally, these staves don't use

charges, so their powers are always available to their wielders.

The magic items in *Staves of Ascendance* offer minor powers to any wielder, but grant their better abilities to those wielders who take one of four new prestige classes: the staff scion classes. The wielder unlocks new abilities of the item by advancing in the item's associated prestige class. In short, the prestige classes reward players for keeping the items.

The staff scion classes—battlestaff scion, spellstaff scion, faithstaff scion, and swiftstaff scion—work slightly differently from item to item. One battlestaff's prestige class requirements might allow a character to get into the class as early as third level; another, with correspondingly greater

powers, might not let a character in until 9th level, at the earliest. The better the item, the harder it is to get into the prestige class for wielding it.

How to Use This Book

Because the items in this book are designed to last a character throughout most of a campaign, a GM who wishes to use the items and prestige classes in this book should try to plan ahead. If you are just beginning a campaign, you can work one of these items in fairly easily. The player characters could discover it in a treasure hoard, or their religious or mystical orders could bestow such items on the characters. The quest for the item could be one of the party's earliest adventures. If the campaign has already begun, you can have an existing item in the game begin to manifest proof that it is a legendary staff. Or you could simply adjust the item's enhancement bonus upward for higher-level characters.

In either case, your goal as GM should be to find a staff or rod in this book that fits into your campaign—or use these rules to invent one of your own—and offer it to your players as incentive to take one of the associated prestige classes: battlestaff scion, spellstaff scion, faithstaff scion, or swiftstaff scion. If you know your players' preferences, you should not only be able to find a player who would thoroughly enjoy uncovering the mysteries of a legendary staff, but also a legendary staff that matches that player's tastes.

For the GM

Staves of Ascendance makes use of prestige classes in the truest sense: taking one of these classes makes a character someone special in the grand scheme of things. Consequently, you, as the GM, must be prepared to utilize these prestige classes—and the legendary staves and rods that go with them—in your campaign. If you're not prepared to do so, then you should make it especially clear to your players that these items, and thus these prestige classes, aren't available to them.

On the other hand, if you're willing to take this plunge, the characters in your game can wield magic staves that more or less automatically scale to the level of the characters' power—running the gamut from minor magic item to minor artifact. And you can use the very existence of these items to make your campaign world that much more a magical place, full of adventure and mystery—which is what heroic fantasy is ultimately all about.

Web Enhancement

Additional material for use with *Staves of Ascendance*, including *Samadhi*—an additional legendary staff—and any discovered errata, can be found at The Game Mechanics' website (www.thegamemechanics.com).

Chapter One: The Basics

Legendary staves and rods use a very simple system to allow their abilities to improve along with their wielders' abilities. A character wielding a legendary staff or rod is eligible for one of the staff scion prestige classes. This allows the character to begin unlocking the staff's advanced abilities simply by taking levels of the prestige class.

Without taking the prestige class, the legendary staff or rod is an ordinary magic item, usually with a small enhancement bonus (+1 or +2, or as high as +3 for truly powerful legendary items) and some minor spells or spell-like abilities. At each level of the prestige class, though, the wielder can utilize another ability of the item. This might be an increase in the a previous enhancement or ability, but more commonly it grants the wielder access to a suite of powers, special abilities tied to the item's purpose, or perhaps magical enhancements to the character's own skills and abilities.

In every case, the staff scion prestige classes simply describe those abilities for which the wielder is now eligible. The legendary staff and rod entries (found in Chapter Two) list what those abilities are. Thus, every staff scion prestige class is different, even though there are only four variations to the staff scion prestige class.

Staff Scions

Staff scions come in as many varieties as there are legendary items. However, they distill down to one of four distinct types, based on the intended wielder of the weapon. Each staff and rod in Chapter Two falls under one of these four prestige classes:

The **battlestaff scion** prestige class is for battlestaves: legendary staves and rods made for the hands of fighters, barbarians, and rangers (and the occasional paladin).

The **spellstaff scion** is for spellstaves: legendary staves and rods made to be wielded by arcane spellcasters, such as wizards and sorcerers, and sometimes bards.

The **faithstaff scion** is meant for characters who wield faithstaves: legendary staves and rods of divine power, used by clerics, druids, and paladins.

And, finally, the **swiftstaff scion** prestige class is for those wield swiftstaves: legendary staves and rods that make use of or improve the wielder's stealth, speed, or just good old-fashioned dexterity. This usually means rogues, but sometimes bards and monks as well.

Rules and Restrictions

In addition to meeting the prerequisites of the prestige class (which are dictated by the items themselves, as shown in Chapter Two), characters who take one of these prestige classes have certain other rules and restrictions to follow.

Losing Legendary Items

Legendary items, as explained in Chapter Two, should never become permanently lost. Fate has a way of bringing these items back to their rightful wielders. As the GM, it is your job to ensure that the legendary item and its wielder do not stay separated for long (unless, of course, the purpose of the adventure is to recover the item). The item should turn up, by default, at the end of an encounter, or should be near enough at hand that the wielder need only make a reasonable effort to reclaim his staff or rod.

Gaining Additional Legendary Items

If the wielder of a legendary staff or rod somehow gains another legendary item, he may only access its special abilities if he meets the following conditions:

- He must meet the requirements for the new legendary item.
- The new item must be a different type than any of the wielder's other legendary items.

Because legendary staves and rods demand a certain level of commitment from their wielders, they do not support their wielders splitting their attention. Thus, the wielder of a legendary staff or rod chooses which commitment he wishes to focus on when he advances a level, by virtue of his class selection. For example, if a battlestaff scion somehow acquires another battlestaff, he cannot simply transfer over to the new item. But if he were to acquire a swiftstaff, he could begin advancing in the swiftstaff scion prestige class.

Ex-Scions

If the wielder no longer meets the prerequisites of the scion prestige class, she loses access to the special abilities of her legendary staff or rod. She retains the basic features of the prestige class (Base Attack Bonus, base saves, and even spellcaster levels, where appropriate), but the staff or rod supplies only the magical abilities it grants to any wielder. The ex-scion may not progress in levels of the prestige class until she corrects the problem and once again meets the prerequisites of the class.

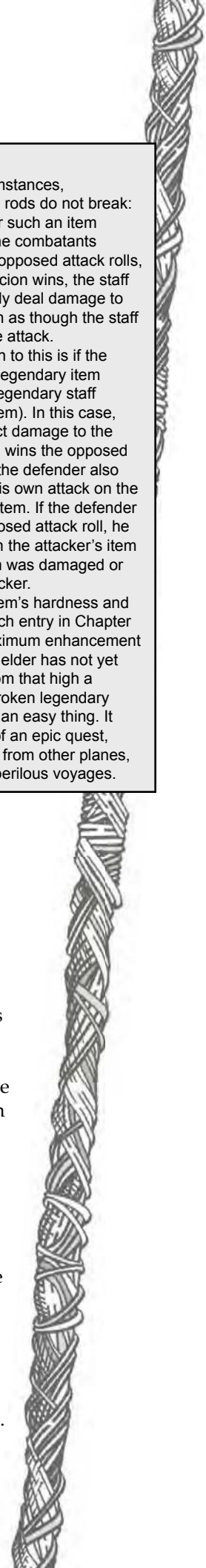
This does not prevent a staff scion from taking levels of another class, or from using the abilities of the legendary staff if she does so. Unless the

Unbreakable

Under ordinary circumstances, legendary staves and rods do not break: any attempt to sunder such an item automatically fails. The combatants should still make the opposed attack rolls, however. If the staff scion wins, the staff scion may immediately deal damage to the attacker's weapon as though the staff scion had initiated the attack.

The only exception to this is if the person attacking the legendary item is herself wielding a legendary staff (or other legendary item). In this case, the attacker may inflict damage to the defender's item if she wins the opposed attack roll. However, the defender also immediately makes his own attack on the attacker's legendary item. If the defender wins this second opposed attack roll, he may inflict damage on the attacker's item – even if his own item was damaged or destroyed by the attacker.

Each legendary item's hardness and hit points, listed in each entry in Chapter Two, include any maximum enhancement bonus—even if the wielder has not yet qualified to benefit from that high a bonus. Repairing a broken legendary item should never be an easy thing. It should be the result of an epic quest, perhaps involving aid from other planes, arduous rituals, and perilous voyages.



Designing Scion Prestige Classes

The general guideline for designing prestige classes found in the DMG in Chapter 2: Characters is that characters should qualify for them around 5th or 6th level. The prestige classes in this book stretch that rule on purpose. In general, the abilities granted by a scion prestige class take into account lower or higher than usual character levels, thus presenting a balanced class.

The class descriptions in this chapter have general entry requirements. The entry requirements that set minimum character level appear in the individual staff and rod descriptions.

new class is in some way in violation of the staff scion prerequisites (such as requiring a different alignment), then the only drawback is that the scion is not advancing in the staff scion prestige class. For example, a battlestaff scion of *Étincelle* may choose to take levels of monk. The only drawback is that the scion is not advancing as a battlestaff scion. As a counter example, a battlestaff scion of *Étincelle* may choose to take levels

of barbarian, but he would then lose access to the special abilities of *Étincelle* because his alignment would no longer be lawful.

The Battlestaff Scion

Sometimes a magic staff is not so much a device for storing spells as it is a magic weapon in the shape of a staff. For such legendary staves, the battlestaff scion is the ideal wielder. Their weapons are items of immense arcane power, and often have a great magical destiny. They might be wielders of fey staves, or of demon rods, or the item might actually be an important symbol of a military order.

Wielding an arcane legendary staff is a great responsibility, because the item contains so much magical power. Those combat specialists who recognize the item afford the wielder more respect—or perhaps fear—than they might another of their ilk.

Hit Die: d10.

Requirements

To qualify to become a battlestaff scion, a character must fulfill the criteria listed for the specific battlestaff (see Chapter Two for examples).

Table 1–1: The Battlestaff Scion

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Bonus feat, Two-Weapon Fighting
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Bonus feat
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	Bonus feat
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	Bonus feat

Class Skills

The battlestaff scion's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Ride (Dex), and Swim (Str). Certain legendary staff special abilities grant additional class skills (and sometimes additional skill points); see the entries in Chapter Two.

See Chapter 4: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are class features of the battlestaff scion prestige class.

Bonus Feats: The battlestaff scion gains a bonus feat at 1st, 4th, 7th, and 10th level. These bonus feats must be drawn from the following list: Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Expertise (Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Whirlwind Attack), Improved Critical*, Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Power Attack (Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Sunder, Great Cleave), Quick Draw, Weapon Focus.

Some of the bonus feats available to a battlestaff scion cannot be acquired until the battlestaff scion has gained one or more prerequisite feats; these feats are listed parenthetically after the prerequisite feat. A battlestaff scion can select feats marked with an asterisk (*) more than once, but it must be for a different weapon each time. A battlestaff scion must still meet all prerequisites for a feat, including ability score and base attack bonus minimums.

Two-Weapon Fighting: If the battlestaff scion does not already have the Two-Weapon Fighting feat, he gains it now. The wielder does not benefit from the Two-Weapon Fighting feat unless he meets the feat's prerequisites, however.

The Spellstaff Scion

A spellstaff scion is someone who has earned the right to wield a particular legendary staff or rod either because it is an ancestral heirloom or because the wielder upholds the principles for which the item was originally created. While characters of any class can eventually qualify for the spellstaff scion, those who wield magic professionally—wizards and sorcerers—are ideal for the spellstaff scion prestige class.

No two spellstaff scions should be identical, by virtue of the items that grant them access to this prestige class. One might wield a family relic, which provides her with the abilities he needs to uphold the family's honor. Another could be the envoy of her arcane order, using her legendary item to prove that might does, indeed, make right. And yet another could be wielding an item dedicated to her school, her profession, or to her race, with abilities drawing on the strengths thereof.

A spellstaff scion, for all the powers her staff grants her, isn't terribly different from any other arcane spellcaster who uses her share of the treasure to buy more powerful magic items every so often. What really sets her apart is that her staff or rod is leading her to a particular destiny, if only in that it shapes her future advancement choices.

Hit Die: d6.

Requirements

To qualify to become a spellstaff scion, a character must fulfill the criteria listed for the specific spellstaff (see Chapter Two for examples).

Class Skills

The spellstaff scion's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Alchemy (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Knowledge (all skills, taken individually) (Int), Profession (Wis), Scry (Int, exclusive skill), and Spellcraft (Int). Certain

legendary staff special abilities grant additional class skills (and sometimes additional skill points); see the entries in Chapter Two.

See Chapter 4: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are class features of the spellstaff scion prestige class.

Two-Weapon Fighting: If the spellstaff scion does not already have the Two-Weapon Fighting feat, she gains it now. The wielder does not benefit from the Two-Weapon Fighting feat unless she meets the feat's prerequisites, however.

Spells per Day/Spells Known: At each spellstaff scion level, the character gains new spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) as if she had also gained a level in a spellcasting class to which she belonged before adding the prestige class level. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (metamagic or item creation feats, and so on). If the character had more than one spellcasting class before becoming a spellstaff scion, the player must decide to which class to add each spellstaff scion level for the purpose of determining spells per day.

The Faithstaff Scion

Faithstaff scions wield their legendary items in the name of their deities—or in the case of druids, in the service of nature. Legendary staves and rods usually come into the hands of faithstaff scions as a gift from their religious order or, in very special cases, as a blessing from their deities. As such, clerics, druids, and paladins are ideally suited to wield these items, though other classes can eventually qualify.

Divinely influenced legendary staves and rods should always be rare and unique. Certainly no deity is going to create multiple copies as a matter

Table 1–2: The Spellstaff Scion

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day/Spells Known
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Two-Weapon Fighting	+1 level of existing class
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3		+1 level of existing class
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3		+1 level of existing class
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4		+1 level of existing class
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4		+1 level of existing class
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5		+1 level of existing class
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5		+1 level of existing class
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6		+1 level of existing class
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6		+1 level of existing class
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7		+1 level of existing class



of course, and few religious orders can afford to do so. Thus, each should grant different abilities, except in special cases. Such items might be devoted to combating the enemies of the church, or perhaps to destroying (or creating) undead. Divine legendary staves of orders devoted to healing might even be less a weapon than an instrument for easing the suffering of others.

A faithstaff scion is someone special in the hierarchy of the religious order, because her possession of the item implies that she has the favor of her deity or that she is more in tune with nature than others of her order. Depending on the alignment of her deity, though, her ownership of the item could be construed as an invitation to try to take it from her.

Hit Die: d8.

Requirements

To qualify to become a faithstaff scion, a character must fulfill the criteria listed for the specific faithstaff (see Chapter Two for examples).

Class Skills

The faithstaff scion's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Spellcraft (Int), and Wilderness Lore (Wis). Certain legendary staff special abilities grant additional class skills (and sometimes additional skill points); see the entries in Chapter Two.

Domains and Class Skills: A cleric who chooses Knowledge as one of her domains also has all Knowledge (Int) skills as class skills. A cleric who chooses Trickery as one of her domains also has Bluff (Cha), Disguise (Cha), and Hide (Dex) as class skills. See Deity, Domains, and Domains Spells in Chapter 3: Classes in the *Player's Handbook* for more information.

See Chapter 4: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are class features of the faithstaff scion prestige class.

Weapon Focus: If the faithstaff scion does not already have the Weapon Focus feat for the type of staff or rod corresponding to the legendary staff or rod she wields, she gains it now.

Spells per Day/Spells Known: At each faithstaff scion level, the character gains new spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) as if she had also gained a level in a divine spellcasting class to which she belonged before adding the prestige class. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (an improved chance of turning or rebuking undead, metamagic or item creation feats, and so on). If the character had more than one divine spellcasting class before becoming a faithstaff scion, the player must decide to which class to add each faithstaff scion level for the purpose of determining spells per day.

The Swiftstaff Scion

Some legendary staves and rods are meant for the hands of the quick and the silent. Swiftstaff scions might inherit their weapons, or acquire them "purely by accident," but this is no less part of their destiny than any other staff scion. Characters of any class can become swiftstaff scions, but rogues, bards, and monks benefit most from the special abilities swiftstaves provide.

Swiftstaff scions wield their weapons to a wide variety of purposes. A rogue who takes up a swiftstaff may use it to supplement his income, while a monk who acquires one of these legendary staves might merely seek to master its use. A bard who acquires a swiftstaff could draw upon the power of the weapon's rich history to enhance his

Table 1–3: The Faithstaff Scion

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day/Spells Known
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	Weapon Focus	+1 level of existing class
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3		+1 level of existing class
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+3		+1 level of existing class
4th	+3	+4	+1	+4		+1 level of existing class
5th	+3	+4	+1	+4		+1 level of existing class
6th	+4	+5	+2	+5		+1 level of existing class
7th	+5	+5	+2	+5		+1 level of existing class
8th	+6	+6	+2	+6		+1 level of existing class
9th	+6	+6	+3	+6		+1 level of existing class
10th	+7	+7	+3	+7		+1 level of existing class

music. Of all legendary staves, swiftstaves are the most focused in their application, favoring rogues, monks, or bards specifically.

Hit Die: d6.

Requirements

To qualify to become a swiftstaff scion, a character must fulfill the criteria listed for the specific swiftstaff (see Chapter Two for examples).

Class Skills

The swiftstaff scion's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex), Use Magic Device (Cha, exclusive skill), and Use Rope (Dex). Certain legendary staff special abilities grant additional class skills (and sometimes additional skill points); see the entries in Chapter Two. See Chapter 4: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 8 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are class features of the swiftstaff scion prestige class.

Two-Weapon Fighting: If the swiftstaff scion does not already have the Two-Weapon Fighting feat, he gains it now. The wielder does not benefit from the Two-Weapon Fighting feat unless he meets the feat's prerequisites, however.

Bonus Class Skill: At 1st level, 5th level, and 9th level, a swiftstaff scion may choose an additional class skill from the following list: Appraise (Int), Concentration (Con), Decipher Script (Int, exclusive skill), Disguise (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Intuit Direction (Wis), Knowledge (all skills, taken individually) (Int), Pick Pocket (Dex), Speak Language (Int), Spellcraft (Int).

Once designated, the skill is considered a class skill every time the character adds a new level of swiftstaff scion.

Bonus Ability: At 2nd level, 6th level, and 10th level, a swiftstaff scion may choose an additional class ability from the following list:

Arcane Spellcaster Level: The swiftstaff scion may gain a number of new spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) as if he had also gained a level in an arcane spellcasting class to which he belonged before adding the prestige class. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (metamagic or item creation feats, and so on). If the character had more than one arcane spellcasting class before becoming a swiftstaff scion, the player must decide to which class to add each swiftstaff scion level for the purpose of determining spells per day.

Bardic Music: The swiftstaff scion may choose to gain a new application of the bardic music ability (as described in Chapter 3: Classes, in the *Player's Handbook*), provided he has the requisite number of ranks in the Perform skill. The scion gains a different application of the bardic music ability each time this ability is chosen.

Bardic Knowledge: The swiftstaff scion may choose to gain a +2 bonus to bardic knowledge checks. This ability may only be chosen once.

Improved Unarmed Damage: The swiftstaff scion may choose to increase his ability at unarmed combat. Whenever he selects this option, his damage with unarmed attacks increases by one die type: from 1d6 to 1d8, for example, or from 1d10 to 1d12. This ability may be chosen multiple times, but it cannot increase the scion's unarmed damage beyond that of a monk of the same character level (see *Player's Handbook* Chapter 3: Classes).

Leap of the Clouds: The swiftstaff scion may choose to gain the monk class ability of the same name. (See Chapter 3: Classes in the *Player's Handbook* for details.)

Table 1–4: The Swiftstaff Scion

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Bonus class skill, Two-Weapon Fighting
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	Bonus ability
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+1	
4th	+3	+1	+4	+1	
5th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Bonus class skill
6th	+4	+2	+5	+2	Bonus ability
7th	+5	+2	+5	+2	
8th	+6	+2	+6	+2	
9th	+6	+3	+6	+3	Bonus class skill
10th	+7	+3	+7	+3	Bonus ability

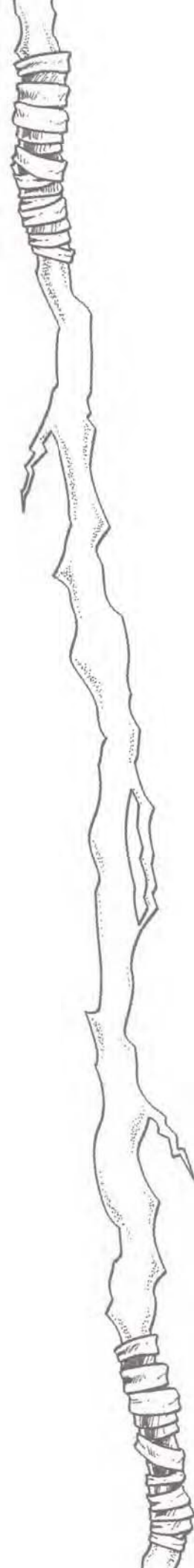


Increased Speed: The swiftstaff scion may choose to add 10 feet to his base movement. This extra movement only applies when the swiftstaff scion wears no armor.

Improved Evasion: The swiftstaff scion may choose to gain the improved evasion ability (as described in Chapter 3: Classes in the *Player's Handbook*), provided he already has the evasion ability.

Uncanny Dodge: The swiftstaff scion may choose to gain the uncanny dodge ability (See Chapter 3: Classes, in the *Player's Handbook*, for details). If the scion already has that ability, he may choose to improve his uncanny dodge ability so that he can't be flanked.

Sneak Attack: If the swiftstaff scion has the sneak attack ability, he may choose to increase his sneak attack damage by +2d6.



Chapter Two: Legendary Staves and Rods

The secret of legendary items is not that they are powerful, but that they have the *potential* to be—just as starting characters are not powerful heroes yet, but so long as they persevere, they *will* be. Therefore they are best thought of as minor artifacts, like the *staff of the magi* and the *hammer of thunderbolts*. As the DMG states, such items are not necessarily unique, but the means of their creation is either long forgotten or far beyond the reach of mortals.

Each of the legendary items in this chapter includes not only details of the item's form and abilities, but also the requirements necessary to enter the prestige class associated with the staff or rod. A character must meet the requirements listed here for the item she wields. *Each item has different requirements.* Some are much easier to qualify for than others.

This chapter is organized by type of legendary staff and rod—battlestaff, spellstaff, faithstaff, and swiftstaff—each of which lists a number of items that the GM can introduce into his campaign. The GM is encouraged to use or modify the items here to suit the needs of the campaign, or to design entirely new legendary staves and rods using these as guidelines.

Divinations and Legendary Items

Whether or not a given rod or staff is a legendary item is never particularly easy to determine. When characters use various divination spells to examine an item, determine what sort of information the characters are seeking: presence and strength of auras, or a more specific identification.

Legendary Item Auras

Though legendary staves and rods display mighty powers when properly wielded, they appear to project only very mild auras, for purposes of the various divination spells that detect such things.

Detect magic reveals only that a legendary staff or rod possesses an aura. Each item lists the aura strength perceived.

Detect chaos, *detect evil*, *detect good*, and *detect law* likewise detect the aura listed for the item.

Magic aura has no effect on legendary staves.

True seeing functions as normal for arcane casters, and allows a divine caster to perceive the full aura of a legendary item, as listed in the item's entry.

Undetectable alignment functions as normal.

Identifying Legendary Items

Because the true natures of legendary staves and rods are usually hidden, properly identifying them

can be difficult. There are two non-magical means of identifying a legendary item.

First, the bardic knowledge special ability applies normally to legendary staves and rods. The GM must decide how common the information is, based on the item in question. A legendary staff or rod belonging to a family in the area might be considered common knowledge, while a legendary item lost centuries before the foundation of the nearest settlement should be considered extremely obscure knowledge.

The second method is a Knowledge check, with the specific field of study determined by the item's legend (history, arcane, religion, or local). The GM might also allow Knowledge (local) checks to always apply, regardless of the type of item, if the staff or rod is locally famous. The DCs for Knowledge checks appear throughout each item's history.

Analyze dweomer functions as normal. The caster levels for the various abilities of the rod or staff are given in each legendary item's entry.

Contact other plane is most effective if the item is in some way associated with the plane; subtract 10 from the die roll to determine the nature of the answer. For example, if the caster contacts a lesser deity of a law-aligned outer plane to ask if a staff is in fact the *Rod of the Inquisitor*, the entity is less likely to lie, and will not provide a random answer.

Identify functions normally, in that it determines only the single most basic function of the item.

Legend lore functions as normal.

Locate object functions as normal, but cannot be used to determine whether the rod or staff is legendary or not. That is, the caster could specify "the staff that Uliximechac ordinarily carries," and the spell would locate it. But if the caster specified "*Lumen*" the spell would not locate the staff, even if it were within the spell's area, unless the caster already knew that the staff was in fact the legendary staff *Lumen*.

Vision functions as normal.

Enhancing Legendary Weapons

As minor artifacts, legendary items cannot be enhanced any further. Any attempt to add special abilities to one of these staves or rods, or to increase an enhancement bonus, automatically fails.

Campaign-Specific Information

Each of the items in Chapter Two includes a history in the form of a legend. Obviously, these legends are campaign-specific, and the DM should use the legends only as springboards for adapting the items' histories to the campaign setting.



Battlestaves

Legendary staves and rods destined for the hands of warriors are battlestaves. They are most effective when wielded by fighters, barbarians, rangers, and paladins.

Bramblethorn, Arm of the Woods

The ancestral staff of a long line of rangers is a magical quarterstaff that grants its wielder prodigious strength and endurance.

Arm of the Woods

Before the Battle of Dragon’s Peak, before the births of King Snowden and Duke Ravenhearst, when the High Kingdom was but a memory in the hearts of those who lived in a divided and lawless land, mercenaries, outlaws, and their monstrous allies despoiled the land even as they oppressed the people. The druids and rangers fought as best they could, but the high temples had fallen and extraplanar creatures controlled the temples’ artifacts.

In the dark heart of the Oak Wilds, a place never seen by mortal eyes, the lords of the land reached a momentous decision. The people of the High Kingdom knew of elves and fairies. Some had even heard legends of the living trees, the treants. The lords of the plants, animals, and lands itself were creatures so ancient not even legend mentioned them. Outnumbered by humans as they had always been, the ancient lords decided to ally with those who had always protected them. They knew that lesser beings could not understand their thoughts and would suspect their appearance and motives. They decided they needed a symbol, a true sacrifice to indicate their dedication. One of the lords laid his arm across the stone back of another, and asked his brothers to chop it off. From that arm, they fashioned the staff humans would come to call *Bramblethorn*.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 50.

Ruck Stanwood’s father was huntsman to the Ravenhearsts, as was his father before him. Ruck himself was a scout for the pitiful remains of the Ravenhearst family and its thanes. He often roamed the forests alone, looking for signs of raiders, outlaws, and monsters. During one such patrol he overheard sounds of battle and sought them out. He found a lone elf, surrounded by dead comrades and set upon by a score of orcs. The elf fought with a staff that appeared to move in her hands, whipping at the orcs to add force to her blows. Ruck leaped to her aid and together they defeated the orcs, but the elf’s wounds were too great. She died in Ruck’s arms, passing the staff on to him. Thus the alliance between mortals and the lords of the forest was forgotten though

Table 2–1: Abilities Granted by *Bramblethorn*

Scion Level	Ability Gained	Caster Level
—	Enhancement bonus +1/ masterwork	3rd
	<i>Light</i>	—
1st	Enhancement bonuses +1/+1 Ability bonus (Con +2)	3rd
2nd	Ability bonus (Str +2) Favored Enemy Damage	—
3rd	Transformation (+2 <i>longspear</i>)	6th
4th	Enhancement bonuses +2/+2	6th
5th	Ability bonus (Con +4, Str +4) Improved Two-Weapon Fighting	—
6th	Favored enemy Woodland stride	—
7th	Enhancement bonuses +3/+3 Evasion	9th
8th	Ability bonus (Con +6, Str +6) Greater two-weapon fighting	—
9th	Favored Enemy Favored Enemy Damage	—
10th	Enhancement bonuses +4/+4 Transformation (+3 <i>longspear</i>)	12th
		9th

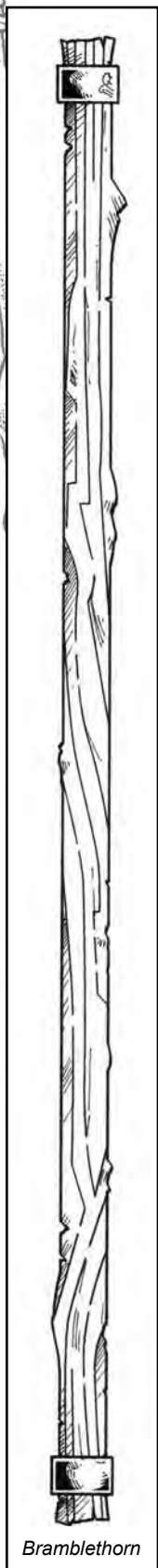
it lived on in spirit. Ruck wielded *Bramblethorn* for the rest of his life in defense of the lands and people of the Ravenhearst demesne. On his deathbed, he passed *Bramblethorn* to his eldest daughter, a ranger in her own right and member of the Wood-Walkers.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 25.

When Lord Snowden led his forces to rebuild the High Kingdom, a Stanwood was among his scouts, wielding *Bramblethorn*. Alas, the battles to unite the warring domains cost the life of the last

Table 2–2: Spells Granted by *Bramblethorn*

Scion Level	Spells per Day			
	1	2	3	4
1st	0	—	—	—
2nd	0	—	—	—
3rd	1	—	—	—
4th	1	0	—	—
5th	1	0	—	—
6th	1	1	—	—
7th	1	1	0	—
8th	1	1	0	—
9th	1	1	1	—
10th	1	1	1	0



Bramblethorn

Stanwood, and the staff passed into the hands of the Ravenhearst family itself. Duke Ravenhearst recognized the staff's power and hid it within his castle on the edge of the newly-united kingdom.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 20.

When King Snowden's successor took up the *Sword of Kings* and led the victorious army from Dragon's Peak to sack Ravenhearst's castle, they found allies in elves and treants, who never explained why they chose to join forces at that particular time. Together they managed what centuries of bandits and monsters had not: the ruination of the Ravenhearst stronghold

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 10.

Many within the High Kingdom's forces saw the wardens of the forest searching the rubble of the castle, for what they could not say. Some speculate they searched for *Bramblethorn*, and none know whether or not they found it.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 10.

Requirements

To qualify to wield *Bramblethorn* as a battlestaff scion, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +4

Feats: Endurance and Track

Skills: Survival 7 ranks

Special: To become the *Bramblethorn* battlestaff scion, the candidate must have at least one favored enemy, as the ranger class ability, and that enemy cannot be Plants.

Attributes

Bramblethorn appears as a sturdy staff with nicks and dents from long use in combat. It has metal caps at each end and still has tree bark on it. It has the following attributes:

Hardness/Hit Points: 13/50.

Value: To someone other than a battlestaff scion, *Bramblethorn* appears to be worth as much as a +1/*masterwork quarterstaff*: 2,600 gp.

Special Abilities

Bramblethorn provides the following special abilities to its wielder, depending upon the character's level in the battlestaff scion prestige class (see Table 2-1: Abilities Granted by *Bramblethorn*).

Initial Abilities: Anyone who wields *Bramblethorn*, whether a battlestaff scion or not, benefits from the staff as a +1/*masterwork quarterstaff* and may use its *light* ability (see below).

Light (Sp): As a free action, the wielder may cause *Bramblethorn* to radiate light as a torch. Extinguishing it requires another free action taken on any subsequent round.

Spells: *Bramblethorn* grants the ability to cast a small number of divine spells, as indicated on

Table 2-2: Spells Granted by *Bramblethorn*. To cast a spell, the scion must have a Wisdom score of at least 10 + the spell's level, so a scion with a Wisdom of 10 or lower cannot cast these spells. Scion bonus spells are based on Wisdom, and saving throws against these spells have a Difficulty Class of 10 + spell level + Wisdom modifier. When the scion gets 0 spells of a given level, such as 0 1st-level spells at 1st level, the scion gets only bonus spells. A scion without a bonus spell for that level (see Table 1-1 Ability Modifiers and Bonus Spells in the *Player's Handbook*) cannot yet cast a spell of that level. The scion's spell list appears below. A scion has access to any spell on the list and can freely choose which to prepare. A scion prepares and casts spells just as a cleric does (though the scion cannot use spontaneous casting to "lose" a spell and cast a *cure* spell in its place).

Enhancement Bonus:

Bramblethorn seems to writhe in the wielder's grip as if directing the strike to be most effective. At 1st level, *Bramblethorn's* enhancements increase to +1/+1 for the scion. These bonuses increase to +2/+2 at 4th level, +3/+3 at 7th level, and +4/+4 at 10th level.

Ability Bonus (Ex): Beginning at first level, the scion gains a +2 enhancement bonus to Constitution while wielding *Bramblethorn*. At second level, the scion also gains a +2 enhancement bonus to Strength while wielding *Bramblethorn*. Both enhancement bonuses increase to +4 when the scion reaches 5th level and +6 at 8th level.

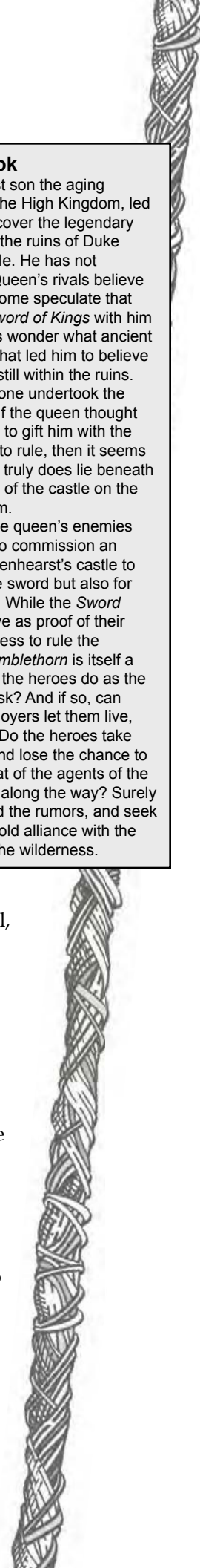
Favored Enemy Damage (Ex): *Bramblethorn's* damage to the scion's favored enemies increases to 1d8/1d8 (1d6/1d6 for Small scions and 2d6/2d6 for Large scions) at 2nd level. These bonuses increase to 2d6/2d6 (1d8/1d8 for Small scions, and 2d8/2d8 for Large scions) at 9th level.

Transformation (Su): When the scion reaches 3rd level, she may take a standard action to will *Bramblethorn* to transform itself into a +2 *longspear*. At 10th level, *Bramblethorn's* enhancement bonus becomes +3 when in this form. Reversing the transformation is also a standard action.

Adventure Hook

Lord Godwin, eldest son of the aging Adeliza, Queen of the High Kingdom, led an expedition to recover the legendary *Bramblethorn* from the ruins of Duke Ravenhearst's castle. He has not returned, and the Queen's rivals believe he is dead. While some speculate that Godwin took the *Sword of Kings* with him on his quest, others wonder what ancient tale he uncovered that led him to believe *Bramblethorn* was still within the ruins. If the heir to the throne undertook the quest himself, and if the queen thought it important enough to gift him with the symbol of her right to rule, then it seems likely *Bramblethorn* truly does lie beneath the stone remnants of the castle on the edge of the kingdom.

Knowing this, the queen's enemies dispatch an agent to commission an expedition into Ravenhearst's castle to look not only for the sword but also for *Bramblethorn* itself. While the *Sword of Kings* would serve as proof of their candidate's worthiness to rule the High Kingdom, *Bramblethorn* is itself a potent weapon. Do the heroes do as the queen's enemies ask? And if so, can their erstwhile employers let them live, knowing the truth? Do the heroes take the queen's side, and lose the chance to seek the staff? What of the agents of the forest encountered along the way? Surely they too have heard the rumors, and seek the symbol of their old alliance with the ancient powers of the wilderness.



Improved Two-Weapon Fighting (Ex):

Beginning at 5th level, the scion gains a second attack with an off-hand weapon in addition to the standard single extra attack, albeit at a -5 penalty. The scion can only use this ability when wearing light or no armor.

Favored Enemy (Ex): The scion gains an additional favored enemy at 6th level and again at 9th level. This favored enemy can never be Plants.

Woodland Stride (Ex): Beginning at 6th level, the scion may move through any sort of undergrowth (such as natural thorns, briars, overgrown areas, and similar terrain) at his normal speed and without suffering damage or other impairment. However, thorns, briars, and overgrown areas that are enchanted or magically manipulated to impede motion still affect the scion.

Evasion (Ex): If exposed to any effect that normally allows a character to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage (such as a *fireball*), the 7th level scion takes no damage with a successful saving throw. She can only use evasion if wearing light or no armor.

Greater Two-Weapon Fighting (Ex): The 8th level scion gets a third attack with her off-hand weapon, albeit at a -10 penalty.

Bramblethorn Scion Spell List

The *Bramblethorn Scion* chooses spells from the following list.

First Level—*Alarm, endure elements, entangle, longstrider, pass without trace, resist elements*

Second Level—*Protection from elements, snare, speak with plants, wind wall*

Third Level—*Diminish plants, plant growth, tree shape*

Fourth Level—*Commune with nature, tree stride*

Spellstaves

A legendary staff forged for the use of a wizard or sorcerer is a spellstaff.

Lumen, the Diviner's Staff

Lumen is an example of a legendary school spellstaff (see the sidebar, below). It favors the school of Divination, and hinders the school of Necromancy for the scion. *Lumen* is only an example. Not all legendary spellstaves are intelligent.

The Imperial University

During the Age of the Old Kings, a terrible darkness fell across the land like a shroud, and the moon was nearly constantly full. A mighty vampire lord brought about this "Plague of Darkness," and many unnatural creatures and evil people wandered the land. Many know the tale of how Owyn the Harper took the great sword *Skysong* from the

hands of Apon, god of the sun, and brought it to the greatest ranger among the Wood-Walkers, Eveleen, to aid in their battle against the were-creatures.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 15.

Fewer know this was also the time when the First Sovereign Emperor of Pelundra organized the schools of magic.

You must understand that in those days, most who practiced arcane magic were sorcerers, a wild and chaotic bunch. Many could perform great feats of magic, but they preferred to fight each other, dueling to prove whose magic was strongest. The First Sovereign Emperor decided that discipline must come to the study of magic. He invited all practitioners of the arcane arts to the Sceptered City and had them debate the nature of magic before him. One wizard, Uliximechac, stood out among all those gathered before the First Sovereign Emperor. Uliximechac explained the eight "categories" of magic, and countered scoffers by admitting there were some spells so universal they could not be pigeonholed.

Check Required: Knowledge (arcana) DC 10.

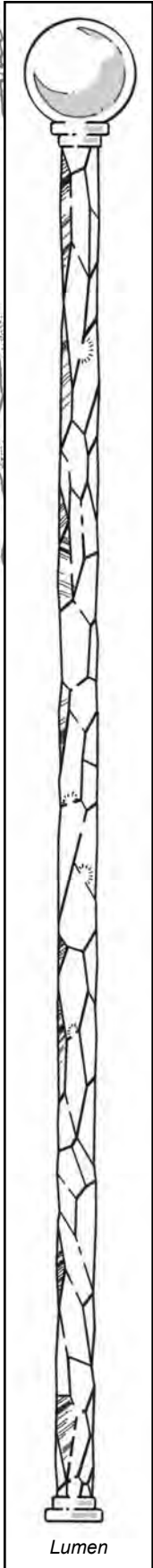
The First Sovereign Emperor commanded Uliximechac to found the Imperial University and to become its First Scholar. By imperial decree, the University had eight colleges, one for each "school" of magic. All those who wished could study there to the limits of their abilities. In this way, the First Sovereign Emperor came to command an organized corps of arcane spellcasters on whom he could call to defend Pelundra. These Imperial Scholars were instrumental in defeating the vampire lord and lifting the Plague of Darkness.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 15.

Uliximechac commanded that each school have an overseer whose title was Second Scholar, and that each Second Scholar carry a staff as a symbol of authority. Now, wizards are no less competitive than sorcerers in their ways, so the creation of mighty staves quickly became a source of rivalry between the schools. When the rivalry reached its peak, Uliximechac appeared before the squabbling Second Scholars and pointed out that none of them could claim supremacy, for each had a weakness against another school of magic. The rivalry was clearly disrupting the school, so Uliximechac took the staves to a vault under the University, only allowing the Second Scholars to carry them for important ceremonial functions.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 20.

After one such ceremony, the Second Scholar of the College of Divination came to Uliximechac full of fear and trembling. She explained that her staff, *Lumen*, had begun acting strangely. Uliximechac examined *Lumen* with the full power due him as the greatest wizard in all Pelundra, and was startled to



find *Lumen* examining him in return! Uliximechac explained to the Second Scholar that she had invested so much power in *Lumen* that the staff had developed a ferocious intelligence all its own. Uliximechac spent many years conversing with *Lumen*, but any recordings of what he learned were long since lost.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 25.

That was many ages ago. There have been those who claim direct inheritance of their power from the University, and claim possession of one of the legendary school staves, but none could prove the truth of their claims.

Check Required: GM only.

Requirements

To become *Lumen's* spellstaff scion, the character must meet the following requirements:

Alignment: Any non-chaotic.

Base Save Bonuses: Will +4.

Skills: Concentration 7 ranks, Spellcraft 7 ranks.

Spells: Able to cast 2nd-level arcane spells.

Special: Divination cannot be forbidden to the character if the character is a specialist wizard.

Table 2–3: Abilities Granted by *Lumen*

Scion Level	Ability Gained	Caster Level
—	Blind Fight	—
1st	School emphasis (+2/-2)	—
2nd	School emphasis (+4/-4)	—
3rd	Caster level checks (+2/-2)	—
	Spell Mastery	—
4th	Empathy	—
	Metamagic (Quicken Spell)	—
	Wakefulness	—
5th	Metamagic (Extend Spell)	—
	School emphasis (+6/-6)	—
6th	Blindsight	—
	Caster level checks (+4/-4)	—
	Images	—
	Metamagic (Still Spell)	—
	Telepathy	—
7th	Metamagic (Silent Spell, Enlarge Spell)	—
8th	Eschew Materials	—
	Evasion	—
	Speech	—
9th	Caster level checks (+6/-6)	—
	School emphasis (+8/-8)	—
10th	Project images	—
	<i>Shield</i>	10th
	Spontaneous Divinations	—

Attributes

Lumen appears to be a single, faceted, translucent quartz crystal, topped by a 4-inch diameter crystal sphere. If the bearer casts a Divination spell or uses a Divination spell-like ability, *Lumen* vibrates in the bearer's hand. *Lumen* has the following attributes.

Hardness/Hit Points:

10/20 (this is an exception to the normal hardness and hit points of legendary spell staves).

Value: To someone other than a spellstaff scion, *Lumen* appears to be worth as much as any item that grants free use of a feat: 5,000 gp.

Intelligent: *Lumen* has Intelligence 19, Wisdom 15, and Charisma 15. Its Ego is 25 and its alignment is Lawful Neutral. *Lumen* speaks Common, Celestial, Draconic, Elven, and Sylvan.

Special Abilities

Lumen provides the following special abilities to its wielder, depending upon the character's level in the spellstaff scion prestige class (see Table 2-3: Abilities Granted by *Lumen*).

Initial Abilities: Anyone who carries *Lumen* as a staff, whether a spellstaff scion or not, gains free use of the Blind Fight feat.

School Emphasis (Su): At first level, *Lumen* adds +2 to the DCs to resist the wielder's Divination spells and subtracts -2 from the DCs to resist the wielder's Necromancy spells. This bonus and penalty increase to +4 and -4 at 2nd level, +6 and -6 at 5th level, and finally to +8 and -8 at 9th level.

Caster Level Checks: Also at 3rd level, the scion gains +2 to caster level checks for Divination spells and receives -2 to caster level checks for Necromancy spells.

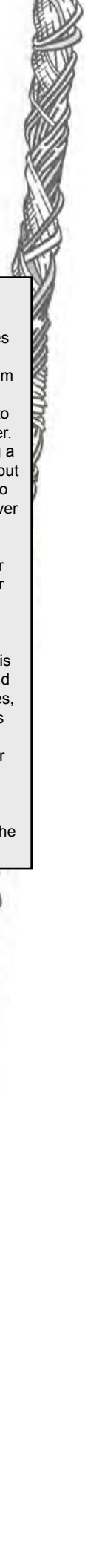
Spell Mastery: Starting at 3rd level, if the spellstaff scion of *Lumen* has wizard caster levels, he may prepare all Divination spells he already knows as a wizard as though he had taken the special feat Spell Mastery for those spells.

Empathy (Su): When the spellstaff scion reaches 4th level, *Lumen* reveals that it is intelligent by projecting emotions to the wielder. Whenever the wielder casts a Divination spell,

Adventure Hook

A neighboring kingdom is suffering a plague of the undead. Mindless zombies and skeletons, cunning ghouls, ancient mummies, and worse are spreading from a remote region of the kingdom. Many are capable of turning those they kill into additional undead of one kind or another. Refugees from the region report seeing a black tower on the side of a mountain, but only at night. The king offers a reward to any who can end the plague and discover the nature of the mysterious, vanishing tower and its occupants.

Whether the heroes pursue the offer of a reward or not, they meet a stranger soon after hearing of it. The stranger's clothing is filthy and ragged, and he appears half-starved. He approaches the heroes and demands they accept his staff. He claims that it speaks to him and that it showed him pictures of the heroes, ordering him to seek them out and pass the staff on to them. Is the stranger a tortured servant of an intelligent staff, or the spirit of Uliximechac passing on a staff to those who need it? Or perhaps the stranger is simply mad, since the beautiful crystal staff doesn't speak to the heroes...at least not at first.



Lumen projects a sense of happiness and well-being. Whenever the wielder casts a Necromancy spell, *Lumen* projects a sense of anger and despair.

Metamagic (Quicken Spell): *Lumen* provides the benefits of some metamagic feats without changing the spell slot of the spell they alter. *Lumen* does not confer the associated feat on the scion, only the ability to use the given feat on Divination spells. *Lumen's* metamagic is use-

activated, and the scion can choose which of the available metamagic feats will be applied to the spell. *Lumen's* metamagic may be combined with any metamagic feats known by the scion. In this case, only the latter feats (if any) adjust the spell slot of the spell being cast. With *Lumen*, all benefits are provided only with Divination spells.

Lumen grants the Quicken Spell metamagic feat at 4th level.

Legendary School Spellstaves

Every school of arcane magic has a legendary spellstaff associated with it. These staves enhance the casting of spells from the staff's school and hinder the casting of spells from one other school. All have the following characteristics:

Requirements

To qualify to wield a legendary school spellstaff as a spellstaff scion, the character must meet the following requirements

Base Save Bonuses: Will +4.

Skills: Concentration 7 ranks, Spellcraft 7 ranks.

Spells: Able to cast 2nd-level arcane spells.

Special: The staff's favored school cannot be forbidden to the character if the character is a specialist wizard.

Attributes

Legendary school spellstaves vary in appearance.

Most are obviously some sort of magic staff. The special abilities available to anyone, scion or not, vary with each staff.

Hardness/Hit Points: 5/10.

Value: Legendary school spellstaves vary in value depending on the abilities available to their potential owners.

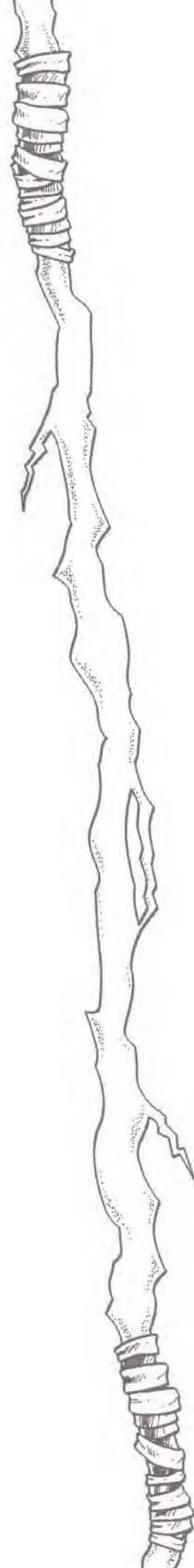
Special Abilities

Legendary school spellstaves favor certain schools and hinder others. The pattern is as follows:

Favored School	Hindered School
Abjuration	Enchantment
Conjuration	Evocation
Divination	Necromancy
Enchantment	Abjuration
Evocation	Conjuration
Illusion	Transmutation
Necromancy	Divination
Transmutation	Illusion

Table 2-4: Typical Abilities of Legendary School Spellstaves

Scion Level	Bonus to Favored DCs	Penalty to Hindered DCs	Common Special Abilities
1st	+2	-2	
2nd	+4	-4	
3rd	+4	-4	Spell Mastery for spells from the favored school, +2 to caster level checks for spells from the favored school, -2 to caster level checks for spells from the hindered school
4th	+4	-4	Metamagic (applies to favored spells only, Quicken Spell)
5th	+6	-6	Metamagic (plus Extend Spell)
6th	+6	-6	Metamagic (plus Still Spell), +4 to caster level checks for spells from the favored school, -4 to caster level checks for spells from the hindered school
7th	+6	-6	Metamagic (plus Silent Spell and Enlarge Spell)
8th	+6	-6	Spells from the favored school no longer require material components.
9th	+8	-8	+6 to caster level checks for spells from the favored school, -6 to caster level checks from the hindered school
10th	+8	-8	The scion can "lose" a prepared spell in order to cast any spell of the same level or lower from his favored school.



Special Purpose: Beginning at 4th level, if the scion casts more than one Necromancy spell in a single day, *Lumen* refuses to function (except for the initial abilities available to anyone). The scion loses all benefits of *Lumen's* spellstaff scion class for 24 hours. A scion may overcome this loss with a Will save (DC 25) each time he casts a spell, but every time he casts a Necromancy spell, the 24-hour loss starts again.

Wakefulness: The scion no longer needs to sleep at 4th level.

Metamagic (Extend Spell): As the metamagic (Quicken Spell) ability above, but at 5th level *Lumen* grants the Extend Spell metamagic feat.

Blindsight: The wielder can use blindsight (see the DMG and the MM for rules on blindsight) with a 30-foot range beginning at 6th level.

Images: Beginning at 6th level, when the scion casts a Divination spell that provides visual information, such as *clairvoyance*, the scion sees the information from the spell in the sphere at the head of the staff.

Metamagic (Still Spell): As the metamagic (Quicken Spell) ability above, but at 5th level *Lumen* grants the Still Spell metamagic feat.

Telepathy (Su): By 6th level, *Lumen* trusts the scion enough to communicate via telepathy. It only communicates with the scion, and only when the scion holds the staff.

Metamagic (Silent Spell, Enlarge Spell): As the metamagic (Quicken Spell) ability above, but at 7th level *Lumen* grants the Silent Spell and Enlarge Spell metamagic feats.

Eschew Materials: At 8th level, Divination spells cast by the spellstaff scion of *Lumen* no longer require material components.

Evasion: The scion gains the class ability evasion (as described in Chapter 3: Classes, in the *Player's Handbook*) at 8th level.

Speech: When the spellstaff scion of *Lumen* reaches 8th level, the staff is now willing to speak with the scion and his allies.

Project Images (Su): When the spellstaff scion of *Lumen* has reached 10th level, *Lumen* projects visual information from spells such as *arcane eye*, *arcane sight*, *clairvoyance*, *greater arcane sight*, *greater prying eyes*, *greater scrying*, *prying eyes*, *scrying*, *see invisibility*, or *true seeing* so that the scion and his allies can all see the results of the spell.

Shield (Sp): As a standard action, the 10th level scion can request that *Lumen* cast *shield* on him up to three times per day.

Spontaneous Divinations: Upon obtaining 10th level, the spellstaff scion no longer needs to prepare Divination spells. The scion can "lose" a prepared spell in order to cast any Divination spell of the same level or lower.



Barra, the Staff of Wands

Barra is a staff that produces powerful magic wands, but after producing its final wand, *Barra* disappears for decades.

The Clever Thief

This is a tale of Galeno, the clever thief. Over his years of adventures, Galeno learned to imitate many people, including wizards and sorcerers. His imitation was so cunning and complete that he could use their wands and staves. Galeno had little use for staves as he had no skill in using them as weapons, and it was difficult to carry them when scaling the walls of one of Vurkis' temples—for he loved to steal from the followers of the god of evil. Wands could be tucked in a pouch or pocket, or sewed into the lining of a cloak, however, and Galeno found them most useful.

One day, while escaping the guardians of another of Vurkis' temples, Galeno pulled a wand from beneath his cloak, meaning to create the illusion of a wall between him and his pursuers. Instead, he turned one of his pursuers into a chicken! Forced to jump from a window rather than make a more dignified exit, Galeno landed in the wagon of a street cleaner. While the pungent contents of the wagon cushioned his fall, they also ruined his clothes.

Frustrated and temporarily humbled, Galeno decided there had to be a better way to organize and carry his collection of magic wands. For days he sat in his room, thinking and waiting for people to forget his humiliating escape so they would not laugh when he entered the tavern. After all, the clever thief was accustomed to accolades and listeners eager for another tale of his daring exploits. Carefully studying his collection, Galeno chose a wand that would turn him into an elf. Borrowing some clothes from a sleeping neighbor, Galeno crafted a disguise for himself. If he learned nothing else, he learned it was best to experiment when no witness would realize they were looking at the great Galeno.

First, Galeno bundled the wands together and tried using them as a tool while robbing a wealthy merchant. This experiment proved disappointing, as Galeno found he could only access the wands on the outside of the bundle. Undaunted, Galeno renewed his disguise and tried attaching the wands in a row along short lengths of wood, then left to rob the Duchess of Beortheocht of her jewelry. (Normally he would also have stolen her affections, for the Duchess was a great beauty. However Galeno's pride argued that he could only do so in his true shape and form.) He found he could use any wand he needed, but the planks were cumbersome when squeezing into tight places. So cumbersome, in fact, that he was unable to steal the jewels.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 25.

This would never do. The great Galeno could not afford to fail. His reputation would suffer irreparable damage. Only his disguise kept the beast of humiliation away from his door. This time Galeno decided to attach his wands to a hollow tube of thick paper, just big enough that it would fit around his forearm. The wands on the inside of the tube stuck out the back of the tube just enough that he could see which was which. Not bothering with a disguise, Galeno set out to rob a sorcerer named Joaquin Mago, whose arrogant display of wealth cried out for a plucking.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 20.

Alas, the sorcerer discovered Galeno in mid-theft. To Galeno's horror, it was all a trap! It seemed the guard who Galeno turned into a chicken was Joaquin's son, and the ostentatious display of wealth nothing more than bait for a greedy, albeit clever, thief. Galeno and Joaquin fought a mighty duel. The clever thief knew the sorcerer had the advantage, for he could choose any spell he knew while Galeno had only his wands. He wanted nothing so much as to escape his trap. As his eyes darted around the chamber in which they fought, his concentration slipped and a strange confluence of a misused

Table 2–5: Abilities Granted by *Barra*

Scion Level	Ability Gained	Caster Level
—	<i>Pearl of power</i> (2nd-level spell)	—
1st	Wand production (1st-level spells, limit 5)	—
2nd	Quicken wands Wand production (limit 10)	—
3rd	Extend wands Wand production (limit 15)	—
4th	Power increase (2nd-level spells) Spontaneous Wands Wand production (limit 20)	—
5th	Heighten wands Wand production (limit 25)	—
6th	Empower wands Wand production (limit 30)	—
7th	Power increase (3rd-level spells) Wand production (limit 35)	—
8th	Focused wands Wand production (limit 40)	—
9th	Penetrating wands Wand production (limit 45)	—
10th	Power increase (4th-level spells) Wand production (limit 50)	—
	Crumble	—



wand and arcane spell occurred. The tube around Galeno's arm began twisting and lengthening. Try as he might, Galeno could not free his arm from the steady transformation. Desperately he pleaded with Joaquin for mercy, and the sorcerer's heart softened. His son had only been a chicken temporarily, after all. Though he could not stop or reverse the transformation, Joaquin was at last able to fling the protean bundle of wands through the dimensions.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 20.

Joaquin warned Galeno of the dangers of using magic without training, and Galeno thanked the sorcerer for his aid and his advice. Then he stole Joaquin's purse and made his escape.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 25.

Requirements

To qualify to wield *Barra* as a spellstaff scion, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Base Save Bonuses: Will +4.

Skills: Concentration 7 ranks, Spellcraft 7 ranks

Feats: Craft Wand

Spells: Able to cast 2nd-level arcane spells

Attributes

Barra appears to be a staff about six feet long and composed entirely of twining, interwoven reeds. Overall, the staff appears twisted from one end to the other. The reeds are of varying colors, but all are smooth and otherwise featureless. *Barra* has the following attributes.

Hardness/Hit Points: 5/10.

Value: To someone other than a spellstaff scion, *Barra* appears to be worth as much as a *pearl of power* (2nd-level spell): 4,000 gp.

Special Abilities

Barra provides the following special abilities to its wielder, depending upon the character's level in the spellstaff scion prestige class (see Table 2-5: Abilities Granted by *Barra*).

Initial Abilities: Anyone who bears *Barra* benefits from it as if from a *pearl of power* (2nd-level spell).

Wand Production: As a standard action, the spellstaff scion of *Barra* can strip a reed from the woven staff. The reed becomes a wand. The scion decides as part of the stripping action which of his prepared 1st-level arcane spells the wand produces. If the scion was a sorcerer before taking up *Barra* he can choose any 1st-level arcane spell he knows. The scion cannot apply his own metamagic feats to these wands. The wand follows the standard rules for magic wands and begins with 50 charges. The caster level for each wand is the scion's caster level at the time of creation. The wands only function for the scion, and are useless sticks for anyone else. The scion can strip up to 5 wands from *Barra* at

each level. Unused uses of this ability carry over to later levels. For example, if the scion has stripped only four wands before achieving 3rd level, he can produce up to eleven more at 3rd level.

Quicken Wand: Beginning at 2nd level, the scion can choose to produce a 1st-level wand that casts spells as a free action even if he does not have the *Quicken Spell* feat. The scion cannot combine this with *Barra's* other metamagic abilities.

Extend Wand: The 3rd-level scion can choose to produce a 1st-level wand that benefits from the *Extend Spell* feat even if he does not have that feat. The scion cannot combine this with *Barra's* other metamagic abilities.

Power Increase: Wands stripped from *Barra* rise in power as its scion increases in level. These spells can benefit from all of *Barra's* metamagic feats available to the scion at that level.

At 4th level, *Barra* produces wands of either 1st- or 2nd-level arcane spells. The level limit of spells increases to 3rd as a 7th-level scion and 4th as a 10th-level scion.

Spontaneous Wands: Beginning at 4th level, the scion may choose from among all the arcane spells he knows, within his current level limitations, when stripping a reed and creating a wand.

Heighten Wands: The 5th-level spellstaff scion of *Barra* can choose to produce wands that benefit from the *Heighten Spell* feat even if he does not have that feat. The scion cannot combine this with *Barra's* other metamagic abilities.

Empower Wands: At 6th level, the scion can choose to produce wands that benefit from the *Empower Spell* feat even if he does not have that feat. The scion cannot combine this with *Barra's* other metamagic abilities.

Focused Wands: Upon obtaining 8th level, all wands stripped from *Barra* add +2 to the Difficulty Class for all saving throws against spells from them.

Penetrating Wands: The 9th-level scion gains a +2 bonus to caster level checks (1d20 + caster level) to beat an opponent's spell resistance when using spells from *Barra's* wands.

Crumble: After producing a total of 50 wands, *Barra* crumbles into dead, dry reeds. It no longer registers as magic in any way. *Barra* lies dormant for 100 years and a day, then reforms, whole again, and waits for another scion to take it up.

Adventure Hook

A small group of villagers approach the heroes. They explain that strange creatures, the likes of which even the eldest in the village has never seen before, have begun terrorizing their village. They have been able to fight the weakest of these creatures, but need the heroes help to deal with this strange series of attacks.

When the heroes arrive in the village, the locals are able to point the heroes to a cave in the hills revealed by a recent avalanche. They haven't explored the cave for fear of the creatures that may be in it. The cave wanders across the planes, so almost anything can be found in it or through it. Eventually the heroes discover a band of jann using a remote chamber in the cave as a hideout from which they raid across the dimensions. In the treasure trove of the jann, the heroes discover a strange bundle of reeds. It seems odd that the jann would preserve and value such an item....



La Sombra, the Staff of Shadows

La Sombra appears to be made from the very substance of the Plane of Shadow, and gives its scion control over that substance.

The Plague of Darkness

In the Age of the Old Kings, a powerful vampire lord rose from the grave and caused darkness to fall across the land like a shroud. Many unnatural creatures and evil people wandered the land under the cover of this Plague of Darkness, and armies of were-creatures threatened the populace. Some believed the vampire lord's victory was assured, and offered their allegiance as a way to protect themselves and their families.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 20.

One such was an illusionist for whom Shadow held a particular fascination. Boleslaus was his name, and he was a student at the Imperial University in the Sceptered City, capital of Pelundra, when he concluded that the age of mortals had ended. Knowing that some even more powerful than he had already allied with the vampire lord, Boleslaus decided to create a great gift guaranteed to win him a place at the vampire lord's right hand. Using the University's library and consulting with the priests of both Synria and Vurkis, Boleslaus labored day and night on the staff—though there was little difference between the two during the Plague. He poured his fascination with Shadow and Shadow magic into his work. Mere days before the Battle of the Dawn, when the Wood-Walkers defeated the Warren-Lords and the sun rose again, Boleslaus completed his shadowy creation, *La Sombra*.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 20.

Before he could depart the University, Uliximechac, First Scholar of the University, confronted him. Boleslaus tried desperately to turn *La Sombra* against the master of the Imperial University, but Uliximechac easily overcame him. To the First Scholar's surprise, he found he could not pick up *La Sombra* himself. He commanded the student to carry the staff to the vaults beneath the University.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 20.

In ages to come, Pelundra was ravaged by Uladon the red dragon and many records were lost. *La Sombra* was forgotten, but occasionally turned up in the hands of wizards and sorcerers with a particular interest in Shadow.

Check Required: Knowledge (the planes) DC 20.

Requirements

To qualify to wield the *La Sombra* as a spellstaff scion, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any non-good

Base Save Bonuses: Will +4.

Skills: Concentration 8 ranks, Knowledge (the planes) 8 ranks, Spellcraft 8 ranks

Spells: Able to cast 3rd-level arcane spells

Special: The character must be able to cast spells from the school of Illusion.

Attributes

La Sombra appears to be a twisted, 6-foot length of shadow. It doesn't have definite edges and, because it's shadowy, it shows no real signs of use. The shadow isn't uniformly dark. Lighter areas suggest textures as well as the twisty, wavy shape of the staff. Only those who meet the requirements to

Table 2–6: Abilities Granted by *La Sombra*

Scion Level	Ability Gained	Caster Level
1st	Enhancement bonus (+1/+1)	3rd
	<i>Shadow conjuration I</i>	*
2nd	<i>Shadow illusion</i>	*
	Hide in plain sight	—
	<i>Shadow conjuration II</i>	*
	<i>Shadow evocation I</i>	*
3rd	Skill bonus (Hide +5)	—
	Ghost touch (+1/+1)	9th
	<i>Greater shadow conjuration I</i>	*
4th	<i>Shadow evocation II</i>	*
	<i>Greater shadow conjuration II</i>	*
	Skill bonus (Hide +10)	—
5th	Ghost touch (+2/+2)	9th
	Shadow jump (20 ft.)	—
6th	<i>Greater shadow evocation I</i>	*
	Shadow companion	—
	Shadow jump (40 ft.)	—
7th	Skill bonus (Hide +15)	—
	Ghost touch (+3/+3)	9th
	<i>Greater shadow evocation II</i>	*
8th	<i>Shadow walk I</i>	*
	<i>Project image I</i>	*
	Shadow jump (80 ft.)	—
9th	<i>Shadow walk II</i>	*
	Skill bonus (Hide +20)	—
	Ghost touch (+4/+4)	12th
10th	<i>Project image II</i>	*
	<i>Shades I</i>	*
	Shadow jump (160 ft.)	—
	<i>Simulacrum</i>	*

* current caster level

La Sombra

become this spellstaff scion can pick up *La Sombra*. *La Sombra* has the following attributes.

Hardness/Hit Points: 5/10.

Value: To someone other than a potential spellstaff scion, *La Sombra* is little more than a curiosity that they have to hold in a box or bag to be able to even move it. A collector might pay as much as 5,000 gp for such an item.

Special Abilities

La Sombra provides the following special abilities to its wielder, depending upon the character's level in the spellstaff scion prestige class (see Table 2-6: Abilities Granted by *La Sombra*).

Initial Abilities: Anyone who can pick up *La Sombra* benefits from it as a masterwork/masterwork quarterstaff.

Enhancement Bonus: *La Sombra's* acts as a +1/+1 quarterstaff for its 1st-level scion.

Shadow Conjuration I (Sp): As a standard action, the 2nd-level scion may use *La Sombra* to cast *shadow conjuration*. She may use this ability once per day.

Shadow Illusion (Sp): The 1st-level scion can create visual illusions from surrounding shadows as the spell *silent image*. She may use this ability a number of times per day equal to half her caster level, rounded down.

Hide in Plain Sight (Su): As long as the 2nd-level scion is within 10 feet of some sort of shadow, she can hide herself from view in the open without anything to actually hide behind. She cannot, however, hide in her own shadow.

Shadow Conjuration II (Sp): As *shadow conjuration I*, but the 2nd-level scion may use this ability a number of times per day equal to half her caster level.

Shadow Evocation I (Sp): As a standard action, the 2nd-level scion may use *La Sombra* to cast *shadow evocation*. She may use this ability once per day.

Skill Bonuses (Ex): The scion gains a +5 competence bonus to her Hide skill at 2nd level. This bonus increases to +10 at 4th level, +15 at 6th level, and +20 at 8th level.

Ghost Touch: When held by its 3rd-level scion, *La Sombra* becomes a +1 *ghost touch*/+1 *ghost touch quarterstaff*. *La Sombra's* enhancement bonus increases by +1 again at 5th, 7th, and 9th level, making it a +4 *ghost touch*/+4 *ghost touch quarterstaff* to the 9th level spellstaff scion of *La Sombra*.

Greater Shadow Conjuration I (Sp): As a standard action, the 3rd-level scion may use *La Sombra* to cast *greater shadow conjuration*. She may use this ability once per day.

Shadow Evocation II (Sp): As *shadow evocation I*, but the 3rd-level scion may use this ability a number of times per day equal to half her caster level.

Greater Shadow Conjuration II (Sp): As *greater shadow conjuration I*, but the 4th-level scion may use this ability a number of times per day equal to half her caster level.

Shadow Jump (Su): Beginning at 5th level, the scion gains the ability to travel between shadows as if by means of a *dimension door* spell.

The limitation is that the magical transport must begin and end in an area with at least some shadow. The scion can jump up to total of 20 feet each day in this way, although this can be broken down into smaller increments (no matter how small, each jump counts as a 10-foot increment). Every two levels thereafter, the daily distance doubles (40 feet at 7th level, and 80 feet at 9th level).

Greater Shadow Evocation I (Sp): As a standard action, the scion may use *La Sombra* to cast *greater shadow evocation*. She may use this ability once per day.

Shadow Companion (Su): At 6th level, the scion can summon a shadow (see the MM for the shadow's statistics). Unlike a normal shadow, this shadow's alignment matches that of the scion. The summoned shadow cannot be turned, rebuked, or commanded by any third party. This shadow serves the scion and can communicate intelligibly with her. Every two levels gained by the scion allows her to summon an additional shadow and adds +2 HD (and the requisite base attack and base save bonus increases) to all her shadow companions. For example, the 8th-level scion can have two shadow companions, each with 5 HD.

If a shadow companion is destroyed or the scion chooses to dismiss it, the scion must attempt a Fortitude saving throw (DC 15). If the saving throw fails, the scion loses 200 experience points per scion level. A successful saving throw reduces the loss by half, to 100 XP per scion level. The scion's experience can never go below 0 as the result of a shadow's dismissal or destruction. A destroyed or dismissed shadow companion cannot be replaced for a year and a day.

Greater Shadow Evocation II (Sp): As *greater shadow evocation I*, but the 7th-level scion may use this ability a number of times per day equal to half her caster level, rounded down.

Shadow Walk I (Sp): As a standard action, the 7th-level scion may use *La Sombra* to cast *shadow walk*. She may use this ability once per day.

Adventure Hook

One night the heroes are attacked by a vampire spawn, formerly a human woman. The sounds of battle attract her former husband, who only now realizes what happened to his wife. She disappeared several nights before, when their store was robbed. Among the things taken was a box containing a mysterious, six-foot length of twisting shadow. Did the box contain *La Sombra*? Someone clearly thought it was valuable. Could that someone be the vampire that created the spawn encountered by the heroes? If so, what does a vampire want with *La Sombra*?



Project Image I (Sp): As a standard action, the 8th-level scion may use *La Sombra* to cast *project image*. She may use this ability once per day.

Shadow Walk II (Sp): As *shadow walk I*, but the 8th-level scion may use this ability a number of times per day equal to half her caster level, rounded down.

Project Image II (Sp): As *project image I*, but the 9th-level scion may use this ability a number of times per day equal to half her caster level, rounded down.

Shades I (Sp): As a standard action, the 9th-level scion may use *La Sombra* to cast *shades*. She may use this ability once per day.

Shades II (Sp): As *shades I*, but the 10th-level spellstaff scion of *La Sombra* may use this ability a number of times per day equal to half her caster level, rounded down.

Simulacrum (Sp): The scion may use *La Sombra* to cast *simulacrum*. She may use this ability once per day.

The Puissant Rod

The *Puissant Rod* is a legendary tool for those arcane spellcasters who seek combat.

Fate of the Cobra-Headed

Before the Battle of the Eight Gods, Lod, the father of the gods, saw a beautiful woman among some trees. When he approached her, he found she had the head of a cobra. For her part, she saw the father of the gods approaching in all his majesty, and earnestly desired that he stop and speak with her. She was Leto, a daughter of the ancient titans, and as such possessed the power to alter her appearance. Lod found her new appearance beautiful, and lay with her in the grove.

Check Required: Knowledge (religion) DC 15.

In time, Leto gave birth to twins, one male and one female. She took her children before Lod, demanding he recognize them as his own and grant them divine status and immortality. Lod denied laying with her and cast her out of the land of the gods and onto the mortal world. She raised her children to despise the gods. During the Battle of the Eight Gods, they sided with Vurkis, the god of evil, and this is why people fear and despise snakes as agents of the evil one.

Check Required: Knowledge (religion) DC 15.

Much divine blood was shed during the battle, and many creatures were changed forever by contact with it. As mortal civilization grew, mortals placed ever-increasing value on tiny amounts of the divine fluid. A vial of it came into the possession of a club-footed sorcerer named Anscomb. No one had ever been able to straighten Anscomb's twisted limb, and he came to believe it was a curse of the

gods on one descended from Leto. Anscomb was an angry man, filled with bitterness toward his fellow mortals. Taunted and abused as a child, he often used his magic to torment others for real or imagined insults, no matter how slight.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 20.

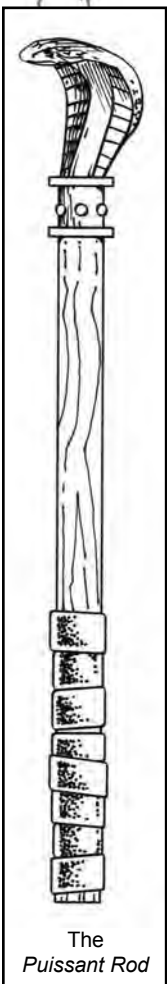
Anscomb treated other spellcasters with respect, for he always feared they had more knowledge and more power than he, though this was quite untrue. This fear combined with the real enemies he made with his torments led Anscomb to believe he was vulnerable and that everyone he met was an enemy, or a potential enemy. He decided that he needed something he could use both as a weapon and as an aid in spellcasting. He believed the divine blood was the last ingredient he needed for his creation, and set to work. For many months he labored, lavishing on his creations symbols of Leto, including capping the length of wood with a silver cobra's head.

The *Puissant Rod* gave Anscomb new confidence, and he quickly discovered that many found his confidence attractive. Not all his neighbors hated him after all. When ogres attacked, Anscomb was moved by a feeling new to him, one of compassion for those who lived around him. Taking up the *Puissant Rod*, he joined the constabulary defending the town. Many saw him there, casting spells and channeling magic through his creation. When the ogres overran the defenders, Anscomb fought on, and that was the last anyone saw of him or the *Puissant Rod*.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 20.

Table 2–7: Abilities Granted by the *Puissant Rod*

Scion Level	Ability Gained	Caster Level
—	Enhancement bonus +1	3rd
1st	Store spell I	—
2nd	Dodge	—
	Store spell II	—
3rd	Store spell III	—
4th	Enhancement bonus +2	6th
	Mobility	—
	Store spell IV	—
5th	Store spell V	—
6th	Spring Attack	—
	Store spell VI	—
7th	Enhancement bonus +3	9th
	Store spell VII	—
8th	Expertise	—
	Store spell VIII	—
9th	Enhancement bonus +4	12th
	Store spell IX	—
10th	Store spell X	—



The Puissant Rod

An ogre apparently took up the rod, for stories tell of an ogre chieftain leading raids with a large club capped by a silver cobra's head. When a group of adventurers defeated the ogres, their wizard took it up and quickly discovered it was far more than just a magic club. From that time on, the *Puissant Rod* passed from hand to hand.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 15.

Though many blame the deaths of its owners on a curse, the truth is that the rod invariably ends up with those who relish combat and are most likely to die in battle.

Check Required: GM only.

Requirements

To qualify to wield the *Puissant Rod* as a spellstaff scion, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Base Save Bonuses: Will +4.

Skills: Concentration 7 ranks, Spellcraft 7 ranks

Spells: Able to cast 2nd-level arcane spells

Attributes

This 3-foot-long rod appears to be made of iron, with a silver cap in the shape of a cobra's head riveted at one end and a leather-wrapped grip at the other. The *Puissant Rod* has the following attributes.

Hardness/Hit Points: 18/50.

Value: To anyone who picks up the *Puissant Rod*, it is worth as much as a +1 *club*: 2,300 gp.

Special Abilities

The *Puissant Rod* provides the following special abilities to its wielder, depending upon the character's level in the spellstaff scion prestige class (see Table 2-7: Abilities Granted by the *Puissant Rod*).

Initial Abilities: When first acquired, the *Puissant Rod* functions as a +1 *club*.

Store Spell I (Sp): The scion may store a single targeted spell of up to 1st level in the *Puissant Rod* (the spell must have a casting time of 1 action). Any time the *Puissant Rod* strikes an opponent and

the opponent takes damage from it, the rod can immediately cast the spell on the opponent if the scion desires. This ability is a special exception to the general rule that casting a spell from an item takes at least as long as casting that spell normally. The spell has the scion's caster level. Once the spell has been cast, the weapon is empty of spells and the scion can cast any other targeted spell of up to 1st level into it. See Table 2-8: Spells Stored by the *Puissant Rod* for a summary of the number and level of spells stored.

Store Spell II (Sp): As *store spell I*, but the 2nd-level scion may store a single targeted spell of up to 2nd level in the *Puissant Rod*.

Dodge: At 2nd level, the scion gains Dodge as a bonus feat.

Store Spell III (Sp): As *store spell I*, but the 3rd-level scion may store a single targeted spell of up to 3rd level in the *Puissant Rod*.

Mobility: At 4th level, the scion gains Mobility as a bonus feat.

Store Spell IV (Sp): As *store spell I*, but the 4th-level scion may store a single targeted spell of up to 3rd level, or two 1st-level spells, in the *Puissant Rod*. Only one spell may be cast each time the *Puissant Rod* damages an opponent.

Enhancement Bonus: When wielded by the 4th-level spellstaff scion of the *Puissant Rod*, the rod functions as a +2 *club*. This enhancement bonus increases to +3 at 7th level and +4 at 9th level.

Store Spell V (Sp): As *store spell IV*, but the 5th-level scion may store any two spells of up to 2nd-level, or one 3rd-level spell, in the *Puissant Rod*.

Spring Attack: At 4th level, the scion gains Spring Attack as a bonus feat.

Store Spell VI (Sp): As *store spell IV*, but the 6th-level scion may store any combination of two spells of up to 3rd level in the *Puissant Rod*.

Adventure Hook

A snake cult is spreading through the area in which the heroes are adventuring. Many of its worshippers and priests claim to be "blessed by the Serpent" and proudly display scaly patches on their necks or limbs, pointed teeth, or forked tongues. Their neighbors loudly proclaim these to be miraculous changes, whether similarly blessed or not. The cult seems to have great wealth and much ancient lore. The authorities of the area are concerned by the cult's influence and ask heroes to investigate. Heroes attracted by the cult's power quickly discover its wealth comes from its members, who surrender almost everything they own to its priests.

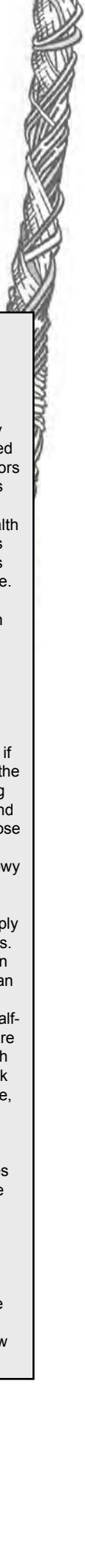
Heroes learn that people are disappearing in an isolated part of the area under the cult's influence. Few people are willing to discuss the disappearances and appear frightened if questioned about them. The priests of the serpent cult blame bandits and roaming monsters, calling on local authorities and passing adventurers to investigate. Those who publicly disagree with the priests about the cause are attacked by shadowy assailants in dark alleys. Adventurers and military patrols investigating the disappearances also disappear, or simply lose a few members in mysterious ways.

At last the heroes attract the attention of a wood-gatherer who knows more than he says. Privately, he tells them he has seen strange creatures, half-man and half-snake, in the woods. He believes they are the cause of the disappearances, though he has never seen them kidnap or attack anyone. If heroes are slow on the uptake, he also says he believes the strange creatures are somehow related to the cult, and that he hasn't spoke up before because he believes the cult encourages people to attack dissenters in the middle of the night.

Are the cult's priests purebloods of Leto's lineage? Are the strange creatures in the woods half-bloods? Have they found the *Puissant Rod*, or are they kidnapping people to excavate its possible resting place? Are the local authorities purebloods in disguise? How far has the cult's influence spread?

Table 2-8: Spells Stored by the *Puissant Rod*

Store Spell	Max Number and Spell Level Stored
I	1 of 1st level
II	1 of 2nd level
III	1 of 3rd level
IV	1 of 3rd level or 2 of 1st level
V	1 of 3rd level or 2 of 2nd level
VI	2 of 3rd level
VII	1 of 4th level or 2 of 3rd level
VIII	2 of 4th level
IX	1 of 5th level or 2 of 4th level
X	2 of 5th level



Store Spell VII (Sp): As *store spell IV*, but the 7th-level scion may store any combination of two spells of up to 3rd level, or one 4th-level spell, in the *Puissant Rod*.

Expertise: At 4th level, the scion gains Expertise as a bonus feat.

Store Spell VIII (Sp): As *store spell IV*, but the 8th-level scion may store any combination of two spells up to 4th level, in the *Puissant Rod*.

Store Spell IX (Sp): As *store spell IV*, but the 9th-level scion may store any combination of two spells up to 4th level, or one 5th-level spell, in the *Puissant Rod*.

Store Spell X (Sp): As *store spell IV*, but the 10th-level scion may store any combination of two spells up to 5th level in the *Puissant Rod*.

Stormachtig, the Staff of Storms

Stormachtig has legendary abilities over the air and the weather.

The Fox and the Lightning

Long ago when the world was young, Sem, god of strength, was practicing hurling his lightning bolts. "That's not bad," said a fox who had been watching. For in those days, all animals had the power of speech.

"Ha! Not bad? You can't do it!"

The fox controlled his expression carefully, for his sense of smell was most acute, and he could tell everything Sem had eaten over the last century. "You speak truly, mighty one," said the suave fox. "I cannot. Yet if you are best in all the world, what need have you of practice?"

Sem countered with the words Lod, his father, used when he sent Sem to practice. "Does Apon not drive his chariot across the sky every day? Does Syra not shine down from the moon almost every night? Yet they too are best in all the world."

No mere fox can compete with the wisdom of the father of the gods, so this one changed the subject. "You speak truly, mighty one. Tell me, can you strike an apple from that tree?"

"Of course!" Sem threw another bolt, striking the apple tree and shattering several branches. Many apples fell to the ground. "See?"

"Your aim is as good as your word, mighty one, but truly while a little salt adds savor, too much spoils the meal."

Sem furrowed his mighty brow, puzzling over the fox's words. "What do you mean?"

"I asked if you could strike a single apple from the tree, and you struck an entire branch! You have great power, mighty one, now you must temper it with control. See here, I will run down among the trees. See if you can strike me, and only me."

Table 2–9: Abilities Granted by the *Stormachtig*

Scion Level	Ability Gained	Caster Level
—	Spells	*
1st	Spells	*
2nd	Spells	*
3rd	Spells	*
4th	Spells	*
5th	Spells	*
6th	Spells	*
7th	Spells	*
8th	Spells	*
9th	Focused Abilities	—
	Penetrating Abilities	—
	Soaring	*
	Spells	*
10th	Spells	*

* current caster level

"If I strike you, you will surely die!" Sem laughed at the fox's offer.

"You speak truly, mighty one. But you will not strike me," said the fox. "For I am tiny, and very fast."

Sem agreed to this challenge, and the fox ran down among the apple trees. Sem threw bolt after bolt, constantly getting closer to the fox, but always the wily animal dodged at the last instant. At last, Sem tired of the game. "Hold, friend fox. I thank you for your help in my practice, but a great thirst comes upon me and I must return to the home of the gods." The god turned to leave.

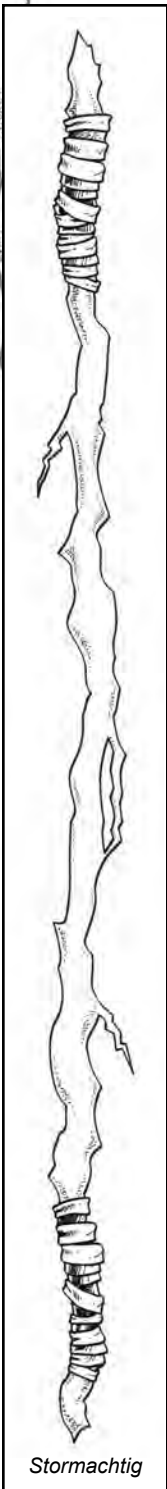
The fox snickered. "Thank you, mighty one, for though you never struck me, you struck many apple trees and now my family and the other creatures of the earth can feast!"

Angered by the fox's arrogant trickery, Sem whirled and, fast as thought, hurled one last lightning bolt. Surprised, the fox was unable to dodge aside entirely and found himself pinned to ground by Sem's lightning, his fur scorching. Other foxes ran to his aid, and together they were able to pull Sem's bolt from the earth. They carried it off beneath the earth to preserve, but the trickster's fur never entirely recovered.

This is why some few foxes have black fur.

Check Required: Knowledge (religion) DC 10.

Centuries later, during the Age of Heroes, a wizard named Agnimukha decided to seek the secret knowledge of the foxes. His mother, a priestess of Sylvania, taught him the stories of Reynard and the other foxes. Agnimukha used his magic to give him the shape of a fox and to



Stormachtig

Table 2–10: Spells Granted by *Stormachtig*

Scion Level	Uses		
	Once per Day	Half Caster Level per Day	Caster Level per Day
1st	<i>Resist energy, wind wall, and levitate</i>	<i>Endure elements, obscuring mist, and whispering wind</i>	
2nd	<i>Protection from energy, gust of wind, and gaseous form</i>	<i>Resist energy, wind wall, and levitate</i>	<i>Endure elements, obscuring mist, and whispering wind</i>
3rd	<i>Fly, lightning bolt, and summon monster III</i> (small air elemental only)	<i>Protection from energy, gust of wind, and gaseous form</i>	<i>Resist energy, wind wall, and levitate</i>
4th	<i>Summon monster IV</i> (air mephit, dust mephit, or ice mephit)	<i>Fly, lightning bolt, and summon monster III</i> (small air elemental only)	<i>Protection from energy, gust of wind, and gaseous form</i>
5th	<i>Control winds</i>	<i>Summon monster IV</i> (air mephit, dust mephit, or ice mephit)	<i>Fly, lightning bolt, and summon monster III</i> (Small air elemental only)
6th	<i>Control weather</i>	<i>Control winds</i>	<i>Summon monster IV</i> (air mephit, dust mephit, or ice mephit)
7th	<i>Summon monster VI</i> (air elementals only)	<i>Control weather</i>	<i>Control winds</i>
8th	<i>Whirlwind</i>	<i>Summon monster VI</i> (air elementals only)	<i>Control weather</i>
9th		<i>Whirlwind</i>	<i>Summon monster VI</i> (air elementals only)
10th	<i>Summon monster VII</i> (air elementals only).		<i>Whirlwind</i>

allow him to converse with them. The wizard spent a year among the foxes, emerging from their lairs to resume his human form and write what he had learned during the day. At the end of that year, Agnimukha had earned the trust of the foxes, and they granted him entrance to the most sacred chamber of their tunnels. There he beheld a lightning bolt on an altar. He was stunned to see a symbol of Sem’s power among the beloved of Syrnia. At the end of that day, he wrote of the event in his notes, for he valued the teachings of the foxes too much to betray their trust.

Check Required: Knowledge (arcane) DC 20.

Not everyone is as scrupulous as Agnimukha, however. Years after his death, his notes fell into the hands of a villainous group of adventurers. Piecing together the clues they found in Agnimukha’s notes, they uncovered the location of the sacred chamber, then unearthed the frozen lightning bolt. Syrnia’s priests, avenging the transgression, tirelessly pursued the adventurers for months. The priests finally found the last one, his hands burned to the bone by the bolt, gibbering and insane. Everywhere the adventurer looked, he saw the burning eyes of foxes. The priests could not find the bolt. To this day, *Stormachtig* surfaces from time to time, sometimes in the hands of

wizards of favor Sem, sometimes in the hands of those who favor Syrnia.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 15.

Requirements

To qualify to wield *Stormachtig* as a spellstaff scion, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Base Save Bonuses: Will +3.

Skills: Concentration 5 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 5 ranks, Spellcraft 5 ranks

Spells: Able to cast 1st-level arcane spells

Attributes

This 7-foot staff looks like a frozen lightning bolt with two leather-wrapped grips, one near the base of the staff and one closer to the head. *Stormachtig* has the following attributes.

Hardness/Hit Points: 5/10.

Value: To anyone who picks up *Stormachtig*, it is worth as much as any wondrous item that could cast such spells: 1,080 gp.

Special Abilities

Stormachtig provides the following special abilities to its wielder, depending upon the character’s level in the spellstaff scion prestige class (see Table 2-9: Abilities Granted by *Stormachtig*).



Initial Abilities: Anyone who bears *Stormachtig* can use it to cast *endure elements*, *obscuring mist*, and *whispering wind* once per day.

Spells (Sp): *Stormachtig* allows its scion to cast an increasing number of spells as the scion grows

Adventure Hook

A gang of iron golems is tearing up the countryside. No one is sure where they come from or who is directing them. The golems are clearly beyond the ability of the heroes to handle, but everyone expects the adventurers to take care of things. If the heroes don't turn to the temple of Sem, after a few days a priest of Sem approaches them. He explains that iron golems are notoriously vulnerable to electricity. While the temple has some scrolls and wands that could aid the adventurers, the temple knows of a family of storm giants whose cloud castle is at the top of a nearby mountain. The priest suggests that the storm giants could easily handle the golems, if only there were something the giants would accept in return for fighting them.

If the heroes accept the challenge, they must travel to the top of the mountain, find the cloud castle, and meet with the giants. The giants don't consider the golems a real challenge: they just don't have any reason to risk themselves on behalf of lesser mortals. If the adventurers are willing to help the giants, the giants will take care of the golems. The giants believe they know the location of *Stormachtig*, in an ancient labyrinth beneath the mountain. If the heroes will bring them the staff, they will attack the golems.

Are the priests aware that the giants know *Stormachtig's* location? Do they intend for the giants to take it with them? How did the giants find out? What lurks in the labyrinth, and how did *Stormachtig* get there?

in power and knowledge.

The caster level for these spell-like abilities equals the scion's caster level. The scion may use the abilities of his class level once per day, of the previous level a number of times per day equal to half his caster level, rounded down; and of two previous levels and earlier a number of times per day equal to his caster level. So a 2nd-level wizard/3rd-level spellstaff scion of *Stormachtig* can use *fly*, *lightning bolt*, and *summon monster II* once per day; *protection from energy*, *gust of wind*, and *gaseous form* twice a day, and abilities from scion level 1 five times per day. See Table 2-10: Spells Granted by *Stormachtig* for a listing of spells available to the scion at each level.

Soaring (Sp): This ability allows the scion to fly at a speed of 40 feet with average maneuverability for up to 1 hour per caster level. If the scion is wearing medium or heavy armor, or carrying a medium or

heavy load, the speed drops to 30 feet. The scion may use this ability for long-distance movement, and when doing so may hustle without suffering subdual damage (forced marches still require Constitution checks).

Focused Abilities: At 9th level, the spellstaff scion of *Stormachtig* adds +2 to the Difficulty Class for all saving throws against the staff's spell-like abilities.

Penetrating Abilities: Also at 9th level, the scion gets a +2 bonus to caster level checks (1d20 + caster level) to beat an opponent's spell resistance when using *Stormachtig's* spell-like abilities.

The Staff of Doors

The *Staff of Doors* at first appears to be a useful tool for roguish wizards, and then gradually reveals its true nature as a facilitator for planar travel.

The Mago's Quest

Joaquin Mago was a sorcerer. He had very little interest in good or evil. Nor did he care much for promises of happiness in some misty afterlife. He claimed to be able to trace his lineage back to Ur-Argo, a metallic dragon that lived in the Time of Heroes. Joaquin claimed the draconic blood in his veins was the source of his family's power, and the source of their insatiable need to experience all the world has to offer. Joaquin never denied himself anything, and over the course of his life gathered wives, mistresses, children both legitimate and otherwise, wealth, and power.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 15.

Joaquin's children did not all share his beliefs, or his taste for adventurous living. One, however, shared his belief in the rewards of this life and sought power and wealth in the temporal world by worshipping Vurkis, the god of evil. Lacking any arcane power or the faith that powers divine magic, this son sought martial prowess, becoming a temple guard. One night a daring and clever thief named Galeno robbed the temple. Joaquin's son was among the guards that pursued Galeno until the dastardly villain turned him into a chicken!

The temple knew Joaquin's reputation as a powerful sorcerer, and so returned the chicken-son to his father. Restoring his son was a trivial matter, but Joaquin seethed at the insult done to his family. He decided to set a trap for the thief by ostentatiously displaying wealth he had hidden for many years. Galeno took the bait, but when Joaquin confronted him he was surprised to find the thief well-armed with magic wands. He wore them around his forearm on some sort of tube. Galeno was clearly terrified and looking to escape when something beyond even Joaquin's understanding happened: The thief's ability to use the wands went awry, just as Joaquin tried to turn Galeno into a chicken as proper vengeance. Somehow the combination affected the bundle of wands on the thief's arm, and it began to change, twisting and lengthening.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 20.

This terrified Galeno even more and he begged Joaquin to help him free his arm. Joaquin never meant to permanently cripple the thief. After all, his son wasn't permanently a chicken. He bent his arcane knowledge to aiding Galeno. To the sorcerer's surprise, nothing he tried could reverse the change. At last, in a fit of desperation,

he wove a spell to hurl the warping bundle across the planes. Galeno was suitably grateful. Joaquin warned him to avoid such situations in the future, but his mind was still on the bundle of wands and what they might become. Galeno stole his purse, and Joaquin did not discover the loss for many days.

Joaquin, who never refused himself anything, decided he must have the protean bundle. For a time he sought *Lumen*, the Diviner's Staff, as an aid in looking across the planes for the bundle. Despite his great expenditure of family wealth, he was unable to find the legendary school staff. If he could not divine the bundle's location, he would have to travel the planes himself looking for signs of it. Joaquin bent himself to the task of creating a tool that would enable him to travel the planes. Some say he prayed to the gods for aid. Some say Vurkis played a trick on Joaquin and the world by offering hints to the fanatical sorcerer. Still others say Joaquin abandoned the work until he saw a fox darting among the roots of an oak with a stick in its mouth and somehow drew inspiration from the vision.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 20.

Whatever the truth is, Joaquin created a unique staff he dubbed the *Staff of Doors* at the expense of most of his family wealth. He took the rest, hired a band of adventurers to accompany him across the planes, and set out.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 20.

The sorcerer spent the rest of his life chasing rumors about *Barra*, the Staff of Wands, without success. He died penniless and alone, clutching the staff he created.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 15.

While some believe the sorcerer's children buried him in state, as befitted his former state of wealth and power, still clutching his staff, others believe a clever thief stole the *Staff of Doors* and turned it to his own nefarious and daring schemes.

Check Required:
Knowledge (history) DC 25.

Requirements

To qualify to wield the *Staff of Doors* as a spellstaff scion, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Base Save Bonuses: Will +5.

Skills: Concentration 10 ranks, Knowledge (the planes) 10 ranks, Spellcraft 10 ranks

Spells: Able to cast 4th-level arcane spells

Special: The character must be able to cast spells from the schools of Abjuration, Conjunction, Divination, and Transmutation.

Attributes

This staff is about seven feet long and is carved with an intricate pattern of keys, like a jigsaw puzzle. It is straight and uniformly narrow. The top of the staff is flat, and notched like the teeth of a key.

Hardness/Hit Points: 5/10.

Value: To someone other than a spellstaff scion, the *Staff of Doors* appears to be worth 2,000 gp.

Special Abilities

The *Staff of Doors* provides the following special abilities to its wielder, depending upon the character's level in the spellstaff scion prestige class.

Initial Abilities: Anyone who carries the *Staff of Doors* within 10 feet of a secret door causes a glowing outline to appear around the door. This glow provides no useful illumination.

Spells: The scion uses the *Staff of Doors* to cast spells as if it was a wand. The specific spells and the number of uses per day are shown in Table 2-6:

Adventure Hook
A beautiful scoundrel approaches the heroes just before they enter a newly-discovered dungeon. She seems unusually knowledgeable about the heroes and their activities, and she suggests that she might be able to help them in their current adventure. She has discovered the location of something that possesses a unique combination of planar travel abilities. Such an item could help the heroes bypass any obstacles they encounter in the dungeon. If they help her acquire it, she will help them in their adventure. Who is she, and why has she been spying on the heroes? Is she a descendant of Joaquin Mago, or is she a descendant of Galeno who seeks to steal the *Staff of Doors* from the Mago family?



Table 2-11: Spells Granted by the *Staff of Doors*

Scion Level	Uses		
	Once per Day	Caster Level per Day	At Will
1st		Arcane mark, hold portal	
2nd		Arcane lock, knock	Arcane mark, hold portal
3rd		Blink, clairaudience/clairvoyance	Arcane lock, knock
4th		Dimension door, dimension anchor	Blink, clairaudience/clairvoyance
5th	Dismissal, contact other plane		Dimension door, dimension anchor
6th	Planar binding, true seeing	Dismissal, contact other plane	
7th	Phase door, plane shift	Planar binding, true seeing	Dismissal, contact other plane
8th	Greater planar binding, maze	Phase door, plane shift	Planar binding, true seeing
9th	Freedom, imprisonment	Greater planar binding, maze	Phase door, plane shift
10th	Gate, etherialness	Freedom, imprisonment	Greater planar binding, maze

Spells Granted by the *Staff of Doors*. The range of all the spells is reduced to touch. The *Staff of Doors* must touch the target, area, or effect of the spell. For example, if the scion uses the *Staff of Doors* to cast *arcane mark*, the scion must draw her mark with the staff. The caster level of the spells is equal to the scion's caster level.

At each new scion level, the spellstaff scion of the *Staff of Doors* may cast new spells in this manner. These spells and their allowed uses per day are summarized in Table 2-11: Spells Granted by the *Staff of Doors*. For example, the 6th-level spellstaff scion of the *Staff of Doors* may use it to cast *planar binding* and *true seeing* once per day, *dismissal* and *contact other plane* a number of times per day equal to her caster level, and *arcane lock*, *arcane mark*, *blink*, *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *dimensional anchor*, *dimension door*, *hold portal*, and *knock* at will.

Faithstaves

Magical staves and rods steeped in divine power are known as faithstaves. Despite the holy nature of many faithstaves they are usually best wielded by clerics rather than paladins.

Bonegrinder

Those who seek to either control or destroy the undead both covet *Bonegrinder*.

Bones of the Jungle

In the days of Vyskandr the Heartless, the tyrannical lich-king that conquered the Old Kingdoms, a chieftain of the Leopard Clan defeated a small group of Vyskandr's priests. This chieftain had traveled far more widely than others of his clan and was able to read the letters carried by the priests. Apparently Vyskandr's servants feared someone might capture or intercept their messages, for all the chieftain uncovered was that the priests searched for an artifact and that they wanted very badly to find it before Vyskandr's foes did.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 40.

Barbarians dwelling deep in the jungle, the Leopard Clan had little to fear from Vyskandr or his undead armies. However, when the chieftain brought his information before the clan's council, they grew concerned that if Vyskandr's power grew he might threaten even the jungle clans. They sent emissaries to the exiled court of the Old Kingdom to alert them and to seek their aid in a quest for the mysterious artifact.

The Leopard Clan's emissaries had many adventurers while searching for the court, lost now in the mists of time. At last they reached the court in exile and had discourse with sages, wizards, and priests who knew much that has since been lost.

Armed with this knowledge and new comrades, the emissaries joined the race for a magic staff that legends hinted held power over the undead. They traveled deep into the jungles to a city lost when the elves were young and gods still walked the earth. There they confronted Vyskandr's minions, losing many friends to Death's embrace before defeating the priests and their undead creations.

Beneath the city they fought hideous monsters, losing still more friends, until at last a single emissary and a priest of Apon found a staff carved from a single bone lying in a cobwebbed vault. The priest studied the staff as they journeyed back to the court, fighting still more minions of the Lich-King along the way. When they returned, they found that a hero had come to court bearing *Lann Lorgaich*, the Questing Blade, and he planned to confront Vyskandr. The priest agreed to join the hero's quest and the emissary accompanied them as the priest's guardian. They used the staff they named *Bonegrinder* to aid their defeat of the Lich-King's minion while the hero confronted Vyskandr himself. The hero triumphed. Vyskandr was defeated, his empire crushed, and his treasure-vaults suitably plundered.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 40.

Vyskandr's cult persisted, though, hiding in lost cities and the forgotten depths of ancient catacombs. Now and again it rose to challenge the Old Kingdom, and great battles were fought against the priests, followers, and undead of the cult. *Bonegrinder* often appeared with the waxing of the cult, most often in the hands of a cult priest, but sometimes in the hands of Apon's priests. The tales of *Bonegrinder* say that it foiled all attempts of Apon's temple to lock it away, vanishing when unwatched, only to reappear in places threatened by the undead.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 15.

Requirements

To qualify to wield *Bonegrinder* as a faithstaff scion, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Base Saves: Will +3

Feats: Extra Turning

Spells: Able to cast 2nd-level divine spells.

Special: Ability to turn or rebuke undead.

Attributes

This 6-foot staff appears to be carved from some very large bone, and still has lumps and flanges of bone at each end. *Bonegrinder* has the following attributes.

Hardness/Hit Points: 13/50.

Value: To someone other than a faithstaff scion, *Bonegrinder* appears to be worth as much as a +1/ *masterwork quarterstaff*: 2,600 gp.

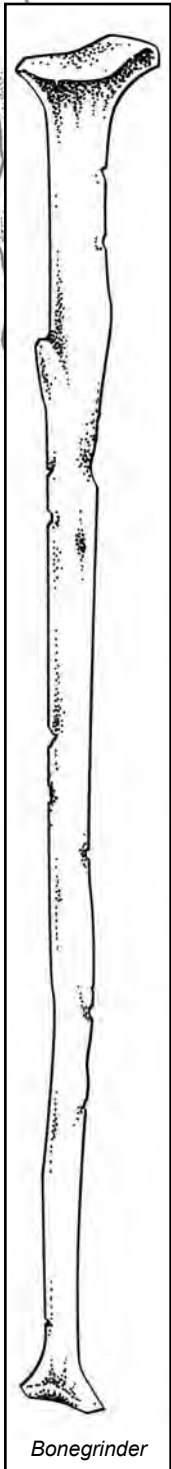


Table 2–12: Abilities Granted by *Bonegrinder*

Scion Level	Ability Gained	Caster Level
—	Enhancement bonus +1/ masterwork	3rd
	<i>Light</i>	1st
1st	<i>Detect undead</i>	*
	Enhancement bonus +1/+1	3rd
	Extra Turning	—
	<i>Invisibility to undead</i>	*
2nd	Ability bonus (Cha +2)	—
	Hew undead	—
	<i>Searing light I</i>	*
3rd	<i>Consecrate/desecrate I</i>	*
	Heighten turning	—
4th	<i>Daylight/deeper darkness I</i>	*
	Divine vigor	—
	Enhancement bonus +2/+2	6th
5th	Ability bonus (Cha +4)	—
	Empower turning	—
	<i>Searing light III</i>	*
6th	Divine will	—
	<i>Invisibility circle to undead</i>	*
	Quicken turning	—
7th	<i>Daylight/deeper darkness II</i>	*
	Extra Turning	—
	Enhancement bonus +3/+3	—
8th	Ability bonus (Cha +6)	—
	<i>Searing light III</i>	*
9th	<i>Consecrate/desecrate II</i>	*
10th	Ability bonus (Cha +8)	—
	<i>Daylight/deeper darkness III</i>	*
	Enhancement bonus +4/+4	—
	<i>Searing light IV</i>	*

* current faithstaff scion level

Special Abilities

Bonegrinder provides the following special abilities to its wielder, depending upon the character’s level in the faithstaff scion prestige class (see Table 2-12: Abilities Granted by *Bonegrinder*).

Initial Abilities: Anyone who bears *Bonegrinder* can use it as a +1/masterwork quarterstaff, and may also take advantage of its *light* ability (see below).

Light (Sp): As free action, the bearer may will *Bonegrinder* to radiate light as a torch. Extinguishing the light requires another free action taken on any subsequent round.

Detect Undead (Sp): At 1st level, the scion can *detect undead* at will, as the spell.

Enhancement Bonuses: *Bonegrinder* becomes

a +1/+1 quarterstaff at 1st level. Both enhancement bonuses increase to +2 at 4th level and +3 at 7th level. In the hands of its 10th level faithstaff scion, *Bonegrinder* becomes a +4/+4 quarterstaff.

Extra Turning: The scion gains Extra Turning as a bonus feat at 1st and 7th level.

Invisibility to Undead (Sp): The 1st-level scion can cast *invisibility to undead* a number of times per day equal to his caster level.

Ability Bonus: At 2nd level, the scion gains a +2 enhancement bonus to Charisma. This bonus increases to +4 at 5th level, +6 at 8th level, and +8 at 10th level.

Hew Undead (Su): As a standard action, the 2nd-level scion may spend one of his turn attempts to add 2d6 points of damage to his next melee strike. This extra damage only applies against an undead opponent.

Searing Light I (Sp): The 2nd-level scion may cast *searing light* once per day.

Consecrate/Desecrate I (Sp): The 3rd-level scion may cast *consecrate* or *desecrate* once per day. The scion does not choose which to cast. If he channels positive energy, he casts *consecrate*. If he channels negative energy, he casts *desecrate*.

Heighten Turning (Su): Beginning at 3rd level, the scion may add a number up to his caster level to his turning or rebuking check, and must subtract that number from his turning or rebuking damage roll.

Daylight/Deeper Darkness I (Sp): The 4th-level scion may cast *daylight* or *deeper darkness* once per day. The scion does not choose which to cast. If he channels positive energy, he casts *daylight*. If he channels negative energy, he casts *deeper darkness*.

Divine Vigor (Su): At 4th level, the scion may spend one of his turn or rebuke attempts to increase his base speed by 10 feet and gain a +2 enhancement bonus to his Constitution. These effects last a number of minutes equal to his Charisma bonus.

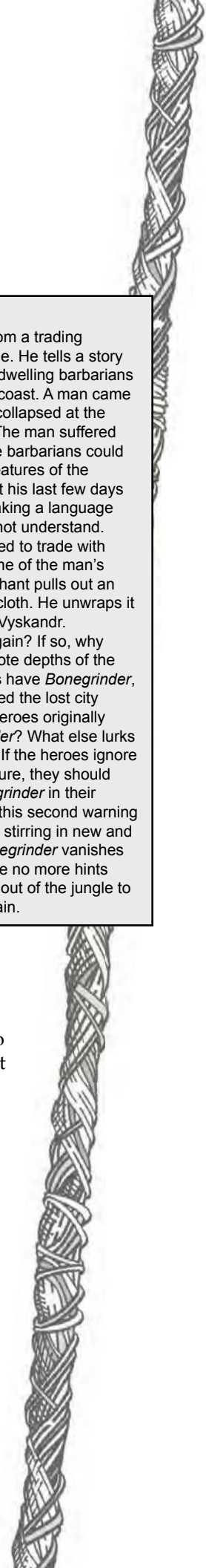
Empower Turning: Upon reaching 5th level, the scion may take a -2 penalty on his turning or rebuking check to add +2d6 to his turning or rebuking damage roll.

Searing Light II (Sp): As *searing light I*, but the 5th-level scion may cast it twice per day.

Adventure Hook

A merchant returns from a trading expedition to the jungle. He tells a story he heard from jungle-dwelling barbarians in a trade port on the coast. A man came out of the jungle and collapsed at the edge of their village. The man suffered from many injuries the barbarians could not attribute to the creatures of the jungle. The man spent his last few days raving in a fever, speaking a language the barbarians could not understand. The merchant managed to trade with the barbarians for some of the man’s belongings. The merchant pulls out an object wrapped in oil cloth. He unwraps it to reveal a symbol of Vyskandr.

Is the cult rising again? If so, why is it happening in remote depths of the jungle? Do the cultists have *Bonegrinder*, or have they discovered the lost city in which the ancient heroes originally discovered *Bonegrinder*? What else lurks in that eldritch place? If the heroes ignore the lure of this adventure, they should stumble across *Bonegrinder* in their travels. If they ignore this second warning that Vyskandr’s cult is stirring in new and dangerous ways, *Bonegrinder* vanishes and the heroes receive no more hints until the cult marches out of the jungle to conquer the world again.



Divine Will (Su): All allies within 30 feet of the 6th-level scion gain a +2 morale bonus on Will saving throws.

Invisibility Circle to Undead (Sp): This ability extends out from the scion a number of feet equal to 5 times his caster level, beginning at 6th level. Those within that radius gain the benefits of *invisibility to undead*.

Quicken Turning: The scion may turn or rebuke undead as a free action beginning at 6th level.

Daylight/Deeper Darkness II (Sp): As *daylight/deeper darkness I*, but the 7th-level scion may cast the spell twice per day.

Searing Light III (Sp): As *searing light I*, but the 8th-level scion may cast it three times per day.

Consecrate/Desecrate II (Sp): As *consecrate/desecrate I*, but the 9th-level scion may cast it twice per day.

Daylight/Deeper Darkness III (Sp): As *daylight/deeper darkness I*, but the 10th-level scion may cast the spell three times per day.

Searing Light IV (Sp): As *searing light I*, but the 10th-level scion may cast it four times per day.

The Rod of the Inquisitor

Although the *Rod of the Inquisitor* is a weapon, its primary function is rooting out spies, traitors, and heretics.

The Eye of Tur

It is said that it is easier to shatter stone with your head than to lie to a priest. Perceptive and armed with divinations that reveal what many would rather remain hidden, priests live in temples filled with truth. Life is not so easy outside the temples, however. Alvis, a priest of Sylvania, goddess of wisdom, recognized this when he wrote "It is easy to be holy in the temple's sacred precincts." Of course, Sylvania's priests are particularly gifted in being able to see through masquerades.

Check Required: Knowledge (religion) DC 10.

Brann, a High Kingdom paladin of Tur, the god of intellect, reasoned that not all temples were so gifted, and almost no ruler had the divine magic to protect himself from liars, assassins, conspirators, and others who hide their true intentions behind bland masks of kind words. While others strove to create the *Sword of Kings* as a symbol of King Snowden's right to rule, Brann spent long hours in silent vigil, praying over the matter. Surely an advisor to a king should not be deceived easily. Days passed without food or drink as Brann prayed. At last he felt some change, some subtle sign from Tur, and looked up to see a short, thick iron rod lying upon Tur's altar. Brann felt the eyes carved on the rod look into his very soul. Taking up the rod, he took his place among King

Snowden's guard. While the *Sword of Kings* warned King Snowden of the poison placed in his wine by Duke Ravenhearst, it was Brann and the *Rod of the Inquisitor* that discovered the traitor's identity.

Over the next month, as King Snowden and Duke Ravenhearst led their armies to the Battle of Dragon's Peak, Brann and a select group of paladins rooted out other members of Ravenhearst's conspiracy. They crippled the traitors' ability to spy on King Snowden's councils and armies, but could do nothing to prevent the king's death at the great battle. As King Snowden lay dying, he ordered his loyal retainers to elect his successor from their ranks, and to give the new king the *Sword of Kings*. "No man will hold the High Kingdom if he cannot hold the *Sword of Kings*."

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 15.

The retainers offered the sword to Brann, but there was room in the paladin's heart only for devotion to his god and he refused.

Brann used the *Rod of the Inquisitor* for the rest of his life, protecting the rulers of the High Kingdom from liars, tricksters, and conspirators. On his deathbed, he prayed for a sign from Tur so that he could know what instructions to give about the use of the rod. His final words were to place the rod on Tur's altar, and that any person wishing to become a paladin of Tur must spend a night's vigil before the altar.

Check Required: Knowledge (religion) DC 15.

Time passed, and initiates among Tur's orders made up many stories about the eye-carved iron rod upon the altar. They said it branded the hand of any who held it, though some stories said it branded the faithful and others said the unfaithful. Young people dared each other to touch it when the senior priests weren't looking. Scores of those wishing to become paladins carried the rod through their vigil, hoping for a sign of a special destiny. The rod remained silent.

One morning, a young woman finished her vigil and left the temple. Shocked paladins and priests asked her why she carried the *Rod of the Inquisitor*, and she could not explain. She remembered only that when the sun shown through the stained-glass eyes of Tur, signaling the end of her vigil; she placed the rod back upon the altar. How it returned to her hand was a mystery to her. She gave it to her mentor, and he returned it to the altar. When he left the temple, the rod was in the apprentice's hand. Everyone swore she had never left their sight and never entered the temple. Little debate was needed to call the event a sign from Tur, and the young paladin was allowed to keep the rod.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 15.

Several years after she completed her training, the paladin joined a group of adventurers



The Rod of the Inquisitor

Table 2–13: Abilities Granted by the *Rod of the Inquisitor*

Scion Level	Ability Gained	Caster Level
—	Enhancement bonus +1	3rd
	<i>Light</i>	1st
1st	Ability bonus (Wis +2)	—
	<i>Command I</i>	*
2nd	Enhancement bonus +2	6th
	Sly tongue +2	—
3rd	<i>Command II</i>	*
	<i>See invisible I</i>	*
	<i>Zone of truth</i>	*
4th	Ability bonus (Wis +4)	—
	<i>Arcane sight I</i>	*
	<i>Command III</i>	*
	<i>See invisible II</i>	*
	<i>Speak with dead II</i>	—
5th	Lawful heavy mace +2	7th
	Sly tongue +4	—
6th	<i>Arcane sight II</i>	*
	<i>See invisible III</i>	*
	<i>Speak with dead III</i>	*
	<i>Tongues I</i>	*
7th	Ability bonus (Wis +6)	—
	Lawful heavy mace +3	9th
8th	<i>Arcane sight III</i>	*
	<i>Speak with dead III</i>	*
	<i>Tongues II</i>	*
	<i>True seeing</i>	*
9th	Sly tongue +6	—
10th	Ability bonus (Wis +8)	—
	Lawful heavy mace +4	12th
	<i>Symbol of persuasion</i>	*
	<i>Tongues III</i>	*
	<i>True seeing II</i>	*

* current faithstaff scion level

exploring a temple once dedicated to the worship of demons. The adventurers soon discovered a cult using the temple, and the rod revealed that the cult's leaders were disguised demons! They defeated the cult after months of danger, the *Rod of the Inquisitor* revealing the extent of the cult's influence for them. When the final demon was defeated, the rod vanished from the paladin's hands. She returned to the temple to train an apprentice and found the rod lying upon the altar once again.

Check Required: Knowledge (religion) DC 20.

Requirements

To qualify to wield the *Rod of the Inquisitor* as a faithstaff scion, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any non-chaotic

Base Saves: Will +4

Spells: Able to cast 2nd-level divine spells.

Attributes

This 2-foot rod appears to be composed of eyes along its entire length, but they are just carvings on the surface of the rod.

Hardness/Hit Points: 18/65.

Value: To someone other than a faithstaff scion, the *Rod of the Inquisitor* appears to be worth as much as a +1 *heavy mace*: 2,312 gp.

Special Abilities

The *Rod of the Inquisitor* provides the following special abilities to its wielder, depending upon the character's level in the faithstaff scion prestige class (see Table 2-13: Abilities Granted by the *Rod of the Inquisitor*).

Initial Abilities: Anyone who bears the *Rod of the Inquisitor* will find that it functions as a +1 *heavy mace*, and may also use the light ability (see below).

Light (Sp): As a free action, the bearer may will the *Rod of the Inquisitor* to radiate light as a torch. Extinguishing the light requires another free action taken on any subsequent round.

Ability Bonus: The scion gains a +2 enhancement bonus to Wisdom at 1st level, +4 at 4th level, +6 at 7th level, and +8 at 10th level.

Command I (Sp): The 1st-level scion may cast *command* once per day.

Enhancement Bonus: The *Rod of the Inquisitor* functions as a +2 *heavy mace* at 2nd level.

Sly Tongue (Ex): The scion gains a +2 competence bonus to his Bluff, Intimidate, and Sense Motive checks at 2nd level. This bonus increases to +4 at 5th level and +6 at 9th level.

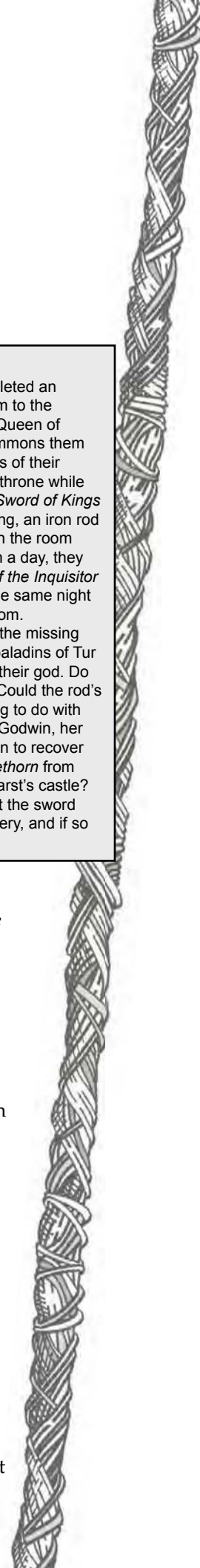
Command II (Sp): As *command I*, but the 3rd-level scion may cast it twice per day.

See Invisible I (Sp): The 3rd-level scion may cast *see invisible* once per day.

Adventure Hook

The heroes have just completed an adventure that brought them to the attention of Adeliza, aging Queen of the High Kingdom. She summons them to regale the court with tales of their exploits. She sits upon her throne while they spin their stories, the *Sword of Kings* at her side. The next morning, an iron rod carved with eyes appears in the room of one of the heroes. Within a day, they hear rumors that the *Rod of the Inquisitor* vanished from Tur's altar the same night it appeared in the hero's room.

Does the hero possess the missing rod? If so, the priests and paladins of Tur believe it to be a sign from their god. Do they find the hero worthy? Could the rod's appearance have something to do with the disappearance of Lord Godwin, her eldest son, on his expedition to recover the legendary staff *Bramblethorn* from the ruins of Duke Ravenhearst's castle? Do the heroes discover that the sword at Adeliza's throne is a forgery, and if so what do they do about it?



Zone of Truth (Sp): The scion may cast *zone of truth* a number of times per day equal to his caster level beginning at 3rd level.

Arcane Sight I (Sp): The scion may cast *arcane sight* once per day beginning at 4th level.

Command III (Sp): As *command I*, but the 4th-level scion may cast it three times per day.

See Invisible II (Sp): As *see invisible I*, but the 4th-level scion may cast it twice a day.

Speak with Dead I (Sp): The scion may cast *speak with dead* once per day beginning at 4th level.

Lawful Heavy Mace: In the hands of its 5th level faithstaff scion, The *Rod of the Inquisitor* becomes a +2 *Lawful heavy mace*. Its enhancement bonus increases to +3 at 7th level and +4 at 10th level.

Arcane Sight II (Sp): As *arcane sight I*, but the 6th-level scion may cast it twice per day.

See Invisible III (Sp): As *see invisible I*, but the 6th-level scion may cast it three times per day.

Speak with Dead II (Sp): As *speak with dead I*, but the 6th-level scion may cast it twice per day.

Tongues I (Sp): The scion may cast *tongues* once per day beginning at 6th level.

Arcane Sight III (Sp): As *arcane sight I*, but the 8th-level scion may cast it three times per day.

Speak with Dead III (Sp): As *speak with dead I*, but the 8th-level scion may cast it three times per day.

Tongues II (Sp): As *tongues I*, but the 8th-level scion may cast it twice per day.

True Seeing I (Sp): The scion may cast *true seeing* once per day beginning at 8th level.

Symbol of Persuasion (Sp): The 10th-level scion may draw a *symbol of persuasion*, as the spell, with the *Rod of the Inquisitor*.

Tongues III (Sp): As *tongues I*, but the 10th-level scion may cast it three times per day.

True Seeing II (Sp): As *true seeing I*, but the 10th-level scion may cast it twice per day.

Swiftstaves

Some legendary staves and rods are made for swifter hands. Most find their way into the possession of rogues, monks, and bards, but a few find homes with fighters who prefer a more subtle approach.

Astuto, the Sly Rod

Astuto is a tool for thieves, helping them get where they want to go and do what they must to guards and other opponents.

The Clever Thief's Bargain

You may have heard tales that make Galeno, the clever thief, sound like a fool and a dandy. There must be more to the story, for even the cruelest, most heartless thieves revere him as a legendary

hero. This is a tale of that side of Galeno, who abandoned his collection of magic wands after an unfortunate encounter with a wily sorcerer named Joaquin.

Now, it often seemed to Galeno that everyone but fighters and rogues cast spells, for Galeno knew little and cared less about monks. Fighters, and barbarians for that matter, were useful for fighting pursuers while clever rogues escaped. Galeno had no interest in scrolls, which he could use but once and then must discard, nor did he like the idea of toting a staff when trying to scale the walls of one of Vurkis' temples. He knew, of course, about various gloves, manuals, gadgets, and bits of clothing reputed to assist adventurers, but Galeno was fussy about the style and cut of his clothes and he did not want to carry an entire arsenal of items to do all the things he wished.

Galeno pondered his dilemma at a corner table in his favorite tavern one night when a slender man in a dark, hooded cloak pulled up a chair uninvited. "I hear you abandoned wands, Galeno."

"If it *were* true, how would you have heard it?" Galeno discretely freed a poisoned blade from its sheath at his belt.

The figure shrugged, or seemed to, within the voluminous cloak. "One hears things if one listens. If you need magic, I might be able to help."

"So you're a wizard then?"

"Of sorts," the figure said. "What would your tool be like?"

Galeno described all the things he wanted, and then added a few he dreamed up on the spot, just to test the intruder.

"Very well, I'll return tomorrow night with your tool," said the figure, and then it rose and walked out the tavern door before Galeno could ask about the cost.

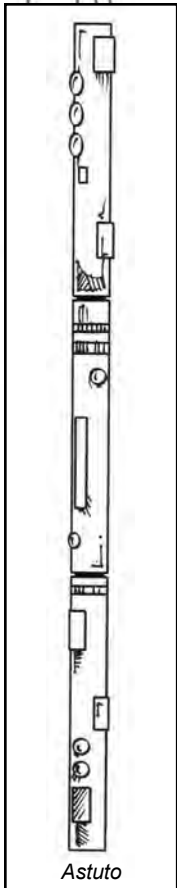
The next night Galeno was in the same seat at the same table. Several of his brother thieves slowly drank ale at nearby tables, watching the clever thief for a sign to act. Once again the figure came in the door, walked straight to Galeno's table, and sat down.

"Well," the thief said, "Where is it?"

"Not so fast, Galeno. There is the matter of payment."

Galeno smiled. "Many consider me a successful man. I have a great deal of wealth. Ask of me what you will."

The hooded figure laughed. "Ah, but you have stayed wealthy so long by not letting go of what you have. No, Galeno, you will not pay me gold even if I ask it." There was a rush of wind, and the tavern vanished into swirling, gray mists. When Galeno stopped looking for an escape and turned back to his unwelcome



Astuto

Table 2–14: Abilities Granted by *Astuto*

Scion Level	Ability Gained	Caster Level
—	Enhancement bonus +1	3rd
1st	Ability bonus (Dex +2)	—
	Expanding ladder	—
	Uncanny dodge	—
2nd	Competence bonus (+4)	—
	Increased threat (19-20)	—
3rd	Enhancement bonus +2	6th
	Improved evasion	—
	Sneak attack (+1d6)	—
4th	Competence bonus (+6)	—
5th	Ability bonus (Dex +4)	—
	Increased threat (18-20)	—
	Improved uncanny dodge	—
	<i>Passwall I</i>	9th
6th	Competence bonus (+8)	—
	Enhancement bonus +3	9th
7th	Opportunist	—
	<i>Passwall II</i>	9th
8th	Competence bonus (+10)	—
	Increased threat (17-20)	—
9th	Ability bonus (Dex +6)	—
	Enhancement bonus +4	12th
10th	<i>Shadow walk</i>	13th
	Slippery mind	—

companion, he saw the hood and cloak were gone, and the figure sitting before him was none other than Vurkis, the god of evil. “Your payment, clever thief, is that you will never rob my temples again, lest your soul be forfeit.”

Galeno gritted his teeth and thought. At last he said, “Our bargain is that, upon sealing our agreement, you will hand over to me a tool that does all I asked, and in return from that point forward my soul is forfeit if I ever rob one of your temples again. Correct?”

The god of evil carefully considered Galeno’s words, and then haggled over a few details to make sure Galeno would not rob his priests or his shrines or any place or person devoted to Vurkis. He then offered his hand to Galeno to seal the deal, and they shook upon it. Vurkis then handed *Astuto*, the Sly Rod, to Galeno.

As the winds blew again and the fog swirled close, Galeno laughed at the parting god. “When you want my soul, ask your sister Ilaia, for I gave it to her long ago.”

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 15.

Requirements

To qualify to wield *Astuto* as a swiftstaff scion, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Alignment: Any non-good.

Base Save Bonuses: Ref +4.

Skills: Hide 7 ranks, Move Silently 7 ranks.

Feats: Dodge

Special: Sneak attack +2d6. Evasion class ability.

Attributes

Astuto is a 3-foot rod composed of three, 1-foot metal segments screwed into each other. Each segment appears to have hatches, flaps, and buttons on its surface. It shows some weathering and a few scratches.

Hardness/Hit Points: 18/50.

Value: To someone other than a swiftstaff scion, *Astuto* appears to be worth as much as a +1 *club*: 2,300 gp.

Special Abilities

Astuto provides the following special abilities to its wielder, depending upon the character’s level in the swiftstaff scion prestige class (see Table 2-14: Abilities Granted by *Astuto*).

Initial Abilities: Anyone who wields *Astuto* will find that it functions a +1 *club*.

Expanding Ladder: As a standard action, the 1st-level scion can manipulate the controls on *Astuto* and cause it to expand to a 20-foot pole with perpendicular extensions. The scion can set it in place as a bridge or ladder. It can also be expanded to jam open doors or brace collapsing ceilings (treat *Astuto* as having a 22 Strength, so it can support up to 520 pounds). If this limit is exceeded, *Astuto* immediately collapses back into its rod form, dropping everything it had been supporting.

Ability Bonus: The scion gains a +2 enhancement bonus to Dexterity at 1st level, +4 at 4th level, and +6 at 9th level.

Uncanny Dodge: The 1st-level scion retains her Dexterity bonus to AC (if any) regardless of being caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker (she still loses her Dexterity bonus to AC if immobilized). If the scion already possesses uncanny dodge from levels in another class, she gains improved uncanny dodge (can’t be flanked) instead of this ability.

Adventure Hook

While adventuring in the catacombs underneath a temple dedicated to Vurkis, heroes come across a steel rod telescoped open to be ten feet long. The rod is wedged between the floor and ceiling of a room and it is obviously bowed, as if holding up a great weight. There is another door out of the chamber, and it is open. If a hero enters the room, the door through which she entered closes and locks. Scrutinizing the other door discovers signs that its lock was picked from the inside. How will the hero escape the room? How will she reunite with her comrades? Can she find a way to remove *Astuto* without the ceiling collapsing on her?



Competence Bonus: Beginning at 2nd level, the scion gains a +4 competence bonus to her Hide and Move Silently checks. This bonus increases to +6 at 4th level, +8 at 6th level, and +10 at 8th level.

Increased Threat: The threat range for the scion's sneak attacks with *Astuto* increases by +1 (so the threat range is now 19-20). The threat range increases to +2 at 5th level (18-20), and +3 at 8th level (17-20). This does not stack with the Improved Critical feat.

Enhancement Bonus: Beginning at 3rd level, *Astuto's* enhancement bonus increases, making it a +2 *club*. This enhancement bonus increases to +3 at 6th level and +4 at 9th level.

Sneak Attack: The scion's sneak attack damage increases by +1d6 at 3rd level. It increases by an additional +1d6 at 6th and 9th level.

Improved Evasion: This ability works like evasion, except that while the scion still takes no damage on a successful Reflex save against spells such as *fireball* or a breath weapon, he now takes only half damage on a failed save. The scion gains this ability at 3rd level.

Improved Uncanny Dodge: The 5th-level swiftstaff scion of *Astuto* can no longer be flanked. She can react to opponents on opposite sides of her as easily as she can react to a single attacker. This defense denies rogues and other classes the ability to use a flank attack to sneak attack the scion. The exception to this defense is that a rogue or other opponent with the sneak attack ability at least four levels higher than the scion can flank her (and thus sneak attack her).

If the scion has another class that grants the uncanny dodge ability, add all of the levels of the classes that grant the ability, and determine the scion's uncanny dodge ability on that basis.

Passwall I (Sp): The scion can cast the spell *passwall* once per day beginning at 5th level.

Opportunist: Once per round, the 7th-level scion can make an attack of opportunity against an opponent who has just been struck for damage in melee by another character. This attack counts as the scion's attack of opportunity for that round. Even a scion with the Combat Reflexes feat can't use the opportunist ability more than once per round.

Passwall II (Sp): As *passwall I*, but the 7th level scion can cast it twice per day.

Shadow Walk (Sp): As a standard action, the scion may use *Astuto* to cast *shadow walk*. She may use this ability twice per day once she has achieved 10th level.

Slippery Mind (Ex): This ability represents the 10th-level scion's ability to wriggle free from magical effects that would otherwise control or compel her. If the scion is affected by an enchantment and fails her saving throw, 1 round later she can attempt her saving throw again. She only gets this one extra chance to succeed at her saving throw.

Balade, the Trickster Staff

Balade is a legend among bards, instrument makers, and others who depend on music to make their way in the world.

A Masterpiece

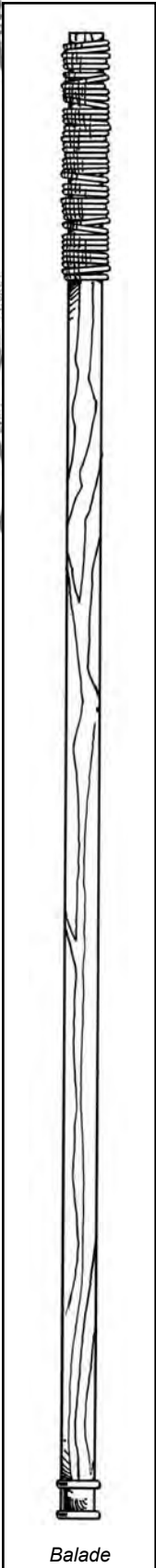
In the Age of the Old Kings, there was a musical instrument maker named Gregorio. Gregorio cared nothing for Plagues of Darkness, legendary monsters, or great heroes. Gregorio cared only for his instruments. He made all sorts of stringed instruments. He loved the feel of the wood, the careful shaping with tools and forms, the smell of the varnish and finally the sounds they made when played. Gregorio himself could play the mandolin and a few others, but he made no claim to be a musician. He was a maker, and that satisfied him.

As Gregorio grew older, his fame spread across the land. In the darkest times, the sound of a Gregorio lifted spirits, warmed hearts and stirred blood. Heroes marched into battle to tunes played on instruments from Gregorio's shop. Bards apprenticed with him just to learn a few of his skills. Still, Gregorio cared little for fame or wealth. He wanted simply to make musical instruments. Many believed the tools, if not the shop itself, held magic.

Age took its toll on Gregorio, and the day came when he realized his sight was growing dim. Fearing it meant the end of his work, he decided to create one final masterpiece. He began every day by praying to the gods for the time to complete his final work. Every act of creation was like a smaller prayer for Gregorio—a prayer of thanks for the years of joy brought by his work. At last his work was complete. His neighbors gathered to hear him play the last Gregorio, but his shop was silent. Finally the boldest neighbor could stand no more and entered the shop. He found Gregorio, completely blind, crying on a stool. When questioned, Gregorio explained they were tears of joy, and would say no more about it or about the last Gregorio.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 15.

The time came when Gregorio realized he was dying. He doubted he would live to see another year. He had never married, for no woman could compete with the instruments he considered his children. He felt a slight twinge of regret, for he had no child to whom he could leave his shop. He decided to summon all the journeymen and masters who trained with him back to his shop and to hold a contest. He would ask each to create a masterwork musical instrument. The creator of the sweetest sounding lute, harp, mandolin, bass, or other instrument would inherit Gregorio's shop,



Balade

and the last Gregorio of which many rumors spoke in taverns and back alleys.

The word went out with merchants, heralds, bards, and gossips: Gregorio's former students must gather at his shop to witness his final days and compete for his inheritance. As the word spread, rumors of the size of the inheritance grew faster than anglers' tales of the one that got away. Gregorio had not made an instrument in years. His last apprentice was truly a master in his own right, yet he stayed to comfort his blind master. Finally, the first dozen of Gregorio's former students arrived at the shop, to find the shutters closed, the door locked, and all still and silent. Several of the dozen were adventurers now, and they lost no time in unlocking the door. Inside, instruments in varying stages of completion hung from the rafters. Wood soaked in the forms, but no one was present. They found Gregorio dead, lying peacefully in his bed. There was no sign of his last apprentice.

The former students summoned a priest and requested the priest speak with Gregorio's spirit, for the inheritance had grown in the telling and they were anxious to settle the matter in accordance with their beloved master's wishes. The priest did as they asked, speaking with Gregorio's spirit at some length. At last the priest emerged from Gregorio's room to say that the old master had given his estate to the man who stayed by his side even after becoming a master, for that student truly loved both the craft and Gregorio. This astounded the students who had abandoned their lives, their work, their families,

Table 2–15: Abilities Granted by *Balade*

Scion Level	Ability Gained	Caster Level
—	Enhancement bonus +1/ masterwork	3rd
	Transformation	—
1st	Enhancement bonus +1/+1	3rd
2nd	Evasion	—
3rd	Competence bonus +4	—
—	Uncanny dodge	—
4th	Enhancement bonus +2/+2	6th
5th	Improved two-weapon fighting	—
6th	Competence bonus +8	—
—	Improved uncanny dodge	—
7th	Enhancement bonus +3/+3	9th
—	Improved evasion	—
8th	Greater two-weapon fighting	—
9th	Competence bonus +12	—
10th	Enhancement bonus +4/+4	12th

and their friends and traveled great distances to attend their dying master.

They wondered how one man could carry off all of Gregorio's estate, believing the exaggerated tales since the master could have asked any price for his creations. The priest, who came to know Gregorio as he visited the temples and lost his sight, gently reminded them that Gregorio had to be reminded to charge anything at all for his work. The deceased master worked because it seemed wrong not to use his gods-given gifts, and he wanted his instruments to be played. Otherwise, there was no point in making them. In fact, the priest informed them, the inheritance had been only the last Gregorio: a magic staff the late master named *Balade*.

Check Required: Knowledge (history) DC 15.

Requirements

To qualify to wield *Balade* as a swiftstaff scion, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any non-lawful.

Base Save Bonuses: Will +3.

Skills: Perform 7 ranks (must be able to play at least one stringed instrument).

Spells: Able to cast 1st-level bard spells.

Attributes

Balade is a 6-foot wooden staff used for hiking. It has a metal cap at the base and a coil of thin cord at the head. It shows the usual dings, dents, and scratches caused by hiking.

Hardness/Hit Points: 13/50.

Value: To someone other than a swiftstaff scion, *Balade* appears to be worth as much as a +1/*masterwork quarterstaff*: 2,600 gp.

Special Abilities

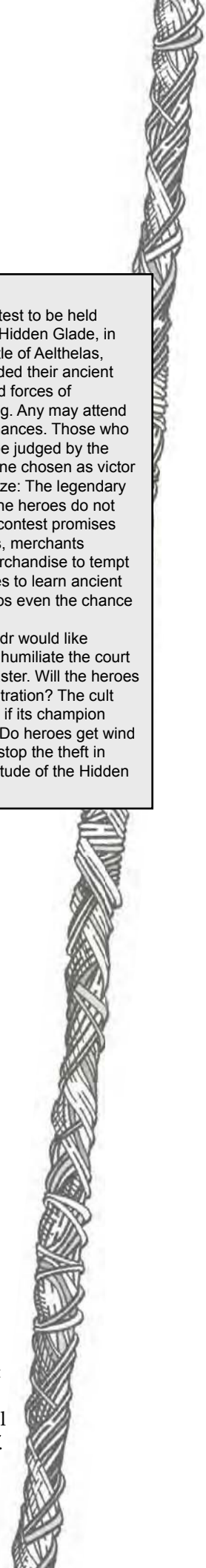
Balade provides the following special abilities to its wielder, depending upon the character's level in the spellstaff scion prestige class (see Table 2-15: Abilities Granted by *Balade*).

Initial Abilities: Anyone who wields *Balade* will find that it functions as a +1/*masterwork quarterstaff*. The bearer, even if not a swiftstaff scion, can command the staff to transform by holding it in

Adventure Hook

Heroes learn of a contest to be held between bards in the Hidden Glade, in celebration of the Battle of Aethelas, when the elves defended their ancient home from the undead forces of Vyskandr the Lich-King. Any may attend and enjoy the performances. Those who wish to compete will be judged by the elven court, and the one chosen as victor will receive a great prize: The legendary staff *Balade*. Even if the heroes do not wish to compete, the contest promises exciting performances, merchants bringing their best merchandise to tempt the elves, opportunities to learn ancient elven lore, and perhaps even the chance of adventure.

The cult of Vyskandr would like nothing better than to humiliate the court that defeated their master. Will the heroes discover the cult's infiltration? The cult will try to steal *Balade* if its champion can't win the contest. Do heroes get wind of the plot? Can they stop the theft in time, earning the gratitude of the Hidden Glade?



both hands and speaking the name of a string instrument. *Balade* transforms into that instrument, with the coil of thin cord becoming the necessary strings. *Balade* can become something as small as a ukulele or as large as a standing bass.

Spells per Day/Spells Known: At each scion level, the character gains new spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) as if she had also gained a level in a spellcasting class to which she belonged before adding the prestige class level. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (metamagic or item creation feats, and so on). If the character had more than one spellcasting class before becoming a scion, the player must decide to which class to add each scion level for the purpose of determining spells per day.

In addition, *Balade* allows bards to take spells not on their standard spell list (see below).

Enhancement Bonus: At 1st level, *Balade's* enhancements increase to +1/+1. These bonuses improve to +2/+2 at 4th level, +3/+3 at 7th level, and finally +4/+4 at 10th level.

Evasion (Ex): If exposed to any effect that normally allows a character to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage (such as a *fireball*), the 2nd-level scion takes no damage with a successful saving throw. The scion can only use evasion if wearing light or no armor.

Uncanny Dodge: The 3rd-level scion retains his Dexterity bonus to AC (if any) regardless of being caught flat footed or struck by an invisible attacker (he still loses his Dexterity bonus to AC if immobilized). If the scion already possesses uncanny dodge from levels in another class, he gains improved uncanny dodge (can't be flanked) instead of this ability.

Competence Bonus: The scion gains a +4 competence bonus on his Perform checks at 3rd level. This bonus increases to +8 at 6th level and +12 at 9th level.

Improved Two-Weapon Fighting (Ex): Beginning at 5th level, the scion gains a second attack with an off-hand weapon in addition to the standard single extra attack, albeit at a -5 penalty. The scion can only use this ability when wearing light or no armor.

Improved Uncanny Dodge: The 6th-level swiftstaff scion of *Balade* can no longer be flanked. He can react to opponents on opposite sides of him as easily as he can react to a single attacker. This defense denies rogues and other classes the ability to use a flank attack to sneak attack the scion. The exception to this defense is that a rogue or other opponent with the sneak attack ability at least four levels higher than the scion can flank him (and thus sneak attack him).

Improved Evasion: This ability works like evasion, except that while the 7th-level scion still takes no damage on a successful Reflex save against spells such as *fireball* or a breath weapon, he now takes only half damage on a failed save.

Greater Two-Weapon Fighting (Ex): At 8th level, the scion gets a third attack with her off-hand weapon, albeit at a -10 penalty.

Balade Scion Spell List

Balade adds the following spells to the bard's spell list:

First Level—*Color spray*, *Nystul's magical aura*, *Nystul's undetectable aura*

Second Level—*Leomund's trap*, *magic mouth*

Third Level—*Nondetection*, *phantom steed*

Fourth Level—*Illusory wall*, *phantasmal killer*

Fifth Level—*Seeming*

Sixth Level—*Mislead*

Étincelle, the Rod of Shock

Étincelle is a legendary weapon with extraordinary electrical powers.

The Fox's Rest

Reynard the fox was hunting one night when a storm broke. The sky roared, and rain fell like arrows. Drenched, he sought shelter among the roots of an oak tree and curled his tail over his nose, intending to sleep until the storm passed. Soon the earth began to tremble, and bits of dirt fell from the roots into his already wet fur. Reynard was almost as proud of his red fur as he was of the silver-tipped flag of his tail. Angry, he poked his black nose out of roots to see what disturbed his sleep. To his surprise, Sem, the god of strength, sat beneath the oak, grinning up at the storm. "Oh, it's you," the fox said, for they had met before when the world was young.

"Isn't the storm wonderful?" replied Sem.

"Honestly!" exclaimed the fox. "It rains so hard you wash away the crops, the lightning frightens the flocks and herds, and the thunder keeps me awake!"

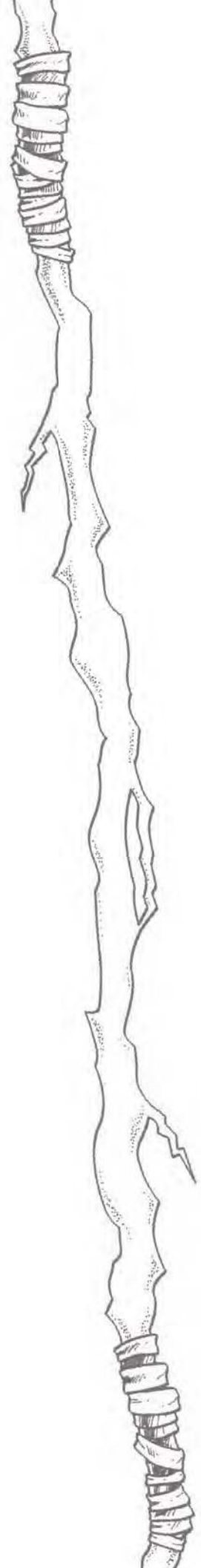
The god's brow blackened as he turned to frown down at the tiny fox. "What right have you, a mere beast, to criticize the gods?"

The fox licked the fur on one paw, considering his answer. He knew full well that his impetuous tongue had gotten him into trouble once again. At last he asked, "Is not Syrnia, your sister, beautiful?"

"Of course! Her beauty is second only to that of Lani, the very goddess of beauty."

Reynard nodded, for he had known Sem would answer that way. "Isn't it true that Syrnia's home is the moon?"

Sem snorted, knocking over several small trees. "Of course, everyone knows that, even a mere fox."



“Then why do you hide her beauty from the world with your storm? No one can see her with all the clouds and rain.”

Now it was Sem’s turn to puzzle out how to answer. Unfortunately for him, Sem was not as clever as Reynard. As he thought, the storm lessened. Finally, just before dawn, he answered, “Clouds must rain, and wind must blow, for this is the way of things. If not now, then some other time. Would you rather it rained during the day, and you could not see Apon drive his fiery chariot across the sky?”

“It is all one to me, for though we foxes respect Apon, we sleep during the day and worship Synchronia by night.” Reynard shrugged and began grooming the tip of his tail.

“Ha! You would dictate to the gods when the rains come! You are arrogant, fox, and must pay the price for your hubris!” Sem rose to his feet and raised his great spear to strike down Reynard.

“Stay your hand, brother!” Around the oak, the wind stilled and a silver light picked out every leaf and blade of grass. Serene and terrible in her beauty, Synchronia floated just above the wet ground. “For this one is a priest of my church, and as such under my protection.”

Sem loved his sister too much to contradict her. Frustrated by Reynard’s hubris and Synchronia’s interruption, he leaped into the sky. Synchronia smiled at her beloved fox, and became a mist that slowly faded. Sem was only waiting for her to go, however, and though she forbade him to strike the fox directly, she had said nothing about the oak tree. From his cloud fortress, he cast a lightning bolt down at the tree, shattering several of its branches.

Reynard had suspected such a trick, however, and was safe in an abandoned badger hole a short distance away. After the branches crashed to the ground, the fox slipped across the grass and took the straightest of the scorched branches in his mouth. The still smoking branch burned his mouth, but he held on and took it to his church in the forest. There he fashioned it into a club, turning Sem’s power into a weapon to defend the mortal world.

Check Required: Knowledge (religion) DC 15.

This is why foxes have black mouths, why they never lair among the roots of trees, and why it is bad luck to offend Synchronia by killing a fox.

Check Required: Knowledge (nature) DC 10.

Requirements

To qualify to wield *Étincelle* as a swiftstaff scion, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Alignment: Any lawful.

Base Attack Bonus: +2.

Feats: Lightning Reflexes, Stunning Fist, Expertise

Special: The character who wishes to become the swiftstaff scion of *Étincelle* must possess the evasion class ability. In addition, the character must be able to do at least 1d6 points of damage with his unarmed attacks (1d4 damage if Small, 1d8 damage if Large).

Ex-Scions

A monk who takes levels in this swiftstaff scion prestige class can gain new levels as a monk.

Attributes

Étincelle appears as a staff of blackened wood. It is three feet long and has copper caps at each end and copper bands at various points around it. The caps are dented and scratched from use in combat as it can be used as a club. It is straight and has a uniform thickness. *Étincelle* has the following attributes.

Hardness/Hit Points: 18/50.

Value: To someone other than a swiftstaff scion, *Étincelle* appears to be worth as much as a *masterwork club* that casts *flare* once per day: 480 gp.

Special Abilities

Étincelle provides the following special abilities to its wielder, depending upon the character’s level in the swiftstaff scion prestige class (see Table 2-16: Abilities Granted by *Étincelle*).

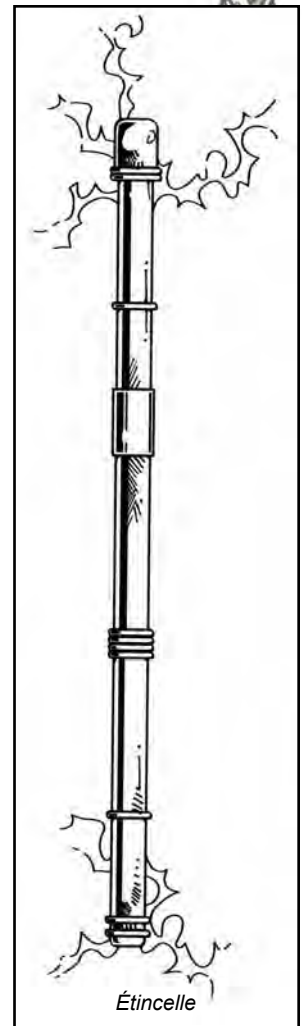
Initial Abilities: When first acquired, *Étincelle* functions as a masterwork club. Anyone who wields it, whether a swiftstaff scion or not, benefits from the *flare I* and *light* abilities (see below).

Flare I (Sp): As a standard action, the wielder can will *Étincelle* to emit a *flare* once per day, as per the spell.

Light (Sp): As a free action, the wielder can cause *Étincelle* to radiate light as a torch. Extinguishing it requires another free action taken on any subsequent round.

AC Bonus (Ex): When unarmored and unencumbered, the scion may add his Wisdom bonus (if any) to his AC. In addition, the scion gains a +1 bonus to AC at 5th level, increasing to +2 at 10th level. These bonuses apply even against touch attacks or when flat-footed. He loses these bonuses when immobilized or helpless, when wearing any armor or carrying a shield, or when carrying a medium or heavy load.

Enhancement Bonus: The rod functions as a +1 *club* in combat when the scion is 1st level. At 3rd level, the enhancement bonus increases to +2.



Unarmored Speed Bonus (Ex): Upon reaching 1st level as the swiftstaff scion of *Étincelle*, the scion's unarmored speed increases +10 feet when wielding the staff. This increase becomes +20 feet at 3rd level.

Flare II (Sp): As *flare I*, but the 2nd level scion can use this ability a number of times per day equal to his swiftstaff scion class level.

Adventure Hook

A terrible lightning storm passes over the village in which the heroes are staying. Lightning strikes an ancient oak nearby, and the next day the heroes find a beautiful young woman with flowing red hair gathering fragments of wood under the scorched trunk. Her name is Kayly. She explains that she needs the wood to burn as an offering at a temple in the forest. She doesn't actually know where the temple is. Her family lived in this land long ago, and her grandfather told her tales about a temple to *Syrnia* in the forest. Her family fell on hard times, and Kayly has come to make an offering to *Syrnia* for the wisdom to see how to help her family. Her grandfather told her the temple was very beautiful, and contained many wonderful things dedicated to *Syrnia*. If the heroes agree to help her find the temple, they may take any one item they find within.

If the heroes agree, they eventually find the temple in question, in a grove of beech trees. Foxes watch them from the underbrush. Entering the temple, they discover an altar, on which lies a scratched, dented, 3-foot long club made of blackened wood. It has copper caps at each end and copper bands around it at various points. The temple is clearly dedicated to *Syrnia*. Could this be the resting place of the legendary *Étincelle*? Kayly walks around a corner of the temple, and the heroes never see her again. Was she really a young woman, or a goddess in disguise?

Shocking Grasp I (Sp): Beginning at 2nd level, the swiftstaff scion of *Étincelle* can use the staff to deliver a *shocking grasp* as per the spell once per day.

Combat Reflexes: At 2nd level, the scion gains Combat Reflexes as a bonus feat.

Spell Focus: The DCs for all *Étincelle*'s spell-like abilities increases to +2 at 3rd level. These DCs increase by an additional +1 at 5th, 7th, and 10th levels, for a total of +3, +4, and +5, respectively.

Lightning Bolt I (Sp): As a standard action, the 7th-level scion can will *Étincelle* to emit *lightning bolt* once per day, as per the spell.

Shocking Grasp II (Sp): As *shocking grasp I*, but the 2nd-level scion can use this ability a number of times per day equal to his class level.

Improved Initiative: At 4th level, the scion gains Improved Initiative as a bonus feat.

Shock Club: When the scion reaches 5th level, *Étincelle* acts as a +2 *shock club*, improving to a +3 enhancement bonus at 7th level.

Deflect Arrows: At 6th level, the scion gains Deflect Arrows as a bonus feat. *Étincelle* may be used with this feat.

Improved Evasion (Ex): This ability works like evasion, except that while the scion still takes no damage on a successful Reflex save against spells such as *fireball* or a breath weapon, he now takes only half damage on a failed save. This ability may be used beginning at 6th level of the swiftstaff scion class.

Stunning Attack (Ex): The 7th-level scion can use *Étincelle* with Stunning Fist.

Chain Lightning (Sp): As a standard action, the scion can will *Étincelle* to emit *chain lightning* once per day, as per the spell, beginning at 8th level.

Improved Disarm: At 8th level, the scion gains Improved Disarm as a bonus feat. The scion must meet the prerequisites normally required by the feat in order to use it.

Improved Trip: At 9th level, the scion gains Improved Trip as a bonus feat. The scion must meet the prerequisites normally required by the feat in order to use it.

Lightning Bolt II (Sp): As *lightning bolt I*, except the 10th-level scion can use this ability a number of times per day equal to his class level.

Shocking Burst Club: *Étincelle* becomes a +3 *shocking burst club* to its swiftstaff scion upon reaching 9th level. Its enhancement bonus increases to +4 at 10th level.

Table 2–16: Abilities Granted by *Étincelle*

Scion Level	Ability Gained	Caster Level
—	<i>Flare I</i>	1st
	<i>Light</i>	1st
1st	Enhancement bonus +1	3rd
	Unarmored speed bonus +10	—
2nd	<i>Flare II</i>	*
	<i>Shocking grasp I</i>	*
	Combat Reflexes	—
3rd	Enhancement bonus +2	6th
	Unarmored speed bonus +20	—
	Spell focus +2	—
4th	<i>Lightning bolt I</i>	*
	<i>Shocking grasp II</i>	*
	Improved Initiative	—
5th	Shock club +2	8th
	Spell focus +3	—
6th	Deflect Arrows	—
	Improved evasion	—
7th	Shock club +3	—
	<i>Lightning bolt I</i>	*
	Stunning attack	—
	Spell focus (+4)	—
8th	<i>Chain lightning</i>	*
	Improved Disarm	—
9th	<i>Shocking burst club</i> +3	10th
	Improved Trip	—
10th	<i>Shocking burst club</i> +4	12th
	<i>Lightning bolt II</i>	*

* current swiftstaff scion level

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