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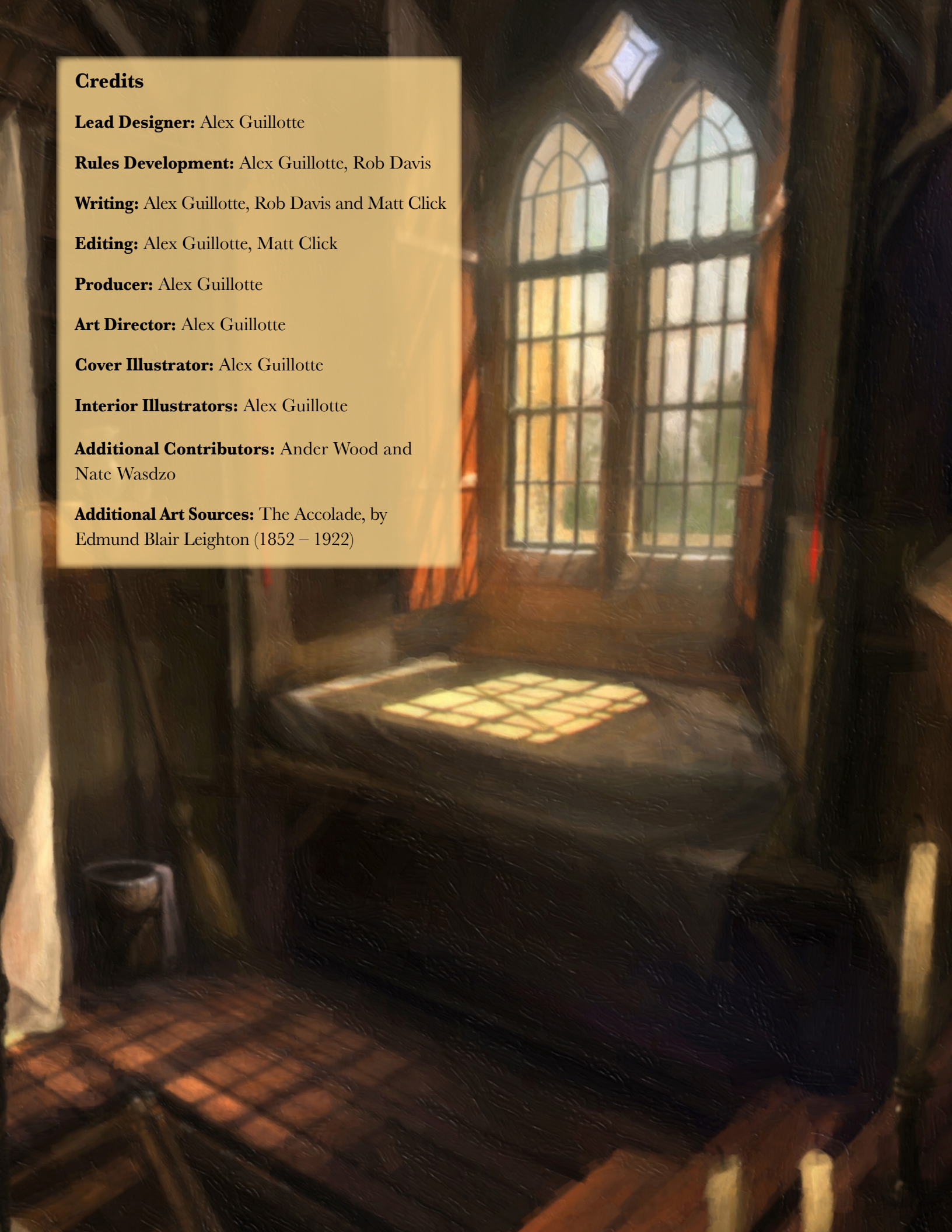
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INTRODUCTION

MAGIC ITEMS

Too often in fantasy role playing games, magic items are reduced to nothing more than statistics, without flavor or history. Players will acquire a sword that is one plus better, and think nothing of selling or tossing their old one in favor of the new. This makes treasure more mechanical, and far less interesting than it could be. Indeed, acquisition or creation of a single magic item can spark an entire epic quest.

In Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, the sword Sting was far more than a mere weapon with a bonus versus goblins; it had a deep, rich history that added much meaning and value to the bearer. This book strives to help players and dungeon masters alike add similar history and context to such items of arcane power. It is hoped that the role player can use this lore to help weave enticing stories and quests that will make the players feel much more rewarded than giving them the boring old "you find a +1 sword."

More than just the item, how it is presented or earned by the party can have a big impact on how it is perceived. If a group opens a chest in an abandoned church, the treasure they find inside, while useful, may not be highly valued. At the least, no fond scenes or memories will be remembered from how the items were acquired. Instead, if the group had to fight their way past a horde of skeletons, into a deeper chamber where zombies and ghouls were being led by a mad sorcerer, now the treasure has more resonance. Thus, without altering the magic items in any way, the DM has added value to them with story and lore.

This value can be increased even further. Many of the entries in this book detail the story of how an item was created, by whom and for what purpose. These fragments of lore can be launching points for ancient rumors and whispered secrets, encouraging players to explore and seek them out. Game masters who

use this lore should not limit themselves to the words within, but add to or even modify them to better fit with their homeworld lore, and really bring them to life.

LEARNING OF THE ITEM

Imagine a town where the locals speak of Rangoth, the dwarven hero of the Giant Wars. They talk of his wielding of the mighty Axe of Tenacity, created by the fabled blacksmith Ortonn. This ax helped the dwarven soldier to lay low dozens of massive beings, and rallied the remaining forces to turn defeat into victory. The townsfolk lament the disappearance of Rangoth decades ago, as recent incursions by ogres suggest that the giants are planning a new offensive.

These rumors can be picked up in a local tavern or inn, and serve as a hook to intrigue players. Perhaps they can speak to other locals; retired adventurers or aging dwarves who remember the Giant Wars. Some of them speak of where Rangoth disappeared, and where his famous ax might still be today. This might lead the group to explore some ruins, ravaged by war, in search of this magic weapon.

ACQUIRING AND OWNING

When the time comes that the players find or acquire the weapon, continue the build up. Don't have it merely be lying on the ground. Instead, it might be found clutched in the hands of a dwarven skeleton, or resting on out-stretched arms of a statue, offering itself to the next hero. Upon being picked up, perhaps the player is hit with a wave of memories, visions of fierce battle against huge creatures.

This will go far to insure the weapon won't be thought of as a 'mere' +2 ax that does extra damage vs giants. Instead, it will have rich meaning for the player, and a value beyond its statistics. Note that this is achieved not because



of what the weapon can do, but because of how you brought it to life with history, hints and story. That is the way this book can best be used, that is how to take the unique and individualized tale for every item that follows and make the most of it.

The story of the item needn't end here, either. Perhaps the PCs make it back to town, proudly bearing the weapon. They boast of their success, and indeed, locals gather to gawk and wonder at famous relic. This not only gives the item greater value to the players, it rewards them further with reputation and admiration. Maybe word of this ax being recovered reaches other ears. It might be those of mere thieves, who will seek to steal it that they might sell it for great profit. Or it might reach all the way back to the giants, who now have a specific target in mind, and seek to destroy the bearer of the ax. Indeed, there is much story which can be had from a single item.

DISCOVERING AND GROWING

There's nothing that says that once a hero acquires such an item, he is automatically familiar with all its properties, nor how to activate them. The ways in which the bearer becomes accustomed or attuned to an item can create even more adventure. Instead of the example above, the DM can take the opposite approach. A character finds an item, one covered in mystic runes, and seeks out someone trained to identify such creations.

The first person he finds knows only that the item is ancient, and that it is beyond his ability to discern its properties, but he knows of an expert, a recluse, who may be able to unlock its secrets. This leads the players on a quest to locate this expert, and again the door is thrown wide open for many possibilities. Who is this recluse? Why is he in hiding? What dangers must be traversed to reach him? And so on.

Additionally, the item does not have to reach its maximum potential right away. The hero might use the ax for a while, admiring its balance and sharpness, only to later discover it has other functions. These might be hidden properties that aren't expressed until time has passed and the hero becomes comfortable and adjusted to the item, or the item itself might need time to adjust to its new owner. These hidden abilities might only express themselves under certain circumstances, such as when the bearer is near death, or under similar duress.

This adds a wonderful longevity to the item, because it means that as the hero grows in power, so might his equipment. This not only makes the weapon viable and desirable for longer, it can serve to increase the bond between itself and the owner. This helps to dismiss notions of tossing away old 'useless' magic items for new ones with marginal improvement. Imagine the idea of a hero using the same weapon for ten levels. At this point, the weapon has become almost legendary, and a distinct part of the legend of the hero wielding it.



AIGÉADACH



RING OF ACID

Voqium was a wizard of some renown a hundred years ago, and was particularly known for his mastery of alchemy. Kings, nobles and adventurers would travel great distances to purchase his tinctures, potions and elixirs, and he soon became extremely wealthy. Since he was advanced in years, he decided to retire to a quiet life of simple pleasures, but this decision did not sit well with a particularly vain and nasty Baron who had come to rely on Voqium's arts.

Baron Eliar Granes had been purchasing a regular dose of a very complex elixir that maintained his youthful appearance, though he was well into his middle age. In a state of panic, the baron sent his best men to capture the old man and imprison him in his keep. There the baron had set up an alchemy workshop where he could force old Voqium to produce as many elixirs as he could before he died.

As a precaution against escape, Voqium was forced to wear leg irons that suppressed his magical abilities. On top of that, the baron consulted lesser alchemists who suggested a list of ingredients that should not be provided to the prisoner, as they could provide a means of escape.

But Voqium was a clever man, and he had convinced the baron to allow him to keep his father's ring – which was clearly not magical – for sentimental reasons. Seeing no reason not to do so, the baron allowed the old man his sentimentalities.

In secret however, Voqium began the long process of transmuting the stone of the ring into something more. The true genius of the plan was that all of the materials necessary were of no real value or power in and of themselves, but when prepared and combined properly, they would slowly metamorphose the stone into a powerful alchemical tool.

After six months, Baron Granes was lulled into a false sense of security, but he hadn't anticipated the extreme patience of a master alchemist. Voqium summoned the baron, claiming that he had completed the first batch of elixirs, and of course the baron arrived eagerly, looking forward to the return of his youthful appearance.

Voqium reached out with the vial of supposed elixir, and so greedy was the baron that he didn't notice that the color of the alchemist's ring had changed from an azure blue to a translucent green. As the baron put his hand out for the vial, Voqium unleashed his trap. A cone of acid erupted from the stone of the ring covering the baron and his two bodyguards in a pale yellowy-green acid that blinded them and immediately began to dissolve their flesh.

Having dissolved the chain of his manacles before his captors arrived, Voqium made his escape, killing a dozen more guards along the way, and finally dissolving a hole through the outer wall of the keep.

The anti-magic manacles were discovered broken behind a blacksmith shop several miles away, and Voqium was never heard from again.

Baron Granes spent the rest of his life in blind seclusion, unwilling to let other see the horrible disfigurement caused by the vicious acid.

PROPERTIES

While wearing this ring, you are resistant to all acid damage. Once you are attuned to it, you can use the following properties:

Acid Touch. The ring allows you to secrete acid from your hand. This can be used to inflict damage with a melee spell attack (2d6) for 3 consecutive rounds, or to dissolve up to 6 cubic inches of any non-magical material except for glass, mithril or adamantine. This can be used to dissolve a lock, ruin a weapon, or make a hole through a door. The process of dissolving 6 inches of material takes 10 minutes.

Acid Splash. You can use the ring to cast the cantrip Acid Splash (3d6) 1 time after a short or long rest.

Cone of Acid. Once after a long rest, you can project a 15 foot cone of acid from the stone on the ring. Anyone in the area must make a Dexterity save (DC 14) or suffer 6d6 hit points of acid damage. Succeeding on the saving throw reduces the damage by half.



ALMIZAIR'S BANE

THE BLOOD NEEDLE

The human city of Bedryn Keep had once been home to a proud and great people. Not a city of high trade nor culture, it was built with defense in mind. An intimidating stronghold, with high stone walls at its front, sheer cliff faces at its back, and an army of well-trained soldiers within. But as with all great cities, eventually Bedryn Keep fell into ruin, though the reason for its demise has been lost to the mists of time.

A century or more after the city's fall, a twisted sorcerer named Almizair discovered the ruins. Deep in the dungeons of the city's old castle he began to conduct magical experiments on living creatures of all types in order to concoct a way to prolong his own life and possibly even attain immortality. Almizair supposed that by holding people in a state of extreme misery and a hairsbreadth away from death, he could peer into their souls and obtain the secrets that would keep him from ever facing death himself.

His victims were generally hapless beggars from nearby towns that he lured into his cart with the promise of gold for a little help at his 'estate', or occasionally a band of wandering adventurers, wishing to explore the ruins and happening upon the seemingly friendly old man in gold robes.

While his victims came from all walks of life, and a wide variety of species, they all became equal on his table or chained to his damp stone wall. They all had to face the point of his unique spike-like dagger. A dagger that he lovingly referred to as the "blood needle."

This cruel dagger had been forged under duress by two of Almizair's earliest captives, a pair of dwarven brothers who made the grave error of telling him that they were skilled smiths. Almizair used his magic to compel them to create the weapon from a shard of hell steel that he has acquired some years earlier, as well as bits of bone removed from the smiths own legs.

Almizair obsessed over the details of this spike, designing it to inflict the greatest fear and suffering possible. When it was finally finished and put to use, he reveled in the amount of pain he could cause with its dark metal point. The screams of his victims could be heard for miles around.

While he did live to be nearly 120 years old, his blood needle eventually found its way into its master's head before he could complete his 'research'.

As Almizair became greedier, the numbers of his prisoners had grown, and he proved unable to contain them all. A riot broke out and the prisoners overwhelmed their captor. In the chaos of the escape it was a young elven boy of the Miralthenn Forest that wrestled the weapon from its master and sent it plunging through his eye. The boy was seen cleaning the dagger on Almizair's golden robe, tucking it into his belt, and he ran to freedom with the dozens of other prisoners who still had use of their legs.



PROPERTIES

This functions as a normal, if evil looking, +1 dagger for anyone who has the stomach to pick it up. After attuning to the weapon, the user can access the following properties:

Keen. This weapon scores a critical hit on a 19-20.

Agony. Anyone who suffers a wound from this dagger must make a successful Constitution save (DC 12) or become stunned for 1d4 rounds as pain wracks their body. If the wound is a critical hit, they are stunned for 2d4 rounds with no save.

Fear. Once after each long rest, the wielder can cause fear (as the spell – DC 14) except that it effects all within a 30 foot radius.

AURIC BRACELET



BRACELET OF AURIC COUPLING

Not all items of power are created in a wizard's lab or a blacksmith's fire. Sometimes they can be forged in the heat of battle. Eristoles, a master of the arcane, was with four other companions, under some forgotten ruins, when they heard the heavy footsteps. Being veteran explorers, they knew that had less than a minute before the confrontation would begin.

Each of the five had their own methods of preparation. The wizard Eristoles expected a fierce fight, and so set out to cast one of his most powerful enchantments; turning his flesh to iron. He had done it a few times before, and the spell had doubtless saved his life, changing it from soft, easily-puncturable skin to supple but solid iron. As he finished the last words of the incantation, his skin transformed, as it was expected to, but not in the manner it did! Instead of a metallic gray, his skin was now the color of polished gold. Eristoles was well-studied, and he correctly deduced the reason almost immediately.

Almost an hour earlier, the group had come up a small chest of jewellery; rings, necklaces, and a bracelet. As per habit, Eristoles enhanced his arcane senses, seeking the presence of magical items. The bracelet gave off a faint dweomer, one which suggested to the wizard that it held unreleased magic. He promised himself he would study it in greater detail, once the opportunity provided itself. The wizard confidently placed the bracelet upon his own wrist, where it fit well. Was it gently vibrating, or was he just imagining it?

In the present, Baergon stepped forward, his large sword ready to face the attackers. Eristoles, almost gleaming, realized why he his skin turned gold, but he wouldn't confirm this until later. His spell had unleashed the magic that lay dormant in the bracelet. Clearly, it was not mere gold, as it had first seemed. Some metals, very, very rare metals, had an inherent magic to them. It was innate, part of the material. Oh, how the wizard would dearly love to locate the original source of this metal. Perhaps he would suggest it to his colleagues later, over ales.

Eristoles casting, along with the natural properties of the bracelet, combined. The result was a permanent infusion of some of the spell's effects. The caster permitted himself a brief grin. Some of his peers would have taken years to determine what had occurred, but not him. His knowledge was considerable and his instincts sharp. His position in the group was well-earned. He knew this bracelet would be forever useful, made more powerful by its own nature and the magic he had unleashed.

With the rest of his quintet, he turned to fight to the death, smiling all the while.

PROPERTIES

If detected for, the bracelet gives off only a faint whisper of magic, despite its released powers. Twice per day, upon command, the forearm wearing it will turn as hard as steel,

and the color of gold. This arm grants the benefits of a small shield, and can be used in a similar manner to help deflect blows. The effect lasts for an hour, and for all intents and purposes the wielder's arm is metal. It can smash through wood or glass without injury, or crush small objects with the hand.

Each time the bracelet is used this way, one of the two gems set in will dim. After one day has passed, the gems will glow again, indicating the bracelet's power is available.



BÅLVERK



RING OF THE BULWARK

All wars share certain commonalities; suffering, loss and death. Even in a world where magical healing can almost instantly close wounds and mend bones, this truth holds true. Wars often span many, many miles, there are a finite number of healers, and very few agree to be field medics. This isn't cowardice, but common sense. A sound tactic for any attacking force was to kill the medics first, so that you didn't have to defeat the same soldiers over and over.

Varine Tole was a veteran healer, and had seen many wars. She held field medics in the highest regard, considering them possibly the bravest on the field. Soldiers, if pressed, at least had the skills to defend themselves, and were armored for protection. Healers usually lacked fighting skills, (it wasn't why they were on the field), and heavy armor would only slow them down, and make their healing magics more difficult to apply.

Varine was a champion of the field medic, and she had the clout to get them anything they needed that would help them do their job. Despite her efforts, far too often she would hear reports of another battle physician slain while trying to save dying soldiers. It was only after she witnessed a siege that a thought occurred to her, one that made her immediately seek out the war engineer, Snell.

Snell rarely left his workshop. A gnome, less than four feet tall, his laboratory was awash in half-completed devices, tools, and parchments with detailed drawings of notions for weapons of warfare. Varine felt he was nearly without conscience, so detached from the lethality of his creations, but she could not deny his skill. With persistence, she managed to pry him away from his inventions long enough to discuss her idea. Snell's reaction turned from annoyance to enthusiasm, and he agreed to immediately set to work on it.

Varine left him to work, knowing she'd only be in his way, and was pleased that he was creating something defensive and not offensive, something that would save lives and not take them. She continued her work in the infirmary, assigning healers and advising on the more difficult cases. The injured came in fast enough that within a week she had all but forgotten her meeting with Snell. Then, one day, he was just there, at the door, with an odd grin on his face. He held out a thick hand with equally thick fingers, palm up. In it rested a wide-band steel ring. Varine was puzzled, as her original ideas were for a small shield.

Snell spoke in a high-pitched voice, whiny in pitch but filled with pride. "This is lighter, it won't slow the healer down." Once she plucked the ring from his hand, Snell turned and was gone, back to his lab, his mind already

churning with other ideas. Deep in thought, she walked slowly out the front of the infirmary, to an area where the field medics rested and ate. She selected Cerano, an elf twice wounded in duty, yet still willing to go back. She handed him the ring and told him of it's usage, receiving a grateful smile and nod in return.

Within a few hours, Cerano was back on the battlefield, running with a bulky soldier who struggled to protect him from the arrows that frequently struck near them. Kneeling before an injured compatriot, Cerano twisted the ring's wide band, and a wall of steel, bigger than any shield, arced about them. It formed a half-sphere of metal that easily deflected incoming missile fire. Cerano set straight to work, and soon the injured man was fighting again, as the elf ran to the next fallen.

PROPERTIES

When activated, this ring converts into a curved steel wall, covering 180 degrees, half-sphere in shape. It is immobile in this form, but will stop any standard attacks from getting through. The area it covers is ten feet wide and five feet deep, enough for several defenders to crowd behind. The wall will last for ten minutes or until intentionally collapsed by the ring bearer. This ability can be used three times after a long rest.



BLOODBATH



SPEAR OF CARNAGE

Perhaps the most ancient magic weapon still in existence, Bloodbath was forged in the age of legends – long before recorded history. To this day, bards and sages still recite the epic tale of Turgarth the Red.

In the time before the elves were born, Turgarth was born to a clan of the first men. His father Nargarth, the wisest of their people, received a vision of titanic men coming down from the sky and laying waste to the land. He called these men titans.

Nargarth sent his only son Turgarth to the black peak to recover the bleeding stone – so called because of the reddish orange stains on its surface and surrounding rock.

Using their hottest pottery kiln, Turgarth heated the stone until it's "blood" ran white hot. He shaped the molten metal into a vicious spear point, forged it to a razor's edge, and quenched it in cave bear oil.

For the shaft of the spear, he boiled a section of long bone from the great mountain roc and infused it with fire beetle resin. Turgarth carved the end piece from nightwood, and once assembled, Nargarth immersed it in the well of souls which contained the blood of their ancestors.

Even as they finished the spear, a hunter staggered into the village announcing that the titans would reach the high western pass by dawn of the next day.

Turgarth took the spear and, garbed only in pale bone powder paint, set out at a run. He traveled all night, climbing to the top of the narrow stone pass, and hiding in a cleft between the rocks, he waited.

He didn't wait long before he heard the thunderous footsteps of the titan's leader. Turgarth looked down upon the 130 foot titan, clad in huge plates of silvery metal, striding towards him.

Turgarth took several steps back, and kissing the blade of the spear with a silent prayer to his ancestors, he ran forward and leapt into the air. Aiming the spear for the titan's exposed neck, he rode the spear down, driving it deep into the titan's exposed flesh. The titan lurched sideways, unable to scream for the spear had plunged through his windpipe. Turgarth clung to the shaft of the spear for dear life, even as a fountain of blood erupted from the wound, covering Turgarth and the spear in deep crimson. Moments later, the massive titan fell dead.

Turgarth stood atop the titan's corpse defiantly and, bathed in the blood of his vanquished foe, held the spear aloft. Turgarth spoke, and the voices of his ancestors spoke as one through him.

"This land is not yours! Go back from whence you came or you shall all meet this fate!"

Seeing their most powerful warrior vanquished so easily by one so small, the titans left the valley, never to return.

PROPERTIES

Bloodbath is a +2 spear that has the following properties once the wielder is attuned to it:

Vicious Critical. The spear scores a critical hit on a 19 or 20. If the character has some other critical enhancement, this improves it by one step. So if their class allows them to critical on an 18-20, this weapon would allow them to critical on a 17-20.

When a critical is scored, the damage is rolled 3 times instead of 2, and the victim takes an additional 2d4 hit points per round from bleeding. An action must be used to stop the bleeding.

Intimidating Presence. Once after a long rest, the spear can allow the wielder to speak with a booming voice of impressive authority. This gives them a +4 to all intimidate checks.



CANDLES OF DANDURA



CANDLES OF DISTANT CONVERSATION

It is said that the Candles of Distant Conversation were created out of necessity. And there is no greater necessity than that of true love.

When Dandura, a rough-and-tumble hill dwarf blacksmith, met Harladrim, a stoic and solitary wood elfen scout, it was hardly love at first sight. Harladrim made regular visits to Dandura's village, seeking rations and supplies for his long treks through the wilderness. Dandura found him haughty and distant; Harladrim found her uncouth and forward. Their tension reached its peak one autumn day when Harladrim insulted the arrowheads smithed by Dandura, and the hill dwarf woman set upon him with her fists. After knocking a few teeth lose, Dandura apologized to Harladrim, and made him a fine bow to retain his business. Harladrim, in kind, apologized to Dandura, and brought her a fine stag for supper.

Over the years, bitterness gave way to friendship, and Harladrim came to rely on Dandura's metalwork for his arrowheads and blades. Likewise, Dandura came to rely on Harladrim's business. The wood elf visited twice a year, and as the decades rolled by, the two found they had developed feelings for one another.

But there was no way they could marry – their families, their communities, nor their work allowed for it. But the pair missed each other terribly, and wished more than anything that they could hear each other's voices on cold nights and dreary mornings.

Dandura made two black soot candles, and used phoenix feather (a rare and costly material) for the wicks. If both wicks were burning, voices would carry through the flame, traveling across the elemental planes and echoing audibly on the other side. For a few moments a night, Dandura and Harladrim could speak to one another, no matter the distance between them.

Dandura died, unmarried, centuries later. It's said that a battered old elven warrior visited town after her funeral and left two black candle stumps upon her tombstone before disappearing into the wilderness.

PROPERTIES

These two identical black candles are fashioned from the purest bees wax blended with finely ground obsidian stone powder and Charwood pitch. The wicks are fashioned from a single phoenix feather that is split between the two of them.

If both candles are burning at the same time (and both candles are on the same plane of existence), sound carries through them, allowing people to converse over great distances by speaking into the flame. The candles may be burned for a total of 24 hours before the phoenix feather wicks can no longer be lit and the candles become useless.

While just one candle is burning, there is a 10% chance (cumulative, increasing every hour that the candle burns) that it will attract the attention of a denizen of one of the elemental planes, through which the sound is traveling. If the candle's wielder speaks the appropriate language (Ignan, Terran, Aquan, or Auran), they may converse with the elemental being.



C'TATAPOTHY'S BOWL

WELL OF SOULS

This bowl was forged long ago, during the height of the Blood War, by M'Ikulose "The Soul Reaper." This bowl was craved from a root of the world tree. It was then stained with the blood of seven slain demons and the souls of seven virgin children. The ebony pit fiend craftsman invested this bowl with the power to contain harvested souls.

While about the dark business of soul harvesting on the prime material plane, M'Ikulose drew the attention of Gran Hayabusa of the Sacred Order of the Phoenix and Aram Ykatan "Lord Enforcer of Tyr." These powerful paladins convened a grand conclave attended by representatives from eight faiths. The assembly contained nearly one-hundred members. In attendance were the high clergy of Phoenix, Tyr, Artemis, Ra, Marduk, Ahuramazda, Isis, and Odin. After nineteen hours of deliberation a universal decision was made. A holy war was launched against the devil that walked amongst them.

The holy crusade soon degenerated into guerrilla warfare through the back allies, whore houses, drug dens, and palaces of a dozen cities. The righteous fell in every way imaginable. The open presence of a devil is enough to drive sanity from the strongest mind, leaving drug addicts and schizophrenics in its wake. These were the lucky ones as most lost their lives and souls as punishment for their pursuit.

After nearly five years the now hardened holy warriors were able to lure the devil into a trap. Sadly the trap was born of utter desperation – and double edged. The holy men sacrificed the purity of their own souls by setting up a false cult of Hell and ritually murdering twenty-one children between the ages of one and seven. So the pit fiend would be lured to collect these pure souls. It is debated until this day by philosophers if this act was born through necessity or corruption. Either way that day the gods themselves wept – or so it is said. Who can know the truth of raging storms?

Upon his defeat M'Ikulose's body was thrown into the Well of Odin after his heart was cut from his chest and burned in the inferno of Phoenix. Before the pit fiend's body was ritually desecrated several items were taken from him. Amongst these was what has become known as C'Tatapothy's Bowl. This bowl was taken to be housed at the Left Hand of Tyr – his mightiest temple.

On his way to transport this evil relic to the temple Aram Ykatan "Lord Enforcer of Tyr" was confronted on an overcast day at the crossroads of March and Mars, the eastern and northern roads. As the sky turned a strange shade of reddish gray a man in royal-blue robes carrying a ruby-headed scepter approached the paladin saying, "You are the most amazing

of men Lord Ykatan. I have watched you since you first encountered by vessel upon this forgotten plane. A soul like steel and the zeal of a volcano, you are mighty of mind and body. But not so mighty as not to have had the chains of your will broken over the last few years. I heard every snap. Every time I shivered. I saw the vows reaffirmed in the morning and broken before high night. I saw the wine. I saw the poppy. I saw the boys. I saw your wrath, your greed, your lust, and your pride."

Aram Ykatan's lip trembled. He wanted to ask the stranger his name. But he knew. He knew, so there was no need. The paladin raised the simple, stained bowl – chest level. With one look into the eyes of Asmodeus, Aram was reborn as C'Tatapothy "The Silver."

PROPERTIES

This object requires attunement to function, and it can only be attuned to one of a non-good alignment. Unlike many other magic items, this object requires a higher degree of dedication, and so the attunement ritual must be performed over three consecutive nights during the new moon.

Once attuned, the bowl has the power to harvest and hold the soul of a recently dead being, provided that they have died within the past hour. The bowl can hold up to nine souls at a time. These souls can then be released individually by the bowls owner. This process requires a one hour ritual.

This ability can be used once per lunar month following each new moon.



DÜRDEKHÜN

POCKET GOLEM

There are many of these strange dodecahedrons littering countless forgotten drawers, pockets and curiosity shops throughout the known world, though their origin is something of a mystery. Each varies slightly in design, but they are all hollow, twelve sided copper polyhedrons with round holes centered on each flat side and round nubs on each point. They range in size from half an inch up to three inches.

Research suggests that they are at least 4,000 years old, but there is no memory of them existing during that time, even amongst the eldest races. Some have suggested that they are new to our plane, and that they may have somehow “spilled out” into our world through some sort of temporary rip in the multiverse.

However they came to be here, they were only considered unusual magical baubles for a long time, showing little of their potential, even though they clearly radiated magic.

Then one day, a curious antiquities researcher and wizard named Eluviah became fascinated with them, and dedicated the next decade to uncovering their secrets. She tried rolling them like dice, heating them, immersing them in various fluids, and even kept one in her mouth for several days.

It wasn't until Eluviah shouted one in frustration that it reacted, sending out a strange metallic tentacle that it used to pull itself away from her. She immediately began to speak to them, using various languages and emotional tones, and recording their reactions in her research journal.

Eluviah nick-named them Dürdekhüns and discovered that each possessed its own rudimentary personality and intelligence. She believed that they were likely constructed to act as a kind of extraplanar scout. They could be sent into a wide variety of environments, and relay the information back to their master, even on another plane of existence.

They can produce a number of useful appendages from the holes located on the sides which can provide sensory organs, manipulation arms, and locomotion. The information is relayed back to the master telepathically, and the master in turn can give it rudimentary instructions.

The Dürdekhüns are intelligent enough to follow basic directions and orders, though they cannot perform any task that requires specialized skills such as picking a lock or disarming a trap.

They can produce odd whistling and chirping sounds that their master can eventually learn to understand after several weeks of regular telepathic communication.

PROPERTIES

Once the owner has meditated while holding the Dürdekhün for at least one hour each day for a week, it will begin to move about and communicate telepathically with its new master. They can communicate over any distance and even across planes, though the amount of information will be limited due to their modest intelligence. They will describe what they sense in the simplest terms, understanding little of it.

The same simplicity must be used when giving it instructions. For example, telling it to go into the next room and listen to the

wizard might cause confusion. If on the other hand, you instruct it to hide and listen to the man with the tall pointy hat, it will likely know what to do. They seem incapable of learning names, but will recognize people and places that they have seen before.

They can produce almost any appendage, including spines, tentacles, spider legs, feet, hands, pincers and so on. When a sensory organ is required, it will be produced from one of the holes and could include an eye on a stalk or a cone-shaped ear.

DÜRDEKHÜN

Tiny construct, neutral

Armor Class 14; **Hit Points** 4 (1d4+2); **Speed** 30 ft.

STR 4 (-3); **DEX** 18 (+4); **CON** 10 (+0); **INT** 4 (-3); **WIS** 4 (-3); **CHA** 4 (-3)

Damage Immunities fire, poison, psychic, nonmagical weapons

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses Darkvision 120 ft., Blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Fire Resistance Takes only half damage from normal or magical fire.

Immutable Form Immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Magic Resistance Advantage on saves versus spells and magical effects.



EBONHARTHEX

THE BLACK HAMMER

This warhammer was commissioned by King Duralroth over 850 years ago, just before his reign began in the northern kingdom. The land had been ruled by the storm giant Sithiloss the Vile for centuries, and the nomadic barbarians had neither the numbers nor the will to unseat him. The Roth clan was one of the strongest in the region, and when Duralroth was made chieftain, he vowed to end Sithiloss' tyranny.

Against the advice of his family, he made a pact with the black dragon Cithyth to gain his aid in destroying the storm giant's hold in the north. In return, he promised Cithyth free reign over the lands south of the Slate River. Cithyth agreed and together they launched a campaign against Sithiloss' strongholds. After six years, they were finally able to bring the giants to their knees, and Duralroth slew Sithiloss with his great hammer Ebonharthex.

A great feast was planned to celebrate the victory and to crown Duralroth as the high king of the north, but unknown to Cithyth, there was a darker purpose afoot. The dragon was given a place of high honor in the great hall, which happened to be surrounded by dozens of murder holes. The signal was given when Duralroth raised his goblet to toast Cithyth, and 12 ballista loosed their bolts into the dragon. It seemed that Cithyth was expecting treachery, and managed to evade the worst of the attack. A great battle ensued, and the dragon was badly wounded, though not slain. He managed to escape into the mountains, and Duralroth expected to hear no more from him.

Several months later Cithyth returned to Duralroth's keep in the guise of the lord from a distant barony who had come to pay homage to the new king. That night he stole into the queen's chambers and violated her, leaving her near death.

Duralroth was distraught. His healers managed to save the queen's life, but to their horror they discovered that the violent encounter had left her pregnant. After eighteen agonizing months she died attempting to give birth to two black eggs that had to be removed by cutting open her womb. The eggs were given to the court wizard who was given strict instructions to keep them in suspended animation.

Duralroth spent the rest of his life hunting down Cithyth, and in the end managed to imprison him somewhere in the southern lands.

PROPERTIES

Ebonharthex is a +1 warhammer until it is attuned or "bonded." The bonding process takes several days, though rather than meditation, this hammer must be wielded. It can be in practice or actual combat, but it must be for at least an hour each day.

Once bonded, the weapon manifests a +1 versus most things, and a +3 versus giants and giant type creatures including ettins, ogres and trolls.

Additionally, once after each long rest, the hammer can project a cone of acid for 30 feet that inflicts 3d10 acid damage. Those in the area can make a Dexterity save (DC 15) for half damage.

The wielder gains a resistance to acid while holding the hammer.



EYE OF INFINITY



PLANAR STONE

Said to have been mined from “the cornerstone” of the multiverse, the true origins of this peculiar object are a mystery. It is a crystalline cube that is precisely 3.14 inches per side, weighing nearly 10 pounds. When at rest, it glows with a violet inner light that seems to pulse like a beating heart. It is warm, though not uncomfortable to the touch.

One of its most unusual properties is that it seems unable to touch or be touched by any solid being or material. If put down, it will float slightly above the surface. If one tries to touch it, they will feel a frictionless resistance, with no amount of strength allowing them contact the surface.

The first mention of the Eye of Infinity was in the Chronicles of Seriarch where he mentions the object by name, saying that “the cube seems innocent enough, and yet I can help but feel a great pressure from it. Stranger still, though it clearly has some sort of magical power, it seems to radiate no magic that can be detected.”

Seriarch goes on to describe finding it adrift in the astral plane while passing through that domain. He claimed that it seemed to be drawn to him, and followed him as “steel follows a lodestone.” When he reappeared in the material plane, the cube was hovering an inch or so above the ground nearby.

Beyond its obviously curious nature, it seemed to do nothing else, and so Seriarch used it as little more than a unique, portable light source.

When Seriarch mysteriously vanished several years later, the cube was passed on to a wizard friend of his named Rehnik who had become obsessed with it. Through research and a few unfortunate accidents, he revealed that the cube acted as a sort of planar key that could open gates to other planes of existence. The problem was that the destination seemed to be fixed to one location – a small cave somewhere near the Iron City of Dis on the 7th ring of Hell.

Puzzled by its extraordinarily specific use, Rehnik brought it to a fellow wizard named Herisah to consult with her, and to his astonishment, when the gate was opened, it led to Mount Celestia. Neither could explain why its destination had changed, nor could they reopen the gate to Hell.

After several months of experimentation, they finally had a breakthrough when the cube was stolen by an unscrupulous apprentice. Rehnik and Herisah pursued the thief down an ally, and watched in horror as he opened the gate. Expecting to see the wooded slope of Mount Celestia, they were astonished to see the black void of the Abyss. The young man frantically tried to close the gate, but too late. He was pulled through to the other side by a terrifying claw, leaving the cube bobbing a few inches above the cobblestones.

Herisah began to suspect that the destination in the planes depended on the location it was used on the material plane. They confirmed this by returning to Tehnik’s workshop and

opening the gate. As suspected, it opened up to the exact same cave in Hell as it had before.

Several years of research led to the writing of the tome known as The Eye of Infinity. It described the cube and what Rehnik and Herisah had learned about it. Sadly, the tome is now lost and only referred to in other documents. The whereabouts of the tome and cube are unknown.

PROPERTIES

The Eye of Infinity is a powerful and dangerous artifact that has brought great suffering and loss to most of those who have possessed it. Though some of its properties are (and may always be) a mystery, the cube can perform the following actions:

Planar Gate. When commanded to open in any language, a gate opens to some other plane of existence. The destination is determined by the properties of the location, but since the tome was lost, the GM should determine the destination randomly.

Time Travel. Once a year, this stone allows one person to travel back in time exactly 24 hours. This is a tricky and dangerous power, for although it can allow you to alter a particular event, time has a strange way of adjusting itself. The precise changes are at the discretion of the GM, but events will attempt to unfold as they did originally, manifesting even extremely unlikely circumstances to do so.

In case where the time traveling character has prevented or caused a death (even accidentally), then their own life ends irrevocably when they reach the time at which they left.



FROZ'GAUL'S LIGHT



CENSER OF THE BURNING SKULL

The first of these copper censers was forged in the ancient smithy of Bathal by the dwarven blacksmith and necromancer Froz'Gaul "The Black Marked." Before the coming of Froz'Gaul this smithery was the heart of the dwarven kingdom of Dakuma – once a wonderful place to live (at least by dwarven standards), it is now a crumbling necropolis overrun by skeletons. It is rumored the dwarven necromancer still resides there with his empire of the undead.

Before Froz'Gaul sequestered himself to this location in the pursuit of lichdom (which some believe he has achieved) he penned and distributed eight copies of the procedure for the creation of this necromantic device.

The scrolls prescribe the following as the proper procedure for the creation of this censer. First it is imperative that the copper used to create this item has been newly mined and never used in the creation of any other item. Once forged the censer must be buried in unhallowed ground for an entire lunar cycle before it is ready to be enchanted. During this time the necrotic energy slowly infuses into the metal, making it right for use in necromantic rituals. When these steps are completed in full the vessel is ready to be enchanted by binding a fire mephit or similar spirit to it.

When the spirit is bound the censer becomes filled with burning, ghostly flame. On occasion one may even see the leering face of the bound spirit looking out from the fire. Despite its strange appearance, this flame produces as much heat as any other fire. The smoke that emanates from it produces a smell vaguely reminiscent of burning flesh. As long as this item contains its magical nature the flame within it never dies. This also allows the item to double as an eerie and unwholesome torch. Some say the spirit inside will, on occasion attempt to speak with the wielder.

The major power of this censer allows the user to bestow upon any skeletal undead an internal flame. This flame makes the undead immune to fire and able to burn those they close with in combat. There is no limit to the amount of skeletons that can be enchanted with this magic item but the enchantment only lasts a year. That being said the skeletons can at any point be re-enchanted.

PROPERTIES

Once attuned to this item, it allows you to imbue any skeleton touched by it with fire. The skeleton will immediately erupt with a hellish internal flame that can be seen burning in the open ribcage, mouth and eye sockets. This makes the skeleton immune to fire damage and allows it to deal 1d6 additional point of fire damage with its melee attacks.

Up to 10 skeletons can be imbued at any one time, and this number increases with the power of the user, allowing an additional 2 skeletons per level. The censer does not give the user any special ability to control the skeletons.

Additionally, the censer provides light equivalent to a torch and warmth equivalent to a small campfire.

This item can only be used by clerics or wizards.



GAUNTLETS OF PO-GUGH

GAUNTLETS OF IGNITION

Not all items of power stem from a benign source, nor is the ability to create such items limited to the more 'civilized' tribes. When the Black Thorn orcs became embroiled in a war with frost trolls, their chief advisor, a shaman named Po-gugh, knew they needed a weapon to help turn the tide. He summoned to his side all the other shamans of the clan, even their lesser skills would be needed for what the advisor had planned.

Po-gugh told them of his plan, and gave them the tomes they would need to study for it. Next, he gathered a dozen of the clan's fiercest warriors, all of them skilled and swift with a blade. With them, he also shared his plan, for their task was the most dangerous. Without hesitation, each agreed, placing the importance of the clan above the individual. Finally, Po-gugh consulted an area map. The location was critical, for once begun, the process could not be interrupted. It certainly couldn't be done with the fortress' walls, for if they failed, and it got loose...

The senior shaman selected a place not far from Black Thorn's walls, to the southwest, away from the front lines. If their captive escaped, it was just as likely he'd head south, and wreak his wrath upon the human village of Hendifoot, a fact that bothered the shaman not at all. Early the next morning, the group of them, the dozen warriors, and the half-dozen shaman, made their way south from the fortress, Po-Gugh leading them. They trusted him fully. To make ranks among the Black Thorns, results were what counted. And Po-Gugh had proven himself many times over.

Arriving at their chosen spot, the warriors dismounted and rechecked their weapons carefully, waiting for their moment. The shaman quickly began laying out the pattern described in the tome Po-Gugh had provided. Soon the small, white stones on the ground numbered in the hundreds, laid out in an intricate and specific arrangement. Taking their places around the hexagonal shape, the lead shaman started them on the words needed to summon the efreeti.

The creature was of this world, but not of this plane. As the chanting flowed faster the stones began to glow, forcing open a portal between the two realms. The late fall air suddenly became very warm, the chanting growing louder, the stones glowing as if in a furnace. The heat became almost unbearable, but the shaman persevered, drench in sweat, almost shouting the syllables now. Then a flash and a shockwave of heat slammed them all to the ground.

Standing in the center of the hexagon was a humanoid figure, more than twelve feet tall. Only his lower half was armored, a kilt of metal of the blackest blue. His skin was the color of burnt rust, and palpable heat emanated from it. His expression was one of rage, and he lifted a massive scimitar before him, bellowing his hatred as he waded into the orcs.

The warriors, ready and waiting, burst into action. One half rushed forward, axes and swords high, while a half dozen others launched crossbows into the creature. It's power was terrible, but it was outnumbered and overwhelmed by orc ambush. Despite being hewed into, it managed to slay two of the orcs and maim another before

it was brought down. Po-gugh sighed with relief as the planar being fell. After saying prayers for their fallen, the shaman ordered the hunters to skin the creature, preserving as much as they can.

Back at the fortress, Po-gugh tracked down the clan's finest leather worker. He told him what he wanted and the clansman eagerly accepted the challenge of working with such an unusual material. His skills were true, and within a week he had produced five pairs of leather gloves, all made from the skin of the efreeti. Thanking him for his skills, Po-gugh then set about to imbue the gauntlets, using the spell he had been studying for a month.

When he was done, the shaman presented the gloves to the general, who grinned when Po-gugh explained what they could do. The trolls would soon be slaughtered, and Po-gugh's reputation once more secured.

PROPERTIES

While worn, any weapon held by them becomes inflamed. A bow will shoot fire arrows, or a sword blade will become wreathed in flames. Whichever weapon is affected, it will do an extra 1d6 fire damage upon any successful hit. One downside is that the gloves gradually heat up with use, and after five minutes, they must be removed, or the wearer will take fire damage. The damage taken this way is 1d6 per round, increasing by 1d6 every minute. After one hour, the gloves will cool enough that they can be safely worn again.



GILEAN'S CLOAK



CLOAK OF MIMICRY

Gilean Leah worked for the Anrok Performing Troupe, a group of individuals who were among the most well-respected actors in all the lands. Despite being with the troupe for decades, she herself was not an actor, but rather a very skilled seamstress. Single-handedly she made all the costumes for every member, for every play. She was able to meet the needs of every one of them and was proud of her work, as were her fellows in the company.

Until one day, a script was given to her that called for dozens of dancers in the scene, a grand royal ball that required almost twice as many bodies as they had actors for. Sure, she could have used old tricks of mannequins, or clothing on sticks, but this run was due to include a performance for the king himself, Frunt IV. She wanted something special.

Fortunately, Anrok was a big city, and rare and specialized goods could be found. Gilean tracked down a friend, a wizard whom she had dealt with a few times before and she spent a large portion of her budget on a few bolts of enchanted cloth and thread. The material was magical such that it would do anything special yet, but it was enhanced to be susceptible to any enchantments laid upon it. Gilean spoke to her friend, telling him what she wanted, and he told her to return when she was ready.

For three weeks Gilean measured and cut, sewed and stitched. When she was done, she had almost twenty cloaks made from the material. Simple, yet elegant enough to suit her purposes. She returned to her friend and they worked to complete the spell upon the costumes, he weaving the magic and her dictating the specifics.

Finally, opening night arrived and the scene approached. Even though everything had gone fine in rehearsal, one could never be certain of anything when performing live. It went perfectly. The actors, fitted in their finery, danced and glided about, while the costumes, were the perfect partners, indistinguishable from their real partners, in appearance and skill. When the final applause came, several scenes later, Gilean was invited on stage with the cast to take her share of the praise.

PROPERTIES

This cloak can be activated with a command word. It will become a perfect image of the original, and respond in mirror opposition. Thus, a fighter using the cloak could approach an enemy from the left, with the image flanking from the right. The imitation cannot be discerned from the original except with powerful magics. In addition, the copy can take up to twenty points of damage before dispersing. The cloak is not damaged by attacks to its image, and can be activated once per day.



GLÜMRAK



GLOOM BLADE

This curved dagger was created by the gnome sorcerer, Svirn Duuthbile. He didn't craft the original weapon, but he slew the human who did and used his blood to accentuate the magic of the blade. Svirn was a member of the Black Hands, an underground affiliation of rogues and cutthroats. The Black Hands had organizations in several large cities, and may still be in operation today.

Svirn rarely liked to risk his own life while committing crimes with the gang. More often, he would stay to the rear of the group, among the shadows and attack unseen. His upbringing, combined with his magic abilities, allowed him more stealth than most, a big asset in his trade. But Svirn wanted every advantage he could get, and used his ill-gotten gold to fashion Gloom. In it, he infused traits to enhance his already considerable skills, and to make him even more rich.

Eventually, other thieves became jealous at Gloom's success, and interested in this blade, thinking it would be their path to wealth. Some of them set up an ambush for Svirn, and succeeded in wresting the dagger from his corpse. But the survivors later fought over who got it to use it, and who it belonged to. An argument among the four erupted into a bloody skirmish with Elena, a female half-elf, being the last one standing.

After a year of increased success, Elena was captured by the authorities, thrown in jail, and later died in prison. But before her capture she had managed to hide some of her valuables, including Gloom. For a time, some tried to locate where she had hidden this treasure, but so far no one has, and it remains out there, waiting to be found.

PROPERTIES

The wielder is proficient in all stealth checks. If already proficient, then the proficiency bonus is doubled.

Once the weapon has been in the owners possession for one month, it will grant the wielder the ability to cast Silent Image twice per day.

If left untouched in darkness for three consecutive days, the weapon grants the wielder the ability to cast Darkness twice before needing to be recharged. Note that this version does not require concentration, and the spell will always last the full ten minutes.



GORAGH

GORAGH THE GIANT SLAYER

This magnificent ax was forged over a hundred years ago with a singular purpose; to slay giants. The dwarven clan of Galaz Karag were defending themselves in a costly war against a tribe of mountain giants. In an effort to turn the tide, the dwarven general Thrun Gmol sought out their most skilled blacksmith, to fashion the perfect weapon.

The result was Goragh, and it took the smith, one Grungaz Ril almost a full year to complete. By this time, both sides had taken terrible losses, but neither would stand down. The ax was the sharpest and most perfectly balanced the general had ever held. With it, he confidently returned to the front and led his dwarven allies in fierce battle, routing the giants after two days of slaughter.

The clan survived, despite losing most of their soldiers. The ax was eventually handed down to the general's son, Wyr, but it never saw use in battle after that. Shortly before Wyr was to be married, a deadly plague swept through the clan, eliminating it entirely. We know this because of two elven clerics who were called in to assist but never arrived in time. The plague did not affect the elves, who brought the story of the fate of the Galaz Karag clan to other dwarven kin.

The history of the ax is unclear after that. It is rumored that the ruins were later sealed, probably by another dwarven clan. As is their custom, the dwarves were entombed in the rock, but whether the ax still remains inside is a mystery.

PROPERTIES

Every property requires attunement in the order listed below before they come into effect. Each attunement requires a minimum of a short rest after the prerequisites have been met, and only one attunement can occur per rest.

Attunement 1. +1 to attack and damage rolls.

Attunement 2. Once the ax has been brought within 500 feet of a living giant, it will thereafter glow faintly violet when within 500 feet of any giantkin.

Attunement 3. Once the ax has been used in combat to harm any giant, it will thereafter grant advantage on all attacks against giantkin.

Attunement 4. Once the ax has killed 10 or more giants in combat, the ax grants a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls, and +3 versus giantkin.



IMMACULATE BOOTS



BOOTS OF THE TRAVELER

“Among the many downsides of being an adventurer, one that is rarely considered is dirt. The tales non-heroes tell never speak of is the almost incessant lack of cleanliness. Roads, when they’re even available, are dusty at best and muddy ruts at worst. That doesn’t even include the damp forests, muddy bogs, or web-encrusted ruins that are a common part of the adventuring life.”

Filbin set down his book, and feather pen, careful to give the ink had time to dry before closing the pages. The brown-haired human hoped to sell it some day, confident that the knowledge within would be useful to someone. The dirt was something all experienced heroes knew about. Some didn’t seem to care, others complained about it, but no one ever did anything. Now that he was a full wizard, Filbin was determined to change that.

Oh sure, it was a project that would take time. The always-needed and oft noble jobs the party accepted had to take precedent. The materials would be expensive, and that mean gold. Fortunately, adventuring usually paid well, a fair trade considering the high mortality rate of the profession. Their travels always seemed to keep them on the road, encountering more of the dirt Filbin sought to avoid, but that also meant visiting many and distant towns and cities, ripe with shops and materials.

Although it took the better part of two years, eventually the wizard managed to acquire not only the fabrics and expensive leathers, but the knowledge to create the spell. Over time, Filbin hoped to create and enchant several such garments, but he started with the boots, since they seemed to always accumulate the most dirt.

When he was done, Filbin was quite pleased. He had made a few minor items before, but he was most proud of these boots. Ironically, he retired from adventuring within the year, and spent the rest of his days happy, in a clean house, selling his stories and items. Filbin never did complete his set of garments, but over the years that followed, he made a few additional pairs of boots for his former companions.

PROPERTIES

While worn, dirt, dust or soil of any kind will not stick to the boots. This includes protection from the wettest mud, always keeping the feet inside dry. Even potentially hazardous ground, from stinging nettles to 6 inch deep mild acid, or even a bed of hot coals, without the boots or the flesh underneath taking any damage. Prolonged or extended exposure to extreme conditions could ruin them, but this would take quite a while. The boots will always appear as perfectly clean.



IMPERITOUS VEX



RING OF DOMINATION

Perhaps the oldest magic item in existence, this rough-looking gold ring was forged nearly 9,300 years ago by the mythical wizard Osübus. His original purpose in crafting this object is lost to the mists of time, but it's infamous legacy throughout history tells its own tale of greed and murder.

The first mention of the ring was recorded in the Chronicles of Than where it describes the ring being gifted to the King Narthen of Than by his brother Sarithus on the day of his coronation. Most agree that the true nature of the ring was probably unknown at the time, but the mistake soon became evident.

King Narthen learned quickly that those about him began to perceive him very differently, becoming unnaturally fascinated with his most mundane words and laughing at his most inane jokes.

Quite by accident he discovered that, by exercising a bit of will, he could even command people to do things that would normally be against their nature. This power became evident when the king made an off hand remark to one of his courtiers that he should hurl himself from the tower window, which he promptly did.

It was around this time that the ring began to manifest negative effects on the King. He started imposing increasingly tyrannical laws upon his people. His vocal opponents would inexplicably commit suicide. He reduced his circle of advisors to only a few who seemed completely enamored with him.

As time went on, King Narthen began to manifest other bizarre symptoms, including paranoia, delusions and obsessive behavior. He became increasingly reclusive, remaining locked in his suite and communicating his increasingly nonsensical demands through his fanatically loyal heralds.

Only his brother Sarithus suspected the true reason for the king's madness, and so, tormented with guilt, he went to the king's chambers one night. No one knows if he went there to simply remove the ring or if he had more sinister intent, but the result was nonetheless tragic. A servant found the bedroom in ruins, and the two of them dead from multiple stab wounds, the bloody daggers still clutched in their hands.

As both brothers were childless, Narthen's cousin was summoned from afar to take the throne and repair the damage done by the late king. No one noticed that the accursed ring was not on the king's hand, and no more was heard about it for a long time.

Over the centuries, the ring would resurface from time to time, finding its way onto the hands of beggars and kings alike, each time with similarly tragic results. Very few suspected the ring was ever behind the horrific events it spawned, but every now and again, an arcane scholar would make note of it in their journal or a bard would sing of "The Tyrant's Ring" as it came to be known by some.

Then about 600 years ago, the historian Oboedien began to see the pattern, like a trail of bread crumbs scattered throughout the history. He assembled the only known history of the ring that he named *Imperitous Vex*. There were many gaps of course where the ring either lay hidden in the bottom of a forgotten chest or



destroyed the life of some poor unnamed soul in a long forgotten village, but even the most humble would eventually succumb to it's malevolent influence and seek to dominate others.

PROPERTIES

This ring appears to be nothing more than a very roughly forged gold ring, which wouldn't fetch much more than the value of the gold from which it's made.

When placed on the hand however, it begins working immediately, increasing the wearers Charisma score by 4. As the ring is worn more and more, it's other features begin to manifest as follows:

Fascinate. Anything you say is very well received by those who hear and understand it. This functions much like the Friends cantrip, except that the target will remain unaware that they have been influenced. This can be used 3 times after a short or long rest.

Charm Person. This functions like the spell (at 10th level) except that the target is unaware of the ring's influence. This can be used 1 time after a short or long rest.

Dominate. This functions as the spell for up to 8 hours, and after that time, the things the person did while under its influence will seem perfectly reasonable. Once a particular target has been dominated 10 times with the ring, the effect becomes permanent, unless Remove Curse is used.

The power of this ring comes at a terrible cost however. Once it is put on, the wearer will have no desire to remove it and will resist suggesting to do so. After a week of wearing the ring, the character becomes increasingly paranoid, suffering a disadvantage on all Wisdom checks. After two weeks, they begin to experience the delusion that it is their destiny to rule others. And after 4 weeks, they are convinced that they can only trust those that are under their complete control. They will attempt to lock themselves away from others, sending only dominated minions to do their bidding. After a month, the effects of the ring on the wearer cannot be reversed.

The cursed nature of the ring cannot be revealed through study, meditation or magical means such as the Identify spell.



KLORFREJA



THE CLAW OF FREYA

Forged nearly 4000 years ago, this blade has seen more than its share of war and bloodshed. It was originally crafted for King Arkethius when he took the throne of the Kingdom of Skerkar — what is now part of the south western provinces of Norbrek that still bears that name.

It first saw battle in what became known as the 50 Years War between Skerkar and the dwarven kingdom of Turak'Dün. Arkethius was slain in the Battle of Cythus, and his sword was buried with him in a great barrow erected at the site of the battle. A century or two later, the barrow was looted by barbarians of the north in one of their many raids into the south lands.

It ended up in the hands of the young queen Syllia Roth of the clan Roth — one of the greatest warrior queens of the northern reaches. The sword was presented to her along with many spoils from the south, but she immediately recognized the symbol of her goddess worked into the hilt, and so took it as her own.

Syllia named the blade Klorfreja (The Claw of Freya) and wielded it for 53 years. It slew hundreds by her hand, and was said to have been “bathed in blood of a hundred demons” in the Abyssal War of 6822. Klorfreja was used to slay the infamous stone giant chieftain Gurgarik during the Grey Hills uprising, as well as the ancient white dragon Kisentaryax. Syllia died from her wounds shortly after her slaying of Kisentaryax at the age of 68. The sword was passed on to her daughter and heir, Queen Heilia Roth whose reign was cut short by her untimely death at the age of 23.

No one knew it at the time, but this was beginning of Freya's downfall. All across the continent, and presumably the world, the followers of Freya began to disappear and die. In most cases, their deaths were extremely suspicious, but it was almost 20 years before anyone noticed the pattern. Almost nothing is known about who orchestrated this elaborate extermination or why, but soon the name of Freya became synonymous with doom.

All objects, temples and shrines associated with Freya were similarly being eliminated, and so one of the last known temples of Freya sent all remaining relics, symbols, weapons (including Klorfreja), and so on to a secret vault hidden somewhere in the south. Only the high priests of the temple knew where the vault was located, and they presumably took that knowledge to their graves.

PROPERTIES

Klorfreja functions as a +1 short sword until it is bonded to someone worthy of its power — usually a follower of Freya. Once a character has attuned themselves to it, the sword manifests a bonus of +2 with a +4 versus demons.

Additionally, once after each sunrise, the wielder can call upon the power of Freya to cause the sword to burn with the radiance of the sun for 10 minutes. Apart from the 120 foot illumination it provides, it also inflicts an additional 1d8 radiant damage for the duration. If the target is undead, demonic, or vulnerable to sunlight, the sword inflicts 2d8 radiant damage for the duration.



KRHENÜWYR



SKULL OF SHADOWS

The war was brutal, with countless deaths on both sides. At least most deaths were quick, but these humans were evil, correctly called barbarians even among their own kind. Instead of granting their enemy the glory of death in battle, they were instead thrown into pits. Not deep in some dark dungeon, no, for the drow would have preferred the dark. These pits were in an open, hot plain, with only a handful of iron bars to block the hot sun overhead.

Sun was anathema to drow. It wouldn't kill them outright, but prolonged exposure led to flesh cracking and splitting, oozing and bleeding. A very painful way to die. The barbarians even fed them meager bits of food and alcohol (no water), so their death wouldn't happen too soon. Of the twenty-nine drow that weren't killed in the attack, Kluthruel was one of only four to survive.

When his kin freed him from the dirt pit, his back was a mass of broken flesh. The blood and pus covering his black skin had mostly dried, then split, again and again. Every movement was agony, and for two days he couldn't walk without help. The war raged on as Kluthruel healed. For a month he lay in bed, seething with anger, teeming with hate, and plotting his revenge.

Among his people, Kluthruel was considered an Originator; a title given to those skilled enough to combine magic with crafting, and create objects of power. And Kluthruel had something in mind, something that would help him get vengeance upon his enemies. As soon as he was able, he got to work, and started gathering the items he needed.

His first stop was his side's own prison. Not a pleasant place, to be sure, but neither one designed to inflict pain every moment of every day. For the first time, Kluthruel questioned that policy, and his people had tortured their enemies for information before. The scarred drow selected a prisoner almost at random, and had guards drag him from his cell and hold him down. With care and without mercy, Kluthruel smashed a large hammer into the barbarian's head, cracking his skull instantly.

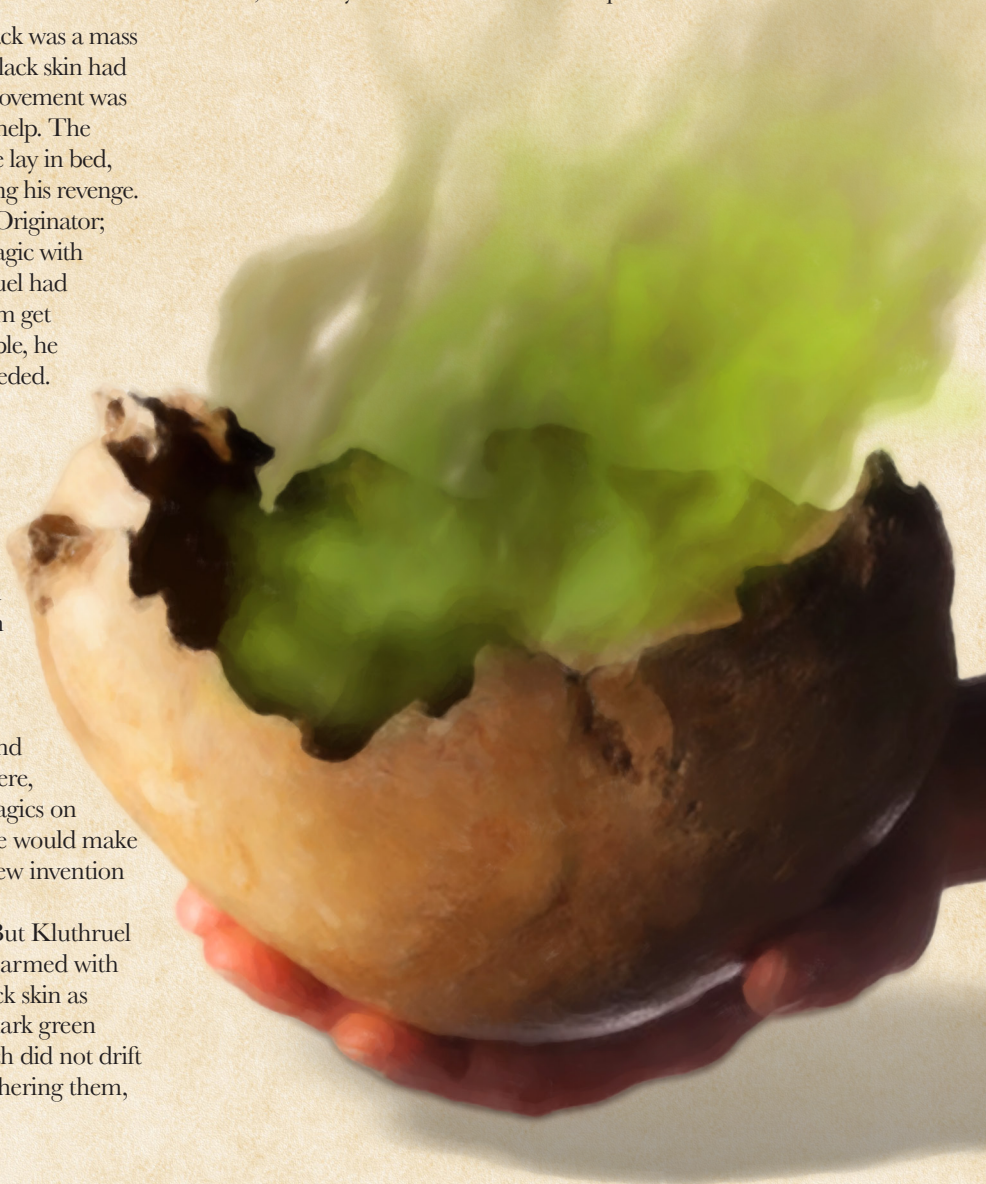
Dismissing the guards, he removed the skull and took it to his workshop. For ten days he stayed there, sleeping when necessary, and worked his dark magics on the broken skull. The enemy craved the light? He would make them choke on the darkness. He would use his new invention to make them suffer, in agony and blackness.

Ironically, the war ended only a month later. But Kluthruel enjoyed those five weeks, back on the battlefield, armed with his grim creation. His teeth grinned beneath black skin as he waded into combat, the skull held high, and dark green tendrils pouring from it. Shadows of smoke which did not drift upon the wind, but sought out his enemies, smothering them, choking them, and sometimes, killing them.

After the war, Kluthruel and his skull disappeared, but rumors found their way back to the drow. Rumors of a mad, dark-skinned elf and a broken human skull.

PROPERTIES

To activate the skull takes a full minute, during which the skull flame must be lit and stirred while reciting the incantation which is carved into its side. Once activated, the smoke will burn for ten minutes, during which it can be called upon three times. Each time this is done, up to five tendrils of smoke will seek out any enemy within 100 feet. Each enemy suffers 2d6 necrotic damage and has their visibility reduced to 15 feet. Additionally, each victim must make a Con save (DC 13) or be incapacitated for one round, unable to attack, and only able to move half their speed.



KYLMÍ'S BLADE

SWORD OF REASON

Upon his return to Bale after The War of Souls for Gold, M'Seer T'Mil Kylmi, a ferrum and former druid of T'Hool, became a vocal anti-theist. After forging the Sword of Reason in 2777, he said, "Vanquish the faithful and burn their temples. Rip every divinity from Heaven and Hell, smash their thrones, and end the suffering that is caused by their breath. They were never on our side... none of them. We will be their playthings no longer."

In 2888 M'Seer T'Mil Kylmi was slain by an unknown assassin. After that day, it is said his ghost merged with the Sword of Reason. Legend says, the blade chooses its master long before he or she ever lays eyes on it. Its only concern is finding the hand that will end the tyranny of the divine forever.

Tarc Doon, a human theologian of Pelgan, stated, "This tulwar was forged not in Bale but upon the black abyss of Ahriman's back, where it was made for only one reason... to end all that is good. Fear the fool who does not fear the gods!"

PROPERTIES

The Sword of Reason functions as a +1 long sword. No follower of any deity nor the caster of divine magic can wield or even lift this blade, much less attune themselves to it.

If they should become the follower of a deity after the fact, the attunement is automatically broken, and this sword will become impossibly heavy in their hands.

Once attuned to the Sword of Reason, the weapon provides the following abilities:

Divine Bane. The sword gains a +3 bonus to attack and damage against anyone that is granted spells or other powers from a deity, which includes clerics, druids, paladins and rangers.

Unseen Strike. This sword can strike targets in the astral and ethereal planes, though it provides no special ability to perceive such entities.

Opposition. The wielder has a advantage and resistance against all spells or powers of a divine origin as long as they have this sword on their person.



LANTERN OF VARIS

LANTERN OF DIRECTION

When the storm broke, it was dusk, and the skies still heavily overcast. There was just enough light to make out the distant shore, but no lights could be seen, and Varis knew they were still many miles from the city. His ship was taking on water, and the searfarer wondered if he could prevent it's sinking. His priorities in order, he loaded his wife and two children into a rowboat, even as a thick fog filled in the darkening skies. He told them it was just a precaution, and he wanted to try to save the ship as it carried their life's belongings, most of which would not fit into the rowboat.

Varis worked into the night, but eventually gave up, as the rising water within the boat was relentless. Hours had passed before he returned to the top deck, ready to join his family. But the fog and drifting waters had caused them to become separated. Frantic, he grabbed a large lantern from below, and called out to his wife and children. The fog seemed to gobble up the sound, and despite the brightness of the lantern, it could not pierce the mist.

Then Varis saw it; not the rowboat he sought, but a spit of land, a narrow band that jutted out into the sea. Perhaps his family had made it to shore? Desperate, he lowered himself into the water, keeping the waterproof lantern with him to help him find his way. He had always been a solid swimmer, but was breathless when he reached the shore. In the near darkness, he scouted the area, holding the lantern aloft. He saw not his family, but a stunted, twisted tower he hadn't seen from the sea. Maybe they had found sanctuary there he prayed.

A pounding on the door brought was answered by a dark-robed man of indeterminate age. Elderly, for certain, but even the heavy robe did not conceal the strong, weathered hands. Shirtless, soaking and on the verge of panic, Varis explained the situation. The man seemed not to care, and was about to shut the door when Varis pleaded that he would give anything to find his family. This got the dark-robed one's attention.

Silently, he invited Varis in, and led him to a basement where impossibly intricate runes were painted on the circular stone floor. Varis worried for a moment when the man approached with with a small dirk, but he appeared to want only a few drops of Varis' blood. He told Varis to sit very still, the only words he had spoken to him, and then spent agonizing minutes swinging the seafarer's lantern in an unfathomable pattern. All the while, he spoke in some ancient language, muttering syllables and sounds that were not easy for the human mouth to make.

When he was finally finished, he returned the lantern to Varis, and showed him to the door. He pointed at the lantern, and then at the fog-enshrouded shore. In a raspy whisper, he told Varis to hold the lantern high, and concentrate on what he sought the most. Barely understanding, Varis was pushed out the door, which closed and locked behind him. The seafarer had no time to solve that mystery, his only concern was his family. He made his way back to the shore, holding the lantern high, staring out at the featureless fog.



Suddenly, the light from it flared brighter than the sun, and a beam of solid blue stabbed out at an angle. For ten full seconds, it cut through the mist as if it wasn't there, and less than two hundred feet from shore, Varis saw the rowboat and his family. They saw it too, and the tiny vessel slowly moved closer to shore. As suddenly as it had appeared, the blue light went out, and the fog reclaimed the night. But it had been enough, for the rowboat with his wife and two children made it to the land. As they pulled the boat up, calling for Varis, he was nowhere to be found, and only his lantern remained.

PROPERTIES

Once per day, this lantern can be called upon to show a path to that which the bearer desires. It will not always show a direct line, but the direction that would best lead to what is sought. The light lasts for two rounds, piercing any magical darkness. It's range is 200 feet, after which the light fades quickly. Note too that the light will always be in a straight line. If the path sought by the bearer requires turns and twists, the light will only lead up to the first bend.

LUKAN'S BOW



STONEBOW OF PRECISION

Verone Dushay wanted revenge almost as much as he wanted his daughter back. He almost gave in and agreed to pay her ransom but his advisors assured him that her captors wouldn't keep their word. They knew these criminals and they promised the administrator that it would be a series of payments and promises. Her best chance at survival, they swore, was a quick rescue.

Verone wished he was the one doing it, just to see the looks on the faces of the bastards who had taken her. He was not so blind in his desire for vengeance that he didn't know he was far from suited to the job. There were men far more trained and experienced in stealth and combat, men who could kill quickly and silently, with any number of weapons. The noble was smart enough to take the advice of those hired to give it to him, and they assembled the team.

Leading the dozen men was Lukan, a thief turned soldier when war came to his country twenty years earlier. Now, a mercenary, his squad had split up and encircled the small keep. Keen eyes, aided by a spyglass, located the room where the daughter was behind held. As he knelt on the grass, Lukan brought his stonebow high. No ordinary weapon, this bow had been created almost a century earlier to launch small steel bullets with incredible accuracy. His father had told him only that his grandfather had been an assassin, and this was his weapon of choice. Lukan had no idea of how his grandfather had come to possess it, but its construction suggested dwarven make.

Checking his spyglass once more, Lukan could see his men scaling the walls, waiting just outside windows for his signal. Placing a half inch steel ball in the pocket of the stonebow, the soldier lined up what seemed an impossible shot. Even if the projectile could travel six hundred plus feet to its target, with this wind, and that tiny window, no bowman could aim that well. Lukan gave that no thought, having used this bow before. He let fly and the bullet unerringly flew straight, unaffected by wind, exactly where Lukan had aimed it, right into the throat of the guard. His death cry was all the signal they needed, and the rescuers swarmed in.

PROPERTIES

Three times after a long rest, this crossbow can fire a flawless shot, up to 800 feet. The target must be in view, and unless protected by anti-missile magic, the shot will never miss. Additionally, this stonebow does an extra 1d6 damage due to no loss of bullet speed during flight.

The bow can launch any bullets, as long as they are very smooth and of some weight to them. Steel shot is the most popular, but other metals or polished stone would work as well. It is even possible to use "alchemical shot," which means an alchemical liquid or contact poison encased in clay or glass to enhance the damage of the attack.



NEKQALNIL



ABYSSAL BLADE

It is common knowledge the nymphs are Cinder's children. But the nyxad are also daughters of Ahriman. Some think that Darkness is only hatred. They discount the legend of Nekqalnil (which is Ahrimanian for Soul Hollower) as propaganda. Those privileged enough to hear a passionate poet recite Vettie Vadonan etta Korstuna (which is Ajyran for The Night when Darkness was Tears) from heart are left, if only for a moment, reconsidering this belief.

The tale recounted in this poem begins on day 21 of Cycle 3 – the time of The Shadow Purge. All was dark in the ancient valley of Mt. Tedisx, save the light of the moons. Until the land was illuminated by the burning fury of thousands of flaming arrows. Iron broke bone, flint, and copper as the nergalis and sirruses, led by Ondhan the most Hallowed, clashed with the meehan-ghe army upon a dry riverbed of obsidian. The battle lasted for eleven hours, culminating when Ondhan slew General Nekqalnil before her husband Breav of the Tribe of the Wolf. The grief of a husband, a father, and an unborn child was visited upon the confident Ondhan. Ahriman touched Breav, investing the fearsome warrior with the primal rage of anti-creation.

The utter horror of how this vengeance was claimed is lost when translated from Vettie Vadonan etta Korstuna. Sages have been kind, claiming it was arrows which ended the dragon slaying Ondhan's life. Say a prayer for ignorance, so you too may believe that is true.

Breav still lives today in Qatik a gibbering mad, near-skeletal creature that is as pitiful as he is dangerous. Some say he died the moment Ahriman breathed upon him and what walks in his flesh now is the grief of Darkness. Whatever the truth, something is alive in those sad eyes.

Mt. Tedisx has become shunned by the sirruses who know that Gruta; which is Thuban for "dead-life," the name they call Breav by; still haunts those terrible windswept valleys and slopes. Even the rock and vegetation of this place has been twisted by the tears of Darkness.

For thirty hours these tears, which were neither oil nor water but something like a debased form of both, fell, shimmering, from the moons as The Shadow King wept the loss of its favorite child. Of the nymph Darkness thought would dance while K'Vega-Thale ended.

The moons' tears carved a long blade from the obsidian in the riverbed. It is not certain who made this bastard sword, but legend claims Breav created it. There are many stories as to how the blade passed from hand to hand. People that have held it seem to meet a dark end. Some say, to hold the shame of Darkness against you, is to invite annihilation.

PROPERTIES

Prior to attunement, this functions as a simple long sword. Once attuned, you gain +1 to your Charisma score while holding it, and add half your Charisma bonus to your attack and damage rolls with this sword (up to a maximum of +3).

Every time you roll a critical hit, you also deal 1 point of Constitution damage to your target. On a roll of 1 on your attack roll, you take 1 point of Constitution damage. The Constitution damage returns at a rate of 1 per long rest.

This blade exists concurrently within the prime material plane and the abyss, which gives it an advantage when striking demons or any other Abyssal creatures.



NIGHT SHARDS



NELICIA'S HAIR SPIKES

Nelicia Shalesarn had been raised from childhood to be a professional assassin, and to this day her record is still unmatched. In fact, only a hand full of people know of her, and of those, only one or two know the true story of her life.

Born to a noble family in the city of Tal'Navashar, Nelicia seemed to have a life of ease and comfort ahead of her. Cruel fate however had other plans. Shortly after her 13th birthday, her parents were killed by thugs before her very eyes, and she only survived by slipping into a shadow between two rain barrels. The thieves grabbed her father's belt pouch and dashed away, leaving Nelicia's mother gasping for breath as she bled out. Nelicia frantically rummaged for the small healing draught that she knew her mother usually carried, but she could only weep when she saw that it had been smashed in the assault.

With a look of sorrow, Nelicia's mother removed the black metal spikes from knot of hair on her head, handed them to her daughter with a weak smile, and then breathed her last.

When they were discovered by city guards a short while later, Nelicia was nestled in between her dead parents clutching the two thin shards of metal. She was remitted to an orphanage until relatives could be contacted.

Not long after her admittance, a young woman showed up, offering to care for the child. She claimed to be a former servant at the Shalesarn manor, and though Nelicia had no memory of her, she seemed a better alternative to the dreary life at the orphanage.

The woman's name was Kendra Halifane, and as it turned out, rather than being a former servant, she was actually one of her parents' advisors. She explained to Nelicia that the murder of her parents was not some random event, but an assassination planned by the House of Garleth – a rival family who had conflicting business interests. Kendra feared for her life since she was one of the few people who might uncover the plot, and so she went into hiding.

Something in Nelicia broke, and she became obsessed with delivering vengeance on those who killed her parents. She began seeking out the fetid underbelly of the city, seeking out those who killed for profit. Over the next few years, she honed her skills and developed connections within the Garleth family. Then, on the third anniversary of the death of her parents, she secured an invitation to a grand ball at the Garleth family manor.

Wearing the hair spikes that her mother had given her, she walked slipped through the elite crowd of nobles, and finding an ideal location, waited for the ideal moment. That moment came when the crowd rose for the customary blessing of the event.

Nelicia moved with a smooth swiftness that would have been unthinkable a few years before. The two hair spikes each found their mark, impaling both Lord and Lady Garleth through their throats. They toppled backwards into their respective chairs, and by the time the guests were aware of the assassination, Nelicia disappeared into the night.

PROPERTIES

These hair spikes function as +2 darts. Once attuned to the owner, they gain the following abilities:

Deadly. These spikes score a critical hit on a roll of 19-20, and you can roll one additional weapon damage die when determining the extra damage for the critical.

Returning. At the will of the owner, the spikes will return to the owner's hands from any distance on the same plane of existence. This can be done once after a short or long rest.

Inconspicuous. When worn in the hair, these hair spikes make the wearer less likely to be noticed. This gives observers a disadvantage to perceiving or remembering the presence of the character at the particular place and time the spikes were worn.



ONGÖLIATH



THE SPIDER'S EYE

Up until a few decades ago, there lived a curious halfling named Cedric Beeble. He shared the same insatiable desire for new things as his kin, but Cedric took a rare interest in insects. He found the little creatures fascinating and varied, and would often wander off to dank caves or muddy banks in search of new bugs to discover. He always went alone, which suited him fortunately, as no one else shared Cedric's interest.

Ink and paper at hand, the halfling scoured nooks and crannies, caring not one whit for the dirt that caked his feet and hair. Day after day he explored, often stopping to make notes or drawings, something he became adept at. His existence was a solitary one, as eventually most of his fellow halflings wanted nothing to do with the odd little man. There were a few, though, learned men, who were willing to overlook the dirt and grime, and appreciate the detailed work Cedric produced.

Over time, an agreement was reached, and these scholars would provide him with enough coin to continue his work, and they happily bought his books and scrolls, and added them to their collection of knowledge. One such man, a wizard named O'quam, was a favored benefactor, and even helped to provide the halfling with tools to aid in his research. The tools were useful, examining lenses, sealable containers with air holes for storing samples, even a magic ink jar that would never spill. With such wonderful aids, the rate at which Cedric's information came in doubled, at least for a while.

One day, while in town with O'quam, the halfling lamented that it was getting increasingly difficult to locate new species. A key problem, Cedric continued, was that there were many tiny places bugs could go that he could not, as diminutive as he was. The wizard considered the problem and came up with a solution. He instructed the halfling to seek out a certain type of arachnid. It should be small enough to fit in all the places Cedric wanted, and one that had few predators. The halfling only had to consider his vast knowledge of entomology before he thought of the prime candidate, and he immediately set off to procure a live one.

Within the day, the halfling had returned, beaming and excited with his sample. The wizard carefully took the box containing the creature to his lab, leaving instructions for the halfling to return in a few days. With reluctant impatience, Cedric complied, and agonizingly waited out the interminable time. Upon returning to O'quam, the wizard presented him with a ring. The ring was sized for



halfling fingers, and the spider Cedric had retrieved seemed to be the jewel. The halfling almost jumped when the spider twitched, but O'quam smiled, but assured him that the creature was not truly alive.

For the rest of his days, Cedric scouted out more and more locations, producing more literature on the ecology of insects than anyone ever had. It is thought that he died somewhere, happily in some moist cave, doing the thing he loved most.

PROPERTIES

Once attuned to the wearer, the spider on this ring will activate, seeming almost alive. In fact, it has no mind of its own, and cannot be given any commands. Rather, once it leaves the ring, the bearer can see through the spider's eyes, although his own are blinded while this happens. The spider can be willed to move at fifteen feet per round. It is small enough to move under most doors, and can stick to surfaces that any small spider could. It has no attacks of its own, and the operator must maintain concentration while it is off the ring.

If the spider is destroyed, the magic of the ring is maintained, but a new spider must be found, and it must be ritually bound to the ring, as the original was. The spider has 1 hit point and an AC of 11.



PENANNULAR OF H'RASIS

THE CAPTAIN'S CLOAK PIN

This penannular was created to be worn by the captain of the guard in the City of H'rasis. It was commissioned by the Lord High Regent of the city during the siege of 2961 t.e.

In the spring of that year, a horde of hill giants came down from the north, having been manipulated by the sorcerer Lirithak to believe that those in the city had been responsible for a recent string of murders of giant folk.

The hill giant chieftain Hugragris led the siege with surprising swiftness and cunning. Great trees had been hewn as battering rams to beat against the main gate, while dozens of others hurled massive stones down from a nearby hill.

The city was well fortified and stocked, and so the siege lasted for several months, and as the summer heat began to take its toll on both sides, it was clear that a hard stalemate had been reached.

The captain of the guard at the time was a woman named Fehriah, and she suspected something more behind this seemingly unprovoked attack. She sent emissaries to the giants to see if a truce could be established to discuss the matter, and after a few tense hours, the giants finally agreed.

As the captain was preparing to go out to meet the giants, the Lord of the city presented her with his own cloak pin that had been in his family for countless centuries. The intent was to impress the giants and to impart Fehriah with the authority of the city.

The meeting looked almost comical from a distance as the hill giant chieftain stood looking down at the human captain who stood only a little over five feet tall. As the discussion began, Fehriah managed to impress the giant with her knowledge of their language and people, and the chieftain soon became convinced by her words.

Watching from a distance, Lirithak could see his plans slipping through his hands, and in desperation, he hurled a bolt of fire at the unsuspecting Fehriah, striking her directly in the chest. She was thrown backwards to the ground, and the field erupted into chaos.

Hugragris was clever for a hill giant, and realized the source of the treachery, and so before the situation could break down further, the chieftain launched a massive spear at the evil sorcerer, impaling him with a single blow.

Fehriah's men approached to see to their captain, and to their surprise they discovered that she was still alive. The bolt of fire had struck her directly on the cloak pin, blackening and warping it, but dispersing the worst of the fire.

Hugragris took this as a sign that the gods clearly favored these people, and so he ordered his people back to the hills. That night a great feast was held just outside the walls and a great friendship was sealed between the City of H'rasis and the hill giants. Hugragris swore that as long as his family led the giants, they would be allies.



The High Regent took the pin and had it reforged. It was imbued with power to honor and protect the captain who saved the city.

PROPERTIES

After the cloak pin is attuned to the character, it imparts the following properties:

Protection. You gain a +1 bonus to AC and saving throws.

Fire Resistance. As a reaction, you can ignore all damage from a fire-based attack. This can be done 1 time after a long rest.

Speak with Giants. While wearing the pin, you can speak and understand the giant language.

Spare the Dying. After a long rest, if you are reduced to 0 hit points while wearing this pin, you will automatically stabilize.

RING OF GLAYDE



RING OF HARMONY

Tragedy strikes with discrimination. The Orring family was doing quite well. They had a nice circuit, each town less than a day's travel from the other, and they were well-liked every one of them. The father, Glayde, had a powerful voice, and had earned a decent living as a solo act for many years. His wife, Merrina, couldn't sing to save her life, but she had such a way with tavern owners that once he hired her, never again did Glayde have to worry about getting paid.

The months together on the road, on horses or sharing a wagon, brought them closer together. She was full of spirit, ever playful, but with a keen mind for business. He was a dreamer and poet, but his songs charmed and won her heart before she admitted it to herself. After a year, they had wed, and went right back to work. Glayde's skills grew even more, and he developed some local renown as a bard without equal. The two continued on this way, happy, for almost two years before Elad came along.

Glayde had never imagined himself becoming a parent, but the moment he laid eyes on his son, he could think of becoming nothing else. After a time, the money grew short and Glayde's love of the road called to him. As they travelled their circuit, a day never passed when Glayde didn't sing to his son. The boy grew with music in his ears and then his heart. Eventually, Glayde even invited the boy up on stage to join him for a few songs.

By the age of fifteen, it became clear that the son had inherited his father's talent for singing and spinning tales of kings and adventure. The duo's reputation eclipsed that of Glayde. Innkeepers would post signs of their upcoming performances and the seats would fill quickly on those nights. For many happy years, the Orring family was doing quite well.

The signs of his illness were small at first, barely noticeable. After weeks and months, those signs grew slowly more frequent, and less able to be brushed off. Glayde would tire easily, even for someone approaching fifty. They spoke to healers in many of the towns they visited. They were sold many cures, but none lasted. Always, the symptoms would return, slowly, inexorably increasing in frequency.

Glayde and Elad were forced to start playing shorter sets, taking more breaks, so that Glayde could catch his breath. His voice was still beautiful, but after only a handful of songs, his breathing would become ragged and forced, affecting the music. Elad even started writing some songs where he sang main and his father back-up, even though Glayde had the better voice. Merrina had saved up quite a bit of money, so she booked fewer shows, giving the elder bard more time to rest between them.

Eventually, they began to seek out priests and clerics in every town they visited. The results were always the same; often apologetically or with sympathy. They visited towns they had never been to before, in the hopes of finding a remedy. From the capitol in the south to distant Golthonor in the north, asking everywhere. Though his wife and son swore they would find a cure, Glayde knew inside that it wouldn't happen. He couldn't let them continue to spend their life savings. Not when he could feel himself slowly dying inside.

One night, Merrina had booked a solo show for Elad, now fully a man, that Glayde might spend a quiet night resting. However, they were not long gone before he went out himself, taking a large purse of coin with him. Instead of a priest, this time he sought a wizard. One who also had a reputation for creating amazing items of magical power. Glayde brought over an expensive bottle of wine, and the two spent a few hours in conversation. By the end of that time, the wizard understood what Glayde had wanted, and bade him to return in three days.

Making a similar excuse, three nights later Glayde snuck out of his bed to visit the wizard. With him, he took a potion he had procured in secret, and for this very night. It was one of the alleged cures he had tried before, one which showed promise, giving him temporary strength and health, but only for a short time. That night, while the wizard worked, Glayde sang the performance of his life for an audience of one.

When they returned to their rooms, Elad and Merrina found not Glayde, but a letter and a ring. The ring was elaborate; of purest gold and carved in the face of a singing bard. The note spoke of regret, and of not feeling sorrow, and of encouragement to go on and make an even greater name for their family. A few months later, after coming to terms with their loss, Elad sang again. He was still accompanied by his father in wonderful harmony, only his father's voice came from the ring Elad now wore..

PROPERTIES

This ring has the ability to store three levels worth of bardic songs. This can be three first level bard spells, or one third level. These songs must be sung to the ring in advance, and it will 'remember' them for up to one week. These songs can be triggered by merely humming or singing the correct tone for 5 seconds. In addition, the ring can sing a half dozen songs, each triggered in a similar manner. These songs are sung beautifully, in Glayde's voice.



SÄRES NECRÜS

DEATH REAVERS

The lands along the edge of the Southern Würal Desert are harsh and unforgiving, and the inhabitants, even more so. Their greatest deity is the goddess Irhara (éer-har-AH), known simply as The Reaper, is symbolized by the sun that bears down on region with her merciless radiance. Irhara governs both life and death, and is indifferent to the good and evil that mortals do to each other.

Her temples are tall, slender alabaster white towers of marble and sandstone that stand against the sky in stark contrast to the dark gray sands of the desert.

The Death Reavers were forged almost 400 years ago for the temple guard Kethran of the western most sun temple. He had earned the honor after saving the life of Princess Esuthiah during her pilgrimage to the temple. Kethran only had a pair of daggers at the time, and yet he managed to slay her would be assassin as he crept upon her during the evening prayers.

As an expression of her gratitude, Esuthiah promoted Kethran to the position of high temple guard and commissioned the forging of the Säres Necrüs or “death reavers” to be his personal weapons.

Kethran wielded the blades for over thirty years, defending the temple against marauders, insurrection, and thieves. Then came the blue dragon Vorhadur.

Vorhadur had been expanding her territory for some time, encroaching further and further south until the temple fell within her reach, and the wealth it contained was too great a prize to resist. She swept in like a sandstorm, laying waste to the surrounding villages, and then moving on the temple.

Led by Kethran, the temple guard defended the temple admirably, but in the end Vorhadur was simply too powerful. She devoured everyone and took the treasure, including the Säres Necrüs, for her horde.

The history of the Säres Necrüs becomes blurred at this point, though it is known that they remained lost for nearly 300 years before turning up in the hands of a northern tradesman in the markets of Tal’Hesütis. They have seen several owners since then, though few have wielded them, and even fewer who know their history.

PROPERTIES

The Säres Necrüs are twin khopeshes that function the same as scimitars. They have very cunning scabbards that allow for very quick and smooth drawing, and with their belt can be set up to wear on the hips or over the shoulders on the back. They are exceptionally light and maneuverable.

Once the character has attuned to them, the Säres Necrüs function as +1 khopeshes with a +2 versus demons and undead.

Additionally, once after a long rest, the swords can make the user invisible for 10 minutes. This works in all but direct sunlight where they appear as heat haze.

The belt and scabbards are enchanted to summon the swords to them at will, or if the swords are separated by more the 100 feet from it or each other.



SOKAN'S SECRET



THE INSECT KEY

For many professions, having an excellent reputation was key, and this was no less true for Sokan Mane. Going by the stage name Smoke, he had spent years developing a reputation as a great escape artist, perhaps the best alive. It was true, the wiry elf had spent a decade developing the extreme flexibility required, and this skill served him well. However, there was more to gaining freedom than just the ability to bend and contort.

When he wasn't training his body, Sokan studied; locks, knots, manacles and bonds of all forms. He learned their strengths and weaknesses, and he used every bit of this knowledge in his show. It could never be forgotten that it was a show. So while the elf would do the amazing, using his hard-earned skills and knowledge, he would occasionally do the impossible, using trickery. Oh, small, subtle trickery to be sure, but after all it was a show, meant to entertain, and it had amazed crowds from peasants to royalty.

Sokan hadn't always been an entertainer. Indeed, he had lived for many years as both a student, and then later, a thief. Admittedly, he had lacked the natural affinity for magic compared to others at the school. His spells weren't quite as precise or flawless as some, but he had learned to make the gestures subtly. He never attained any great powers of magic, but he had learned enough. Enough that, it allowed him to excel as a thief. And his years of stealing, first out of necessity and then later for practice, had added an entirely new set of skills.

In combination, his sleight-of-hand, aided by subtle magics enabled him to earn a living as an escape artist. One of his best kept secrets was the Insect key. It wasn't actually an insect at all, but it was what Sokan called it in his own head, and it had stuck. The key was small enough that he could easily hide it in his hair, yet large enough that it could open almost any lock.

One of the misdirections of being a performer was the illusion that if the artist would fully bound, he was helpless. This misconception only helped to make Sokan's reputation all the greater. Sometimes his bonds were slippable, without the audience being able to see, but there were times, both in Sokan's past and in his finale, that his was truly bound. This limitation could not stop an escape artist should he desire to become known as the greatest. This is where the Insect key came in.

With just the right tone, a very precise whistle, the key would go from laying dormant in the elf's hair, to crawling down his arm like some small, metallic insect. It was segmented in several places, and could bend and twist each individually. Best of all, those twist and

turns could be accurately controlled with faint but equally accurate tones, sounds Sokan had mastered with hours of practice. Even naked in manacles, he could escape with merely a wordless song.

PROPERTIES

The key is small enough to be easily hidden on one's person; hair, a tiny pocket, etc. With a little practice, the key can be commanded through a series of whistles or tweet sounds. These sounds can order it to climb its way to a lock and attempt to pick it, at the same level of skill as the owner. If the owner has not seen the lock, the attempt is made at disadvantage. The key also has some limited ability to cling to surfaces, but cannot do so on very slick or slippery ones, nor can it cling to ceilings.



STAFF OF KERHERN



DUNGEONEER'S STAFF

Kerhern was born somewhere along the Cursed Desert to a half-orc mother and a Vengal father. His mother's relationship with his father was not voluntary, and so soon after he was born, she escaped her captor and fled north to the city of Tal'Ansül with young Kerhern and another unborn child in her womb.

Kerhern grew up quickly, needing to take care of his mother and younger brother; and he was not particular about the work he did. He realized quickly that adventuring was a way to earn quick gold, and although he was young, he managed to find a position as a servant to the Wizard Gulwhem.

His adventures did indeed earn him quite a bit of gold, and so he was able to care for his family, though his mother's health was clearly beginning to wane. Kerhern realized that he might not have much time before he'd have to care for his brother himself, and so he decided to go adventuring on his own.

Gulwhem advised against it, but Kerhern's mind was set. Taking pity on the young man, Gulwhem fashioned Kerhern a copper and bronze staff to aid him in his endeavors. Although not particularly powerful as a weapon, the powers of the staff proved extremely valuable in other ways. It provided light, warnings of danger, minor protection against a variety of discomforts, and even some basic needs.

Kerhern has successfully adventured with it for four years before word reached him that his mother was dying. He returned home to find that she had already passed, and in his grief, he swore to kill his Vengal father who he blamed for her poor health.

PROPERTIES

The Staff of Kerhern (also known as The Dungeoneer's Staff) is made from bronze and copper, and has a marble-like crystal globe at the top. The staff has 12 charges, and regains 2d4+4 charges daily at sunrise. If you expend the last charge, roll a d20. On a 1, the staff loses all its properties for 1 week. On a 20, the staff regains 1d4 + 2 charges.

Self-Standing. The staff can stand on end (as if stuck in the ground) without being held, as long as it is within 30 feet of the owner. (0 charges)

Light. Globe produces light [as the spell] for 4 hours. (1 charge)

Repel Vermin. Repel normal vermin for a 30 foot radius, centered on the staff. Summoned or magical vermin are at a disadvantage within the area. (2 charges)

Create Water. Produce up to 5 gallons of clean, cool water. The water pours from a concave brim near the top. (3 charges)

Mushrooms. The staff can sprout truffle-like mushrooms from the brim near the top. These are very tasty and nutritious, and can feed up to three people at a time. (4 charges)

Alarm. The staff can be made to alert the owner if anyone comes within 60 feet of it. Apart from the area of effect, it works just like the alarm spell. The staff must be stationary to do this. (5 charges)

Thunderwave. The staff can be struck on the ground to produce a thunderwave spell [2d6 damage; DC 14]. (5 charges)



SYLRIAN MYND



MIRROR OF PEACE

Grief is an emotion inevitable to all, at some point in a life. It was grief that filled much of the life of the elf Ordail Pwyaln. He was swift, even by the standards of his own kind. Ordail could move through the forest faster than any of his clan, and more quietly than most. When the hill giants of the west launched their assault on the elves, none were caught unaware. The giants were powerful, mean brutes, but there numbers were few enough that neither side gained purchase in the war, and the war continued for months.

A brief respite occurred in the war. The elven warleader was considering whether the giants had abandoned their conflict. He even had thoughts of a counter-assault, when a new wave of giants attacked, this time with allies. Numerous ettins had joined forces with the hill giants, massive two-headed, almost feral creatures, more vicious than their cousins.

Ordail was immediately dispatched. His orders, seek aid from the humans to the east, and the dwarves from the south. They had been allies in distant times, and they would surely see the elves need. Only 70 years of age, the still young elf set out immediately, covering many leagues per day. He pleaded his case to the dwarven kings, and the human nobles, emphasizing the dire consequences should the elves fall. Ordail was successful. The dwarves agreed, and sent word to prepare their armies to march in three days. The humans were just as quick to respond. Hope soared in Ordail's heart as he headed back to the forest. Thousands of troops would soon follow, and easily crush the invasion.

It was all for naught.

He saw the smoke long before he saw the trees, or what was left of them. The entire forest, thousands of square leagues, writhed in flames. With tears in his eyes, he raced around the perimeter, looking for some way past the fire. Time and time again, Ordail tried to enter, only to be turned back from the heat and the smoke. For eleven straight hours, the elf rode his mount along the edge, moving faster than he had done before, but it was the same everywhere. Fire, ash, death.

Three days later the first of the humans arrived. Advanced scouts of their army. They found Ordail, kneeling, silent, almost starved, his eyes dry from crying. He quietly offered no resistance and let them help him. He sat mutely as they cleaned him up, and fed him a little food. With the need for armies long past, they invited him to return with them, to their home. Ordail finally looked them in the eye, perhaps realizing for the first time that that might become his home.

Eventually, he thanked them, and suggested he might join them soon, after he had made sure there was nothing and no one left. They offered to help, but he insisted he do it himself, alone. He turned and walked into the forest, still smoldering in places, crunching burnt brush underfoot. He walked for hours, not rushing, and upon reaching his village and seeing the remains of the trees, the homes...the people. His tears returned anew, and he staggered to a fallen tree, grief wracking him once more.

Ordail wasn't sure how much time passed before he heard her. Or rather, felt her presence. He looked up, instantly astonished. Her flawless appearance, her garb, utterly untouched by ash, it could only be the Forest Mother. She



looked upon him, and smiled sadly. She approached slowly, stopping to retrieve a small mirror from the remains of one of the dwellings. She stopped before him, and soon spoke softly.

"I cannot undo what has happened here. Nor can I take away the pain you feel now. But I can help you remember the joys too. I can help you to look back, and remember a time when those joys filled your heart."

She took a flower from her hair, yellow and red, and placed it against the frame of the glass. Immediately, the flower grew vines to surround the frame. She offered it to the elf.

"Take this mirror, young Ordail. Keep this plant alive, and the mirror will forever allow you to see the times you remember, and let you experience happiness again."

She turned, and walked back into the scorched trees, soon gone from Ordail's view. He looked at the mirror, took one more look at his former home, and left the forest for the last time..

PROPERTIES

To use this mirror, the wielder must be in a place of quiet, to allow for uninterrupted contemplation. One petal is eaten from the flower, and the user will begin to suffer a slightly hallucinogenic effect. This takes place within a few minutes. Once under, the user must stare into the mirror and, holding it tightly, think of a day in the past, in a location known well to him. The mirror will then show the holder the events of that day, in that location, as they truly occurred. After ten minutes, the user will be drained, and must have a short rest or suffer from minor exhaustion.

Note that a Con save must be made every time a leaf is taken. On a roll of 1, the user will suffer temporary insanity, lasting 24 hours. If more than one leaf is consumed by the same person during the same 24 period, this makes the temporary insanity a guarantee. Also, the plant must get fresh water and sunlight like any other. So long as proper care is taken of it, it will live forever. Any leaf plucked from the plant will grow back within a week.



TALON OF NOD

THE BLADE STAFF *Weapon (blade staff), rare (requires attunement)*

Imerell was an elven nobleman's son of the southern nomadic desert clans. He had spent decades mastering the art of martial combat, and so it should have come as no surprise when the regional prince, a stern man named Fahrehd, summoned him to tutor his daughter.

Imerell was honored of course, but he also knew that his family's position would be strengthened by being assigned to such a position, and so the pressure to represent his house was great indeed.

As soon as he arrived at the prince's summer encampment, a rider took him into the hills to where his student waited at the ancestral shrine. Imerell knew the place well as it is where all those of his order are trained in the arts, and as he approached, he prepared himself to take on his first apprentice.

As it turned out, nothing could have prepared him for what awaited him when he walked through the archway of the shrine. He had imagined that the prince's daughter was a young girl of 14 winters; the traditional age for training. But Ceriah was a young woman... and beautiful. As their eyes met, a long moment passed between them and their fate was sealed.

Imerell trained her as promised, though they mentioned nothing of their love to anyone else, lest word of it reach the prince, for she had been betrothed to another through an arranged marriage.

Unfortunately, such secrets are fragile and word did indeed reach the prince. Enraged by the betrayal, he had both of them brought to him. Ceriah was sent away to the far ends of their territory. Imerell's punishment was far more severe.

The prince ordered him banished from their lands forever, and worse, he cursed Imerell to age as humans rather than living for centuries as his elven kin.

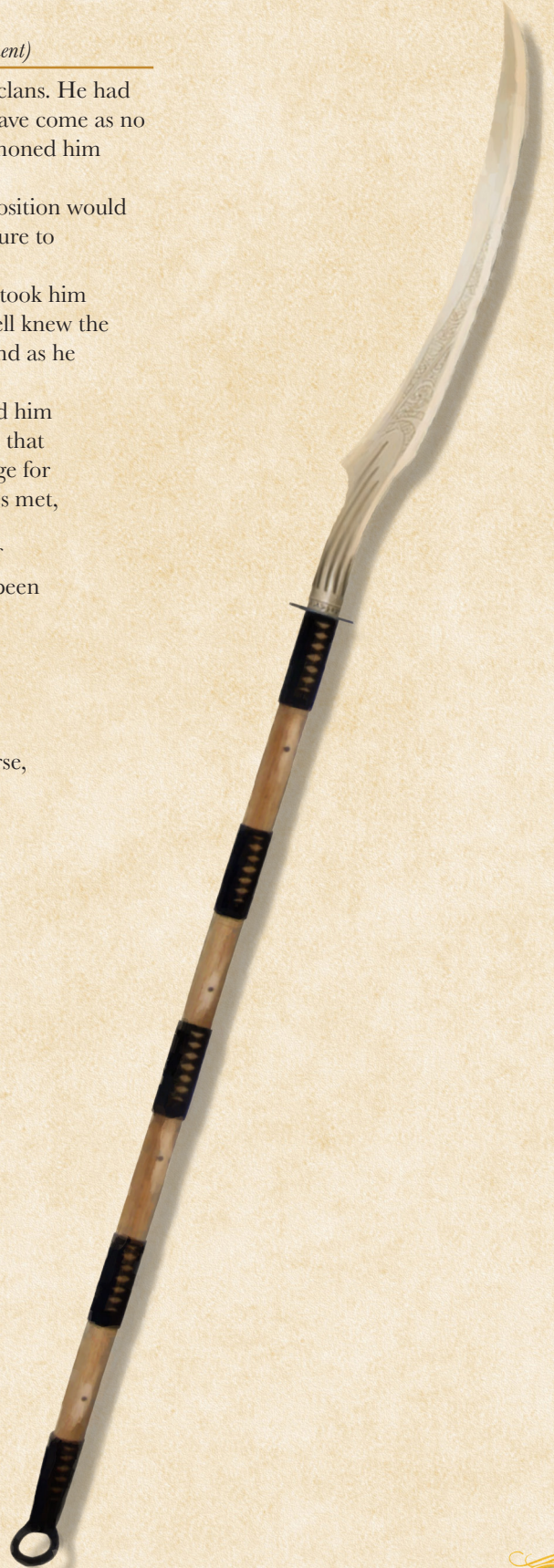
Imerell's family would not even see him before he left. As was the custom, he was escorted to the borders by his weapons master Leoharn, who perhaps alone in the world understood the young man. Without saying a word, Leoharn handed over his unique blade staff that had been passed down from master to student for countless generations since their order was founded in the land of Nod.

Imerell wept at the sight of the gift. He bowed respectfully, accepted it, and turned towards the looming mountains that bordered the strange lands to the west.

PROPERTIES

The blade staff is a unique +1 weapon that functions as both a quarterstaff and a short sword, and so the wielder must be proficient in both to use it. This is a versatile weapon, and so the wielder can choose to inflict bludgeoning or slashing damage on any attack, whether using it one-handed (1d6 damage) or two-handed (1d8 damage).

Additionally, once the weapon is attuned to the wielder, the blade staff can point the way to the wielder's greatest desire. This must be something tangible, specific, and they must have touched it at least once. In the case of a person, there must be mutual love between them, whether it is romantic or familial love.



TELJA'S SCROLL

ROD OF COUNTING

Money is only enjoyable if it's yours.

This was a lesson that few knew better than Oran Binkle. Not that he didn't have some money of his own. Indeed, he was well paid for his work as treasurer of the Royal Inn Organization, a chain of successful hotels. However, it was not counting his own money that wearied Oran, it was the counting of numerous piles of coins, that arrived on his desk every other afternoon; the revenue from all six of the locations. Heaps of silver nobles, gold crowns, platinum sovereigns, and always hundreds and hundreds of copper commons.

Without fail, it would take Oran well into the night to count and recount them all, carefully noting the totals in two different tomes, with those numbers yet to be copied again onto scrolls and sent back to the various establishments the next day. The slender man actually enjoyed the accounting aspect of his job, but all the counting put his work a half-day behind, and it happened three times a week. One night, while refilling the lantern oil for a second time, Oran concluded there had to be a better way.

On his one day off, Oran visited one of the more established magic shops in the city. One of the many advantages of living in the capitol was access to many amenities, and often a wide range of quality and price levels. Selecting a shop he knew to be one of the better ones, the treasurer made his way inside. It only took him a few minutes to explain what he wanted to the wizard, who went through a series of facial expressions in response; a furrowed brow of grasping the problem, a chin-holding visage of considering possible solutions, and a widening grin at arriving at one.

Oran paid the wizard a healthy sum of coins, with the promise of the rest upon delivery of the item. He did this out of his own pocket. Despite the name, the Royal Inns had no official connection to the government, although they did occasionally have royalty dine or stay over. Binkle was sure that there was no way his superiors would agree to the cost, despite the profits he knew them to be making. However, he had calculated that the money he spent now would more than be repaid in the time it saved him later.

Within ten days, the item arrived at Oran's office in a short, wooden case, along with the bill, of course. Putting the invoice aside, he opened the case and saw the silver rod. More of a tube really, with a slit along the length, from which protruded the edge of a scroll, affixed to a silver slat. Eager to test out his purchase, the small man emptied his own coin purse upon the desk, in an uncharacteristically messy fashion. With a boyish grin, he waved the rod over the assorted pile of coins, and then slowly drew the parchment out from the tube. There it was! An exact accounting of the number of copper, silver, gold and platinum pieces that lay

on the desk. He retracted the scroll into the tube, and repeated his actions, waving the wand once again over the pile. Yet again, written on the page were the precise number of coins before him. Oran smiled as he re-pocketed the coins, knowing that his money had been well spent.

PROPERTIES

To activate this item, you need only hold down a small button while waving it over a pile or stack of money. The scroll is then slid out of its holder, and it will display a precise count of the coins. This includes individual breakdowns of all the coin types, copper, silver, gold, etc. This will not work through chests nor walls, the rod needs to 'see' the coins to be able to count them. Additionally, this item only works on actual money, it does not have the ability to evaluate raw ore, gems, or jewelery.

Activation takes only a few seconds, and the rod can be used once per minute. This device needs no charges to function.



TIMULT'S WAND

WAND OF SHIFTING WHIMS

Timult Alderun was an infamous charlatan and thief who moved from region to region, bilking the rich of their most prized possessions. She was able to build this impressive reputation through her near miraculous abilities in the art of disguise. It was said that she could pass herself off as any race from elf to a half-orc.

A major drawback to this lifestyle is that it required carrying a rather large disguise kit, most of which consisted of materials to change the color of her hair.

Fed up with lugging a bulky case and the tediousness rinsing dye from her hair, Timult began searching for a magical means to alter her hair color. Paying hedge mages for potions, minor illusions or cantrips was an option – but more often than not, she ended up with damaged hair, a wart-covered nose, or eyes the putrid yellow of sewer runoff.

Then one day, opportunity presented itself when Timult encountered the great archmage Baerun – an old and feeble man, decrepit in his last years of life. What drew her attention was the fact that, despite his age, he sported a full head of long, luxurious blonde hair. He confided to her that his secret was the *Wand of Shifting Whims*, a powerful implement with chameleon-like properties. With a flick of this wand, Baerun could easily change the length and color of his hair and the shade of his eyes. Timult became obsessed with obtaining the marvelous wand.

Posing as a timid noblewoman, she won Baerun's heart with her wily charms, causing him to fall madly in love with the young woman. It wasn't long before the two were soon engaged to be married. Timult, of course, had other plans.

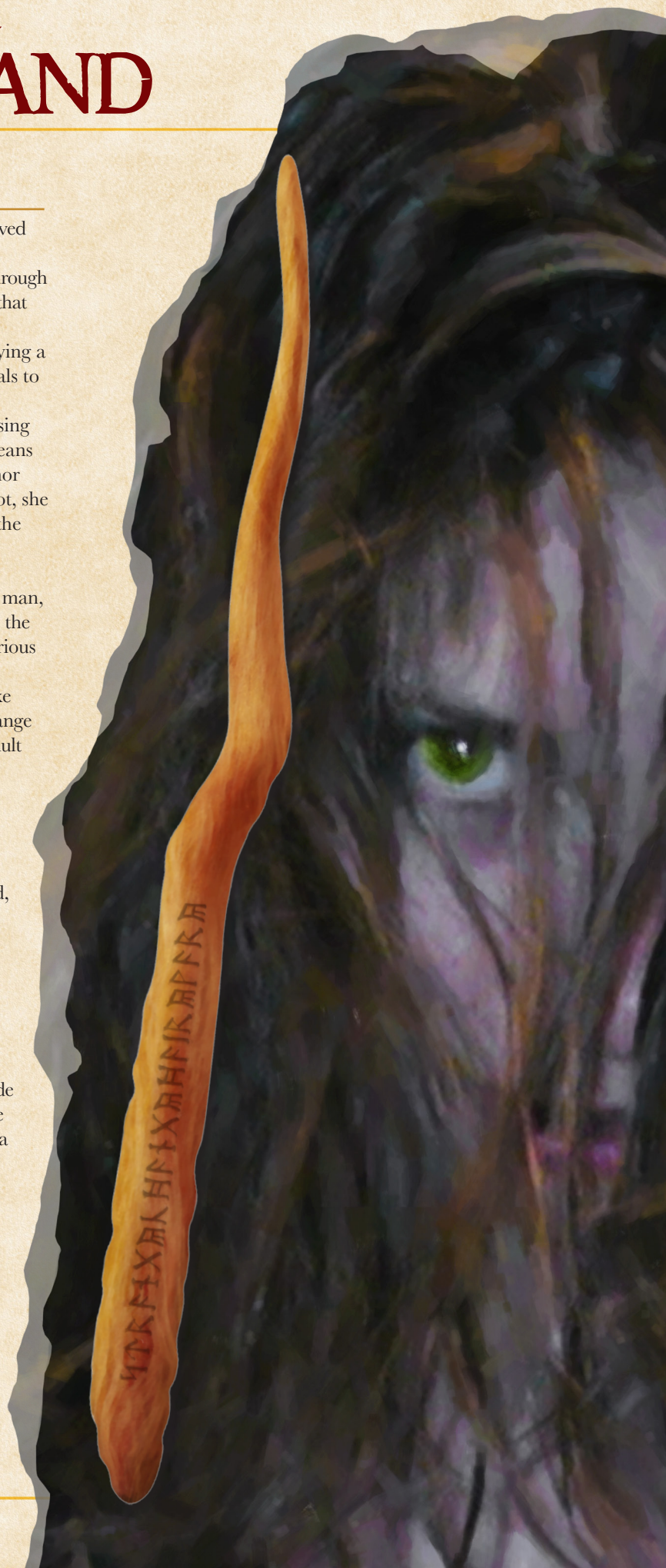
The night of their wedding, Timult robbed Baerun blind, snatched the wand from his bedside table, and fled the city. Of course she avoided notice by drastically altering her appearance with her new wand.

A heartbroken Baerun spent the last decade of his life searching desperately for his runaway love, sinking the last coins of his fortune into bounty hunters and trackers. But neither his magics nor his hired help were successful. Baerun never found Timult, whose constantly changing hairstyles made her impossible to track. Baerun died alone with Timult's name on his lips. Timult used the wand to win the hearts of many a lonely, wealthy man.

PROPERTIES

After being attuned to the wielder, this wand can change the length and color of their hair, as well as the color of their eyes. The change lasts for 1 hour before reverting to the wielder's natural hair color and length, and eye color. The wand has 50 charges, and regains 1d2 charges following a long rest.

Using this wand grants advantage on Charisma (Deception) checks when attempting to disguise oneself.



U'GLATH'S PIPE



PIPE OF PRESERVATION

U'glath Cger was a shaman and a Fiertok, a dark-skinned race of orcs that lived in the shadow of Torus Drem, a mountain that was volcanically active. U'glath was a pious individual, even moreso than the rest of his clan. The mountain was a prominent part of the religion of Fiertoks, and U'glath's duties often required him to traverse it's hot ledges and precipices. Over time, this breed of orcs had evolved to be highly resilient to hotter temperatures, although magma and hot ash were just as deadly as they were to other humanoids.

No, it was not the heat that plagued U'glath, as he climbed to the summit of Torus Drem, the peak being the most holy part of the mountain. It was the often unpredictable and sometimes fatal gases that could bubble up from beneath the surface of the lava. If one were not cautious and alert, one could easily die to the toxic fumes. It had happened to a few of U'glath's predecessors.

The shaman did his best to watch for the signs that indicated an expulsion might occur, but even then it sometimes meant backtracking quickly, in areas where the ground was not easily traversable at any speed. Compounding the danger was the frequency with which U'glath made the climb, which was at least three times per month. He feared that sooner or later he'd made a fatal mistake. Not that U'glath feared death, far from it, but his people needed him and his guidance, and he wanted to be there for them for as long as possible.

The problem was one the shaman gave great consideration to before reaching an idea. His connection to his deity granted him certain magical abilities; abilities which, if cast in the correct manner, could be applied to an item. This often took the form of magically-enhanced weaponry for the soldiers, or healing salves for the sick or injured, the shaman knew this was far from the limitation.

U'glath permitted himself few luxuries, but one he enjoyed was his pipe. He had thoroughly mastered climbing with it clenched between his teeth, and could refill and light it with one hand in utter darkness. Whatever solution he came up with, U'glath knew it would have to work quickly, and be something close at hand, lest it be brought to bear too late to stave off the deadly gases. It was with this in mind that the shaman spent four days alone and undisturbed within his hut. He slept little, and while awake worked almost unceasingly to imbue his magic into his favorite pipe.

When he was finished, he slept for fifteen straight hours before gearing up to make yet another trek to Torus Drem's summit. This time, however, his pipe would be more than an affectation. He took a moment to admire its altered appearance. Runes could be seen along it's length and around the bowl, and was it a shade darker than before? Tucking it into his waistband, U'glath smiled as he set out once more on his pilgrimage.

PROPERTIES

A few solid puffs off this pipe will fill a 20x20 foot area with a cloud of bluish-grey smoke. This smoke will linger in the air for five minutes unless dissipated by a strong wind. Anyone within the cloud is immune to poisonous vapors and gases, natural or magical. Similarly, those inside it cannot cast gas-related spells within the area of effect.



VIVIMUS



RUBY OF EMBERS

It's not certain how the Ruby of Embers came to be. This much, however, is certain: the Ruby of Embers is an incredibly powerful and volatile artifact, and it has consumed more than one overeager wielder in its time.

The Ruby of Embers appears as a perfectly faceted gemstone, blood red in color. Those who look upon it for longer than a moment swear they can see orange flames burning within the ruby. In reality, the gemstone houses the essence of an incredibly powerful fire elemental – an archon of its kind who once ruled a portion of the Plane of Fire. Millennia ago, this fire elemental was caged within the ruby, and remains to this day a prisoner within its facets.

This fire elemental serves the will of the ruby's wielder – but also possesses a will of its own.



PROPERTIES

After attuning the Ruby of Embers, the wielder may use a bonus action to speak aloud the words *"In igne enim vivimus"* to activate it. It cannot be activated again until after a short or long rest. The DM should roll either 1d6 or 1d10 on the following table to determine the result:

1. Harmless sparks emit from the gemstone.
2. A bright red glow springs up from the gemstone, shedding light in all directions for 60 feet. This effect lasts for 1d4 hours.
3. The wielder's eyes begin burning harmlessly for 1d4 hours, granting them advantage on Charisma (Intimidate) checks.
4. A comfortable warmth flows through the wielder's body, granting them resistance to cold damage for 1d4 hours.
5. Heat courses through the wielder's body, and they may immediately cast fire bolt (with an attack modifier of +4).
6. A weapon of the wielder's choice (including unarmed attacks) is wreathed in flames for 1d4 hours, adding 1d4 fire damage on a successful hit in addition to normal damage.
7. Intense heat courses through the wielder's body. They immediately take 1d4 fire damage and may also cast a 3d6 burning hands spell (DC 14) at the same time.
8. Severe heat flows through the wielder's body. They immediately take 1d8 fire damage and may also cast a 2d6 flaming sphere (DC 14) at the same time.
9. Nearly unbearable heat flows through the wielder's body and flames dance across their skin. They immediately take 2d8 fire damage and may also cast an 8d6 fireball (DC 14) at the same time.
10. Redhot fire erupts from the wielder's body, charring their flesh. They take 4d8 fire damage and may immediately summon a fire elemental (of challenge rating 5 or lower) as the conjure elemental spell.



THE WIDOWER MAKER

MACHINE OF VENGEANCE

At the fringes of End World, on the vast salt flats of Chloride, a solitary figure wanders the barren white landscape. She is clad in archaic leather, girded with a belt hanging low on the right hip. A sturdy pocket drops even lower and is secured to her thigh with a strand of rawhide.

In the pocket sits a strange machine of mithril, steel and ghost wood. Concealed within are 6 cylindrical chambers are projectiles of steel, copper, brass and a strange alchemical powder whose secrets were lost millennia ago. Tucked into two dozen leather hoops around the belt are more of these arcane projectiles glittering in the relentless sun.

She stops momentarily and crouches down to touch the parched ground. Her finger traces the outline of a dusty footprint where the surface has been slightly disturbed.

“Close now,” she murmurs to herself, her eyes scanning the horizon ahead. At the very edge of sight in the heat haze, she can just pick out a faint, darker smudge. The corner of her cracked lips curl into a most subtle of smiles, though there is no humor in it. Her eyes speak only of absolute focus of purpose and resolve.

She removes the machine from its sheath, presses a small lever and opens it. The back of it pivots down on a hinge revealing the projectiles within. She rotates the cylinder, checking each one in turn. Of course she knows that there is no need for this. She would feel the difference in the weight of the weapon if the projectiles had been discharged, but this is all a part of the ritual that she was taught as a child.

“Before you are seen, inspect the machine.” She says to herself reflexively, and satisfied that all is in order, she returns the weapon to its sheath and moves on. Her eyes fixed on the horizon and the dark smudge, she thinks to herself that the three years of pursuit are nearing an end, and that her father’s spirit may finally rest in peace.

“Now you will see me as I am become death and vengeance,” she says as her pace quickens to a steady jog, small puffs of dusty salt kicking up behind her.

PROPERTIES

This is a +1 revolver that shoots alchemical projectiles. This item requires attunement, though this process takes one lunar month, with at least 8 hours of meditation per day during that time.

Once the attunement is complete, you can swear vengeance on an individual who has wronged you. At that point the weapon’s bonus increases to +2, and +4 against the object of your revenge. These bonuses apply to hit and damage.

The drawback is that you become obsessed with killing your victim, and each day that you do not spend trying to kill them, means that you must make a Wisdom save (DC 14) or lose 1 point of Wisdom until they are dead or your Wisdom score reaches 3. If that happens, you become insane, killing people at random until you are dead. Only a remove curse spell can cure the madness, and only if the revolver is taken away from you.

The revolver is paired with a special leather belt that not only holds the weapon, but additional projectiles and a pouch on the back with the tools to produce more, as long as the materials are available. The materials required are not terribly exotic, but the tools necessary to create the projectiles are very specialized. With the right materials, you can produce 1 projectile per 4 hour period. This time is halved if you have any alchemical training.

The revolver, belt and tools are magically bound together, so if separated for more than an hour by a distance greater than 500 feet, the revolver and/or tools will return to the belt.



XARIAH'S EYE



POOL OF CLARITY

Some centuries ago, a noble paladin named Xariah embarked on quest to eradicate an evil cult who called themselves The Seekers of Ctharicah, though most referred to them simply as The Hidden Ones. They were called that because of their uncanny knack of hiding their temples in the middle of cities through the use of extremely cunning architecture. They were able to create secret doors, rooms and even whole buildings that were nearly impossible to find, wedging them in between other buildings, in sewer systems, and even beneath a thieves guild who were completely unaware of their presence.

Following one particular instance where Xariah was nearly killed after stumbling into an ambush of these cultists, she vowed never to be caught unaware ever again. She entered a deep state of meditative prayer for a week, asking for guidance from her patron goddess Sune.

When she came out of her trance, she felt a warm object resting against her chest. Looking down, she saw a simple lens in a silver frame attached to a length of fine chain. Once she saw it, she instinctively knew what it was, and how it worked.

Placing the lens in front of her eye and concentrating on any solid material, she found that she could see through the material as if it were as transparent as glass. By adjusting her focal point, she could adjust the depth at which she could see.

After several days of practice, Xariah learned that some materials were more difficult to see through than others, requiring greater time and concentration.

Once she was confident at using the lense, she set out to finish her life's work. In a matter of only a few years, she was able to root out The Seekers of Ctharicah in most of the major cities, driving them deeper and deeper underground until even her marvelous lens couldn't find them. By the time Xariah died, there had been no sign of the cult for nearly a decade, and she finally came to the conclusion that they were gone for good.

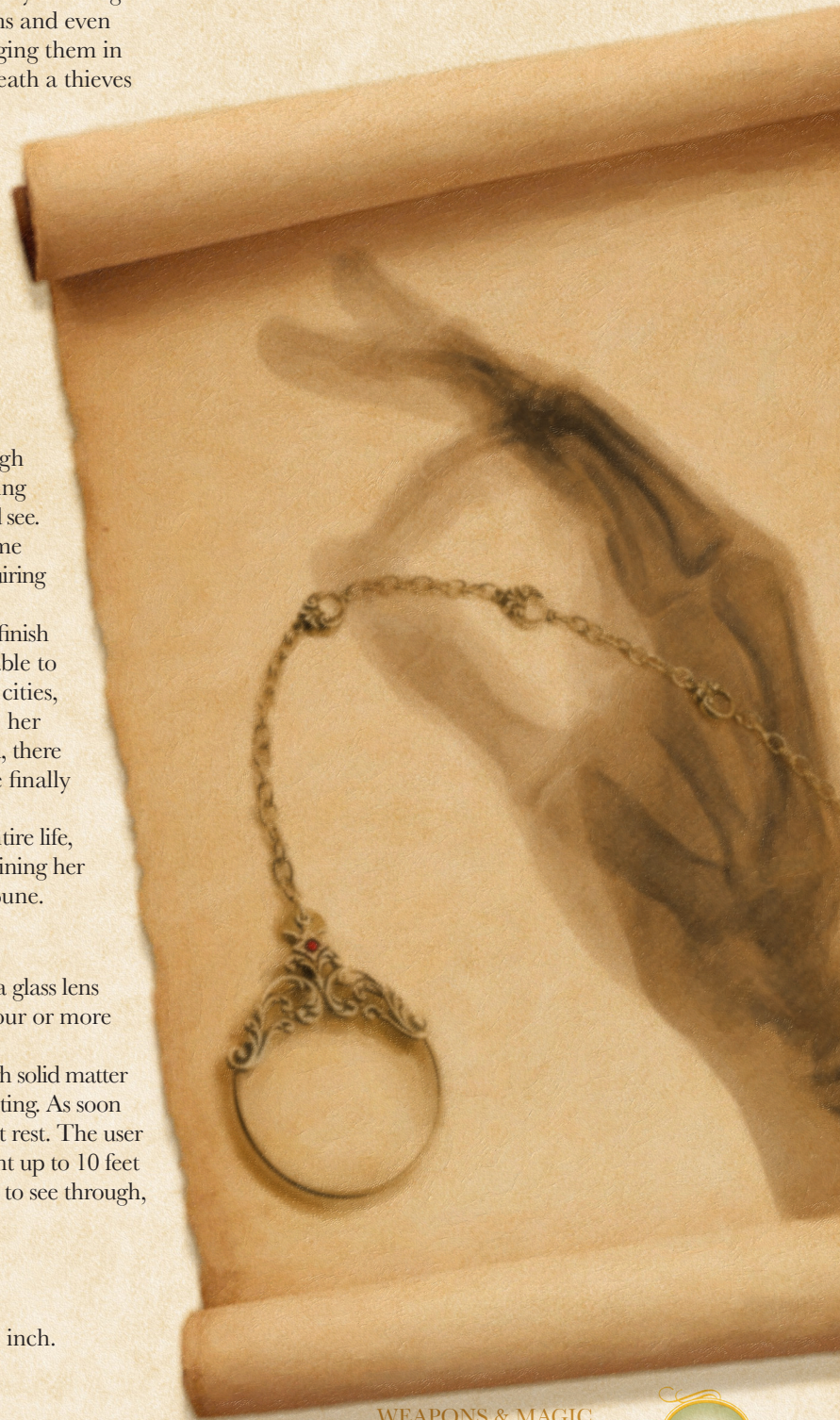
Xariah had kept the power of the lens a secret for her entire life, but on her death bed, she passed it on to her apprentice, gaining her word that she would use it only for the greater good of Sune.

PROPERTIES

The lens in this monacle appears to be nothing more than a glass lens of extraordinary quality. After meditating with it for an hour or more it will reveal its true nature and properties.

Following a short or long rest, the lens is able to see through solid matter as if it were perfectly clear for up to 1 hour while concentrating. As soon as the user stops concentrating, it is spent until after the next rest. The user can adjust the depth of viewing by adjusting their focal point up to 10 feet of material. Different materials can be more or less difficult to see through, and takes the following times:

- Paper, Cloth or Wood – Instantaneous up to 40 feet.
- Stone – 1 minute up to 20 feet.
- Metal – 5 minutes up to 10 feet.
- Planar Steel, Mithril or Adamantine – 10 minutes per inch.



ZERIBARÜS



ZERIB'S PEACE

Most of the time, an item of power is created out of need; for a weapon, or a tool, and this one was no different. This item was needed to still the fears of a small boy.

A young prince, not yet eight years old, was haunted by a recurring vision. In his dream, he saw himself in a palatial room, a bedroom, and everywhere there was fire. The painted tapestries, the silken bedsheets, the woven carpet, all ablaze. There was no way through, and the fire was slowly closing in on young Zerib. He snapped awake, sweating and crying, unable to shake his horrible nightmare.

The prince tried to speak to his father about it, but the sultan merely chuckled it away, telling him not to worry, he was safe within the palace walls. No harm would befall him. But Zerib did not believe him. He learned to dread sleep, to fight to stay awake. Mercifully, the nightmare did not come often, no more than twice a month, yet it was always the same. The fire everywhere, and young Zerib trapped, soon to be burned alive.

The sultan's vizier, a wise man named A'heem, had been with the family for generations. He had seen countless sights, both wondrous and terrible, there was little that disturbed him. But the venerable sage couldn't help but feel pity for young Zerib; afraid of his own bed, of the terror it might bring. He had a long chat with the boy, and he encouraged him to talk. A'heem and Zerib, separated by a dozen decades, had a long, tear-filled discussion.

At the last of it, A'heem bent close and promised the boy he would find a way to protect him from the fires. He did not dismiss it as nonsense, as the sultan had. The young prince looked into the eyes of the ancient vizier, and he believed him. A'heem had few official duties these days, peace and prosperity had been consistent for several years. This task made him feel slightly younger, and gave him a renewed sense of purpose.

For weeks, the old vizier visited the Atheneum daily, an honored member in its halls. He wandered row after row, searching through aged scrolls and tomes that cracked upon being opened. The vizier found himself smiling, a vigor in his bones, and his dedication paid off. He found the information he needed. An ancient ritual, and not exactly what was needed, but Z'heem's knowledge and ties to the spirits of the land granted him the power to make it perfectly suited.

Less than a month later, on the prince's birthday, the vizier proudly presented him with the ring. He told Zerib that he need never fear fire, as long as he wore it. The boy's expression turned from one of disbelief to joy as he put the ring on. It had flickering colors in it, like those of hot coals, yet the ring felt cool to his finger.

Many years later, at the age of 141, the sultan Zerib died peacefully in his sleep.

PROPERTIES

While worn, the wearer has near immunity to fire. Any fire, natural or magical, that comes within five feet of the ring will be absorbed by it, up to its limit. Additionally, this powers the ring, allowing the wielder to later release its energy. This release can take several forms, from producing a simple candle flame, to throwing powerful fireballs. In total, the ring, once charged, can generate 80 points of damage, and absorb five times that amount. Once 'full', some of the energy must be spent before the ring can absorb any more.

The wielder has some latitude in how the energy can be released, including how much power it puts out at a time. The minimum for any effect drains 1 hit point from what is left, such as lighting a candle or a torch. Though, if chosen, the wielder could also unleash a gout of flame up to 50 feet distant, emptying all 80 points of damage if he so chooses.

While the ring can always absorb fire damage up to its maximum of 400, so long as it is not full, it can never output more 80 points of damage per day.



APPENDIX



RULE VARIANTS

There are many ways to handle magic items in a fantasy setting, so here are a few simple rule variants that should work with most popular fantasy systems.

IDENTIFYING MAGIC ITEMS

If you would like magic to be a bit more mysterious in your campaign, then consider having a lengthy process of item identification.

Perhaps the character has to meditate while holding the item for several consecutive nights, or on certain days, such as the full moon.

The method and length of time can vary depending on the type of item, the amount of power it holds, and its complexity. In the case of weapons for example, perhaps it must be used in combat to reveal its secrets. The DM can even consider revealing only one power or ability following each meditation.

Here are some guidelines that you can use to determine the amount of time and method needed to identify a particular item:

Rarity. For each level of rarity above *common*, add one session of meditation. The levels of rarity and hours meditation are: *common* (1 hour), *uncommon* (2 hours), *rare* (3 hours), *very rare* (4 hours), and *legendary* (5 hours).

Power. Determine the power of the item and adjust the meditation time accordingly. This can be somewhat arbitrary, but one could look at the total equivalent spell levels involved, the number of maximum charges, or the amount of damage that it can inflict, for example: *1 hour per 5 spell levels*, *1 hour per 10 maximum charges*, and *1 hour per 3 damage dice*.

Intensity. Some items have made a greater impression on the world, and so events have left a greater imprint on it. So, a sword that has been through many great battles or a dagger that has murdered many powerful people would have a much stronger psychic impression than a magical orb that sat on a wizard's shelf for a few hundred years.

Consider making items that have a stronger psychic impression easier to identify. Also consider the effects of these visions on the character during their meditation.

Here are some examples: *no significant events related to the item (no effect)*, *1 significant local event (-1 hour)*, *many significant local events or 1 well known event (-2 hours)*, *several significant and well known events or 1 extremely traumatic event (-3 hours)*, *1 legendary event or many extremely traumatic events (-4 hours)*, and *legendary can catastrophic events (-5 hours)*.

The meditation time can never be less than 1 hour.

The effects of having visions of extremely powerful or traumatic events should be left up to the DM and player as this can offer a great deal of role playing opportunities for the group.

Wisdom. Those with greater wisdom will likely glean more from the chaotic visions that come to them during the meditation. Subtract 1 hour for each Wisdom point above 12.

The meditation time can never be less than 1 hour.

Use. The item might have to be used in order to determine its full potential. This applies particularly to weapons and items of clothing. Although the time is not modified, rather than meditating, the character would have to be using the item for the use it was intended. For example, if a sword requires 3 hours to determine its powers, instead of meditating, it would require 3 hours worth of combat. Keeping track of that time could become tedious, so a DM may decide to say that instead of 3 hours, the weapon would have to be used in 9 battles with 30 minutes of meditation after each.

The player and DM should remember to be creative and flexible with all of this. If the player wants to improvise the effects of a session of meditation, it should be encouraged. If the DM wants to use the history of an item for a plot hook, this too is all to the good as it will ultimately enrich the game and make it more memorable for all involved.

THE STORY OF GOTHNOG

GOTHNOG WAS A MERCHANT FROM THE BORDERLANDS OF THE GREAT CURSED DESERT. HE WAS BORN TO THE UNLIKELY PAIRING OF AN ORC MOTHER AND A VENGOL FATHER, AND WAS SHUNNED BY BOTH RACES. THAT SUITED HIM WELL, SINCE HE HAD LITTLE IN COMMON WITH EITHER CULTURE.

HE APPRENTICED WITH A WIDELY RESPECTED MERCHANT NAMED SALIL WHO TAUGHT GOTHNOG THE WAYS OF THE TRAVELING MERCHANT. TOGETHER THEY DEVELOPED A REPUTATION FOR BEING WISE TRAVELERS, SELLERS OF FINE FABRICS, AND EXTENSIVE DABLERS IN THE LESSER MAGICAL ARTS, OR AS THEY ARE MORE WIDELY KNOWN, CANTRIPS.

HE LATER MARRIED THE WERE-ELF SAMARA WITH WHOM HE ADVENTURED WIDELY ACROSS MANY LANDS, AND THEIR ADVENTURES ARE CHRONICLED IN THE TALES OF GOTHNOG AND SAMARA.

TODAY, HE CAPTAINS THE AZURE DRAKE – ONE OF THE FEW AIRBORNE MERCHANT SHIPS ALLOWED WITHIN THE BORDERS OF TAL'ANSÜL.

GOTHNOG'S CURIOSITY SHOP HAS SEEN MANY WONDERS, ODDITIES AND TRINKETS PASS THROUGH ITS DOORS OVER THE CENTURIES. THE OBJECTS CONTAINED HEREIN ARE FROM THE SHOP'S LEDGER, AND REPRESENT SOME OF THE MOST UNIQUE AND BIZARRE ITEMS OF MAGIC EVER COMPILED IN ONE BOOK.

