



a DOZEN DUNGEON TREASURES

BY PHILIP REED

Once, long ago, my works were assembled into a softcover collection titled *The Book of Unusual Treasure*. Hundreds of treasures, spell components, and other assorted objects drawn from the deepest parts of my brain were presented as a single work, and the book was a real treasure all its own. I had published many fantasy RPG products in PDF by the time that the book was created, but few of those products had made the leap from the digital world to our physical realm.

Today, I go back to the depths of my imagination, searching for another twelve objects that will make for entertaining and valuable treasures for your use. Each is a single page, complete with an illustration and a common as well as uncommon knowledge that you can share with the players, and all twelve are meant for you to change and adapt as best suits your needs.

As with the other entries in this series, the objects that follow are presented without detailed game statistics. You, as GM, are best able to make these treasures fit your exact needs.

“How on earth should I have got all that treasure home without war and murder all along the way, I don’t know.

And I don’t know what I should have done with it when I got home. I am sure it is better in your hands.”

*– J. R. R. Tolkien,
“The Hobbit”*

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anatomy OF a TREASURE

1. A title, to help set the mood.
2. Common knowledge, which even the most inexperienced of adventurers should already know when they find the item.
3. Uncommon knowledge, which may require some sort of skill check or bardic lore check to possess.
4. Some items include variants, or possible encounter seeds, or whatever else I find entertaining and think will help the GM.
5. Every magic item includes an illustration to help spark your imagination and give you something to show the players: "You have found this."

1 DISTURBING CANDLE

Common Knowledge

A signature item of the Cult of Shadow Wings, this candle comes in all shapes, though each is as grotesque and twisted as the crafter can imagine. Regardless of its shape, the candle is no more than the size of a human hand, made of wax, as fragile and brittle as you already suspect. The candles are used by evil, terrible creatures who embrace corruption and choose only to serve the most destructive and ancient of the elder gods.

Uncommon Knowledge

The candle is a ritual item, only unleashing its true arcane powers when properly lit and the dark rituals are performed without interruption. The standard ritual requires the lighting of the candle in a dark, secluded chamber or area as well as the chanting of foul, ancient words that summon the powers of the elder gods. The ritual requires 2d6 minutes – every candle is different – after which time those participating in the chant gain powers as determined by the sculpted shape of the vile and magic candle.

Elder God

A twisted, winged and bipedal monster, this candle was made in the image of an elder god and is an unholy symbol that evil clerics may use as either a true unholy symbol or as a disturbing candle. Once lit, and the ritual complete, the hardened wax pool that remains must be broken into bits and consumed by all who participated in the ritual. Only then do the cultists gain the candle's power; for one hour, all who were involved in the ritual and ate bits of the candle gain a +2 unholy bonus to attacks and are immune to flame.

Demon's Skull

Far from human in appearance, the demon's skull has horns, a long jaw, and sharp, dog-like teeth. The ritual completely consumes the candle; no wax remains after the ritual comes to a close. Any who participated in the ritual will forever bear the mark of the demon – a pentagram burned into the back of the neck – and for a full day after the close of the ritual, the participants may inflict a magical sickness on any who they touch. A successful touch attack – without a weapon – is required to hit an unwilling target. Once hit, the target must succeed against a Constitution check or become sickened (as per the condition or as the gamemaster decides) for 1d6+1 days. Magical healing of any kind automatically cancels the sickness.

Coiled Serpent

The sculpted shape of a snake coiled and ready to strike, this candle is one often created by those who worship the snakemen of the south. As the candle burns, it melts into a puddle of wax that soon hardens and forms the shape of a star. Snapping off the five points of the star after the ritual has come to an end creates five magical daggers, each one of which deals double damage against good-aligned characters and creatures. The daggers crumble to wax dust after one hour.

Other Shapes

Only your imagination limits the types of disturbing candles that you may create. The important thing to remember is that each should require an uninterrupted ritual in order for the magic to function properly. Possible shapes include bats, devils, and even evil items such as unholy symbols and dark castles.



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USING THE TREASURES

As treasure items, you may simply drop one or two of these into the next hoard that the party discovers when exploring a dungeon or other location. If used in this way, you may want to single out the treasure – perhaps by saying it looks unusual – so that the group gives it a little more attention than the latest +1 sword. Of course, every magic item should be special in some way, so it may require as little effort as stating "the item glows faintly in the dark of the dungeon" to alert the party that the item is in some way special.

Loot. If used as loot, the item is intended to be exchanged for gold just as soon as the party finds a willing buyer. Loot items should often be small and light, making it easy for the party to transport them back to town.

Adventure. A treasure that is used to spark an adventure is one that has an owner and a past. When you use a magic item as an adventure hook, it works best if you have some setup before the party finds the item. Perhaps a townsman is overheard speaking of a magic amulet that he lost when chased by goblins in the forest and describes the item, offering a reward for its return. Days or weeks later, when in the dungeon, the party finds an amulet that matches the description. Do they return the treasure and claim the reward, or do they keep it for themselves?

Curse. The worst treasure of all, cursed items look like a reward and are in fact a punishment. Be careful not to drop too many cursed items into your campaign. You want the party to desire treasure, not run from it.

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SKULL CHALICE

Common Knowledge

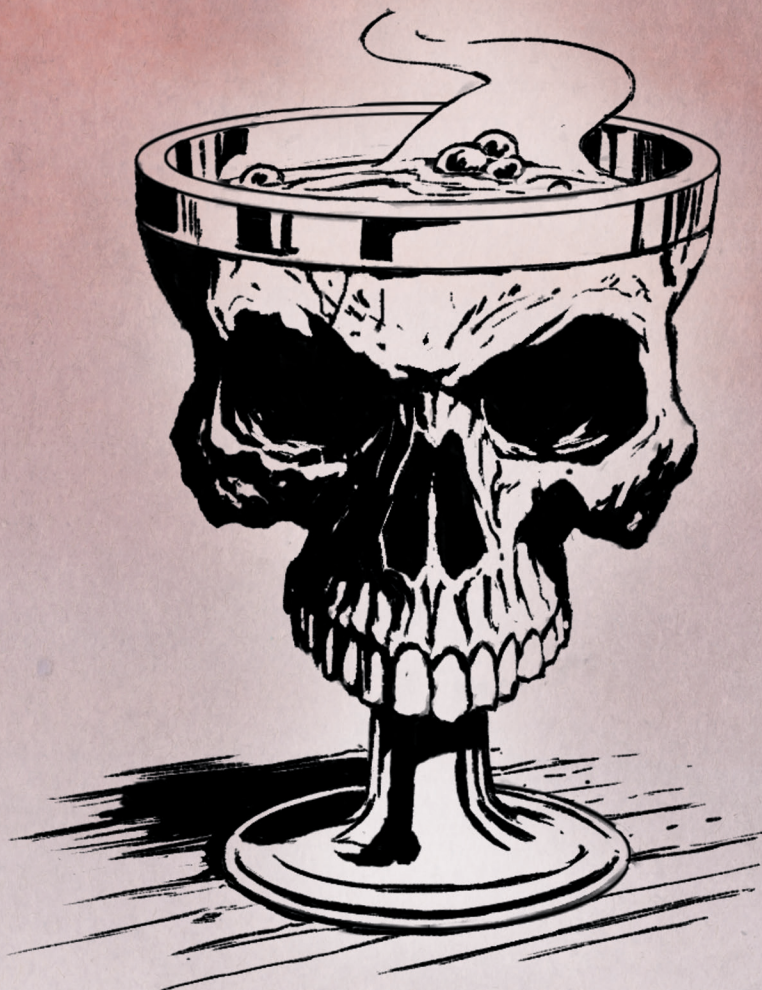
A marriage of a skull and fine silverwork, this evil chalice is an uncommon type of magic item usually found only in the deepest of dungeon chambers and treasure vaults. The chalice is of a type commonly crafted by wicked wizards and spellcasters several centuries ago, during the Age of Invalidation when evil cults fought hard to stop the forces of light from growing in power.

Uncommon Knowledge

Most skull chalices are evil magic items that inflict great suffering on those who are so unlucky as to drink from the terrible skulls. The item's power varies from chalice to chalice, though every effect is unwanted by all who foolishly drink.

To determine the exact effect of a discovered chalice, either roll 1d6 on the following table or select the effect you wish to inflict on the party.

1. Drinking from the chalice causes arcane pain. Any drink from the chalice, even as little as a sip to test the artifact, immediately deals 1d4+1 damage.
2. Any liquid poured into the chalice – from filthy water to the finest of wines – is transmuted into a clear inviting water by the item's arcane powers. Unfortunately, the clear water is far from benign, let alone beneficial, and is instead an magical curse that reduces the imbiber's intelligence score by half for 2d4 hours. At the end of that time, there is a 20% chance that the victim's intelligence score is forever reduced by a single point.
3. Any who drinks from this chalice becomes a beacon, drawing undead from within 100-miles to the party. The amount of time it takes the undead to reach them will depend on the range, but the undead will eventually find the character. Only a cleric's blessing can remove this curse.
4. The character who drinks from this wicked chalice loses the ability to cast spells, whether divine or arcane, for 1d4+2 hours. Only magic can remove this curse, though there is a 10% chance that any attempt at curse removal will fail.
5. Any liquid poured into this chalice is instantly transformed into black, thick blood. Evil-aligned beings who drink this dark blood gain a +1 bonus to all attack and damage rolls for the next hour. Good characters who drink this suffer 1d6 points of damage.
6. Swallowing from this vile chalice drives the character to madness, automatically reducing the victim's mental state to that of an insanity-controlled fiend. Until a divine or arcane spellcaster removes the magical insanity, the character is unpredictable and violent, as likely to harm friends as they are to attack foes. Take the player aside and explain the situation, suggesting that the descent into madness happen gradually over the next game session or two. At the proper time, as determined by you and the player, the character will switch to full insanity and turn on the party.



DRAGONBLOOD DAGGER

Common Knowledge

Brought into existence by arcane practitioners who fuse their sorcery with the blood of dragons, this dagger is a powerful weapon. While the dagger is a magical weapon, yes, there are some who say that it grants far more than simple battle prowess.

Uncommon Knowledge

It is not the blood of dragons that grants this dagger its power and name. The dragonblood dagger is a magical weapon, granting a +1 bonus to all attacks and inflicting a bonus 1d4 points of magical damage. But the weapon's true power is only unlocked when the blade is covered in the blood of a dragon.

Once completely coated in dragon's blood, the dragon's essence applied so heavily that it runs down the wielder's hand as the dagger is held tight, the dragonblood dagger shows its true abilities. After the blade is drenched in dragon's blood, the weapon glows bright red and grants the user one of the following bonuses (roll 1d6).

1. The dagger projects an arcane armor that instantly envelops the user's armor and expands to wrap their entire body in a shimmering, ghostly armor that looks like interlocking plates of a dragon's hide. For 1d3+1 rounds, the character gains a resistance to all attacks; reduce any incoming strikes by 2 points.
2. The weapon becomes more powerful, doubling the magical hit and damage bonuses that are described above. (Now a +2 to attacks and +2d4 points of magical damage.) This effect expires after 1d6 rounds.
3. At any one time within the next hour, the user may forgo a melee attack with the dagger to instead project a cone of flame from the dagger. The magical flame can hit any target within 100' of the user and deals 3d6 points of fire damage.
4. For 2d4 rounds, the character's dagger attacks gain +1d4 points of magical fire damage.

5. The dagger magically transforms, expanding in size and turning into a magical long sword with a blade made of arcane fire. In place of the standard long sword damage, this magical weapon deals 2d6+2 points of fire damage with every successful hit. The dagger remains in this long sword form until the character wills it to change back, the character is unconscious or dead, or after one hour has passed.
6. The character grasps the dagger in both hands and pulls, splitting the weapon into two magical daggers. For 2d4 turns, the character may attack with both without penalty, regardless of combat skill.

Once the random power expires, the dragon's blood vanishes, consumed by the blade. The dagger may only be used as described once each day; coating the blade a second time in the same day has no effect.



The dragonblood blade is a type of weapon, and not a unique item. In some campaign worlds, mages have also created dragonblood shields that function in the same way, except that they provide defensive bonuses.

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Far from human in appearance, the demon's skull has horns, a long jaw, and sharp, dog-like teeth. The ritual completely consumes the candle; no wax remains after the ritual comes to a close. Any who participated in the ritual now forever bear the mark of the demon – a pentagram burned into the back of the neck – and for a full day after the close of the ritual, the participants may inflict a magical sickness on any who they touch. A successful touch attack – without a weapon – is required to hit an unwilling target. Once hit, the target must succeed against a Constitution check or become sickened (as per the condition or as the gamemaster decides) for 1d6+1 days. Magical healing of any kind automatically cancels the sickness.

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ensorcelled casket

Common Knowledge

These unusual magic items are healing chambers, capable of bringing any who are placed within back from the dead. Rumors say that the magic of the ensorcelled casket is unstoppable, able to transform even the most ancient of skeletons back to its living form. (The rumor is inaccurate; it cannot revive ancient skeletons.)

Uncommon Knowledge

The casket's power is not limitless. Only those who are placed in the casket within a day of death have a chance at being brought back to life by the casket's power. Even then, the corpse placed inside the casket must be intact and surrounded by the possessions that were being worn/used when the victim died. The healing power of the casket takes a week to act, after which point the lid automatically opens and the body inside is alive, if unconscious and unmoving.

The magic of an ensorcelled casket is also limited in that the item will only function so many times before all of the arcane power is lost. Most such caskets may be used 1d3+1 times before they are nothing more than an empty and useless box; there are rumors of caskets with an infinite number of uses, though those rumors have never been proven to be more than wishful thinking.

Variant Caskets

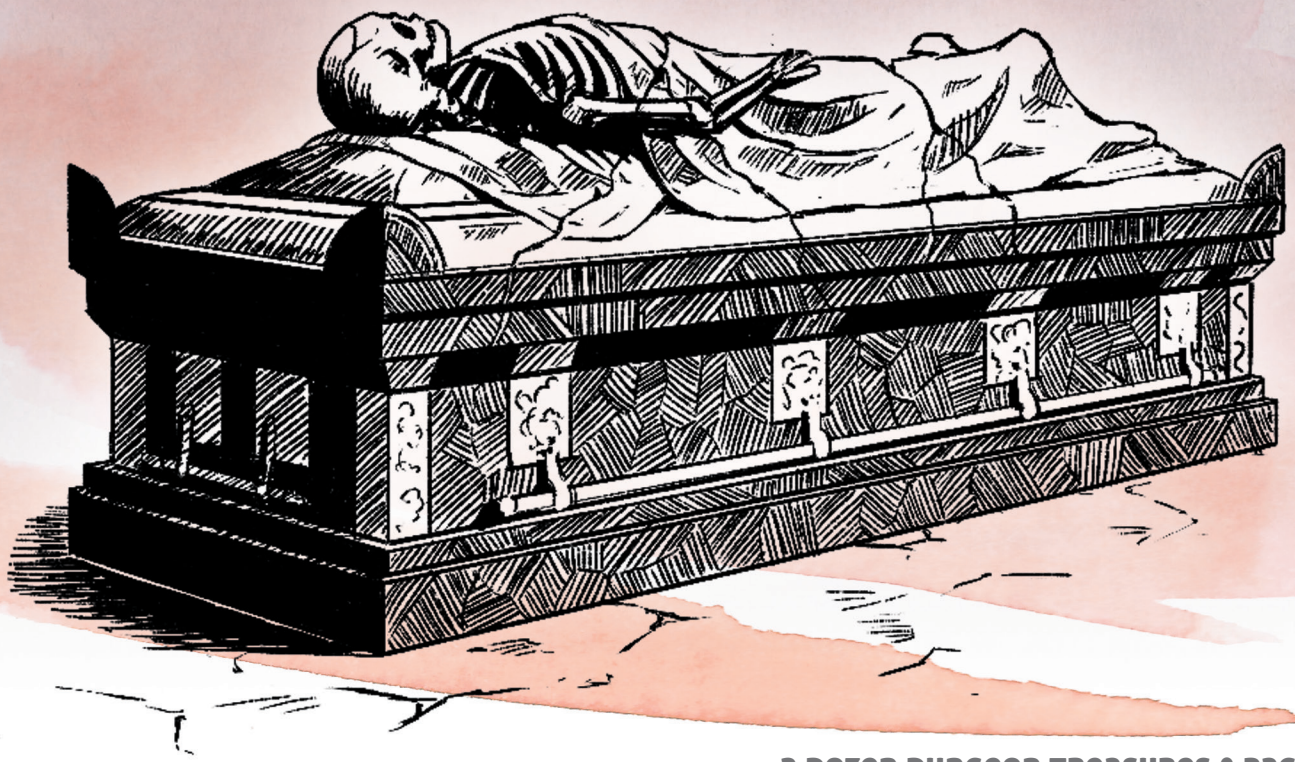
In addition to the more common ensorcelled casket, some wizards have created other forms of the item that have completely different powers.

Casket of Undeath

This creation of a dark necromancer does the opposite of the more common casket. Any living character or creature sealed inside the casket is slowly killed and brought back as an undead monster, usually a zombie. The casket requires 1d6+1 days to complete the transformation; any who are rescued from the casket before the change is completed come out of the box weakened and in need of healing.

Casket of Power

Similar to the ensorcelled casket, this item brings the dead back to life and fully restores their strength. Unlike the basic casket, one who awakens inside this casket is fully healed and rested, ready for battle as if they had just slept through the night. The casket may also be used as a healing chamber; there are tales of powerful nobles and kings who own such caskets to sleep in so that they are strong every morning. These caskets also have a limited number of uses before the magic is gone.



AMULET OF EVIL SIGHT

Common Knowledge

Anyone wearing this amulet gains the ability to detect evil, as per the spell of the same name, at will. Evil characters and creatures within line-of-sight of the wearer of this magical amulet appear to be glowing a faint red. Only the wearer of the amulet may see this glow.

Uncommon Knowledge

In addition to the ability to detect evil, the wearer of the amulet also gains a defensive bonus against all attacks from evil creatures. When attacking the amulet's wearer, evil characters and creatures suffer a -1 penalty to their attack rolls.

Other Powerful Amulets

In addition to the basic amulet, described above, there are the Greater Amulet of Evil Sight and the Amulet of Good Sight, both of which are detailed below.

Greater Amulet of Evil Sight

As above, except that the amulet also grants the wearer a +2 bonus to attacks against evil characters and creatures. This bonus may be either to the roll to strike or the damage result; the wearer may choose which gains the ability before each attack roll is made.

Amulet of Good Sight

Identical in power as the Amulet of Evil Sight with one (obvious) difference: The wearer may see good-aligned characters and creatures and they suffer a -1 penalty when attacking the amulet's wearer.

A Common Magic Item

Not surprisingly, for such a basic powered item, the Amulet of Evil Sight is one of the more common types of magic items found in many campaign worlds. Both good heroes as well as clerics find the amulet to be a valuable tool in their war against evil, and those adventurers who have the means to acquire one of these amulets will do so before setting off to explore the dungeon.

Too Common?

In high magic settings, the amulet may be a charm that almost all characters – even the low commoners – own and wear to protect themselves against the evil dangers of the land.



In such settings, evil wizards have crafted counterspells and magic items that overwhelm and destroy the amulet's power. This wizardly arms race may lead to more and more powerful amulets – and opposing items – which eventually end in the destruction of all of the amulets. Centuries later, adventurers may uncover one of the ancient amulets, perhaps unwittingly setting the brutal chain of events in motion once again.

Only One

In most game systems, a player character may only wear one of different types of magic items. Only one pair of boots. Only a single pair of gloves. Only one helmet. And, of course, only a single magical amulet.

In such games, the Amulet of Evil Sight is not the powerful magic item that it may first appear to be. There are no doubt much better, far more powerful amulets available in the campaign, which makes this again an item for only the commoners. Basically, in a setting with a lot of magic, something as simple as the ability to see evil characters and creatures is far less valuable than it may first appear.

ABANDONED SPELLBOOK

Common Knowledge

No wizard willingly leaves a spellbook behind, so something must have happened to the book's original owner. While there are spellbooks that are protected by mechanical and magical locks, this particular spellbook is open and undefended, meaning that anyone can open the book and look at the pages and pages of arcane writings inside.

Spellcasters examining the book who are talented in the arcane spells of wizards and mages determine that there are $2d10+5$ different spells described within the book. The exact selection of spells, as well as the power level of those spells, is left to the gamemaster to decide.

Those without an understanding of arcane writings cannot understand the book's contents. They know that there is something of valued detailed on the pages, but they cannot understand the writing.

Uncommon Knowledge

Wizards must study and memorize spells every day, so a wizard who has lost a spellbook is at an extreme disadvantage. Losing a spellbook is an act of suicide for many mages and wizards; there is either a wizard searching for this book... or there is a dead wizard.

In addition to spells, many wizards also record the secrets of brewing potions and crafting magic items inside their spellbooks. There is a 15% chance that the discovered spellbook describes the steps needed to create $2d6+1$ different spells, magical swords, magic shields, or whatever other magic items the gamemaster feels best fit the needs of the party.

Of course, spellbooks are valuable items and may be sold rather than used. While most adventurers who find a spellbook will give it to the party's arcane spellcaster, there's nothing stopping the group from deciding that the best course of action is to take the book to the nearest shopkeep and get as many gold as they can for the item.

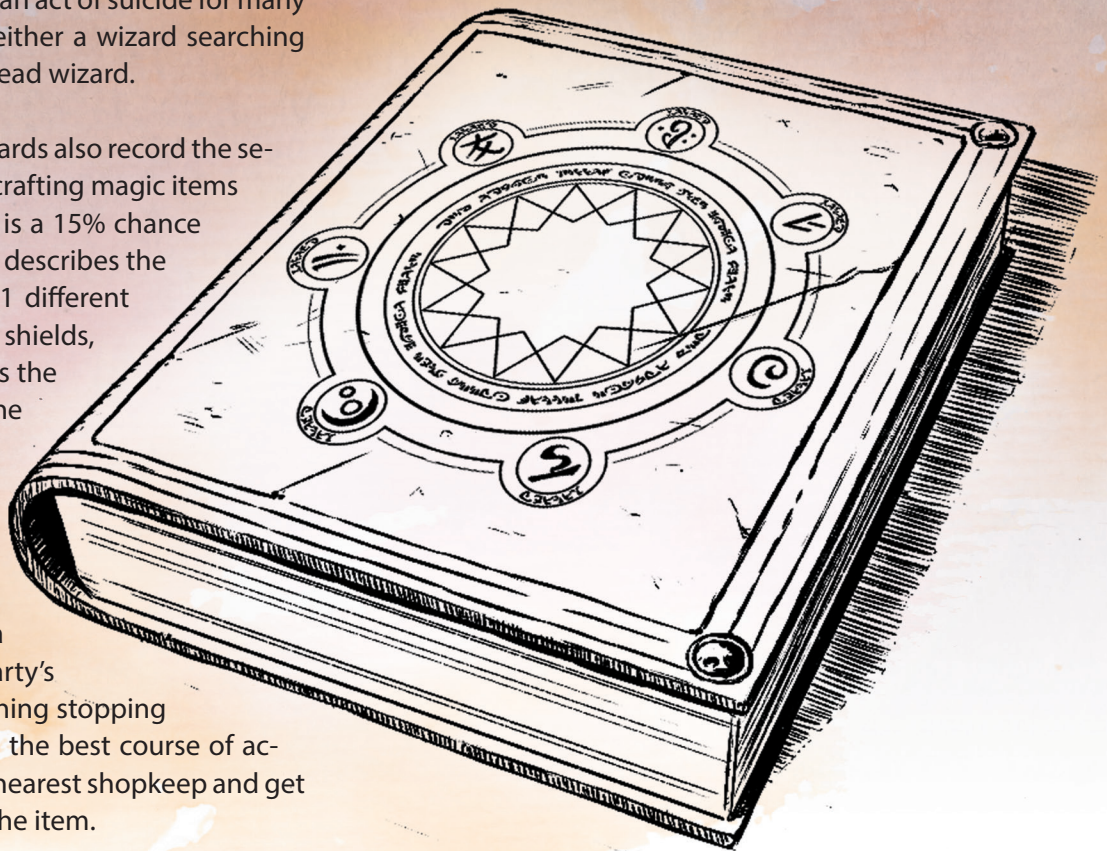
Making Them Pay

If the group does decide to sell a discovered spellbook, one mean trick that you could play on them is to have the party overhear a conversation at a local tavern a day or so after they sell the book.

"The reward is 500 gold and I aim to collect. The old man says that the book was stolen one week ago and he must have it back. Considering that the reward was only 100 gold a few days ago, I will sit on it for a week or so once I find it. Gotta drive up that price, right, boys?"

The speaker is a young thief, not yet twenty winters of age, and as he continues talking he describes the very spellbook that the party sold recently. If they pressure the youth, he tells them that the buyer is Ogorim Ozahar, a human mage who lives in a small shack in the poorer area of the city.

The shopkeep who bought the book no longer has it, of course, having sold it to an elven mage with red hair and a scar over one eye. Can the party recover the spellbook and deliver it to Ozahar for the reward?



DORMANT CREATURE

Common Knowledge

Evil wizards sometimes capture creatures and lock them away in a magical stasis, saving the beasts as weapons to use against their opponents. These dormant creatures are in a magical hibernation and, once awakened, are mentally linked to the creator or, if the creator is dead, whoever released the creature from its rest.

Uncommon Knowledge

These bottled beasts are magical constructs, not real creatures, and they are held safely within vials and glass chambers for decades at a time. To awaken and activate the magical construct, the small glass prison must be smashed open, either with a weapon or by throwing the container at a floor or wall.

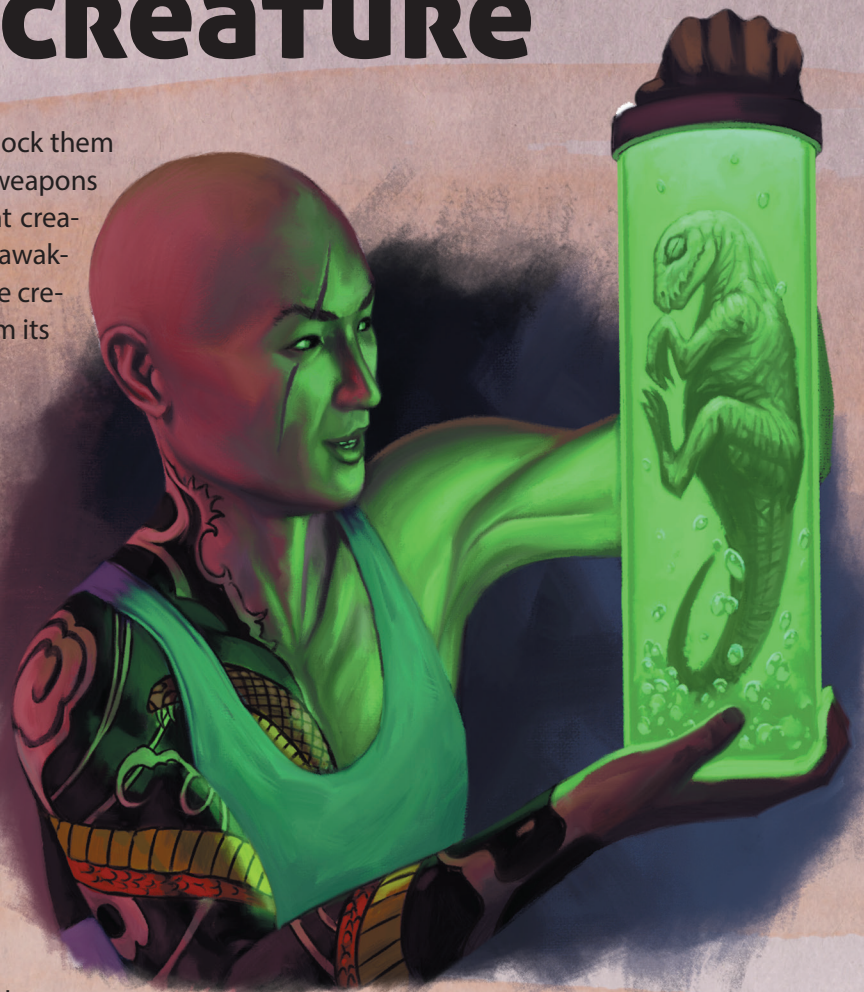
Once shattered, the magical creature is released and automatically obeys the mental commands of the one who freed it from the arcane prison. The creatures are made of pure magical force and can only function for 2d6 rounds, or until they suffer enough damage to destroy them.

The exact statistics and shape of the creature is left to the gamemaster to determine. They should be low-level creatures, a threat to novice adventurers but only an obstacle for experienced player characters to overcome. Some wizards may store several such containers in their home or workshop, unleashing the monsters if their private space is ever disturbed by unwelcome guests.

The creatures are almost a golem of sorts, but they are made of magic and not wood, stone, flesh, or the other materials most often associated with golems.

In battle, the creatures can deal physical damage or, if the GM wishes, they may cast minor spells such as flaming attacks, magic missile, or other low-powered offensive spells. The limit is only the imagination of the GM.

Player characters who know what these bottles are and get their hands on one will no doubt save it to use as a strange thrown weapons.



Larger Containers

While most dormant creatures are held in cylinders that are no more than a few feet long, a determined wizard could create a much larger creature that is held within a container that stands 10' or more in height. Such magical beasts are dangerous and should be rare; it is best to make the stories of such monsters far more common than any actual encounter with one of the beasts.

To really threaten the party and force them to work hard, perhaps a wizard has constructed a cylinder within his tower. Instead of measuring the size of the container in feet, it is measured in stories . . . and the monster within is every bit as large and powerful as you wish.

Such a giant of an arcane monster would be devastating to most small towns and villages of your campaign world, so think long and hard before placing such an encounter too close to your campaign's base of operations.

KEY OF MANY LOCKS

Common Knowledge

Wizards who prefer to avoid the company of thieves and rogues, who find themselves confronted with an unbreakable lock, sometimes turn to the key of many locks to unlock the barrier. This simple magic item is one that even most inexperienced of arcane spellcasters learns to create as an apprentice, making these keys far more common than you may first think. Unfortunately, though, each key of many locks is in fact very limited in its power; after 1d4 uses, the key crumbles to dust and is forever lost.

Uncommon Knowledge

While the uneducated believe that any simple magical key is a key of many locks, the practiced and experienced adventurer knows that only a handful of true keys of many locks have ever been crafted. The item may only be constructed by a powerful mage; those keys that the apprentice learns to craft are temporary magics that consume far too many hours of time to be worth the effort to create. The basic keys made by an apprentice are a training tool, intended to give the new spellcaster a little experience with item crafting and a touch of confidence.

A true key of many locks will function for decades, the key able to unlock 99% of the mechanical locks that have ever been – or will ever be – created. The key does not work with magical locks; there is a 25% chance that inserting this key into a magical lock will destroy the key of many locks in an arcane explosion that destroys the lock (hey, it is unlocked!) and deals the user 2d4 points of damage.

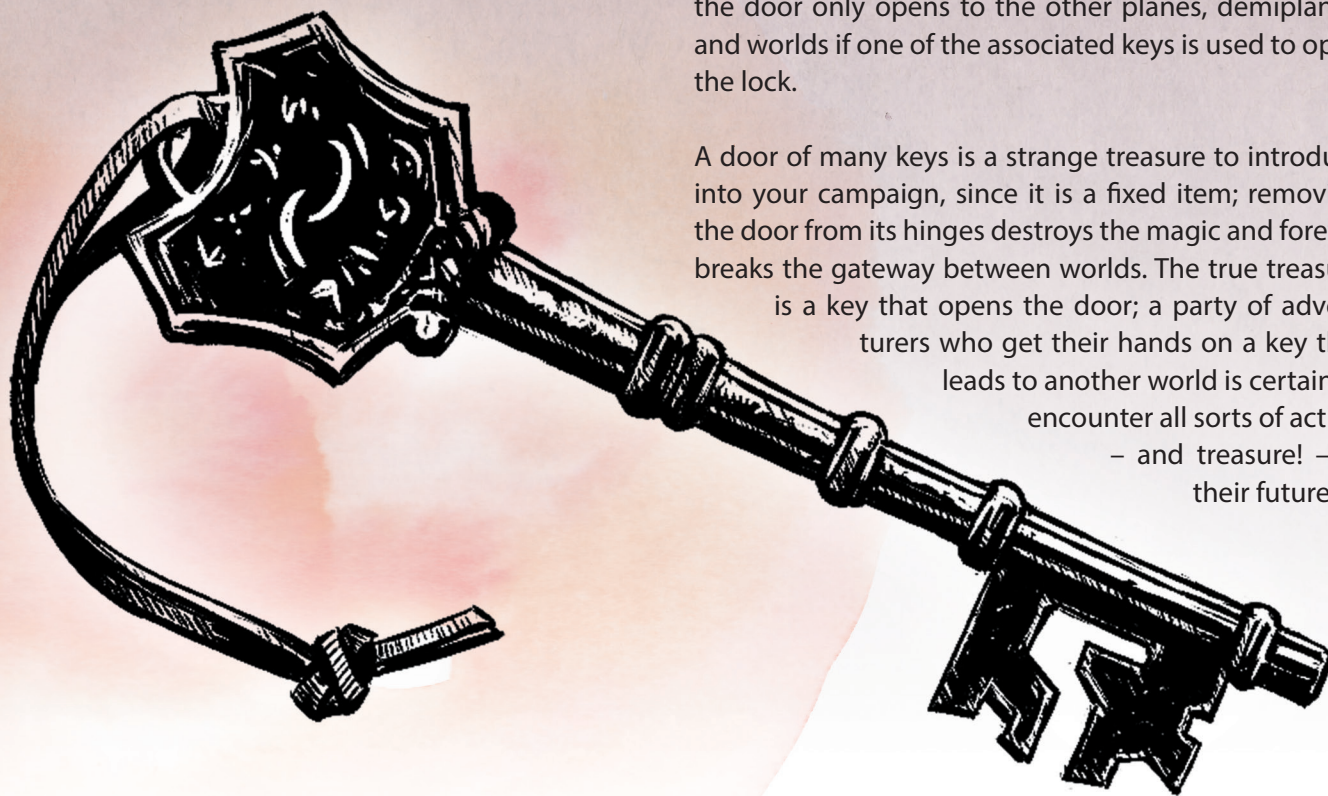
Scroll of Many Locks

Another magic item that functions like the key is a scroll of many locks, an arcane spell that the reader may trigger to unlock almost any mechanical lock. The scroll is a single use item, of course, making it far less valuable. Still, it may be that a wizard does not possess the resources or knowledge to craft the key and the scroll is the only option.

Door of Many Keys

Unlike the key of many locks, the door of many keys is a magical door that can be opened by a number of different keys (usually 2d10+6 different keys will work with the door). The door is a planar gate, with every key used opening the door to a new realm of existence. Anyone picking the lock and opening it finds only a solid wall; the door only opens to the other planes, demiplanes, and worlds if one of the associated keys is used to open the lock.

A door of many keys is a strange treasure to introduce into your campaign, since it is a fixed item; removing the door from its hinges destroys the magic and forever breaks the gateway between worlds. The true treasure is a key that opens the door; a party of adventurers who get their hands on a key that leads to another world is certain to encounter all sorts of action – and treasure! – in their future.



SKULL OF THE VAMPIRE

Common Knowledge

This sculpted art object is a rare work, described in stories as an evil artifact that attracts vampires and other forms of undead creatures. The item is enchanted by a wizard and then left in a place where the caster wishes to unleash a plague of vampires. The art item is sometimes presented as a gift to an enemy who, if they're unaware of the item's power, carries it into their home. Vampires are drawn to the skull if they are ever within five miles of the object.

Some without an understanding of the item's power will see it as an art object and may be willing to pay up to 100 gold for the item. They'll soon regret their purchase if they live too close to a vampire or two.

Uncommon Knowledge

While commoners and the uneducated may think that the skull was sculpted by an artist, those with experience and training know that it is in fact the skull of a slain vampire. Its true value is to those who wish to attract a group of vampires to them . . . or to an enemy.

The vampires are drawn to the skull for one reason: To claim it and give their slain relative a proper resting place. It isn't that the skull is in any way magical; those who sell the unusual item tend to talk, and that talk eventually makes its way to nearby vampires who take action to rescue their deceased companion from its humiliating position.

The Magical Skull

While the basic skull as described above isn't really a magic item – no matter what the commoners say and believe – there have been known to exist magical skulls that were crafted by evil wizards. These skulls are real skulls, taken from corpses, that the wizards then ensorcell and infuse with arcane power. The skulls have different powers; roll 1d4 to determine the power of a found skull.

1. Skull of Screams. Made from any skull. The item is an alarm of sorts; the owner may instruct the skull to scream at specific times of day, if someone comes within sight of the skull, or if the door to the skull's chamber is opened.

2. Vampire Skull. The item must be kept out of sunlight. Any sunlight that hits it instantly reduces it to dust. Once per night, at the command of its master, the skull turns into a bat and may explore for up to an hour, during which time the owner senses all that the bat encounters in its travels.

3. Skull of Death. This human skull, if throw as a weapon, explodes in a burst of black flames that inflict 2d6 points of damage to all within 20' of the impact spot. The skull is a single use weapon.

4. Necromancer's Skull. May be created from the skull of any intelligent humanoid creature. The skull has the power to animate the dead, even bringing defeated skeletons back for a second round of battle. The skull is most often strapped to a wizard's skeletal minions so that if one of them is destroyed, it automatically stands back up on the next round. The skull works 1d6+1 times and then crumbles to dust.



GROTESQUE STATUE

Common Knowledge

Far too large to be easily moved, these ugly statues were sculpted centuries ago and have been scattered across the known and unknown lands. Many of the statues are art objects – prices ranging from a few hundred gold to infinite value that only the most powerful of kings could dare hope to afford – while a handful of the statues are magical artifacts that have remained undisturbed for so many years that their powers were forgotten long ago.

Uncommon Knowledge

Many of the more terrifying statues that exist in the land were created millenia ago by the serpentfolk known as Yiggzz. 99% of the statues are art objects that are valuable only to the wealthy and collectors. A small number, less than 1% of the statues, are in fact magic items.

There are a number of different powers that the statues may possess, with each one unlike the others. Even when statues look the same, their powers may vary. To determine the power of a located magic statue, roll 1d4:

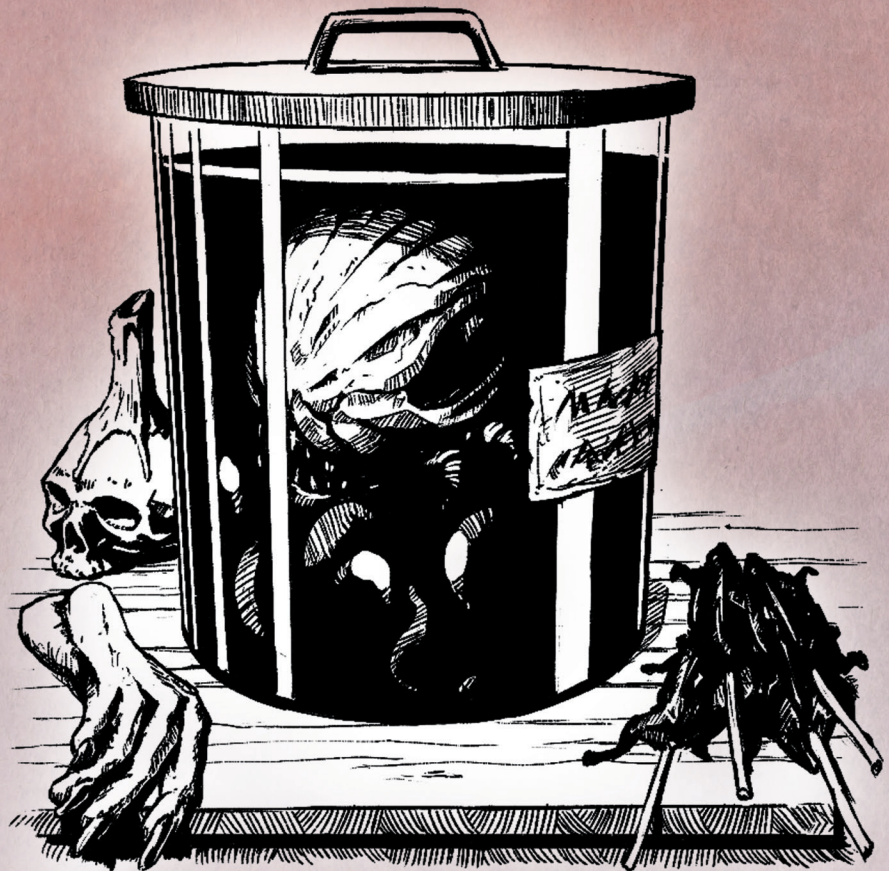
- 1. Magical Gate.** The statue is a planar gate, allowing access between worlds. Many of the gates are single contact gates, opening between the statue and a specific point on another plane or demiplane of existence. At times, some gates will allow for contact between multiple worlds. Activating the gate requires knowledge of the trigger, which can be anything from a specific time of day to a magical key to a command word.
- 2. Healing Touch.** Anyone coming into contact with the statue automatically heals 1d6 points. An individual may only be healed once each day.

- 3. Protective Shield.** When activated, by pulling a hidden lever, the statue projects a magical field around itself and all within 5' of the statue. For 2d6 rounds, no attacks or beings may pass from outside of this field into the protected area. Attacks, as well as characters and creatures, may move from within the protective field to outside of the protected area, though they may not get back in after leaving.
- 4. Ensorcell Weapon.** Any mundane weapon that is positioned within a specific spot on the statue – an outstretched hand of a statue, for example, may perfectly hold a sword or shield – and left for a decade or more is forever empowered. At the end of a decade, the undisturbed weapon gains a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls. The weapon changes color to match the statue; it takes a spot check to notice that a statue's weapon or armor is removable.



HEAD IN A JAR

Found in the wickedest of wizardly workshops, the ubiquitous head in a jar is a staple of the scene. What wizards use these warped, evil items for is a near-infinite number of magical experiments, many of which are as evil as the very act of preserving the head of an intelligent being in a jar of thick, gray, indescribable fluids.



Common Knowledge

The heads are valuable only to arcane spellcasters who use them to speak with the dead, as components in some spells, and when crafting evil magic items. Good-aligned wizards would never use a head in a jar; only evil casters are willing to abuse the dead in such a vile and disgusting way.

Uncommon Knowledge

The head in a jar, despite what the uneducated may think, is a magic item all its own and not simply a wizardly tool to be used in the act of crafting other magical effects. The head is a conduit to the realms of the dead, granting the living wizard the ability to speak directly with creatures in the lands of the dead. While it is near-impossible to communicate with a specific character or creature in the otherworlds, experienced spellcasters know that the head of one who was once a divine caster makes for the best contact with the other side. Any head will work, yes, but the head of a divine caster gives the wizard a 2% chance of talking to a chosen spirit.

Can You Find a Head?

While visiting a magic shop or guild of wizards, the party overhears a spellcaster asking for a supply of heads. The wizard, Zilleas Kumal, is told in hushed whispers that it is rude to ask for such things. He complains loudly at being shushed and silenced and then, if he notices the player characters listening in, approaches the party and offers gold for heads.

Kumal has a supplier of heads at a magic shop in a distant town – as far away as the GM feels is appropriate – and he offers the party 100 gold each if they will make the journey to acquire the heads and return them to him. Throughout the discussion, others in the shop or guild mutter about the wickedness of it all and that the town watch should deal harshly with such sorcery.

Will the party accept his offer and set off on the errand, or will they join the others in frowning on the questionable activity of Zilleas Kumal? If they are not careful, they may make themselves an enemy of the wizard.

STARLIGHT SWORD

Common Knowledge

This powerful two-handed sword has been enchanted with the power of starlight, an ancient and magical force that comes from far beyond the worlds of man. It is said that millenia ago, when demonic creatures controlled the known lands, accomplished spellcasters tapped into starlight and siphoned some of its energy to form the earliest magics practiced by the elves. The sword grants the ability of starlight; attacks with the weapon inflict a bonus 1d4 points of damage and, once per day, the attack unleashes a magical lightning that deals an extra 2d4 points of magic damage.



Uncommon Knowledge

A starlight sword is brought into existence when a spellcaster plunges a newly-crafted magic sword into a boiling pool of starlight-infused water. Finding raw, natural starlight is an adventure in its own right; the power is almost impossible to locate and all known starlight sources are guarded by spellcasters and creatures who harness the energy to power their magic.

In addition to the increased damage and the magical lightning attack, a starlight sword also grants the user the ability to see in the dark. This magical sight works without fail; even magical darkness cannot eliminate the power.

Other Starlight Items

In addition to the sword, there is also a starlight potion (as described in *The Book of Unusual Potions*) and various other starlight weapons and armors. Most starlight weapons are similar in power to the starlight sword, while armors grant the wearer defensive starlight powers that are different depending on whether the item is armor, a shield, or a helmet.

Starlight Helmet

The wearer gains the ability to see in the dark and the helmet glows a deep, intense purple when evil characters and creatures are nearby. It does not grant a defensive bonus greater than the helmet's basic defense.

Starlight Shield

A shield fused with the power of starlight allows the user to deflect magical lightning blasts. The attacks automatically fail to strike the wearer, and a successful attack roll by the shield's user deflects the power of the lightning at any nearby target that shield's user wishes to attack.

Starlight Armor

This magical armor glows purple, much like the helmet, and gains a magical +2 bonus against all attacks. Starlight armor is only made of metal; there are no padded or leather starlight armors. Once per day, starlight armor grants the wearer the ability to heal 2d4 points of damage as a free action that requires only a thought to activate.