

a DOZEN MAGIC HELMETS

BY PHILIP REED

“Helms and helmets restrict vision and hearing. They frame the face, obscure his vision, muffle his hearing, and generally give the character less ability to observe what’s going on around him. (They also sometimes keep maces from caving in his skull, which is why fighters like helms and helmets.)”

– Aaron Allston, ***The Complete Fighter’s Handbook***

Few game systems bother with the complexity and unnecessary act of dealing with armor as individual pieces, instead granting a single defensive bonus for armor as a complete set. When it comes to magic, though, we can easily offer up individual items: such as helmets, shields, and gauntlets. The trick is to stick with the fantastic rather than to fall into the rabbit hole of simulation.

I’ve written descriptions of magic helmets before, usually as part of a larger collection of random magic items, so it’s fun to return to the concept of magic helmets and devise new concepts and present helmets unlike those I’ve created before. Best of all, as with some other entries in the ***A Dozen . . .*** series, I’ve included histories in addition to the in-game abilities of the helmets.



As with some of the other works in this series, I’ve made loose connections between the items within these pages and other entries in the ***A Dozen . . .*** series of PDFs. Unlike earlier connections between titles, though, I’ve made several of the links far more direct. As you read through these helmet descriptions, I suggest keeping ***A Dozen Magic Armors*** and ***A Dozen Magic Shields*** close at hand.

One way in which to introduce some of these items is a bit at a time. Maybe drop in one of the helmets, and then allow the party to learn of the helmet’s history . . . and that there are other items that make the helmet part of a set of equipment.

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anatomy OF a HELMET

1. A title, to help set the mood.
2. A brief overview and introduction, to set the scene/mood.
3. Information on the helmet, which includes both any powers the helmet may possess as well as a little info on the history of the item.
4. Every helmet includes an illustration to help spark your imagination and give you something to show the players: "You have found this."

1 HELMET OF DWARVEN STOICISM

Motralisia Orcbreaker, a dwarven warrior who died hundreds of years ago, was the first owner of this magical helmet. Before her death, she used the helmet and armor – and a magic shield that was bonded to the items – in her life as an adventurer and defender of the dwarven clans living deep beneath Mount Frostlance.

The helmet has only one ability when worn on its own; the wearer may cast the detect magic spell, as if they were a wizard or sorcerer, up to two times each day, so long as the wearer waits at least two hours between casting the detect magic spell. Once cast, the spell functions as detailed under your chosen game system's standard rules for the spell.

If used with the matching armor (see *A Dozen Magic Armors*, p. 7) and/or shield (see *A Dozen Magic Shields*, p. 7), the Helmet of Dwarven Stoicism grants even greater powers. Please see both of those PDFs for information on wearing the items together. If you are a player reading this, please keep in mind that your gamemaster may change the exact effects of any one of the three items; maybe the knowledge your character possesses of any of these items was just bad and inaccurate rumors that were passed down throughout the years by bards telling stories that became less and less accurate as time went on.

Where is the Helmet?

While the armor may be in the hoard of the dragon Zazzurri (see *A Dozen Ancient Dragons*, p. 4), the helmet was last seen on the head of the goblin king Brugs Fung, who has taken control of an abandoned giant ant warren far from the city.

If the player characters happen to ask in the city about the Helmet of Dwarven Stoicism, or maybe seek out a sage or bard as they search for any historical information on Motralisia Orcbreaker that may be available, there's a chance they will learn of Brugs Fung and the goblin's rumored "kingdom" beneath the earth. Asking about the goblin specifically leads to more information than any will have of Orcbreaker and the magical gear; it turns out that "King" Fung has been causing trouble for some of the farmers who live near the city and they are now offering a 20 gold bounty on the head of any goblin. 100 gold if it is the head of Fung!

Will the adventurers set off in search of Fung's kingdom and, if they do, how will they deal with the goblin and his band of warriors? The exact size of Brugs

Fung's followers will be up to the GM to determine and will depend entirely on the GM's preferred outcome for the meeting. If the GM wishes to make the encounter especially challenging, Fung may have an orc or two in his army who have pledged to protect their king from all invaders.

Of course, the PCs don't have to murder the goblins to put an end to the rains (or to get the helmet). If the group tries to bargain with the goblin, they find Fung open to negotiation.



See *A Dozen Magic Armors*, p. 7 and *A Dozen Magic Shields*, p. 7.

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USING THE HELMETS

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 helmet – 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 helmet 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 helmet 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.

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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POISON HELMET

Created centuries ago by the arcane assassin Drasko Pavlovic, this unusual helmet was originally worn with the poison plate armor. Pavlovic created the two items for one of his companions, a fighter who specialized in poisons, and the helmet and armor were separated when the fighter was killed while exploring the dungeons beneath Castle Hell's Heart.

The helmet provides no additional bonus to defense, but it does grant the wearer with a 20% chance to resist the effect of any poison. Additionally, when worn, the helmet's wearer gains the ability to cast poison spray, as per the cantrip of the same name, once each day as an attack action. The spell's effect is as if the helmet's wearer were a low-level wizard; the poison spray's damage does not increase regardless of the wearer's level of experience.

If worn with the armor, the helmet gains no additional powers or benefits. See **A Dozen Magic Armors** (p. 3) to learn more about the matching suit of armor.

A Unique Item

It is certainly possible that other helmets have been crafted for poisoners over the years, but the sages and scholars of the land know of no other that is identical to Pavlovic's Poison Helmet. The party may come across a similar helmet that they think is this specific item, and it is possible that they may be able to convince someone that the similar helmet is the missing Poison Helmet, but they would be selling a lie. How can one tell when they have found the real Poison Helmet? When it comes within a few feet of the matching

See **A Dozen Magic Armors**, p. 3.

armor, the helmet glows a bright green. That glow persists for so long as the two items remain close together. For that reason, those who rely on stealth and hiding in the shadows will not want to wear the two items at the same time.



DUNGEONEER'S HELMET

Crafted by the dwarven expert maker Dreas Embermaul, this helmet was commissioned by the fighter Carles Criville who had the helmet – and matching suit of armor – built to his exact specifications. The fighter didn't get to use the helmet or armor for long, though, because a wicked troll proved more powerful than he could handle. The helmet and armor were separated by Criville's companions after his death.



When worn on its own, the helmet grants the wearer a +1 magical bonus to defense. The helmet's true strength is when it is worn with the matching armor (see **A Dozen Magic Armors**, p. 4) at which point it gives the user the ability to see magic items as well as grants the wearer darkvision.

For those unaware of the helmet's history and the armor that was designed to go with it, the magic helmet doesn't have a lot of value. This has made it a relatively inexpensive magic item that, over the last few years, has seen a handful of different owners. Only someone who knows of the matching armor will truly understand the helmet's value.

Chasing Down the Helmet

While the elf Thaola Araqen, a friend of Criville's, may have some knowledge of the initial sale of the helmet and armor (both were sold to a traveling wizard who was staying at The Caster's Rest, an inn in the city that opens its doors only to spellcasters), she has no idea that the helmet has passed through so many hands since Criville's death.

Finding the helmet may be more challenging than tracking down the armor, so the party – if they decide to try and claim Embermaul's offered reward – will be forced to turn to those in the city who are most likely to keep their eye on the sale and trade of magic.

See **A Dozen Magic Armors**, p. 4.

In addition to the established merchant, magic, and armor shops in the city, there's also an old wizard who lives in the forest who is rumored to keep a journal detailing all of the information on magic items that he can collect.

If the party chooses to visit Zlaten Dimitrov, they'll find that he isn't a fan of company; the wizard is as likely to cast minor spells to annoy and frustrate them as he is to open his door and yell at them to go away. Dimitrov can be persuaded to chat with them, though, if they have a scroll, potion, or minor magic item that they're willing to trade for some of his time.

Zlaten Dimitrov knows exactly where the helmet is. The wizard is unaware of Embermaul's reward, but he was interested enough in the helmet and armor when they were first made that he has kept tabs on both of them. He may choose to share the info . . . for a price.

MIDNIGHT HELMET

The deep dwarves of Cavefall built this helmet – and its matching suit of armor – for the drow warrior Tymith Ishra, an ally of theirs who helped to train the elite guards of Cavefall. Ishra taught the dwarven warriors a few drow secrets that they then used in their battle against the people of Deephaven. The helmet and armor were lost when Ishra was killed during that battle against the drow citizens of Deephaven.



When worn on its own, the Midnight Helmet grants a +2 magical bonus to defense as well as darkvision at a range of 50-feet. If the wearer already possesses the darkvision ability, the helmet extends the character's natural darkvision range by 50%.

If the character also wears the Midnight Defense plate armor (see **A Dozen Magic Armors**, p. 5), the combination grants the wearer the ability to move without a sound.

Carried Away by Spiderfolk

Long after Tymith Ishra died in the battle of Deephaven, after the drow warrior's body had turned to dust far below the city, a band of spiderfolk scavengers found the warrior's belongings. While many of Ishra's possessions had also turned to dust, the Midnight Helmet and matching armor were still intact and in perfect condition. The spiderfolk claimed the two items as their own, even though the creatures were unable to wear either the helmet or the armor.

The spiderfolk scavengers had no home of their own, but were wanderers who traveled the subterranean roads that connect the cities of the dwarves, drow, and other races that live below the surface. The spiderfolk

are traders, taking whatever they can find when exploring the labyrinths, caves, and dungeons of the world and trading it with others for food, water, and weapons so that they can continue their journey.

The helmet and armor were last traded to a band of human merchants who visited the city of Deephaven, the city where the spiderfolk had taken the two items after they were found. The merchants bought the two items from the drow of Deephaven, and eventually the helmet was sold to Elias Wouters, owner of the shop All the Best Wares (see **A Dozen Shocking Betrayals**, p. 14) where it sat for only a week before an adventurer purchased it from the shop.

The armor was tougher for the merchants to sell, and they unfortunately lost it when a tribe of hobgoblins attacked them on the road to Hightown. Some of the merchants survived the attack, but all of their belongings were taken by the hobgoblins. Perhaps the heroes meet one of the survivors at a tavern where they hear the tale of the ambush and one-sided battle. Will the promise of magic armor catch their imagination and attention?

See **A Dozen Magic Armors**, p. 5.

SPELLSHELL HELMET

The Spellshell helmet, part of a set that includes matching armor and shield, was created as a defense against the arcane powers of the wizards and mages of old. For one-thousand years, this helmet – as well as similar ones that were crafted at the same time – has granted its wearer limited resistance to spells while also providing protection against physical attacks.

The spellshell helmet is the most common item of the three-piece set that also includes the Protective Spellshell armor and the Spellshell Blocker. More of these helmets were crafted than the other two items, making this the part of the set that is most likely to be encountered first by the heroes when they are sifting through the treasures that they may have found during an adventure.

These helmets were never commonplace, meaning that it is unlikely that the party will stumble across more than one of them. If they happen to find the armor or shield first, though, the helmet will be the easiest piece of the set to locate and claim to amplify the power of either of those other two parts of the set.

The weakest of the three linked items (see ***A Dozen Magic Armors***, p. 6, and ***A Dozen Magic Shields***, p. 6), the spellshell helmet reduces the damage of all incoming magic spells by 5% (round down). Additionally, wearing the helmet grants the wearer the darkvision ability (15-ft).

When worn with the matching armor and shield, the spellshell helmet provides the wearer with other abilities. See the matching items in their respective PDFs for more information.

See ***A Dozen Magic Armors***, p. 6 and ***A Dozen Magic Shields***, p. 6.

Magic Item Sets

A concept popularized in video games (which owe a lot to the tabletop fantasy RPGs that came before them), the central concept of magic item sets is that they give the player an in-game goal that both impacts the look of the player's character and rewards the PC when all of the matching items in a set are collected and worn by the character.

The three inter-linked series of PDFs, created thanks to the support of Kickstarter backers – ***A Dozen Magic Armors***, ***A Dozen Magic Helmets***, and ***A Dozen Magic Shields*** – are my stab at the concept of magic item sets. I fully admit that these items were inspired solely by playing too many video games two decades ago, and I encourage all GMs to adapt and modify each item in any of the described sets to meet their own needs or the wishes of the players.

Magic item sets should be rare in your campaign, though, or you'll soon face an escalation of power that can only be defeated by throwing tougher and tougher monsters at the party. A magic item set is most rewarding to the heroes if such sets are hard to acquire; as soon as every member of the party has a complete set – or even pieces of a set – the concept loses any charm that it may have once possessed.



HELMET OF DWARVEN STOICISM

Motralsia Orcbreaker, a dwarven warrioress who died hundreds of years ago, was the first owner of this magical helmet that grants its wearer both defense against attacks as well as the ability to detect magic. Before her death, she used the helmet and armor – and a magic shield that was bonded to the items – in her life as an adventurer and defender of the dwarven clans living deep beneath Mount Frostlance.

The helmet has only one ability when worn on its own: the wearer may cast the detect magic spell, as if they were a wizard or sorcerer, up to two times each day, so long as the wearer waits at least two hours between casting the detect magic spell. Once cast, the spell functions as detailed under your chosen game system's standard rules for the spell.

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See **A Dozen Magic Armors**, p. 7 and **A Dozen Magic Shields**, p. 7.

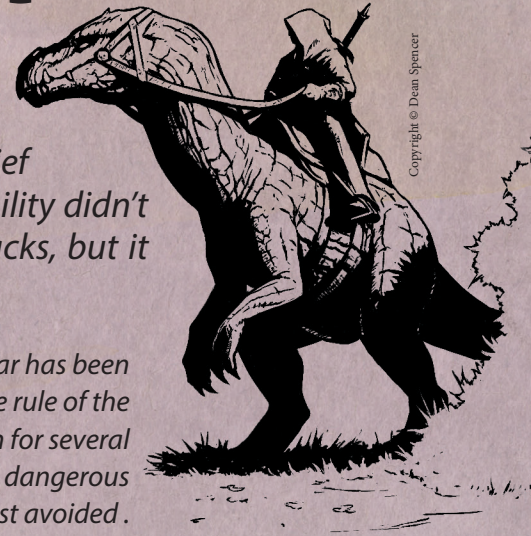
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Will the adventurers set off in search of Fung's kingdom and, if they do, how will they deal with the goblin and his band of warriors? The exact size of Brugs Fung's followers will be up to the GM to determine and will depend entirely on the GM's preferred outcome for the meeting. If the GM wishes to make the encounter especially challenging, Fung may have an orc or two in his army who have pledged to protect their king from all invaders.

Of course, the PCs don't have to murder the goblins to put an end to the raids (or to get the helmet). If the group tries to bargain with the goblin, they find Fung open to negotiation.

HELMET OF AGILITY

In addition to magical armor, Ianbalar Yalathanil, the elf thief best known for stealing the Eye of Rage from Castle Hellscar, also possessed a magic helmet that aided the thief in his adventures. Unlike most helmets, Ianbalar's helm of agility didn't provide much in the way of protection against physical attacks, but it did enhance his skills as a thief.



Castle Hellscar has been under the rule of the Dinosaur Clan for several years now. It is a dangerous place that is best avoided.

This magical helmet increases the wearer's Dexterity score by 1 and grants a +2 bonus to checks involving stealth, theft, or subterfuge. Also, once each night between the hours of midnight and dawn, the wearer may cast a magical shadow that extends out 5-feet to give the helmet's wearer a magical bonus to hide in shadows. This shadow power remains centered on the helmet and lasts for ten minutes or until the wearer wills the shadow to vanish, whichever comes first.

When worn with the suit of matching Agile Plate Armor, the helmet amplifies the armor's magical bonus to defense, increasing the total defensive bonus to +4. The helmet, just like the armor, is light and slim fitting, very much unlike most traditional plate armors and helms.

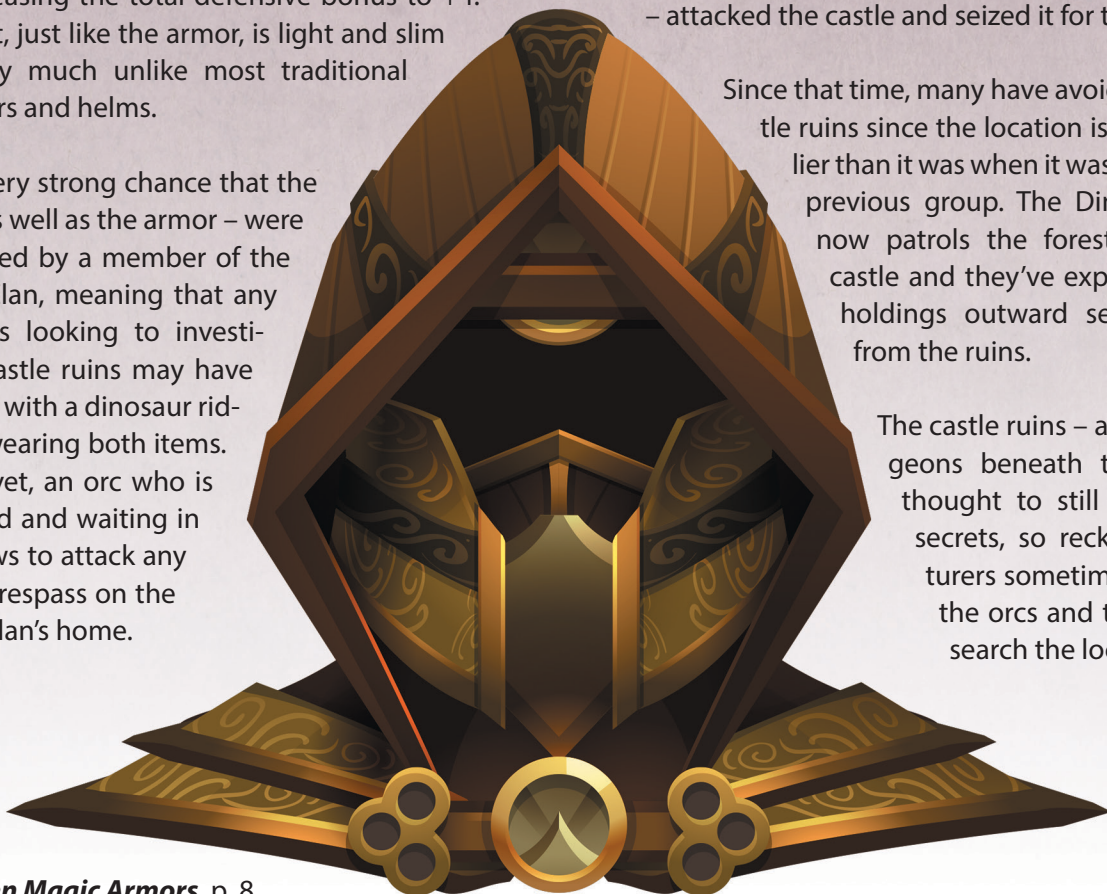
There's a very strong chance that the helmet – as well as the armor – were both claimed by a member of the Dinosaur Clan, meaning that any adventurers looking to investigate the castle ruins may have to contend with a dinosaur rider who is wearing both items. Or, worse yet, an orc who is dismounted and waiting in the shadows to attack any who dare trespass on the Dinosaur Clan's home.

The Hellscar Dinosaur Clan

When Ianbalar explored Castle Hellscar several years ago, the ruins were under the control of a band of human thieves who were using it as their base. Shortly after Ianbalar stole the Eye of Rage, the castle ruins changed hands when the Dinosaur Clan – a tribe of orcs who domesticated dinosaurs and use them as mounts – attacked the castle and seized it for themselves.

Since that time, many have avoided the castle ruins since the location is even deadlier than it was when it was held by the previous group. The Dinosaur Clan now patrols the forests near the castle and they've expanded their holdings outward several miles from the ruins.

The castle ruins – and the dungeons beneath them – are thought to still hold many secrets, so reckless adventurers sometimes sneak by the orcs and take time to search the location.



See **A Dozen Magic Armors**, p. 8.

LORD'S PROTECTIVE HELM

This large, heavy helmet was lost several centuries ago in the Dungeon of Spells when its wearer, Balach Sulemani, was killed while exploring the complex. The helmet grants the wearer the ability to see in complete darkness as well as provides a 50% resistance against all psionic attacks.

The helmet is more powerful when worn with the matching armor (see **A Dozen Magic Armors**, p. 9), so anyone who happens to come across the helmet will certainly want to track down that missing armor.

Though the helmet was lost at the same time as the Lord's Protective Shell plate armor, the two items are not in the same place. Sulemani's body was found a few months after he died, but the scavengers who picked over his body only had time to snatch the helmet (and a few weapons) before the dungeon's inhabitants chased them away from the man's cold corpse.

The helmet was worn by a few different warriors over the years, though none of them knew exactly what they possessed. The helmet's last owner, Musa Zakirov, suspected that there was something special about the helmet, but he died before he was able to research the item.

Now, the Lord's Protective Helm has fallen into the hands of Gurvio Ingal (see **Fantasy City Sites and Scenes**, pp. 18-19) and the man has discovered the true nature of the helmet. After communicating with the spirit world and genies from other planes, he has pieced together the truth behind the helmet and, best of all, he knows the location of the matching armor.

A Job for the Heroes

Ingal is unable to take the time necessary to explore the Dungeon of Spells – it may be as far away as a month's ride from the city – so he is seeking adventurers who will accept an assignment. The PCs always need gold and adventure, right?

See **A Dozen Magic Armors**, p. 9.



The wizard is willing to pay up to 5 gold per character per day in expenses, and offers them a 1,000 gold piece reward if they can find the armor and deliver it to him at his inn in the city.

Of course, it may not be as simple as finding and returning the armor to Ingal. The wizard has been spending a bit of time these last few months asking questions about the ancient armor, and there's a chance that someone has overheard him and plans to steal the helmet and then track down the armor. How will the heroes respond if they find the armor and then – on their way home – are attacked by a competing band of adventurers who were hired to steal the armor?

HELMET OF THE MIGHTY NECROMANCER

In addition to his powerful armor, the necromancer Nil Borya Ivanovich, who died long ago in the town of Glenhearth, wore this strange helmet whenever he set off on adventure. The helmet is unusual and glows a black, sickly color when detect magic is cast on it. When worn, the helmet provides the wearer with the ability to command and control the undead, a power that Ivanovich used often before his death.



When wearing the Helmet of the Mighty Necromancer, the character – regardless of their true profession – gains the ability to Command Undead as per the School of Necromancy arcane tradition. This power is subject to the GM’s ruling, though I recommend that a necromancer wearing the helmet gain an increase in the strength of the effect and that undead must possess an Intelligence score of 13 or more to gain advantage on its saving throw to resist the wearer’s commands.

When worn with the matching armor (see **A Dozen Magic Armors**, p. 10) the helmet has no additional powers (beyond the boost to spellcasting ability as described in the companion PDF).

Just as with the armor, those of a good alignment who try to wear this helmet will suffer damage; 2 points for every round that the helmet is worn.

Wanted by Ivanovich’s Daughter

Though the necromancer died long ago, his daughter is still alive thanks to wish spells and her own power over the necromantic arts. The woman looks to be about sixty winters of age, though her true age is measured in centuries.

See **A Dozen Magic Armors**, p. 10.

Genrietta Ivanovich has spent the last few decades following every lead, every rumor, and every scrap of information that she could find, and her efforts are finally starting to pay off. The woman has determined that the helmet is in an ancient and crumbling castle that is a few days’ ride from the city, and now it is time that she claim her birthright and wear her father’s long-lost magic helmet.

Ivanovich was wounded just a few days ago, though, and because of her advanced age it takes her longer to heal than it did when she was younger. Even magical healing is less effective – she heals at only one-quarter the normal rate – and she now worries that someone else will find the helmet before she does.

Genrietta Ivanovich puts out word in the city that she is looking to hire adventurers – heroes! – who will recover an item for her. She’s willing to pay 500 gold pieces for the item and, if pressed, will give the adventurers two healing potions and a fireball scroll in advance to aid them in their adventure. Will the PCs discover who they’re dealing with before it is too late?



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Heero Awedan was a fighter who lived seven centuries ago and, to this day, is known as a champion of the people. Bards still sing songs of Awedan's bravery, telling tales of the time that he defeated the forces of the Zombie King, the day he freed the Emperor Baskhala from the grip of the fire elementals, and – perhaps most importantly – how Awedan had the treasures of an ancient dragon destroyed and transformed into the Dragonhoard armor and helm.

DRAGONHOARD HELMET

When worn, the Dragonhoard Helmet grants a +1 magical bonus to defense (for a total of a +6 bonus if the helmet and matching armor are worn together). A minor item on its own, the helmet is most powerful when worn with the matching Dragonhoard Defense plate armor (as detailed in ***A Dozen Magic Armors***).

After Awedan's death, when a handful of the dragons of the land ordered their minions to seek out and claim the man's magic armor and helmet, the armor fell into the clutches of an elderly red dragon while the helmet went to Rianayvio, a young green dragon who – even at that time – proved to be a cunning and murderous creature unwilling to let anything stand between him and his dreams.

Over time, as Rianayvio grew in power and amassed more treasures, the monster lost interest in the helmet. It was eventually given to one of the dragon's followers; a human fighter, Itai Pocock, who soon left the dragon's employ.

See ***A Dozen Magic Armors***, p. 11.

Itai Pocock joined a minor mercenary company and was soon killed in battle. Having no known relatives, the man's equipment was distributed to his companions and one of them soon sold the helmet to a merchant (the warrior preferred the coin necessary to buy pleasures of the flesh and far too much drink over whatever protective value the helmet may have granted).

From Hand to Hand

The unknown merchant soon sold the helmet to a paladin who then gave it to a follower. Over many years, the helmet belonged to almost a dozen different people until, today, where it sits in the shop of Grete Bauermann, a half-orc shopkeep who has a stall in the market district of the city.

The woman isn't sure what she has, but she knows it is magic and is asking 250 gold coins for the item. Any capable of appraising magic items who gets a little time with it will determine that the helmet is worth at least 1,000 gold.



THE STARMAGE'S ARCANES HELMET OF STARS

Known only as the "Starmage," the creator of this magical helmet – as well as a matching suit of armor – claimed to learn all of his arcane secrets from the stars. The helmet and armor were first worn by the caster's personal bodyguard, Heralak Tammand, who was a loyal companion of the mage and used the helmet and armor to defend his friend in battle.

The wearer of the helmet may see perfectly at night, so long as there are stars in the sky and at least a handful of them may be seen. The helmet provides no other bonuses unless worn with the matching armor (see **A Dozen Magic Armors**, p. 12 for details).

Finding the Armor and Helmet

If the GM wishes, the player characters may discover the armor and helmet when they are exploring any one of the land's many dungeons (the GM must place the items in a pit and then find a reason for the party to investigate the pit). Of course, finding both of these magic items at once may be too much for your campaign to handle, in which case you may wish to:

- Decide that the helmet was taken by the ogre when he killed the goblin. The ogre then sold the helmet to a traveling wizard, after which point the helmet was eventually sold to a shop in the city.
- A gelatinous beast, or similar slime, scraped the helmet from the pit one day and now the monster is somewhere in the dungeon, the helmet suspended in its body. This would mean that the two items are in the same dungeon, just not conveniently placed together.
- A dragon's minions found the pit and pulled the helmet out, but then had to flee when giant spiders attacked before they could snatch the armor. The helmet now sits in a dragon's hoard; the dragon senses that there is something special about the helm, but she hasn't bothered to look into things.
- The helmet and armor are still together, but the goblin is now undead and still using the items when the PCs encounter the monster somewhere in the dungeon.

See **A Dozen Magic Armors**, p. 12.

Starcharged Powers

To complicate things for the party, the armor and helmet will only work – including the magical bonus to defense – if the items are charged beneath the stars every night. Perhaps the items have been underground so long that they don't even register as magic items until they are carried to the surface and spend a night beneath the stars.



THE REGAL HELMET OF ARCANE DEFENSE

*This companion to the Regal Suit of Arcane Defense (see **A Dozen Magic Armors**, p. 13) fully encloses the wearer's face and head, providing protection against physical attacks and hiding the identity of the wearer. The helmet is currently for sale in a small shop in Hightown, and the shopkeep keeps reducing the asking price since he has had the item for far too long.*

When the elven wizard Musima Olivarch created this helmet (and the matching armor) for his bodyguard, Verle Harmelink, he put as much arcane energy into the items as he could manage. Some who have read the man's journals say that, in the wizard's own words, the act was "brutal and almost resulted in Musima's death." Those with an understanding of the craft of magic item creation claim that the suit and helmet each – to this day – carry part of the man's soul.

The helmet allows the wearer to project, once each day, a magical barrier that surrounds the helmet's wearer and up to six companions so long as everyone is within 15-feet of the helmet's user. This barrier completely blocks all mundane missile attacks and reduces the damage of any magical attacks – including spells – by 50% (round down). The barrier lasts for only two turns after which point the wearer suffers 1 point of damage for each separate attack that struck the barrier when it was active.

Powerful Magic

When detect magic is cast on the helmet, the item gives off a brilliant aura and is unmistakably magical. Characters with an understanding of magic items recognize that the item is extremely powerful, which is confusing since the helmet's actual powers are not as great

See **A Dozen Magic Armors**, p. 13.



as its aura would suggest. This is because the helmet's connection to the now-dead wizard – as well as the lingering energy that loosely ties it to the armor – has not faded.

Someone who wears the helmet is immediately aware of the armor and at all times knows which direction to travel to find the armor. Once within one-mile of the armor, the helmet begins to hum loudly, with the sound growing in intensity the closer the item gets to the armor. Once reunited, the hum immediately vanishes, and will only return if the two items are ever again separated from more than a few days.

HELMET OF MYSTIC DEFENSE

When fighters must face powerful spellcasters there are many times when the caster's magic makes the meeting far more one-sided than the sword-wielding warrior may expect. The helmet of mystic defense was created decades ago for one of those fighters, Seretse Lebona, who knew that he would be forced to enter into battle with a sorcerer.

Unfortunately for Lebona, he went to the wrong mage when he commissioned the creation of a magical helmet to protect him against an enemy spellcaster. Fenil Pipalia, Lebona's sorcerous enemy, disguised himself as a half-orc crafter and accepted Lebona's coin for the job. The sorcerer created a magic helmet for the fighter, and delivered the item on schedule, but Lebona had been tricked; the helmet that Pipalia crafted was a cursed item that led to the death of the fighter.

The Helmet of Mystic Defense may be put on and taken off freely and shows no signs of being a cursed item . . . until, that is, the helmet's wearer enters battle. When the first blow lands, or the first spell is cast, the helmet's true nature is revealed and it may no longer be removed willingly by the wearer.

Once activated, the helmet restricts the wearer's vision (which forces a -4 penalty when attempting attacks or trying to use any skill that depends on sight) and gives the wearer's attackers a +2 bonus to strike the helmet's user. Worse still, the damage of any magical attack made against the helmet's wearer is doubled; this applies to magic items and spell attacks.

Lebona was killed within moments when the fighter faced off against Pipalia; the sorcerer's trick had worked! Pipalia claimed the dead fighter's belongings, including the helmet, and to this day the cursed helmet is in the wizard's treasure chamber in his tower.

Promises of riches, including magic items, may be just enough to convince the heroes to ride out and investigate the tower. If they don't take the bait, perhaps a merchant offers to buy whatever items the party can find

and bring back. Of course, everyone forgets to tell the heroes that the sorcerer is still alive and that he does not appreciate strangers intruding on his home.

If the party does get their hands on the helmet, and one of them is foolish enough to put it on, there's a chance the group will need to find a wizard or cleric who can remove the curse . . . another adventure all its own!

