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DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

Official Game Accessory

The Book of Wondrous Inventions

Compiled by Bruce A. Heard

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Distributed to the book trade in the United States by Random House Inc., and in Canada by Random House of Canada, Ltd. Distributed to the toy and hobb trade by regional distributors. Distributed in the United Kingdom by TSR UK Ltd.

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POB 756
Lake Geneva,
WI 53147 U.S.A.

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The Mill, Rathmore Road
Cambridge CB1 4AD
United Kingdom

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ISBN 0-88038-497-2

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Introduction

(or, The Monday Morning Editor's Blues)

It was a pleasant Monday morning when I arrived at the Game Wizard's castle. I finally reached my favorite crypt, buried among many dark and twisted corridors. All was fine; I took the leftover mail from the ochre jelly's cage, and removed the imp from my drawer to feed it.

As I was cleaning the crystal ball, I noticed strange clouds inside. There, amidst the swirls, I saw someone approaching. It was the Master, striding down the secret passageway. Bad news... he had one of those wicked smiles on his face. Quickly, I pushed the imp back into the drawer, hoping the Master was headed for another elf's crypt. No such luck.

"Good morning, my boy!" he said. "I bring good news! Our gentle readers crave a tome of bizarre magics and silly gnomish inventions! The other elves are all busy right now, so I know you'll volunteer to do this. Here, take this bag of gold and fetch these wondrous devices. Farewell, my boy, and take your time—I don't need this until tomorrow!"

About This Book...

The material included in this product is for use with both the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Game and the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Game.

These inventions can be placed in dungeons or in the lairs of powerful NPCs to distract, surprise or startle PCs. Nefarious NPCs can take over an invention to create major hazards for the PCs to deal with. Ultimately, inventions can become the goal of a long lasting quest.

Many small inventions can appear in a campaign game without much difficulty, however, several may seriously unbalance the game when encountered by a party of adventurers. In order to avoid this situation, all inventions have a weak spot, or a potentially fatal flaw built in. Whenever a situation gets out of hand, the Dungeon Master should feel free to implement one of these flaws and remove the faulty item from the game.

These inventions should be viewed with humor. They provide fun and an uncommon change of pace whenever they appear in the game.

I hope you enjoy playing with these incredible inventions as much as I had fun compiling them for this book.

Bruce A. Heard

What You Will Find

Inventions are organized in separate categories such as "Transportation, Appliances, Combat Devices", etc. Within each category, inventions come in alphabetical order. The Table of Contents gives a full list of inventions available in this book.

The nature of the inventions appears at the beginning of each new item, under the * **Definition** entry. This short description allows a quick flipping through the pages to easily locate a useful item.

The * **History** of the invention follows. This entry can often be used as source of ideas for new adventures, as well as a reason why and how the invention came about.

The * **Description** entry gives details on the invention's appearance. The DM may read this entry to the players the first time they discover an invention.

The creation of such devices is explained in the * **Construction** entry. The DM may allow player characters to gather the necessary wealth and knowledge that will enable them to reproduce an invention. This entry gives the details specific to the invention and its enchantments.

* **Statistics** indicates in a more telegraphic manner the general parameters of an invention, its size, weight, and other specific numbers that a Dungeon Master needs during a game.

The way an invention works is given in the * **Functioning** entry. This details what an invention can do and what it needs to function properly.

All inventions have a flaw of some sort that allows the Dungeon Master to remove them from play if they cause too much trouble. Faulty devices can be used to add some fun at the most unexpected moments, as well as extra difficulties for the players to solve. Weaknesses are defined in the • **Hazards** entry.

Finally, adventure ideas for the DM to develop are given under * **Staging**.

Building Inventions

The DM may allow player characters to build already existing inventions or new creations. Optional rules for doing so in the D&D® game system are given at the end of the book. Whenever the term "enchantment" is used, it refers to these rules. An "enchantment" is the process by which a wizard makes one or more magical effects permanent.

For the AD&D® game system, *enchant an item* and *permanency* spells are often used as a way around the optional rules mentioned above. The *permanency* spell used in this book refers to *improved permanency*, a new 9th level spell. This spell enables a wizard to permanently bestow any spell effect on any recipient, provided he spends the time and money indicated in the * **Construction** entry.

The optional rules suggested in this book will help the DM determine the time and money necessary for the creation of a magic item or invention.

Dorfin's Little Shop of Horrors should help the DM in finding spare parts usable on some of these inventions. These can be purchased directly from the gnomes without too much trouble for those who want to avoid the actual construction of an invention.

Movement Rates

Many of the creatures and inventions in this book use D&D game system movement rates. To convert these to the AD&D game system, use the following guidelines: 10′ per turn = 1″ per round (indoor). For example: a D&D game orc moves at 90′/turn (30′/round); an AD&D game orc would then move at 9″/round.

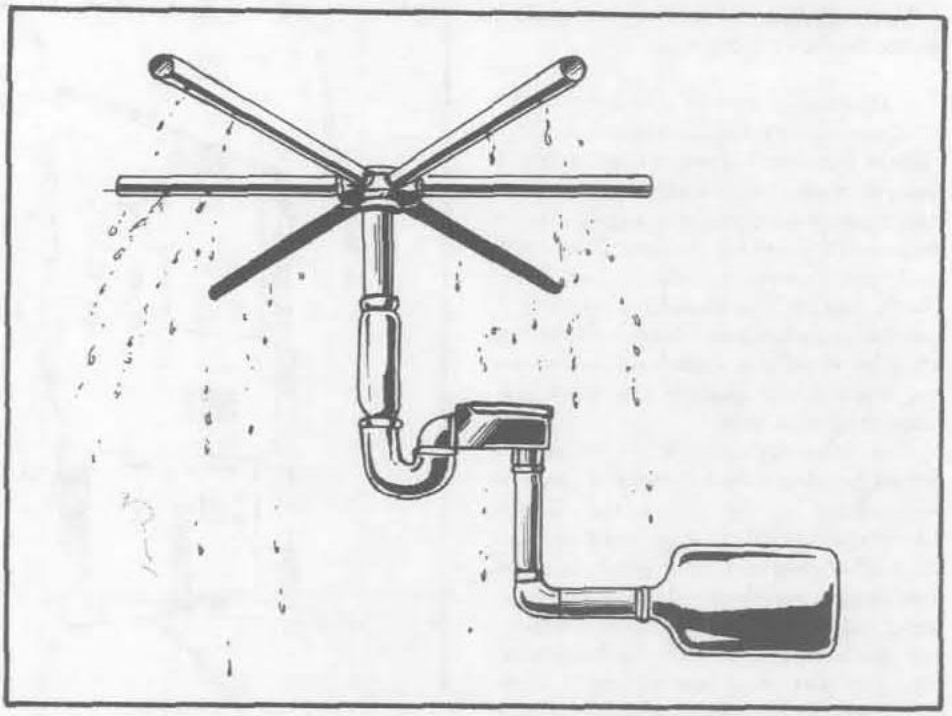
Aldryk's Fire Quencher

* **Definition:** A magical source of water, connected to a piping system, that detects dangerous fires, sounds an alarm, and puts the fire out.

* **History:** Aldryk Scorchbeard was an alchemist of great skill. He was well on his way to solving some of the great alchemical secrets of the ages when a devastating fire—from which he barely escaped with his life—not only gave him a new name, but destroyed his notes, equipment, and decades of work.

Aldryk fought through the disappointment of seeing his life's work destroyed, and turned his despair into a new quest: the study of fire in general, and ways to extinguish it in particular.

* **Descripton:** The heart of Aldryk's Fire Quencher is a *decanter of endless water*, unstoppered and attached to a system of copper pipes. Before the main pipe splits into the network of smaller pipes, there is a small box for loading the dry chemicals (see below). Characters will not notice a building is equipped with this system unless they are specifically looking for it.



* **Construction:** One week, minimum 3,000 gp. The only magical item required to make the Fire Quencher work is a *decanter of endless water,* which costs 3,000 gp. The cost of the copper piping depends on how elaborate the area to be protected is: open rooms need a length of piping equal to three times the length of the longest side, while corridors only require piping equal to their length. Piping costs 10 gp per foot.

The installation of the pipes requires skilled labor. It takes one man/day to install 100 feet of piping. The labor cost is 10 sp per laborer per day.

The dry chemicals come in cake form, and cost 500 gp each.

* **Statistics:** Piping: 1″ diameter. Dry chemical box: 1′ square, with a lid in the top that has a standard clasp closure. The bottom edge of the lid has a rubber gasket to provide a solid seal.

* **Functioning:** A *magic mouth* spell is cast on an item nearby the *decanter of endless water*, usually on the piping near the open mouth of the *decanter*. When a fire is detected, the *magic mouth* is set to say the command word that turns on the *decanter,* then shout an alarm (usually "Fire!") until its limit of 25 words is used up.

Meanwhile, the *decanter* is pours water into the piping system. The water goes first through the dry chemical box, where the cake is slowly dissolved. The chemical solution is then forced into smaller and smaller pipes, building up quite a bit of pressure, until it finally reaches the end pipes, where exit holes are equipped with small baffles to insure the solution is sprayed uniformly throughout the room.

* **Hazards:** The first, and most obvious, danger is in turning the system off. In that case, it is useless should a fire break out. Also, it is assumed that the alarm will bring help, including someone who knows the *decanter.* This may not always happen.

Another problem is in choosing the command word for the *decanter*. If the command word is one that comes up in every day conversation, an innocent dialogue between a merchant and customer could result in disaster.

Finally, the exact conditions under which the *magic mouth* sets off the system needs to be carefully defined. In an alchemical lab, for instance, some fires are planned. The system must somehow be set to ignore the planned fires, and only respond to the unplanned ones.

* **Staging:** The players could be hired to firebomb a merchant's competitor, unaware the competitor has this system installed, or be caught unaware when they move a lamp or candle too near a finicky fire detector.

*** Scott Haring
Austin, Texas

The Animated Money Changing Machine

* **Definition:** A money conversion device found in dungeons.

* **History:** King Gnarly Gnelly, ruler of a Deep Gnome kingdom under the Crystalmist Mountain, noticed that parties of fighters, magic users, and clerics ventured into the many dangerous dungeons in his mountain. They left loaded down with gold, magic items, and shiny gems. King Gnelly had his best illusionists and craftsmen build an Animated Money Changing Machine to provide a service to adventurers. From it, the gnomes would get rich without lifting a pick.

The plan was simple. The device would be placed in a dungeon corridor somewhere in the mountain. When adventurers put their huge, unmanageable piles of gold and silver pieces into the machine, it would give them more manageable gems and a vellum scroll certifying the transaction. But the beauty of Gnarly's plan was that the gems were nothing more than rocks with a *permanent illusion* spell cast on them. Needless to say, King Gnelly is insufferably pleased with himself.

* **Description:** The Animated Money Changing Machine is a metal plate set in front of a hollowed-out dungeon wall. The plate face has a smoked crystal screen that displays messages such as "Hi, can I help you?" "Do you want to continue in Common?" and "Temporarily out of order." There is also a wire mesh *magic mouth* device and response buttons labeled "Yes," "No," "Haggle," and "Do Not Press This Button." Two large drawers labeled "Give" and "Get" are receptacles for the adventurers' coins, gems and the illusory gnome gems.

A Deep Gnome "teller" sits behind the device in a secret chamber. He talks with depositors through a voice tube connected to the magic mouth device. He also has a deck of message cards and a gnomish lettering machine with a roll of vellum scroll sheets.

* **Construction:** 10,000 gp; 21 days. Requires six gnome metalworkers, 10 miners, and a human illusionist with a *permanent illusion* spell.

* **Statistics:** Size: 3′ by 5′ metal face plate, 6′ by 10′ secret chamber in the dungeon wall. AC −2; HD 0; hp 30 to break through the metal face plate.

* **Functioning:** The teller yells "Next!" when someone approaches. A message appears behind the smoked cystal and reads, in crudely-lettered Common, "Welcome to the Animated Money Machine." It then displays "Would you like to exchange loose money for more easily carried gems? Please press 'Yes' or 'No' on your right."

The machine instructs the adventurers to deposit their coins and gems in the "Give" drawer. Then a bell rings and the "Get" drawer opens.

Adventurers receive one 10,000 gp illusory gem for each 10,000 gold pieces they put into the device. The machine also provides a "certificate of transaction" recording the exchange. This piece of vellum is inscribed by the gnomish lettering machine (a typewriter) and is signed by an official of the Bank of Greyhawk. It's a rather impressive document—for a forgery.

* **Hazards:** If caught, the teller faces a painful death at the hands of the adventurers. If they attempt to break in, he displays an "Out of Order" sign and slips out a secret door. The hazard the adventurers must beware of is the button labeled, "Don't Press This Button." If they press it, a ten-foot square pit swings open in front of the Money Changer. Anyone falling into the 20-foot deep pit takes 2d6 points of damage. Otherwise, the machine is perfectly safe to operate, if characters don't mind losing money.

* **Staging:** This device can be placed in any dungeon corridor. When PCs find out they've been tricked, they may want to visit King Gnelly and have a talk about early withdrawals.

*** Bill Slavicsek
New York, NY

Ardraken's Refreshment Simulacrum

* **Definition:** A magical construct of a box-shaped creature called a cola. Colas make a dark, sweet elixir.

* **History:** Ardraken, a wizard from Greyhawk adventuring in another dimension, first discovered the creature named "Cola". Cola was a rectangular, man-sized thing. It spoke few words, but was *very* friendly. For just two silver pieces, Cola gave a total stranger a refreshing elixir. Back in Greyhawk, Ardraken resolved to create his own "Cola". The dungeon could use a spot of color, anyway.

* **Description:** A Refreshment Simulacrum is a colorful box standing on one end. Its usual colors are red, white, and blue. Glowing runes read, "Cola," "New Generation," "Exact Change When Lit" and other arcane sayings. A small opening large enough to accept a coin is located midway to the top on the right. One foot from the bottom is a large aperture, almost as wide as the box. Ideally, the thing affably greets people, then offers its elixir for a mere two silver pieces.

* **Construction:** 11,500 gp; 17 days; 11,500 xp. A simulacrum is magically created to duplicate another living being. The process calls for an ice model of the creature to be duplicated. Thus, a cola simulacrum requires a block of ice with the dimensions given under Statistics. The water for the ice is mixed first with crushed red, white and blue precious gems. Each gemstone must be valued at 100 gp. Three gems of each color are needed. The mixture is frozen around a container of that exotic potion Elixir of Cola, called simply "cola," named for the creature that produces it. The cola is usually contained in metal cylinders. If found in Oerth markets, a 12-ounce cola is worth 600 gp. The ice model is carved with the proper runes. Finally, the spells *reincarnation* and *limited wish* (AD&D® rules) or *create monsters* (D&D® rules) are cast. These give the simulacrum life and the ability to imitate Cola's talents.

* **Statistics:** Size: 2′x4′x6′. Weight: 300 pounds.

* **Functioning:** Two silver pieces are put in the metal slot, and the Simulacrum drops a potion in a metal cylinder through the lower aperture. It can also accept other coins and make correct change. Both processes are magical conversions, i.e., it converts silver to elixir.

* **Hazards:** Somehow these enchantments never malfunction for the wizard who casts them, so a Cola always operates perfectly for the wizard that made him. For anyone else, any number of nasty things can happen. First, Cola may accept money, but not give any change due. Half the time, it dismisses the user with a simple taunt: "No drinks for you, scum!" Those less fortunate are either attacked or become the recipients of one of Cola's Special Drinks. Each Special differs from the last and its effects are always malign. At best, a Special Drink is noxious and give the imbiber an embarrassing acne problem. The worst Specials cause insanity, loss of hit points, or death. It is believed these hazards prove that Simulacrums are inherently evil. Simulacrums are thought to fear their makers and therefore do *them* no mischief.

* **Staging:** The obvious adventure use is a party of adventurers moving warily through a danger-fraught dungeon. They suddenly see a bright light. A weird, rune-inscribed box is the light's source. The box speaks. "Hi! Want a cola?"

Cola: AC 2; 7HD (28hp); MV nil; AT 1-3, Range 16″; D 4-7; AL C (E). The creature attacks by firing 1-3 of its drinks as missiles. If reduced to half its hit points or less, Cola gives up and offers its attackers the real elixir.

*** Scott Haring
Austin, TX

The Barber's Aid

* **Definition:** A device used to aid dwarvish barbers in hair and beard care, personal grooming, and dentistry.

* **History:** Yori Kerlgortz, barber and dentist to the Irongate dwarves, was distraught when his assistants quit over a beard-braiding dispute. This final straw helped him persuade his king to bankroll the Barber's Aid. When the novelty was completed, dwarves flocked for grooming and business boomed—until a few flaws in the device became apparent. Yori was forced to get rid of the Barber's Aid before he was thrown down a deep mine shaft.

* **Description:** This invention resembles a barber's chair, with arm and head rests and adjustable positioning. Set in the sides are 10 mechanical arms mounted with tools: 1 comb and brush, 1 set of shears, 1 drill, 1 toothpuller, a pair of headgrips, pair of handgrips, 2 mechanical hands and 2 sets of nailclippers.

* **Construction:** 48,000 gp, 55 days. The mechanical portion can be built in seven days. Thereafter, the clerical spell *animate objects* is cast eight times (on matched sets of mechanical arms), and a wizard completes the binding with an enchantment of *permanence.*

* **Statistics:** Dimensions: 5′ high, 4′ diameter pedestal base. Dwarves, halflings and elves can sit in it comfortably. Gnomes must sit on something to boost their height. Humans and half-orcs over 5′ 5″ tall may use the Aid if they hunch down in the chair. Muscular humans 6′ and taller cannot use the invention on themselves.

Each mechanical arm can withstand 5 points of damage before breaking; the chair itself takes 20.

* **Functioning:** Command words for the Barber's Aid activate its various functions. These words are engraved in Dwarvish on the respective mechanical arms. On the back of the chair is the dwarvish phrase for "The Works." That command activates all functions at once.

Dentristry: A grip arm grasps and holds the character's head while another braces his mouth open. The head is held until the activating command word is spoken again (supposedly a dentist is examining the mouth). A drill and tooth-puller can also be activated.

Grooming: One grip holds each hand while two clippers trim and clean the nails on each hand. Shears clip hair. Two mechanical hands unbraid or unknot the beard. Another gadget combs and brushes it and the moustache, shears trim split ends, and the hands rebraid or reknot the beard if necessary.

* **Hazards:** The Barber's Aid works well; unfortunately, Yori did not realize that *animate object* is generally used to motivate objects to attack. There is a 10% chance per use that a specific gadget evades its dweomered control and partially reverts to nature. An arm is active until it completes its task. The tools do not actually attack anyone sitting in the Barber's Aid, but set to their tasks with complete abandon. This malfunction also occurs when any command word is spoken imperfectly (i.e., by someone not fluent in Dwarvish). If "The Works" malfunction, all possible errors take place simultaneously. Errors happen as follows.

The dentists' grip does not free the victim. The drill and tooth-puller go to work automatically. They stop only after they have drilled or pulled 1d4 teeth. A mouth held open by the dentist's grip will be unable to say command words to prevent this action. Hand grips grab the victim, and nails are cut painfully close (−1 hp per hand). Shears clip all hair and eyebrows; ears, nose and teeth are combed. Mechanical hands become knotted and entangled in hair; if victim is hairless (perhaps from the shears) the hands become entangled in clothes. In either case, it takes an hour to extricate a victim from the invention, or four hours if the individual must do so by himself.

*** Deborah Christian
San Diego, CA

Balthazar's Suite of Many Delights

* **Definition:** An extremely comfortable, fully automated chamber capable of housing one or two persons.

* **History:** In the last one hundred years, Galgaboth, a small town less than one mile away from an exotic dungeon ruin, has become a boomtown. Many parties of adventurers stop there, preparing for excursions to the nearby dungeon. When Balthazar, a retired wizard of great renown, noticed this, he built a luxurious resort catering to the wealthy adventurers. The facility is a den of luxury known throughout the country.

Balthazar's famous resort is well known for its famous patrons, friendly atmosphere, and exotic quarters. Among the resort's more exotic features are two indoor swimming pools (magically heated), unique mechanical gambling devices (constructed by gnomish artificers), a huge steam bath, and an acoustically-perfect theatre in which the resort's own company of actors and entertainers perform nightly.

The most famous of the guest rooms is the "Suite of Many Delights." The suite was constructed about ten years ago, and has been solidly booked ever since. The suite is reputed to be so comfortable that recently foreign kings have traveled to Galgaboth for the sole purpose of spending a week or two within.

* **Description:** The first thing that one notices upon entering the suite is the color green. The interior is decorated with a wide variety of tropical plants, vines, and flowers. A huge brazier located under the floor keeps the temperature in the room constant and the growing conditions perfect.

The first room entered is the outer chamber, filled with works of fine art. In front of the main entrance is a statue of the famous bard Tiresias; on the west wall are two huge oil paintings (one of Balthazar, one of his wife—each worth over 20,000 gp); on on a table next to the broom closet rests an interesting crystal sculpture executed by a skilled elven craftsman. The outer chamber also has comfortable seating, several cabinets, a large fireplace, and an exotic hand-woven rug from the Eastern provinces (worth 10,000 gp).

The large bedchamber is curtained off from this room by expensive tapestries depicting sylvan scenes. The eight-foot by six-foot bed is stuffed with goose feathers, as are the large pillows. Nearby is a solid silver night table.

Across from the bedchamber is a spacious bath. It features a fountain with an endless trickle of water flowing into an eight-foot-diameter pool and a silver trough (a reservoir for washing and drinking water). The calming sound of the running water can be heard throughout the suite.

Just below the bath is a comfortable study featuring a huge oaken writing desk, two tables, and a miniature library containing valuable books about the history, flora, and fauna of the region.

* **Construction:** It took Balthazar roughly 400,000 gp to construct the suite (6500 XP). The process took three years, and used a labor force of more than twenty workers.

Construction required many unusual items. Besides the rare woods and silks, fine marble, and pure silver, Balthazar acquired a *decanter of endless water,* and captured and controlled a mimic and a sheet phantom. (For those unfamiliar with the AD&D® game system, puzzling magical items, spells, and creatures will be explained below.) He also cast several *continual light, magic mouth, create food and water, gust of wind,* and *unseen servant* spells.

* **Statistics:** Size: 25′ × 25′ overall. Capacity: sleeps one or two persons. Upon occasion, many more have stayed in the rooms. Nightly charge: 750 gp per night, plus tips (*see Hazards*); at times weekend or weekly package deals are available.

• **Functioning:** The suite houses several interesting features designed to make a guest's stay more comfortable. These are:

1. Running water. The fountain contains a cleverly concealed *decanter of endless water*, a small bottle from which one can pour a neverending stream of water. At the bottom of the pool and at the end of the reservoir are drainage holes, through which excess water is piped down into the river running alongside the resort. The rate at which the water is released is magically adjusted in order to keep the drainage system functioning properly. If the water flows too fast, the drain can back up, causing a flood (see *Hazards*).

2. Overhead Lighting. Four globes bearing *continual light* spells are placed at various places around the chamber. Together, the globes are capable of lighting up the entire suite. Each globe is covered by a special mechanical baffle that functions similarly to an umbrella. When a cord is pulled the baffle pops up, allowing the light to escape. When the cord is pulled a second time, the baffle retracts, blocking the light out.

3. Self-Making Bed. The pile of sheets that rests upon the huge bed is actually a captured and tamed sheet phantom, a lesser haunt that has taken up residence in a sheet. The phantom automatically smooths itself out each morning. On patrons that it likes (i.e. those that tip well—see below), it takes care to stay tightly wrapped at night. On those it does not like, the phantom tends to fling itself off at random intervals.

4. Self-Perpetuating Food Supply. A cleric helped Balthazar create a cupboard in which a freshly prepared meal magically appears every time it is opened. The cupboard is located in the entry chamber and functions for one month before needing recharging. The recharging requires a cleric capable of casting *create food and water.*

5. Four-Channel Entertainment. On the east wall of the main chamber Balthazar has cast four *magic mouth* spells. (For D&D® game, players, a *magic mouth* is a peculiar enchantment that causes a human mouth to appear on any solid object after a certain condition is met, when it recites a speech prepared by the caster.) Each of Balthazar's *magic mouths* tells a different story when activated. The stories last anywhere from ten minutes to an hour. In order to activate one of the stories, the patron need only call

out "Channel one," "Channel two," etc. Stories are changed once every two weeks. There is usually a written "guide" describing the four available stories lying upon the desk in the study.

6. Self-Cleaning. Once per day, a special magical enchantment sends a *gust of wind* through the suite, blowing any accumulated dust out the windows into the open air (in D&D® game terms, Balthazar uses a mild version of the spell *weather control* to send a sudden breeze through the chambers). The broom closet also contains a magically enchanted broom which floats out and sweeps the floor on its own once per day. Balthazar has implemented these features because he does not wish to disturb his guests with the entries of maintenance personnel.

7. Comfy Chair. The outer chamber features an unusually comfortable chair that seems to mold itself to the user's every whim. The chair is actually a captive trained mimic. (For D&D game players, a mimic is a creature capable of shifting its form and color so that it resembles almost anything imaginable. See D&D-game-rules-compatible statistics below.) This mimic has been trained to subtly alter its features based on the user's distribution of weight to provide the optimum in comfort.

8. Butler Service. The suite features a permanent *unseen servant* (in D&D game terms, an *invisible stalker*.

* Hazards: Many guests in the suite do not realize that the mimic chair, the sheet phantom, and the *unseen servant* are all employees of Balthazar and expect a tip for all services rendered (small silver dishes rest near each for this very purpose). If the creatures are not tipped between 50 and 100 gp each per day, they are extremely offended and become somewhat unruly. A tip of over 100 gp per day brings incredibly devoted service.

A tip of 25 to 50 gp per day causes the sheet phantom to fling itself off the patron at random intervals (perhaps contributing to a fierce cold), the *unseen servant* to drop food and drink at random (perhaps damaging some of the patron's papers or belongings), and the mimic to become extremely uncomfortable.

A tip of less than 25gp causes the sheet phantom to suddenly fling itself off and shriek in the middle of the night (probably scaring the wits out of the patron), and the mimic to suddenly eject the patron from the comfy chair at random intervals. The *unseen servant* will alter the rate at which the water flows from the *decanter* in the bath. Unless noticed and checked, this floods the suite within the hour, possibly damaging the patron's property.

Balthazar has little sympathy for patrons who tip the staff poorly. Instead, he will even go so far as to charge them for any damages caused by the pranks of his employees.

* **Staging:** The suite functions as a status symbol. Adventurers who have stayed there will constantly boast of such. This may cause the PCs to book their own stays in the suite, allowing them to equal such boasts. An amusing adventure can easily be designed around a PC that somehow comes to stay within the suite without hearing about its special features. This one is perfect for springing on paranoid dungeon crawlers. A great reaction can be provoked when the GM describes the sheets gliding over them at night and the slowly shifting chair in which they are sitting.

Mimic: AC 7; HD 7-10; MV 30′ (10′); #AT 1; D 3-12; Save F7-10; M 9; AL N.

Sheet Phantom: AC 3; HD 3; MV 60′ (20′); #AT 1; D 1-4; Save MU3; M 10; AL usually CE but Balthazar's is N.

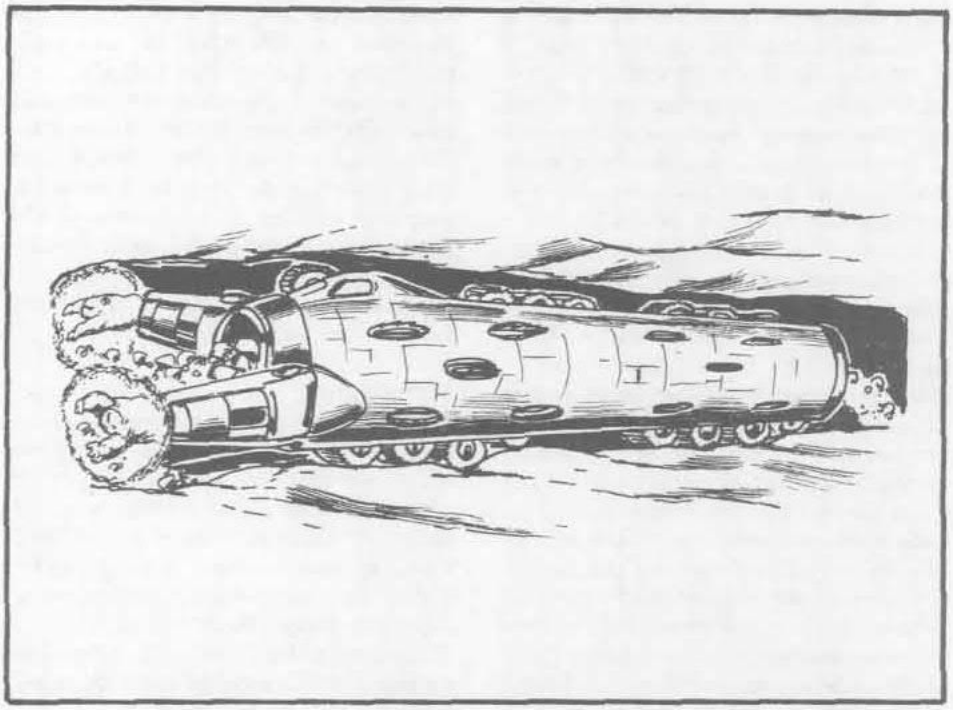
*** Ray Winninger
South Holland, IL

Beldane's Subterranean Borer

* **Definition:** A manned mechanism for cutting tunnels through earth and rock with relative speed, without the use of large work-gangs.

* **History:** The wizard Beldane, an adventurer, liked to explore new and different locales—not merely new lands, but the upper aerial regions and the depths of the earth. He also sought magical and monetary treasure, and devised this means of reaching buried caches and tombs, creating underground lairs, and of freeing *imprisoned* mages whom he might befriend and acquire as tutors or allies.

* **Description:** A Borer looks like a tube with open ends, fashioned of adamantite or steel plate. It is covered all over with many thick, toothed metal wheels set in sockets in the body. At its open front end are three triangular, hinged projections. On the ends of these projections are shimmering globes of force, each containing a fearsome umber hulk (AD&D® game system) or hulker (D&D® game system).



* **Statistics:** Size: Usually 60′ long by 20′ in diameter. Weight: averages 6,600 lbs. Crew: three magic-users. Passengers: three additional M-sized passengers (60′ version). Cargo: 1,000 lbs; heavier loads will cause the hulkers to move at half speed. Speed: varies; see Functioning, below.

* **Construction:** 75,000 gp (plus labor); 60 days (assumes digging creatures have already been procured); 7,600 XP. Construction begins with a metal cylinder of massive strength. An expert smith is required to design the necessary internal bracings and bands, and the precision, large size, and high durability desired for the Borer's many wheels. A human smith of exceptional accomplishments, a gnome or a dwarf craftsman must be hired at a cost of 150-200 gold pieces per day for a minimum of two weeks.

Umber hulks or other digging creatures (such as baby purple worms) that can be confined with magical *force fields* or *forcecages* must be acquired, alive and in good condition. Carrion crawlers must also be procured, although the crew can employ *hold monster* spells if these cannot be found. The initial enchantment of a Borer involves the casting of three *force fields* on the projecting arms. These do not operate, but combine with, and serve to anchor, later *force fields* to the arms.

A clear passage along one side of the Borer's interior bypasses the cabin; rubble freed by the digging hulk when the Borer is operating flows down it and out of the Borer. To do this, *move earth, permanence*, and *teleport* spells must be used in the initial enchantment. The earth passes down the length of the Borer to behind the cabin by means of *move earth*, which is a permanent effect; linked to it is the *teleport* of the initial enchantment, a specially-researched 'continous' version which affects later *teleport* spells cast by the crew when the Borer is operating (see "Functioning," hereafter). Rumors persist that Beldane later improved his Borer to employ a special continous *disintegrate* rather than digging creatures.

* **Functioning:** The hulkers pull the Borer and dig a path for it. The crew must prepare a Borer for use by charming the digging creatures, harnessing them to the triangular arms and confining them there within *forcecages* (D&D game: spherical *force fields* with holes in them to allow air to enter and the digging extremities of the creatures to reach through). One crew member per digging creature is required; once charmed, each hulk can be commanded to dig or to stop digging, and in what direction (up, down, straight, or to the right or left). A hulk can also be directed to dig 'wide' (i.e. rooms or alcoves) or 'narrow' (a tunnel just large enough for the Borer to pass through). The hinged projections swing with the diggers, so that the Borer will not be dropped sideways and jammed against the tunnel walls during sideways digging.

The boring speed of the hulkers varies depending on how wide an opening they are digging and the nature of the material they are digging through. For AD&D

game players, this is: 6"/round (loam) to 1"/round (solid stone). In D&D® rules, it is: 60' (20') to 10' (3 1/3'). The Borer is AC0; the same protection is conferred upon its digging monsters if they pull their extremities inside the force fields that confine them. Otherwise, exposed portions of their bodies are AC2.

Rubble freed by the digging monsters collects between them, where the Borer's *move earth* spell passes it through the Borer. The aft cabin door allows inspections if the Borer is being used for mining; a *wand of metal and mineral detection* or similar device is useful for such endeavors. The Borer's *teleport* enchantment serves to make later *teleport* spells cast by the crew continous. If no such spells are cast, the rubble merely fills in the tunnel behind the Borer. Otherwise, the *teleport* spell deposits rubble at a predetermined surface location, and serves crew members as a handy escape to the surface if something goes wrong (see "Hazards," below).

The control cabin of a burrowing Borer is usually lit by *continual light*; such spells can be used in combination with *wizard eyes* and *x-ray vision* ahead of the vehicle, to aid in navigation. Air in the cabin can be refreshed (and precious things sent to the surface) by means of teleport magics cast near the ceiling.

The control cabin has a view port facing the digging creatures. These creatures are located within non-permanent *force fields* at the ends of the triangular projections. On each triangular arm is located a small enclosed cage for a carrion crawler. Each cage has a sliding hatch controlled by rods from the cabin, to allow crawler tentacles to reach and immobilize the digging creatures when desired.

If the creation of a stable tunnel through earth or fissured rock by means of a Borer is desired, groups of miners with wooden props must follow to secure the diggings.

* **Hazards:** The occupants of a Borer are in peril at all times; they can be crushed, asphyxiated, melted by accidental contact with veins of molten lava, drowned by contact with subterranean lakes or watercourses, or attacked by subterranean creatures, particularly the umber hulks if they escape control or come across and alert others of their kind. Several Borers have disappeared below the surface and simply never reappeared; misfortune has probably befallen at least some of the occupants. If something goes wrong, escape is difficult—and one is particularly vulnerable to deliberate magical attacks by a foe.

* **Staging:** An adventure could involve finding an inoperative Borer halfway into a dungeon, its occupants slain or trapped in some sort of suspended animation, perhaps with the monster(s) that slew them still aboard. Certain subterranean races (AD&D® game: such as Illithids) are known to have developed their own Borers, or seized human-built versions, and may be encountered moving beneath the earth in such underground ships.

Foes of all races could use a Borer to attack the treasure vaults of a king or other being able to enlist or coerce the aid of adventurers—or of course could rob the adventurers themselves.

Adventurers who are *imprisoned* or lost and weakened far underground could be freed or rescued by an appearing Borer. PCs using a Borer could blaze extensive exploratory trails—or even excavate their own stronghold—underground, or bore a tunnel through a hitherto impassable mountain range to permit trade caravans or troops to pass through.

* **Other:** Use of a Borer can create an underground campaign setting for many adventurers. This is useful to a DM who wishes to avoid creating a surface world. It can keep player characters out of certain parts of the surface world, hold them incommunicado from the surface lands for a certain period of time, or can simply provide a change of pace. The problems of repairing a Borer while underground or of living in one for long periods of time could provide interesting challenges for players. Their characters are in constant danger from the umber hulks, and probably, if their delvings are extensive and last long enough, the operators of a Borer will face attack by subterranean races. Such folk may fear that widespread tunnelling makes them vulnerable to attacks from the surface, or is simply taking too much valuable or edible material and/or destroying existing underground routes, features, and homes.

Borers can also serve in siege warfare (although vulnerable to hostile earth elementals), as hideouts, prisons for the kidnapping and confinement of important personages, the sites of *gates*, and laboratories for dangerous magical experiments (such as *cloning*).

Beldane is said to have achieved lichdom and built a huge Borer, crewed by many lesser undead, who serve him in an endless voyage under the earth. They plunder all hoards of treasure they find, and surface occasionally to seize what they can ere retreating again to the depths.

Umber hulks: AC 2, HD 8+8; MV 60' (loam) to 10' (solid stone); AT 3; D 3-12, 3-12 (claws), 2-10 (mandibles); gaze causes *confusion* for 3-12 rounds if save versus magic fails; speak own language; AL CE. In D&D game terms, the equivalent creature (detailed in AC9, *Creature Catalog*) is the 'Hulker': AC 2; HD 10; MV 60' (20') down to (solid rock) 10' (3 1/3'); AT 3; D 2-12 x 2 (claws)/ 2-16 (mandibles); Save F 10; ML 10; AL C.

Carrion crawlers: AC 3/7; HD 3+1; MV 12"; AT 8; Attacks paralyze (save negates); AL N (D&D game: AC 7; HD 3+1*; MV 120' (40'); AT 8; D paralysis (lasts 2-8 turns, save negates); Save F2; ML 9; AL N).

*** Ed Greenwood
Colborne, ONT

Bladderwick's Human Catapult

* **Definition:** A device sometimes used to traverse ramparts, palisades, and castle walls.

* **History:** During the Seige of Krakatos, Duke Stefan called upon his engineers to create a device which would allow a single soldier entry into the fortified city. Burton Bladderwick, an inventor of gnomish descent, provided the Prince with said implement. In theory, the so-called Manapult fit the bill perfectly. In operation, however, it failed miserably. Following a fatal test of the implement, Burton Bladderwick was beheaded, and Bladderwick's Human Catapult sank into obscurity.

* **Description:** The Manapult consists of two separate pieces: the launch bar and the launch vehicle. The vehicle resembles a pogo stick, being a hollow tube with two footpegs, two handlebars, and a set of cranks in the middle. Below the footpegs is a large eyelet. This eyelet is fastened to a long, thick bowstring, which is in turn fastened to the top of the launch bar.

A long, solid pipe provides the guidance system for the Manapult. At the top of it is a metal eyelet which fastens to the bowstring, connecting in turn to the launch vehicle. A toothed metal track runs down one side of the launch bar; this provides a means for cranking the vehicle to the bottom of the bar, thus pulling the bowstring taut.

* **Construction:** This gnomish invention costs 1,000 gp and requires 14 days to build. The component parts are mostly metal, save for the bowstring, which is a combination of catgut and various horsehairs.

* **Statistics:** Launch pole: 20′ long, 2″ diameter. Anchor claws: 1′ long. Launch vehicle: 4′ high, 3″ interior diameter. Footpegs, handlebars, cranks: 1′ long. Bowstring: unstretched, 5′ long, 1″ diameter; stretched, 15′ long.

* **Functioning:** The Manapult operates on the same principle as the heavy crossbow. The launch bar is first anchored by being pounded five feet into the ground. The bar is then pulled up to release the five anchor claws at the base of the pole, which spread out and lock in place. These claws can be unlocked to remove the bar.

Once the launch bar is secure, the launch vehicle is put into place. The bowstring is first connected to both the bar and the launch vehicle. Next, the launch vehicle is slid over the launch bar so that the teeth on the bar mesh with the vehicle winch teeth. The pilot climbs aboard the vehicle pogo-fashion and begins cranking the vehicle down the bar. Once the vehicle reaches bottom, a mechanism locks it into place. The cranks are disengaged and folded back; with the bowstring fully extended, the vehicle is ready to launch when the pilot hits the release button.

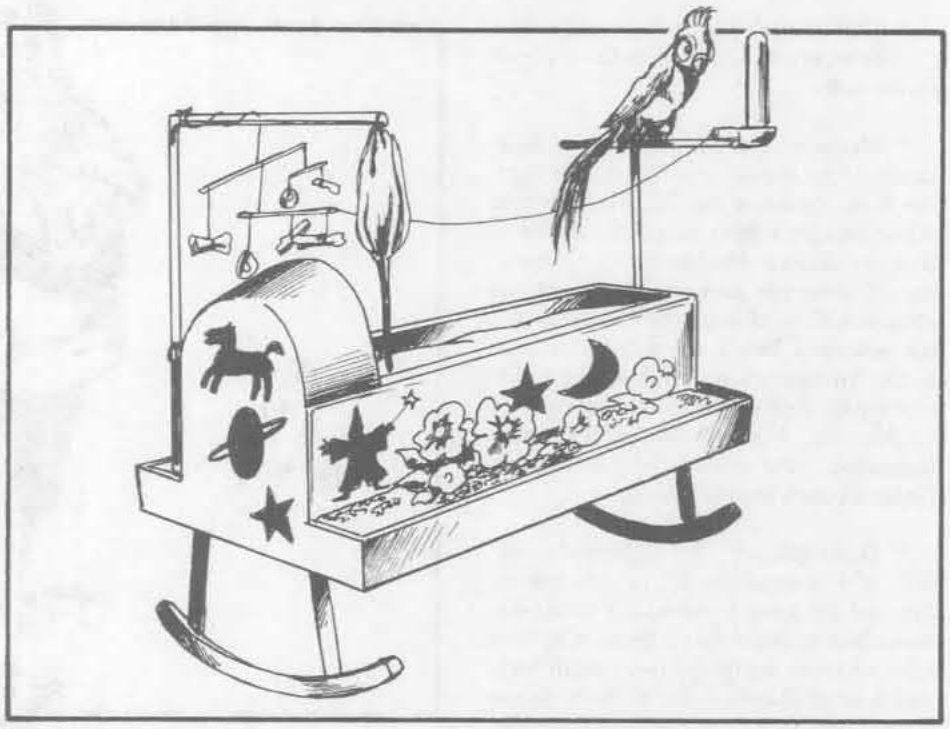
The distended bowstring can launch a 200-pound man 50 feet directly into the air. At an elevation of 45 degrees, it is able to launch the same subject in an arc of 200 feet with an apogee of 35 feet.

* **Hazards:** The major problem with the Manapult is landing the launch vehicle. It has no means for a soft landing, and any pilot launching from the device runs the risk of injury or death. Other problems may also occur. If, for example, the launch bar is not secure, the bar itself becomes the projectile. Likewise, if the cranks are not secured at the end of cranking, they spin dangerously when the vehicle is launched and may hurt the pilot's feet.

* **Staging:** Numerous impregnable buildings have been burglarized lately. PCs are hired to catch the robbers: a band of thugs with manapults.

*** Robin Jenkins
Lake Geneva, WI

Blashphor's Ever-Vigilant Baby Cradle & Nursery



* **Definition:** A self-contained care unit which dependably attends to the needs of an infant for up to 12 hours. A more elaborate nursery unit can attend to as many as two dozen infants for up to a full day with a minimum of humanoid or animal supervision.

* **History:** Blashphor was a kindly and studious wizard who lived with his wife, Atrina, in the tiny village of Spinyon, a poor farming community many miles from the nearest trade route. Because of their isolation, the citizens of Spinyon were forced to live on what little corn and wheat they were able to grow in their barren fields. Blashphor had spent most of his life attempting to unlock the secret of transmutation; with the power to earth to wheat and wood to gold, the miserable poverty of Spinyon could be ended forever.

Blashphor eventually left Spinyon for a wilderness retreat where he could continue his research without interruption. Atrina, pregnant with their first child, was less than eager to go, but Blashphor convinced her that he needed her help. Besides, he argued, there could be no better way for their child to come into the world than surrounded by the magnificent splendor of nature. Reluctantly, Atrina agreed.

Six months later in a small cabin deep in a beautiful remote woodland, Atrina gave birth to triplets. Sadly, Atrina died in childbirth, leaving Blashphor alone with his three new sons. The grieving Blashphor chose to turn to the village and continue his research, while raising his sons as best he could.

However, Blashphor's research went very slowly, and caring for three infants proved all but overwhelming. Able to transmute only the simplest of gases and minerals, he developed diapers as an experimental novelty that kept his babies dry and clean—a great help to an overburdened father, but hardly the breakthrough he had hoped for.

Believing himself to be a failure, Blashphor was surprised when new parents in the village took an interest in his magical diapers. Intrigued, he began to tinker with other of his seemingly minor magical experiments and soon came up with a baby cradle that completely provided for an infant's needs. The cradles were made available at harvest time, much to the delight of the overworked parents.

News of these strange breakthroughs in child care drifted to neighboring communities, and Blashphor suddenly found his inventions in demand. When Blashphor sold one of his magical diapers to a traveling prince for an astonishing 5,000 gp, he knew the time had come to go into business. With a growing list of wealthy prospects, Blashphor convinced the community to abandon farming and set up shop to produce his magical diapers and cradles. It was the best decision they ever made. Within a year, the residents of Spinyon were set for life.

* **Description:** The diaper resembles an ordinary white diaper, but the cloth is somewhat softer and silkier and sparkles slightly in the sunlight. Small leather straps in the corners serve as fasteners.

The cradle is a rectangular box made of polished wood, typically oak or maple. Colorful caricatures of animals and babies are painted on the sides, and two wooden rockers are attached to the bottom. A small platform extends from the foot of the cradle and holds a medium-sized flowerpot containing sweet-smelling mint plants. Daisies, violets, and other flowers grow in boxes attached to the sides of the cradle.

A long wooden rod extends upward from the flowerpot at the foot of the cradle, and a second rod crosses it at the top to make a perch. A brightly feathered parrot sits on the perch, softly chattering and chirping as it overlooks the cradle. At the end of the perch is a wooden tube containing food for the parrot. A small cup at the base of the tube is filled with seeds.

Another wooden rod is attached to the headboard. Two objects are attached to this rod and hang over the cradle. One is a large leathery bag ending in a long tube. The other is a delicately balanced mobile made of several pieces of bamboo

and crystal. The mobile produces a soothing tinkle at the slightest touch. A string extends from the mobile to the parrot's food tube.

A typical nursery is made from a small one-room house which contains as many as 24 baby cradles arranged in neat rows. In the corner is a high chair for the nursery supervisor, along with an hourglass and a large wooden supply cabinet. A trapeze is suspended from the ceiling by chains, in case a baboon or other simian is on duty. The walls are adorned with colorful paintings of baby animals, oversized numerals and letters of the alphabet, and other decorations. A doorway leads to the back yard which is completely enclosed by a high fence. An assortment of stuffed animals, balls, dolls, and other toys are scattered about. In a corner of the yard is a large barrel on raised legs. The barrel is filled with water, and a chain release lets out the water in a steady stream.

* **Construction:** Blashphor was responsible for three related baby care inventions: the magical diaper, the magical cradle, and the nursery. Each has its own construction requirements.

Because of the time and expense involved, it is a good idea to create a large number of *diapers of enchantment* at the same time. Using this method, up to 15 yards of cloth can be enchanted at the same time (12,000 gp, 39 days, 15,000 XP), enough to make as many as 30 small to medium-sized diapers. A newly woven bolt of cloth made from any natural fiber interwoven with 10% butterfly silk must first be hung outside and blown in the wind for 30 days. A permanent *transmute foul to fresh* spell (second level) is then cast on the cloth. Spell components include a handful of crushed lilacs, an ounce of talcum, and a vial of green slime.

A baby cradle (8,000 gp, 8 days, 6,000 XP) first requires the construction of a basic crib out of wood. The crib is varnished, polished, and decorated to taste, then enchanted to become a *crib of pushing:* components for this enchantment include a pinch of powdered brass, a baby's fingernail clipping, and the pendulum from a clock. The crib is then lined with the same kind of cloth used to make *diapers of enchantment.*

Flowers of the inventor's choice are planted in the flower boxes, and mint sprigs are planted in the pot containing the parrot perch. A trained parrot, preferably one with a large vocabulary, should be secured from a reputable animal trainer. (Note that adequate training of a parrot for baby care purposes takes a minimum of 10 weeks.) The food tube for the parrot can be made from a small hollow log. This is attached to the perch along with a cup to receive the food as it spills from the tube. A string hooked to a latch inside the tube releases the food when pulled by the parrot.

A milk bladder is hung from the wooden rod suspended over the cradle. The top end of the bladder has a stopper or valve that can be opened to pour in fresh milk. The tube end has a valve that opens at the slightest pressure from an infant's lips, but otherwise remains closed. The bladder is adjusted so that the tube end dangles within easy reach of a reclining infant. The milk bladder may be made from a leather flask, but an air bladder from an aquatic creature makes a better one—cleaned and dried, air bladders won't leak, and come equipped with natural valves. (In his original cradle, Blashphor used the bladder of a giant carp.) A mobile constructed of attractive bits of crystal, bamboo, and other baubles is hung next to the milk bladder. The mobile should have no sharp edges and be hung just out of the baby's reach. The string from the parrot's food tube is also connected to the mobile.

The cost of the nursery (15,000 gp, 30 days, 12,000 XP) reflects the price of minor renovations and remodeling of a suitable structure, along with the expense of enchanting the building with *magic mouth* (a second level AD&D® game spell that empowers the chosen object with an enchanted mouth which suddenly appears and speaks the message which the spell caster imparted upon the occurrence of a specified event). The cost also includes the construction of a simple shower device (made from a water barrel on legs with a chain release) and a supply cabinet (typically stocked with a few doses of *potion of healing*, spare *diapers of enchantment,* towels made from the same cloth as the diapers, and extra food). Assorted baby toys, an hourglass, and a monkey trapeze completes the furnishings. The nursery is filled with as many cradles as available, up to a maximum of 24. Note that the cradles are not included in the cost of the nursery.

No parrots are necessary for the nursery, although one good speaking specimen is suggested for educational and entertainment purposes. One supervisor is required for the nursery. If the supervisor is an animal (simians are recommended, particularly baboons), it should be permanently enchanted with *animal friendship* (6,000 gp, 8 days).

* **Statistics:** Diaper: size varies but averages 2′ × 2′. Up to 30 diapers can be made from a 15-yard bolt of enchanted cloth.

Cradle: 4′ × 2′ × 3′; parrot perch reached 5′ from ground. Weight of entire cradle: about 50 lbs. Provides up to 12 hours of complete care for a single infant (suggested age: 3-15 months). Milk bladder holds about one gallon. Parrot food tube holds one week's supply.

Nursery: Size varies according to number of cradles, but a 35′ × 35′ room can hold the suggested maximum of 24. Typical play area is 25′ × 25′, adequate for 12 babies per suggested play period of 60 minutes. With one supervisor, the nursery provides complete care for up to 24 hours. The supervisor must be paid 5 gp per day. An animal supervisor requires no pay, but must be fed daily.

* **Functioning:** A *diaper of enchantment* is secured to an infant with small leather straps. When the baby relieves himself, the waste products are instantly transmuted into a mixture of 95% pure oxygen and 5% powdered talcum.

The *crib of pushing* is activated by the

sound of crying from its occupant. It will continue to gently rock back and forth as long as the baby cries. If the baby is hungry, he may suckle milk from the milk bladder suspended overhead. The crib is lined with cloth made from the same material as the *diaper of enchantment* and transmutes any milk that leaks from the bladder or dribbles from the baby's mouth.

At the base of the crib is a flowerpot of fresh mint, fertilized by the droppings of the parrot perched above. Colorful flowers grow from boxes on each side of the crib. The mint and the flowers keep the air smelling sweet and also add to an aesthetically pleasing environment.

The specially trained parrot keeps an eye on the infant and provides entertainment and speech lessons. A string runs from his feeder to the mobile; when the parrot pulls the string to fill its cup, the string tugs on the mobile to amuse the baby. The parrot's songs and chatter provide additional entertainment while its repetition of words and phrases helps the baby learn to talk.

Most importantly, the parrot has been trained to alert the parents in case of an emergency. If specific cues occur which indicate the baby may be in trouble, such as gasping for air or extended crying, the parrot will fly like a homing pigeon to the parents or to a specified neighbor and squawk out a warning. It is strongly suggested that the parents or designated neighbor remain within a mile or so of the infant so the parrot can reach them quickly if necessary.

Aside from their entertainment and speech value, parrots aren't necessary in a multiple cradle nursery. A single supervisor can easily monitor as many as two dozen infants for a full day. The cradles attend to the basic needs of the babies while the supervisor makes sure the milk bladders stay full and keeps an eye out for emergencies. If a problem arises that the supervisor can't handle, banging on the wall for 10 seconds activates the nursery's *magic mouth* which will scream for help from passers-by.

Once a day, the supervisor removes the babies from their cradles and takes them to the play areas for exercise and interaction with each other. The babies are taken to the play area in shifts so that no more than 12 babies are playing at the same time. When the play period is over, the supervisor places each baby under the barrel shower, pulls the release chain, and washes the baby under gentle streams of water. Towels made from *diaper of enchantment* cloth dry the babies instantly.

Many nurseries use enchanted baboons for supervisors. Although there is some initial expense involved, simian supervisors are in many ways superior to humanoid ones. They are more reliable, more attentive, and more playful. They can be quite affectionate, and the babies adore them. They also work for free.

* **Hazards:** Most problems associated with these inventions are more annoying than hazardous. Active babies can wiggle out of their *diapers* to make messes that aren't cleaned up automatically. If milk bladders and mobiles are loosely fastened, babies can pull them down and throw them overboard (then yowl because they're gone). Babies sometimes pick on other babies, resulting in a squabble that can turn into a free-for-all and drive the supervisor to tears.

Parrots can get confused as to when exactly they're supposed to go for help. Some parrots, for instance, misinterpret snoring as a breathing disorder and are baffled by temper tantrums. Parents are also occasionally shocked to hear their babies gleefully spout obscene phrases picked up from a parrot with a colorful vocabulary.

Enchanted baboons are generally reliable supervisors, but like the parrots, they are prone to panic, activating the *magic mouth* and frightening the neighbors at inappropriate times. Baboons can grow quite attached to the infants and become extremely despondent when a child gets too old for the nursery and has to leave. Merely passing an empty cradle can cause a sentimental baboon to break down in a fit of uncontrollable sobbing. Depressed baboons may require intensive therapy before they are able to resume their duties.

* **Staging:** A *rod of cancellation* has been inadvertently used as a trapeze crossbar in the construction of a new nursery. The *rod* is activated by any high-pitched cry. In the first day of operation, the baboon supervisor has managed to negate virtually all of the magic in the nursery. Alerted by the cries of the *magic mouth,* it is up to the PCs to restore order and locate the cause of the crisis.

In another adventure, the PCs are asked by the local ruler to modify their *diapers, cradles,* and nurseries to accommodate orphans of different species. As a variation, the PCs might be asked to help design nurseries to raise baby monsters in hopes of using the adults for sport or selling them for profit to collectors. Modifying the nurseries to meet the needs of various infant monsters could pose some interesting problems for the PCs. Baby aquatic elves or mermen, for instance, might use glass rocker tanks for cradles, enchanted with *create water.* Baby lycanthrope cradles could be enchanted with *light* or *darkness,* depending on what the PCs are trying to accomplish. Cranky lizardman babies or orc infants could be pacified with *dancing lights* or *faerie fire* mobiles, or they could be shut up with *silence,* perhaps on a command from a parrot. And don't forget the special nutritional needs of infant monsters, especially tricky when dealing with flesh eaters.

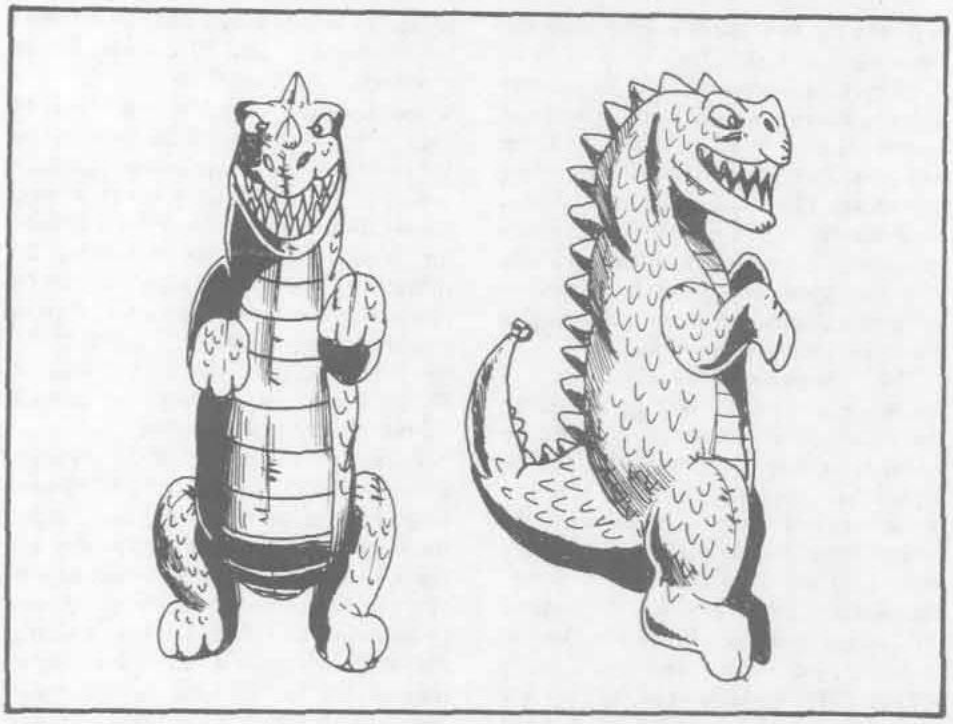
Monster Statistics:

Parrot: AC 7; Move 10′ hopping, 240′ flying; HD 1-4; hp 4; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2; TNAC0 19; AL N

Baboon: AC 7; Move 120′; HD 1 + 1; hp 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; THAC0 18; AL N; SD climbing.

*** Rick Swan
Des Moines, IA

Borgora's Inflatable Scare-Dragon



* **Definition:** A tough, resilient, elastic construct made from the byproducts of petroleum fungi and employed as an effigy to frighten away wandering monsters.

* **History:** Borgora Hilltopper and his five boon companions traveled the lands of Oerth for many a year, reveling in high adventure. One such journey found the companions fleeing into the Hool Marshes to escape the Grandee of Westkeep, who took offense at "a group of Yeomanry spies" roaming within his borders.

While exploring the Hool, Borgora and his companions met an old hermit by the name of Wiiken. Being a dwarven craftsman of some repute, Borgora's interest was sparked when Wiiken invited the group into his hut to view his "treasures." Dozens of small, brightly-colored shapes floated about the cluttered interior of the tiny dwelling. They were made of an unknown material, twisted and tied into crude animal forms and gaily painted.

The material was extremely light and resilient to the touch. It was smooth and elastic, stretching freely in Borgora's strong hands. One crudely- formed unicorn exploded with a loud pop when the companion Keeri Redhair poked it with an arrow. The party laughed afterwards when recalling how Keeri dove headlong into the sloppy marsh at the startling sound.

Wiiken showed Borgora how he collected the byproducts of the petroleum fungus, a mold indigenous to the Hool Marshes. Each tiny plant, long and triangular in shape, oozed a thick, dark gel that ran down the cap and pooled at the base of the stalk. The sticky substance, when boiled and cooled, became the light-weight elastic material Wiiken crafted into his treasures. Impressed but doubtful of any useful applications, Borgora thanked the hermit for his hospitality and led his companions north into friendlier territory.

A few years later, Borgora Hilltopper and his friends were adventuring in the Barrier Peaks. One night after a particularly grueling campaign, the friends set up camp and Borgora took the first watch. The exhausted dwarf fell fast asleep at his guardpost some distance from his resting companions, but soon snarls, growls, and the sound of ripping flesh started Borgora from his slumber. Horrified that he had been derelict in his duty, the dwarf grabbed his battleaxe and rushed to help his friends. He was too late: a band of werewolves made short work of the sleeping and unprepared adventurers. Borgora could do nothing but escape, his own skin intact, his heart heavy with guilt, and his friends gone.

Borgora retired to the Good Hills in the Kingdom of Keoland and set up a small general store, specializing in unusual items especially suited to the adventuring classes. His new life was shadowed by memories of his doomed companions until an idea struck him for using the strange material from the Hool Marshes. Borgora invented the Inflatable Scare-Dragon to help other groups avoid a fate like that of his companions.

* **Description:** Borgora's Inflatable Scare-Dragon resembles a small red dragon rearing up on its hind legs. The front legs are clawed and appear to sway dangerously. A coiled tail helps the Scare-Dragon maintain balance and adds an air of authenticity to the construct's appearance. Painted bright red and detailed with seemingly overlapping scales, the Scare-Dragon has a wide, toothy maw designed to frighten even the most courageous monster. Also available in Scare-Ogre, Scare-Zombie, and Scare-Nymph models for every possible adventuring need.

* **Construction:** 18,000 gp; six months and 10 days; 6,000 gp must be paid to the traders who brave the Hool Marshes to acquire the petroleum byproducts. An additional 3,000 gp are paid to the hermit Wiiken, who farms and gathers the sticky substance, and then packs it for shipment north. Borgora allows three months for the round-trip trek, but even the voyage down river usually takes only 26 days. The additional time com-

pensates for any hazards met once the river winds into the Hool.

When the petroleum-fungus byproducts arrive at Borgora's shop, 2,000 gp and one month are needed to cook and distill the sticky sap. Borgora personally oversees this procedure. The substance is cooked at a temperature of 475 degrees on a firepit specially built for this task. After two weeks over the open flame, the hot liquid is strained and sifted before being returned to the firepit for another two weeks.

The final two months and 10 days of the process require 4,000 gp as well as the skills of two dwarven artisans, in addition to Borgora. The double-cooked liquid is poured into an expertly prepared mold. As it cools and dries, the fungus byproduct is continually worked and crafted into its final form. Painstaking detail is added throughout this stage, making the Scare-Dragon realistic, accurate, and beautifully artistic. The remaining 3,000 gp are applied to overhead, maintainance, and Borgora Hilltopper's profit-margin.

Borgora has thus far been unsuccessful in his attempts to grow the petroleum fungus in the dry and hilly countryside around his shop. Until he succeeds, the Hool is the only source of the substance.

* **Statistics:** Size: 10′ tall by 5′ wide by 6′ across when inflated. Deflated, can be folded to fit into a backpack. Weight: 20 gp deflated, 50 gp inflated.

Construct: AC 5; HD 0; hp 10; AT 0; D nil. The Scare-Dragon explodes noisily when punctured. Persons within 10 feet take 10 points of damage, or 20 points if the Dragon was filled with hot air.

* **Functioning:** Borgora's Inflatable Scare-Dragon is equipped with a nozzle built into the construct's tail. When inflated to its full size by blowing air into the nozzle, the Scare-Dragon is placed near or in an adventuring party's camp to frighten off wandering monsters and bandits. It takes characters with a strength of 17 or better at least one-half hour to blow up the construct. Ten minutes are added to the time for a character with 16 strength, 20 minutes for 15 strength, and 30 minutes for 14 strength. Characters with a strength-ability score of less than 14 cannot blow up the Scare-Dragon by virtue of their own lung power. Opening a flap in the construct's lower section allows flame-heated air (from a brazier for example) to fill the dragon in 20 minutes or less, but this method can be dangerous if extreme care isn't taken to ensure the Scare-Dragon's safety. If the fire is too hot, the construct will melt. If the fire is too cool, it won't force enough air into the inflatable dragon.

Because of the quality of the dwarven workmanship, a fully inflated Scare-Dragon in a group's camp will *cause fear* like the first-level cleric spell, except that the effect lasts three hours. For monsters of 1HD or less, there is no saving throw. Creatures of 1 + HD to 4HD get a saving throw. If they make it, the Scare-Dragon startles them for two turns, but otherwise has no effect. Creatures of 5HD creatures and above see the construct for what it is and are unaffected by its presence.

The purpose of the Scare-Dragon is to provide a party of adventurers with some manner of protection should the entire group fall asleep or be caught by surprise while camped in a hostile environment. It functions much the same way as a farmer's scarecrow, only it is portable and more formidable in appearance.

* **Hazards:** The greatest hazard involved in the use of a Scare-Dragon is complacency. Many groups feel that the Scare-Dragon will solve all their nighttime problems and so refuse to set watches, relying completely on the inflatable construct to protect them. This results in well-fed wandering monsters and enriched bandit coffers. Borgora's warranty doesn't cover stupidity, and no such claims will be honored.

The second greatest hazard is the Scare-Dragon itself. When inflated, the construct actually becomes a small bomb. Air is compressed into a tight, enclosed area, becoming quite volatile. If heated, the already-inflated construct expands further and could explode in the camp, causing damage to all within a ten-foot radius. The noisy blast also results from sharp objects getting too close to the easily-punctured material. A Scare-Dragon that explodes is not repairable 75% of the time, and a new one will have to be commissioned at Borgora's shop. The warranty doesn't cover a Scare-Dragon going boom, either.

* **Staging:** One obvious way to introduce Borgora and his inflatable constructs into a campaign is to have the dwarf hire the PC party to go to the Hool Marshes and obtain the petroleum byproducts for a rush order. Borgora has been commissioned to provide four inflatable constructs to aid his Pious Majesty of Furyondy, and they must be delivered to Chendl by the first moon of Flocktime, six months from today. The party is employed to get into the Hool as quickly as possible, obtain the byproducts from Wiiken, and return to the Good Hills in two months' time. They are provided with one Scare-Dragon to assist them in their mission. Of course, things won't be easy. Besides the normal wandering monsters and bandits encountered in the Hool, Wiiken has been taken prisoner by the Grandee of Westkeep. The Grandee has finally discovered a means by which to exact revenge on Borgora for past injustices. Only Wiiken can provide enough of the strange substance to complete the party's important mission.

*** Bill Slavicsek
New York, NY

Brandon's Bard-in-a-Box

* **Definition:** A portable magical music system for party entertainment.

* **History:** The Bard-in-a-Box was developed to fill the musical needs of a group of wild elves. Two elvish brothers, Brandon and Dorian Grimm, grew notorious for the large and extravagant celebrations and fetes they threw in their domain of Taneilian. The festivities continually got out of hand, until no bard worth his lute would be caught dead performing for the wild elves and their musically-unappreciative friends. To solve this problem, Brandon commissioned the Bard-in-a-Box from the retired wizard Thrangor. The device was intended to take the place of a bard and provide musical entertainment. The Brothers Grimm, however, did not reckon with Thrangor's growing senility. The wizard's notes on construction have been read by his peers, and it is agreed that the Bard-in-a-Box should work perfectly. Unfortunately, Thrangor died of heart failure, forced to dance when his invention first malfunctioned (see *Hazards*). No one knows what the wizard may have added or omitted from his notes or the original enchantment to affect the proper operation of the Box. The wild elves' parties truly deserved their outrageous reputation after the introduction of the Bard-in-a-Box.

* **Description:** This invention resembles a rectangular silver box. A carrying handle is set into the top and a tapered crystal rod is gimbel-mounted at one corner of the surface. Two sheeps' horns are set into one side, the bell-mouth of each horn flush with the side of the box. Elaborate and unusual runes are engraved into the metal, especially around the horns. Three knobs connected to pull-rods are mounted above the horns.

* **Construction:** 60,000 gp; 17 days. The Bard-in-a-Box requires three unique spells. *Loudness*, a third-level spell, amplifies sound from enchanted objects such as horns and drums. This is cast on the sheeps' horns. Spell components are ground shrieker, a giants's fingernail, and powdered ram's horn. Cast: 1 hour; Duration: permanent; Range: touch, 1 object.

The fourth-level spell *musical ear* is designed to seek out musical vibrations. Components are a miniature ear of gold, hair from a bard, and a quartz crystal and rod. Cast: 1 hour; Duration: permanent; Range: touch, 1 object.

Finally, the third-level spell *Clairaudience* enables the device to search out music over long distances. Components are a small silver horn, the ear of a basilisk, and a quartz crystal and rod from the Ethereal Plane. Cast: 1 turn; Duration: permanent; Area: 1 object; Range: true range unknown—at a minimum, the local ethereal plane (150') is searched for reflected and resonating sounds.

* **Statistics:** Size: 2' wide, 1' high, 6" deep. Weight: approximately five pounds.One Bard-in-a-Box will provide music for the lifetime of the crystal (100 + 1d100 hours) and, at maximum volume, can be heard distinctly up to 150 feet distant.

* **Functioning:** The silver shell of the Bard-in-a-Box is hollow. Inside, the enchanted crystal is suspended within the Box. This crystal searches out lively dance music, taking a clairaudient shortcut through the Ether. Its angle of orientation is adjusted by one of the pull-knobs, and its proximity to the horns is changed with another pull-knob. It is connected by platinum wire to the gimbel-mounted crystal rod.

Music received through the crystal is broadcast and amplified through the enchanted sheeps' horns. The rod serves as a musical direction finder: the user swivels it into a random position and, by experimentation, can find a direction from which music is most distinctly heard. There is a 10% chance per use that no music at all can be heard from the Box, but the attempt may be repeated after an hour. There is also a 10% chance that no amount of adjusting will make it play distinctly.

Each of the knobs connects to pull

rods which may be drawn out of the Box to a maximum of three inches. The first knob activates the device and must be completely extended to do so. The second knob controls the volume; the farther out it is pulled, the louder the music becomes as the crystal within is drawn closer to the mouthpieces of the horns.

The third knob is sometimes capable of altering the type of music played by the invention. There is a 20% chance per manipulation (once per round) of altering the type of music played when the crystal's orientation is changed (i.e., the knob is moved). Depending on the state of the Ether, extending this knob may alter music from lively (close to the Box) to sedate (far from the Box).

* **Hazards:** When senile Thrangor created this invention, his fine tuning of the device was less than accurate. The Bard-in-the-Box is subject to drift as ethereal cyclones and other disturbances cause the fabric of that plane to shift. When this occurs, an unexpected and dangerous side effect may take place.

The Bard-in-a-Box normally plays relatively local music echoed through the Ether and picked up by the invention: winsome flute and lyre duets, bawdy lute-plucked melodies, and brisk roundelays with drum, pipes and harp. However, at unpredictable intervals (10% chance per use), the type of music played by the Box alters radically. Strange, alien tunes suddenly blare forth at maximum volume. A pounding repetitious beat underlies the harsh, strident tones of unidentifiable instruments; sometimes voices wail in accompaniment, or a single voice shouts forth in an oddly syncopated, compelling chant.

When this happens, all listeners within earshot must immediately save against Spell. Those who were dancing to the previous music make the save at -4 to their roll. Anyone who fails the saving throw is compelled to dance in an outrageous and alien manner. During the first round, these dancers, bewitched by the perverse music, gather close to the Box and throw their bodies into odd contortions: their arms flop about and their legs move in no traditional dance step whatsoever. During the second round, each enchanted dancer begins to walk backwards as if blown by the wind, while moving arms and head in a disjointed, mechanical manner.

During the third round, and for each round thereafter, dancers hectically throw themselves to the ground, attempting to spin on their backs or their heads, or flipping their legs through the air while supporting their weight on their arms. They go through such violent contortions that many are apt to hurt themselves. Characters should make a Dexterity Check every other round of bizarre dancing. One point of damage is inflicted each time the throw is failed. Characters cannot kill themselves in this way, but they can injure themselves seriously and will fall unconscious at 0 hit points.

When this alien music is playing, the "off" knob on the Box is disabled. The music can only be stopped (and the Box returned to normal function) with the third knob, which adjusts the enchanted crystal and hence the music played by the Box. Remember that there is only a 20% chance per round of the knob altering the music. In addition, it may be difficult for any unenchanted character to even reach the Box, since it will likely be surrounded by a number of dangerously flailing bodies. If there are more than three dancers, a Dexterity Check must be made in order to approach the Box. If failed, the character is bashed by an oblivious dancer. Both he and the dancer suffer 1d4 points of stun damage from the impact.

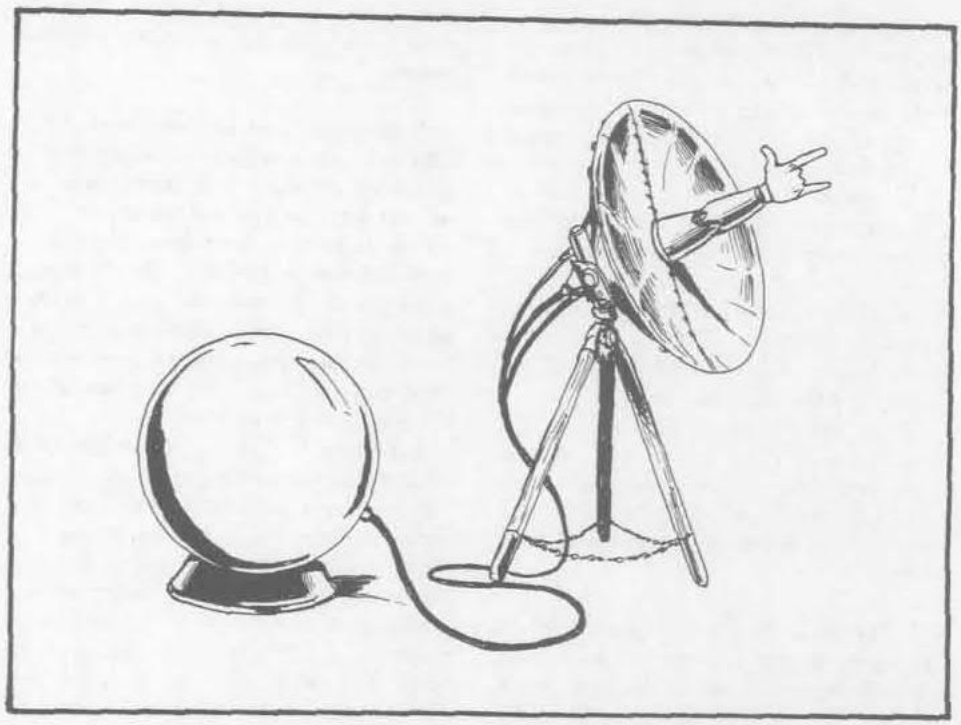
If there is no one around to shut off the berserk Bard-in-a-Box, there is a 10% chance per turn that the music will return to normal by itself. Those who are bespelled are doomed to dance until the music changes or the Box is shut off or destroyed. It sustains 20 points of damage before it ceases to function.

*** Deborah Christian
San Diego, CA

Ch'Thon's Astral Ball

* **Definition:** A crystal ball that monitors scrying activity in an alternate reality.

* **History:** Ch'thon of the Black Arts, bored, decided to take a ride through the dimensions on his nightmare, Whelm. The ride continued from one alternate reality to the next, but nothing caught Ch'thon's interest until they ventured past shop windows in a distant otherwhen. There, weird box- like devices showed pictures much like a crystal ball does. "Scrying devices of some kind," thought the mage. With the help of a *tongues* spell, Ch'thon was able to understand the words emanating from the artifacts. Fascinated, the mage realized that the scrying devices must monitor various entertainment arenas. For hours he watched the performances of actors, jesters, and minstrels until, unexpectedly, the scrying boxes went dead. The shop's proprietor came out, locked the door and left, leaving the disappointed mage to stare at blank scrying boxes. Ch'thon quickly decided to return home and make up his own crystal ball, one capable of viewing that alternate dimension's many entertainers' guilds.



* **Description:** The invention consists of a large crystal ball with a golden socket in the back. A copper wire cable wrapped with a non-conductive material conects via a gold plug to the crystal ball. The cable leads outside to a similar plug in the back of a large, metal dish. The dish is mounted on a tripod. A metal arm, used to focus the enchantment, protrudes from the dish's center and is aimed skyward.

* **Construction:** 120,000 gp; 127 days; 120,000 XP. The invention requires a crystal ball that has a hole drilled in it. The hole must conform to the shape of a gold socket that will fit the plug on either end of the cable. An expert jeweller is needed to fashion the gold components. Besides the usual scrying ability, the crystal ball must be enchanted with *clairaudience* and *tongues*. (D&D® game players should use equivalent spells, such as *read languages*, that will allow the device to pick up and translate languages from far away).

The cable is nine strands of copper wire braided tightly together and wrapped in a non-conductive material such as electric eels' skins. Enough cable must be made to reach from the dish to the scrying room. The dish must be placed outdoors. The costs include 300 feet of cable at 10 gp per foot. The cable must be permanently charged with a *lightning bolt* spell. Once the cable is properly connected, the charge is fed into the crystal ball and the focusing arm. Thoughtful wizards will post warning signs.

The dish must be made by a master armorer. Metal used in the construction must be meteorite iron. Thirty pounds of meteorite iron is required, and costs 500 gp per pound. A hole is drilled through the dish's center and lined with more eel skin. An arm of the same metal is attached to the inside of the dish, so that the gold socket in its base corresponds to the hole in the dish. The dish is mounted on an ordinary steel tripod. The arm is then enchanted with a special *clairvoyance* spell called *astral reception* (see below), developed to allow the crystal ball to easily intercept scrying or similar activity on the targeted world. The arm and dish act as a focusing mechanism for the spell.

Theoretically, any world is a valid target for an *astral ball*; however, each ball invariably focuses on the parallel world found by Ch'thon, probably because of the high level of scrying activity common to that place.

* **Statistics:** 16″ diameter crystal ball (13 lbs.); 6′ diameter dish (27 lbs.) with an 18″ focusing arm (3 lbs.); 4′ high tripod (82 lbs.) and 300′ of special cable (1.3 lbs per foot).

* **Functioning:** The *astral ball* receives most of the scrying common to the alternate world. These receptions are usually entertainment-oriented, though some are educational or otherwise informational. Some of the information is of no value to the viewer, based as it is upon

a magic unique to that world, known as technology. Things of technology do not work well, if at all, on Oerth unless redesigned using common magics. Surprisingly, however, Oerth magic works well on that plane.

As several scryings are being sent at the same time on the other world, the wizard controlling the *astral ball* must become attuned to the device in order to differentiate between things that he wants to intercept. This process takes three hours. An Intelligence of 17 or better cuts this time to one hour.

Occasionally, the astral wind will interfere with the scryings and replace them with a view of the astral plane. The user of the device will then be able to see any nearby astral monsters—and vice versa!

* **Hazards:** Besides the possibility of the *lightning bolt* blasting anyone who touches the crystal ball or the dish, there are two other problems. First, the thing attracts astral monsters. There is a one in six chance each hour that an astral encounter will occur, provided the party is within three miles of the *astral ball* and its dish.

The other problem involves Technology. The wizards of that other world's magic use a special spell called *scrambling*, intended to prevent eavesdropping. However, this technology reacts differently on Oerth, causing a dimensional rift. This rift pulls the eavesdroppers onto a parallel world where whatever they were viewing is very real. The former viewers stay in this new world until the 'show' is over. Characters are compelled in behavior to go along with the intent of the show they were watching—and anything can happen once they arrive in the middle of events. For example, a play common to the alternate world is the Western. In one, peasants are terrorized by a local baron. In the natural "plot" of events, a hero would have arrived to deliver the peasants from the despotic baron. A character thrust into the midst of this case either side with the baron, assist the peasants, or defeat the hero himself. In any case, the characters can leave only after the plot of the show has been brought to a conclusion. Then the show ends and the adventurers return home.

* **Staging:** The adventures that the DM can create with the scrambled astral portal are virtually unlimited. There are several ways to start the players on such an adventure: a mage gives the PCs a note to deliver to Ch'thon; the city guard hires them to find out why monster sightings have increased near the mage's house; the adventurers are spies sent by a rival mage to learn what they can about Ch'thon's new invention.

Exploring Ch'thon's manor can be a mystery adventure in itself. The manor will be empty and dark. The DM can throw in elements of a haunted house to chill the PCs' blood. Creaking boards, clattering shutters, and other eerie, unexplained noises can only add to the suspense. Yet PCs notice two things that seem out of place: the dish in the courtyard, and the weird scrying room. Both of these areas are littered with dead rodents and other pests. The deaths, of course, were caused by the *lightning bolt* enchanted into the invention. But the scrying room is the key to whatever adventure the DM has planned, and exploring it will eventually take the player characters to another dimension.

The players should be forewarned of an imminent transfer by one or more of their characters recognizing Ch'thon in whatever show they're watching. There are portraits of the vain wizard in every room. Then the image begins to blur; the characters are picked up by an unseen force and bodily hurled toward the *astral ball*, blacking out before they hit.

When the adventurers come to, the players may recognize their situation. A man dressed in green and carrying a bow may say from a tree limb, "Welcome to Sherwood!" while other green-clad bowmen menace them from the surrounding underbrush—not very welcoming at all. Alternatively, the PCs might see a mob rushing their way and screaming in fear: "The blob!" The mob is being chased by what looks like a mountain of red slime. Still another possibility would have the party confronted by constables in blue. The PCs are thought to have just slain some young hoods in the dungeon-like tunnels beneath their city of shadows, steel, and glass.

In whatever world the adventurers find themselves, they can be further confounded by discovering that one or more of them is the exact double of a famous or notorious native. Their circumstances can be easily complicated if their identities are mistaken as promient leaders or notorious criminals.

This "clone" effect is not limited to player characters, of course. The adventurers soon learn that Ch'thon has already figured out the status quo and placed himself as close to the top as possible. In Sherwood, he finds he is the double of the usurper King John and takes *his* place. If near the Blob, he has learned to control it. In the third example, Ch'thon is the double of the constable general or perhaps the leader of the largest gang. Adventurers in any of these situations find that disposing of the evil Ch'thon is the fastest means of returning them to their home world. As a final complication, PCs might be unable to leave the parallel world if their native doubles are killed.

Ch'thon: INT 18; 19th-level MU; 38 hp; AC 0; #AT 1; DM 1d14. Equipment: *staff of striking* and *robe of protection +3*. He has spells appropriate to his level.

Astral Reception: Level 4; Range special; Duration special; Effect: enables a mage to view scryings from another world. The material component is a crystal ball palm-sized or larger.

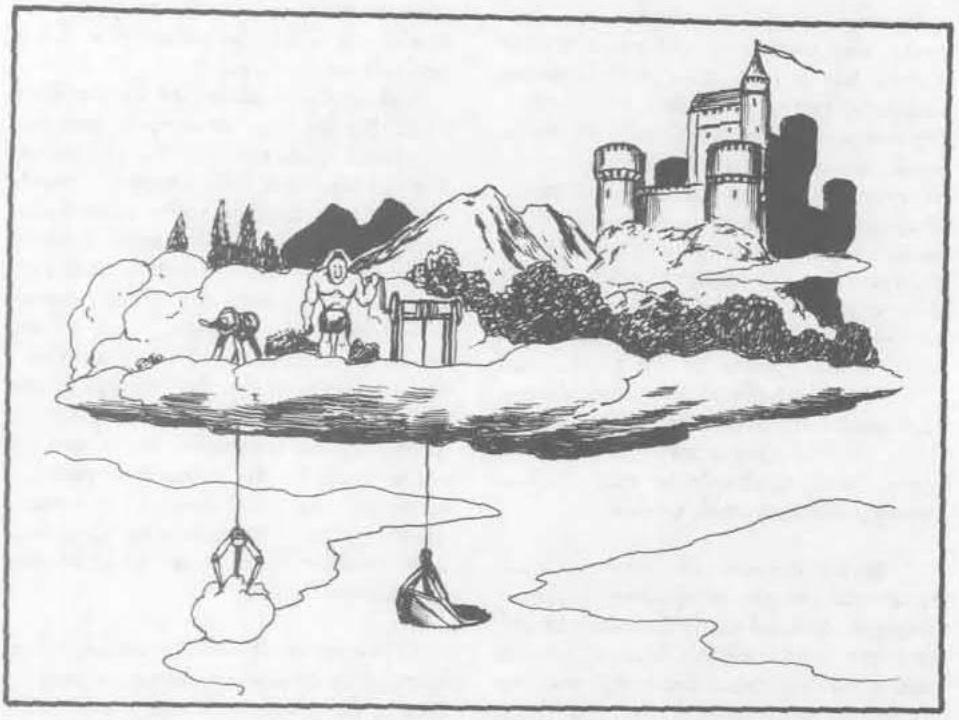
*** Raymond Maddox
Slocomb, AL

Castle in the Clouds

* **Definition:** A floating structure, generally a castle, built on a cloud and usually inhabited by cloud or storm giants.

* **History:** Clouds are normally too vaporous and impermanent for any but the most insubstantial of creatures to dwell upon. However, millennia ago, a being of unknown species, traditionally called Gibberlin the Aerifier, made the discovery that when the blood of a storm deity is spilled on a cloud, that cloud changes. It becomes permanent and semi-solid, never fading or completely evaporating. The cloud's appearance is unchanged to human eyes, but aerial entities (such as cloud giants) can recognize them at a glance.

* **Description:** A cloud castle looks like a cloud from below. It moves with the wind and looks white and fluffy—the only real difference is that it never dissipates, although the edges can change shape. However, anyone flying above it and looking down can view the castle, its gardens, perhaps even forests, towns, or landscapes upon the cloud's surface.



* **Construction:** Manufacturing one's own permanent cloud is quite difficult, since godsblood is nearly impossible to obtain. Fortunately, storm deities are by and large a violent bunch. Their immortal ichor is frequently spilled onto clouds, so a cloud castle builder need only check out likely prospects until he comes across a permanent, ichor-saturated cloud.

Boarding one of these clouds is easy; flying creatures can simply land atop the foggy mass. Landbound giants must wait until the cloud bumps into a mountain, then climb aboard while it is still caught on the pinnacle.

Once aboard the cloud, it must be prepared for construction. The cloud-stuff itself is soft and fluffy, and while it can support enormous weight, it is quite unsuitable for use as building material. Fog-cutters and fog-tongs are needed to dig the castle's foundation and carve the cloudy landscape into the desired shapes of hills, lakes, rivers, and valleys.

Fog-cutters are non-magical shears used to snip out cubes of cloud from the surrounding mist. The shears must be lengthy to chop out the largest-size cube possible, and they must be sharp, as with any shears intended to cut soft materials. Most fog-cutters are cloud-giant sized, and are much too large for humans to wield. Fog-tongs are enormous non-magical pincers resembling oversized ice-tongs. They are used to grip blocks of cloud and move them about. Often a rope is attached to the tongs, so the hunk of cloud can be towed, floating at a distance above and behind the user. When a great number of cloud-cubes must be moved, the easiest procedure is to net them and tow them with a long rope. If landscaping is to be done, grooves must be cut out for rivers, and depressions for lakes and ponds. A few holes are usually cut entirely through the cloud to permit the threading of chains (see below).

The castle-builder needs one or more huge iron dredges, attached by colossal lengths of rope and chain to the cloud. These dredges are lowered to the ground as the cloud floats by, to scoop up dirt and lift it to the surface of the cloud, where it is spread to provide surface for gardens and trees. Plants and animals may be caught in the dredge as well; in that case, the better plants are used as seed stock to start gardens, and the animals are eaten or bred. Cloud giants, having little concern for human needs, usually scoop up only the best farmland. Some giants use their dredges to scoop up entire human houses, using the inhabitants as serfs to work their cloudtop farmland.

Building the castle itself is a bit more arduous. Once the foundation is prepared, the builder—usually a giant—must lower himself on a rope or chain to a good source of stone. The cloud should be anchored so it won't float off, and slabs of stone are quarried in the normal fashion. Of course, with a giant doing this work, it takes less time than for human quarry-workers. Buckets are lowered from the cloud to raise the quarried stone, then the giants return to the could and construct the castle.

A cloud castle is inexpensive, since everything used is natural material or is stolen, but it may take as long as an ordinary castle to build. Fog-cutters, fog-tongs, dredges, anchors, and chains must be made to order, costing an average of 500 gp each; the dredges, chains, and buckets average 5000 gp each. These items may be obtained more cheaply from a giant blacksmith or dwarves, or in a different manner entirely. Some giants simply walk into a small town, glower at the locals, and order them to build a house-sized dredge equipped with a mile or two of chain. That, or the giants will devastate the town. It's as simple as that for an unstoppable and callous giant.

* **Statistics:** Size: as ordinary castle. Structural points: as ordinary castle or stronger. A cloud castle is usually larger, stronger, and cruder than a normal castle, having been built by and for giants. Construction tools: Fog-tongs and fog-cutters are usually about ten feet long and weigh well over two hundred pounds. The dredges are at least twenty feet across, and weigh several tons. The anchor need only be a simple boulder attached to a long rope.

Weight-bearing capacity: 50 lbs per square foot per foot of cloud's thickness. Thus, a cloud 40 feet thick can support 20,000 lbs per square foot, sufficient for most building purposes.

Movement: At the speed and in the direction of the prevailing wind.

* **Functioning:** A cloud castle is more or less self-sufficient. Its gardens and animal life provide enough food to support many inhabitants, and if the fare ever gets dreary, the inhabitants need only lower a dredge to scoop up an orchard or a barn full of cattle. Waste materials are easily dumped overboard.

It does not rain very often on cloud castles, since they float at altitudes equal to or higher than those of many rain clouds. When drought threatens, a bucket is lowered to a pond and water scooped up and dumped in one of the cloud castle's lakes. The gardens and farms on the cloud must be irrigated, and that chore is done by whatever serfs the giants have captured.

A cloud castle makes an ideal raiding base. By its very nature, it provides excellent camouflage. It is almost continually on the move, rarely remaining behind to suffer retribution. When the castle drifts over a likely prospect, such as a wealthy citadel or prosperous hamlet, the giants simply lower ropes and chains, then swarm down to rob the area blind. The cloud's motion can be controlled slightly by the use of huge bellows and fans, so it can be made to float directly over a ground castle, enabling the giants to bypass the fortress's outer defenses. If necessary giants subdue defenders by dropping large boulders, tree trunks, dead horses, and similar debris.

* **Hazards:** While the cloud never completely dries out or disintegrates, its edges do change shape, and any structures built too near the edge may be damaged or even fall over the side. In addition, the cloud changes size with the prevailing air moisture. When traveling over a steaming jungle, the cloud swells up, becoming much larger than usual. When over arid regions, it may shrink to only a third its normal size.

Cloud castles are at the whim of the winds. If becalmed, the inhabitants may be unable to find loot, food or water for weeks. They will also suffer water shortages if blown over ocean or desert. Castles are sometimes attacked by flying monsters, creatures which are both more rare and more fearsome than earthbound beasts. Dragons, wyverns, and griffins can be hard to beat off, even for giants.

* **Staging:** Cloud giants drift by and raid a village, citadel, or homestead. The adventurers are hired to protect a village from a coming attack, to avenge a town that has been destroyed, or to hunt down and regain magical treasures stolen by the inhabitants of a cloud castle.

The adventurers spend the night in a country inn. During the night, a huge dredge drops from the skies and scoops up the inn, taking it up to enslave the inhabitants. This particular scenario is best for medium- or low-level characters, who are incapable of defeating a band of hardy cloud giants by force. The fun of the adventure comes in trying to escape the castle.

* **Other:** Cloud castles can be occupied by different types of inhabitants. For instance, a wizard in such a castle could steer and propel his domicile by using controlled air elementals. The mass could be blown wherever the dwellers desired. An easy and sensible form of blackmail would be to move over a fertile valley and stay there, blocking out sunlight until the dwellers paid a vast extortion to the cloud-folk.

*** Sandy Petersen
Richmond, CA

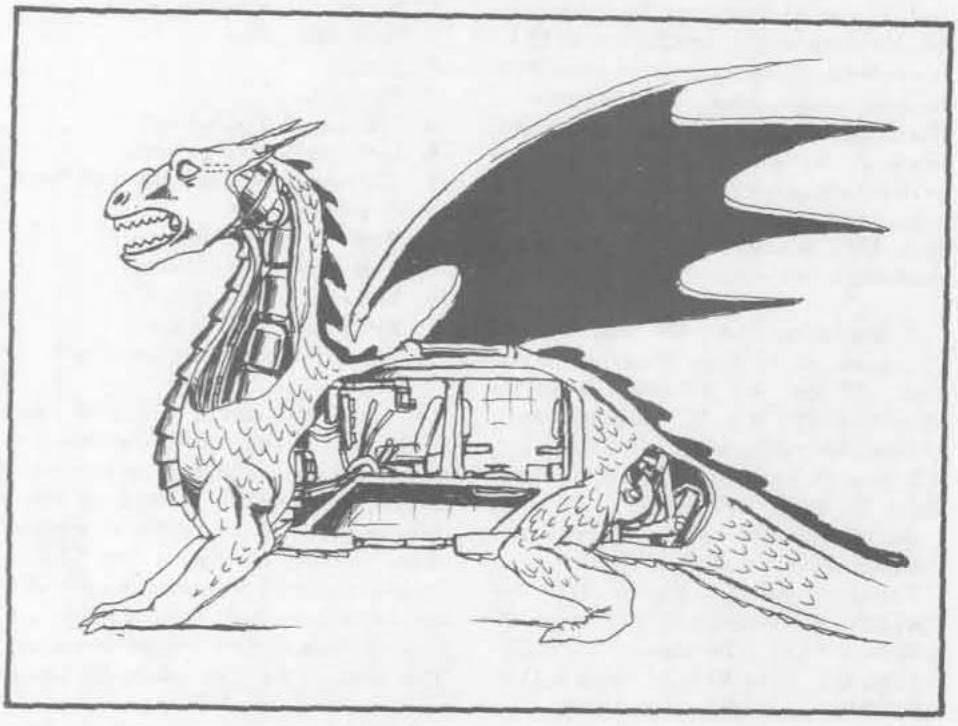
The Clockwork Dragon of Mai-Faddah

* **Definition:** A Clockwork Dragon ("Clock-dragon" for short) is a mechanical automaton that simulates the appearance and basic abilities of a real dragon.

* **History:** The Clock-dragon was invented by the eccentric mage Mai-Faddah. He lived in a flying castle with his assistants Symonn, Taiador, and Allwyn and a company of mercenary amazons. The problem he faced was how to provide transportation from the castle to the ground three thousand feet below. He needed the services of an adult dragon but he did not want to go through the time, tedium, and danger of raising, training, and feeding a saddle-bred dragon. He investigated and abandoned methods such as building a dragon-golem ("drolem") after learning of the incident at Balfour's Landing. An uncontrolled drolem had destroyed much of the dockside before it marched into the sea and promptly sank. The story has it that the drolem continues its march across the sea floor even today.

Mai-Faddah had a passion for clocks. One day, while he tinkered with an automaton in his castle's clock tower, he realized that this was the solution to his problem. He realized a spring-powered clock mechanism could power a mechanical dragon. If properly handled, his design could do most of the things real dragons could do—walk, attack, and even fly. Best of all, it could carry up to a dozen people in safety and varying degrees of comfort. Mai-Faddah realized that the magical abilities of real dragons were beyond his clock-dragon's design. To make up for this, he designed places where his assistants could discreetly use magical items to provide the needed powers.

Mai-Faddah used the finest materials in building his Clock-dragon. Unfortunately, he decided to give his Clock-dragon scales of real gold. Armed with *teleportation* spells and their natural ferocity, Mai-Faddah's amazons staged raids on the treasuries of some of the more prosperous thieving guilds in the area. The affected guilds were perturbed about the sudden loss of 60,000 gp.



Eventually a repossession team located the missing gold, now plating a nearly completed Clock-dragon. Somehow they managed to activate the Clock-dragon and fly away with it. The sponsoring thieves' guild decided that the intact Clock-dragon was more valuable than their stolen gold (they could always steal more gold) and was definitely too valuable to risk its loss by using it as simple transportation. Instead, the guild's Master Thief, Curare by name, decided to recoup the cost of her new toy by renting the Clock-dragon to scholars and mages for examination. Although the rental fees were exorbitant, the scholars got a good value. They were able to recreate Mai-Faddah's plans, construction methods, and operating procedures.

* **Description:** The Clock-dragon appears to be a large adult winged dragon. The Clock-dragon can be entered by a hatch in its left flank or through the mouth. In its basic form, the Clock-dragon is a metallic bronze. It can be painted with any color of enamel or be covered by real silver or gold scales.

* **Construction:** 80,000-200,000 gp; 100 days. The market price of the plans varies from 10,000 to 60,000 gp. The plans are available from the same sources as magical tomes, although the plans are simply a non-magical tome of no value otherwise. The builder can create his own plans himself if he has an Intelligence of 18 + and training in mechanical engineering. Original plans take two to three months to complete. The builder can draw up plans based on an existing Clock-dragon if he has three weeks to study the original, an Intelligence of 16 +, and a background skill of metalsmithing or engineering.

The materials and labor to build the Clock-dragon has a base cost of 80,000 GP. This provides the Clock-dragon with a basic bronze, brass, or copper hide. If the builder desires to give his Clock-dragon real silver or gold scales, he needs the equivalent of 60,000 coins of the desired metal.

Construction requires the services of a

well-equipped foundry. At least one Mastersmith with an Intelligence of 15 + is needed to correctly read the plans and oversee construction. Two supervisors (Intelligence 12 +) perform the detailed work. A dozen laborers are needed to perform the heavy work. The builder can assist in any area where he is qualified to help. Unfortunately, most PCs are only qualified to act as brute laborers.

* **Statistics:** Size: 45′ long by 60′ (wingspan) by 15′ high (shoulder). Body size: 20′ long by 10′wide. Head to shoulders: 12′. Tail: 13′. Weight: 4 tons (7 tons with gold or silver hide). Payload: 4.5 tons (1.5 tons with gold or silver hide). Ceiling: 9,000′.

Range: 50 miles per day. Armament: ceramic or ivory teeth and claws.

Construct: AC 1; HD (pilot's HD); hp 200; MV 90′ (walking), 300′ (flying); AT 4; D 2-24 (bite), 2-24 (claws), 2-12 (tail), 6-72 (crush); Save F10; AL (pilot's AL); XP 9,000 (Clock-dragon and pilot).

* **Functioning:** The Clock-dragon is a purely mechanical construction. It gets its power from a large metal spring that takes 20 hours to wind; once wound, the spring powers the Clock-dragon for five hours of operation. The spring cannot be wound while the Clock-dragon is in operation. The controls are a series of levers clustered around the pilot's chair in the Control compartment. The Clock-dragon is a hideously complex machine to operate. A pilot must have a Dexterity of 16 + in order to operate all the controls by himself. If the pilot's Dexterity is lower, a co-pilot is needed to assist whenever the Clock-dragon is in flight.

The levers are all brass rods three feet in length, connected under the floor to other pulleys, cables, and connecting rods. The levers form a semicircle around the pilot's chair. All are easily within reach. Normally the levers are left unmarked as a security measure to prevent untrained people from stealing the Clock-dragon. From the pilot's left, the levers are as follows:

1. Forward Cargo door release
2. Neck movement
3. Jump
4. Flying speed
5. Left front leg (Clawing)
6. Left legs (Walking speed)
7. Tail movement and horizontal flying direction
8. Right Legs (Walking speed)
9. Right front leg (Clawing)
10. Vertical flying direction
11. Head movement & bite
12. Forward Cargo trapdoor release

All the levers except 3, 5, and 9 are designed to remain in their last position when they are released. The exempted levers automatically return to their original positions once the pilot releases them. Unfortunately, if the Clock-dragon is in need of maintenance or if it was improperly built, any of the levers may slip back to their original positions. This requires the pilot to keep his hands on the controls at all times.

A set of five tubes hangs in front of the pilot's head. A harness can be used to attach them to the pilot's head, although this is not necessary. If so, the tubes cover the pilot's mouth, ears, and eyes. The mouth tube connects to a megaphone in the Clock-dragon's mouth; this permits the pilot to speak for the Clock-dragon. The ear tubes connect to funnels in the Clock-dragon's flanks; this permits the pilot to hear outside sounds. The eye tubes are the ends of the periscopes; the pilot is able to see out through the Clock-dragon's eyes. In Mai-Faddah's design, the tubes were flexible to allow the pilot to move his head. However, many Clock-dragons have rigid tubes that lock the pilot's head in place.

The head is used to see, bite, and swallow. The eyes are the lenses for the periscopes that connect to the pilot's chair. Mirrors and prisms enable the periscopes to function in any position the head and neck assume. The teeth have a screw-in base for easy replacement. A supply of extra teeth can be carried in the tail storage section. The head can swivel independently of the neck. The mouth is wide enough for a fully grown human to fit through. It leads into the neck slide, a tube that deposits any swallowed matter in the forward storage compartment in the torso. There are footholds and handgrips recessed in the neck slide to enable a person to look out through the mouth. In Mai-Faddah's original plan, he stationed one of his assistants here with a *wand of fire* to simulate a dragon's fiery breath.

The torso is divided into four sections. The Forward Engine compartment contains the Clock-dragon's spring and gears. It can only be reached by access hatches in the Forward Cargo section. There is no room for anyone to ride in this section.

The Forward Cargo section contains the crank for winding the great spring. An opening above it in the center of the forward wall leads to the neck slide. Anything swallowed by the Clock-dragon ends up in this compartment. The walls are padded to protect the unsecured cargo and to cut down on the noise generated by the gears. There is a hatch in the floor to permit the pilot to quickly dump cargo or unwanted passengers. A hatch in the back wall leads to the Control compartment. Both hatches can only be operated from the latter compartment.

The Control chamber is also the primary passenger compartment. Bench seats line the left and right walls, with harnesses to secure three people on each bench. A door above the left wall leads to the outside; it drops down to form a ladder. The center of the room is dominated by the pilot's seat and its encircling row of levers. A set of five tubes hangs in fron of the pilot's headrest.

The Aft Engine section contains the gears for the Clock-dragon's hind legs and tail. There is enough room to store tools, spare parts, and weapons. One or two people can ride here in incredible discomfort, although they must beware of getting caught in the gears.

The tail contains the Aft Cargo compartments. These are four trunks 1.5′ by 1.5′ by 2′. The tail can be swung with great force to batter or knock over

targets. When the Clock-dragon is flying, the tail acts as a rudder.

* **Hazards:** The Clock-dragon is possibly the most complex machine in the world. It is certainly the most finicky. The clockwork must be oiled after each 20 hours of operation. This requires a gallon of oil to reach all the spots. The spring should be examined after 100 hours of operation and completely replaced after 10,000 hours. If the spring breaks, the band bursts from its cage and fouls up all the gears. The Clock-dragon suffers immediate and total paralysis. If the Clock-dragon is airborne, the wings lock into position, transforming the Clock-dragon into an glider. When it finally crashes, the Clock-dragon takes d6 damage for each 100' it was aloft. Fortunately, if the Clock-dragon remains intact, it absorbs all the damage the passengers would otherwise have suffered.

Occasionally the control mechanisms jam or break. When this happens, the affected mechanism remains in its last position until repairs are made. If the walking or flying modes are engaged, the Clock-dragon continues to travel until the spring is disengaged or runs down.

The worst thing that can happen to a Clock-dragon is having a rust monster loose inside. Mai-Faddah insisted on scales of real gold to protect his Clock-dragon from these beasts, at least on the outside. Rumor holds that Mai-Faddah later discovered a way to make his Clock-dragon's interior invulnerable to the beasts; however, he has shown no inclination to sell his secret to the outside world.

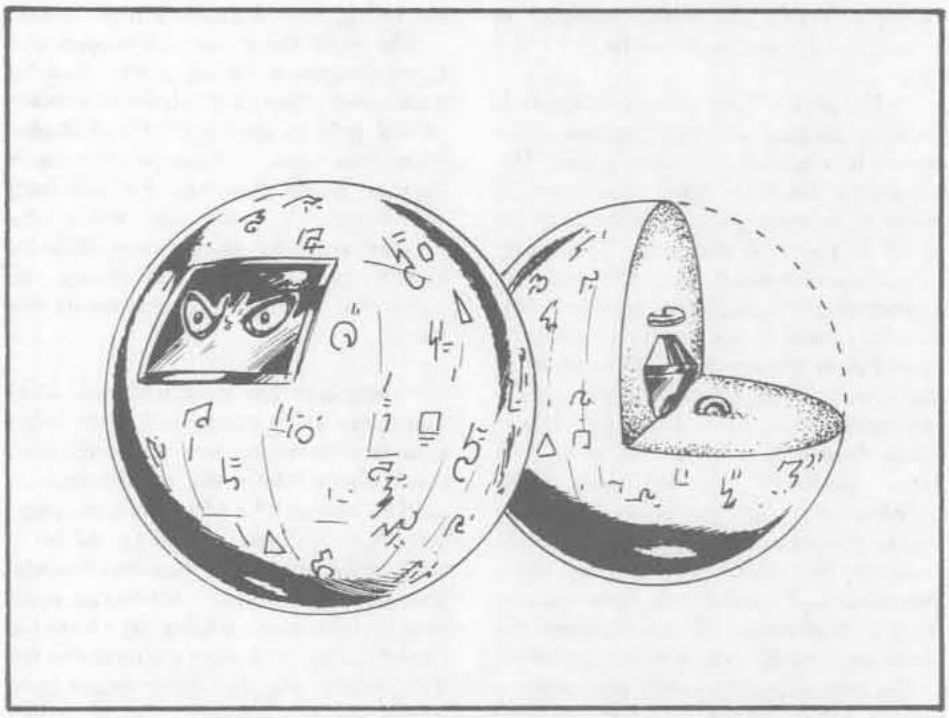
* **Staging:** The guild's Master Thief summons player character thieves to her chamber. At last her seer has been able to track down where the guild's missing gold has gone. The Master Thief orders the PCs to form a raiding party to recover the gold, or at least find out who took it. To assist them, the Guildmistress provides them with a *flying carpet* from the Guild's armory. This event recreates the theft of the orignal Clock-dragon from Mai-Faddah's flying castle. The adversaries include forty Amazon fighters (F1-F4), three 4' golems made of ruby and one made of diamond, Mai-Faddah (MU25), and his assistants Symonne (MU3), Taiador (MU2), and Alwyn (MU1).

A local warlord has acquired a Clock-dragon and is using it to terrorize the countryside. Now he has demanded that a local baron surrender to him or risk the destruction of his castle. The baron offers a reward to whoever can capture or at least disable the warlord's Clock-dragon. The fact that it is a Clock-dragon and not a real one may be a secret known only by the warlord's men.

The party has rented a Clock-dragon to go on an expedition into the wilderness. Unfortunately, they rented a lemon, but this doesn't become obvious until the party is far from civilization. Fortunately, they have a repair manual. Unfortunately, it's written in an obscure language that none of the party understands. Fortunately, they learn of a mechanic who can read the manual. Unfortunately, he was captured by orcs yesterday...and so it goes.

*** David E. Martin
Lake Geneva, WI.

Damos's Ball of Bowling



* **Description:** An illegal, magical bowling ball used when playing pin-kill (a magicians' version of bowling).

* **History:** Magicians seek tenure at Elselip's Post-Graduate College of Magic for two reasons. First, it's a mark of honor to be accepted, since only the most skilled magicians receive faculty positions. Second, tenured magicians are given unlimited research funds by the City of Glantri.

Occasionally, petty squabbles occur between faculty members. During one such squabble, involving Ithoria the Magnificent and Al the Stubborn, 16 blocks of downtown Glantri were leveled. The City Council complained.

A self-appointed "Blue-Ribbon Committee" of the College's wisest, most respected magicians was formed to investigate the incident. Several weeks later, after interviewing dozens of eyewitnesses and examining hundreds of pieces of evidence, the committee reached its verdict:

Wizards will be wizards.

The next day, the wizard-prince of Glantri told Dean Elselip that the college's research funds were canceled "due to a poor alfalfa crop this year." This sounded reasonable, except that (as far as Elselip knew) Glantri had no alfalfa crop.

Three days later the Blue-Ribbon Committee reconvened, reversed its previous decision "in view of startling new evidence," proclaimed that Ithoria and Al would be held accountable for all damages caused by their use of the *earthquake* spell, and passed Ordinance 507.

Ordinance 507: All disputes between wizards within Glantri city limits must be settled with a game of pin-kill. Magicians who violate this ordinance are subject to loss of tenure!

Pin-kill's rules are simple. The accusor has a ball, the defender has a pin. If the accusor's ball knocks over the defender's pin, then the defense has lost its case. Spells may be cast upon the ball or the pin, before the game, but no live creatures may be used and once the game is in progress no interference, magical or otherwise, is allowed.

Hence, when Damos *magic-jarred* a lesser efreet into his *ball of bowling* for the grudge match replay with Bethfra "Gutterball" the Enchantress, it was technically illegal.

The name of the efreet was Blywirkl Firetongue—an unsavory, dimwitted fellow from the Elemental Plane of Fire. Damos summoned Blywirkl, trapped him inside a bowling ball, and then cast a *geas* upon the efreet. The *geas* forced Blywirkl to "knock over" the first object viewed whenever it hears the command words, "Come on, baby, Daddy needs a strike."

Five years and 43 victories later, Damos remained the unchallenged master of pin-kill. Then his luck ran out, during a game of pin-kill. The opposing pin cast a *wish* spell followed by *dispel magic*. The combination of the two broke the *geas* upon Blywirkl.

The efreet, still trapped inside the ball, smashed through the alley and fled to the basement of Damos's tower.

Blywirkl intended to kill Damos and destroy the college. He might have succeeded, but at that moment a pack of ambitious kobolds broke into Damos's basement and threw a sack over Blywirkl.

When the sack was opened, Blywirkl found himself in a large cavern surrounded by kobolds. Blywirkl could have destroyed them, but instead told them the long, sad tale of how he came to be trapped in the gem.

Fork-tooth, leader of the kobolds, proposed a deal. If Blywirkl helped them to take over the dungeon they'd be his servants.

Blywirkl agreed.

* **Description:** *Damos's Ball of Bowling* looks like a crystal ball, with a diamond and two magical rings trapped inside. The ball's surface is etched with mystic runes and symbols, yet feels smooth to the touch.

On one side is a 4-inch by 4-inch "window to the interior" completely free

of writing. (If one peers through the window when the ball is activated, and one sees two very angry, red eyes staring back.)

When activated, the ball pulsates with an orange glow and makes a loud rumbling noise as it rolls toward its target (even on grass). This noise has been described as incessant thunder, the approach of death, or by common folk as simply "very loud."

* **Construction:** Three months, 225,000 gp. To make a Ball of Bowling, start with a diamond of at least 10,000 gp value. *Gate* in a lesser efreet and place it in the gem via *magic jar.* Cast *permanence* upon the *magic jar.* Place a *geas* upon the efreet. Cast *permanence* upon the *geas.*

Next, seal the diamond and two magical rings (*ring of spell turning* and *ring of protection +4*) into a crystal ball. Use a diamond stylus to inscribe spells onto the surface of the crystal, writing backwards so the efreet can read them on the inside.

Following is a list of all spells used on *Damos's Ball of Bowling*. Treat all spells as if cast by a 12th-level magic-user.

Continual light
Polymorph other
Cone of cold
Passwall
Transmute rock to mud
Anti-magic shell
Death spell
Flesh to stone
Power word, kill

After finishing the inscriptions, cast *cloud crystal ball* (see below) and *permanence* upon the *cloud crystal ball* spell.

Cloud Crystal Ball: Level 1; Range 10′ per level of caster; Duration 12 turns. Once this spell is cast on a crystal ball, billowing clouds of white or grey smoke fill the inside of the affected crystal ball. This smoke appears and disappears as often as desired for the duration of the spell, provided the proper phrase is spoken. The exact phrases needed to cloud and uncloud the crystal ball are chosen by the magician while casting the spell. This spell is a favorite among carnival magicians who pose as fortune tellers.

When this spell is in effect on *Damos's Ball of Bowling* the efreet cannot read the spells etched on the ball's surface.

* **Statistics:** Crystal ball with a 9″ diameter; approx. 16 lbs (160 cn); AC 0; hp 50; MV 9″. The efreet can cast one spell per round when the ball is unclouded and both the efreet and the crystal ball are protected at all times by the *ring of spell turning* and the *ring of protection +4* encased within. When activated the ball has 75% magic resistance (D&D® game system: *anti-magic shell*).

* **Functioning:** Activation of the *ball of bowling* is a simple process. The use holds Hold the ball so that the 4″-by-4″ window is aimed toward the target and at the same time murmuring under his breath the secret incantation, "Come on, baby, Daddy needs a strike."

This ritual unclouds the crystal ball and allows Blywirkl to see his next pin. Next, cradle the ball in the right hand and, with a smooth, five-step approach, roll the ball toward the target. Soon after release, the efreet takes over and the ball remorselessly follows the target where ever it goes. Blywirkl casts one spell per round at the target.

Once the ball has annihilated the pin, the crystal is reclouded when the user yells "STRIKE!" and pumps his arm three times.

* **Hazards:** The user must be absolutely sure that the "window" is pointed toward the intended target. If the efreet sees the user's belly, the ball turns around after a few feet, tracks the user down, and kills him.

Also, the user should never stand too close to the target. Cave-ins as a result of the offensive magic are always a possibility.

* **Staging:** The characters are ushered into the College's Conference Room before a panel of four magicians who look as if they've been in a fight recently, sporting arm-slings, bumps, and bruises. The magicians explain, "An important artifact, *Damos's Ball of Bowling,* has been stolen. It must be recovered at all costs." If pressed for details, the wizards balk, claiming to reveal more would be a "trademark infringement."

Next, a witness to the *ball's* location is called. A battered beholder floats into the room.

The tearful beholder launches into his testimony, claiming "All I wanted was a little kobold snack. (sniff) I was only gonna eat a couple of 'em." He goes on to tell a sad tale of how he was denied a late night snack by a vicious kobold tribe armed with *Damos's Ball of Bowling*. The beholder warns that if he can't hunt kobolds then he and other monsters will have to turn to "other foods"—a clear threat.

Finally, the beholder shows the characters the location of the kobold lair, grumbles "If the gods had meant for humans to use magic they'd have given them multiple eye-stalks," and leaves.

When the PCs arrive at the kobold lair, they find a long line of fearsome creatures—bugbears, ogres, two dragons, and a fire giant—standing outside the lair, arms crossed over their chests, many tapping one foot on the ground impatiently. These monsters were thrown out of the dungeon by the *ball of bowling.* They are now waiting to see that this matter is cleared up so that they can get back to living in dark caverns, eating helpless travelers, and being slain by heroes.

To succeed on this mission, the PCs must sneak into the kobold lair and steal the *ball of bowling* while it's inactive (i.e., while the crystal ball is clouded). This should not be easy for the PCs. Kobolds are tricky creatures and more than once during the adventure the characters should find themselves running away from *Damos's ball of bowling.*

Alternatively, the characters might destroy the *ball of bowling* with a *shatter* spell or by some other means. Breaking the ball releases Blywirkl, who will immediately leave to kill Damos.

*** Steve Gilbert and Robert Tuftee
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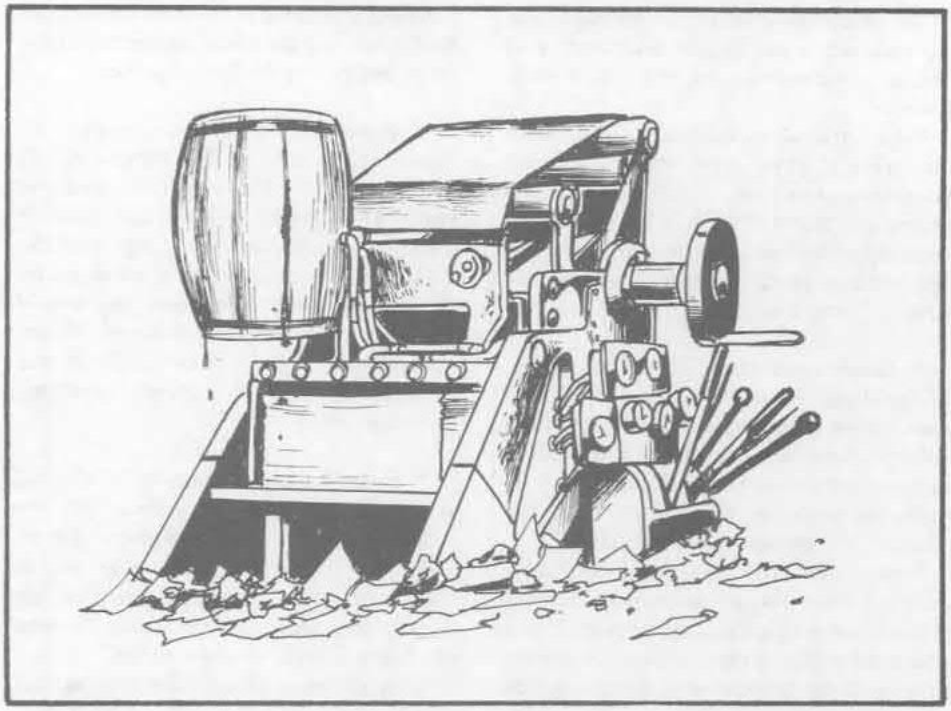
Darak's Thaumaturgical Printing Press



* **Definition:** An advanced and sophisticated printing press using sorcery and machinery to produce printed material in quantity.

* **History:** The thaumaturgical printing press was originally designed and created by the Arch-Mage Moxwul Darak a hundred and twenty years ago. Darak's original design suffered from serious gearing troubles. The gnomish mechanician, Mardok Torgul, redesigned the press dramatically, replacing Darak's magical paper feeders with mechanical rollers. The new machine was far more efficient, and it proved to be highly successful. Over the next ten years Darak and Torgul, now in partnership, became very wealthy. Once the press's commercial potential was evident, the master thief Adysha stole the plans to the machine. He copied them by hand and then sold the copies for vast sums. Most of the buyers used the plans to build presses in their home towns.

One person who bought the plans was Veridai Jechk, a wise scribe. He studied the plans and persuaded a press owner to show him around his press. He then wrote a book explaining how the presses are made. The book was printed on a Darak printing press, and copies sold widely.

The book enabled more presses to be built throughout the land. Other people studied and improved the design. Since then, presses have been constructed in most cities and major towns.

* **Description:** The press is a large iron machine, with rollers and gears everywhere. Over the front there is a large barrel containing ink. This tends to leak a certain amount of ink over the press, leaving black stains over the floor and the machinery. A certain amount of shredded paper collects around the machine and lies underfoot. There is a permanent smell near the press of oil, ink, paper and a hint of sorcery.

On one side of the device there is a collection of levers and dials that are used to control the press. Few are clearly labeled, making it difficult for an outsider to understand how the press is worked. Near the controls is a large crank handle which must be turned to power the press. At the heart of the press is the printing plate, which can be reached by scrambling between iron supports around the press.

When the press is running, it generates a deafening clatter and rumble as the rollers turn and the paper is printed. The press seems very alarming to outsiders. Paper flicks into the works large stack at one end of the machine. At the other end, printed sheets drop neatly onto a plinth. Within the machine, a floating dish of ink rises to ink the plate before that surface is slammed down onto the paper by a massive, disembodied fist. Sometimes a sheet becomes tangled in the rollers. It must be removed by the operator, who watches the machine from the controls.

* **Construction:** 54,000 gp; 63 days; 54,000 XP for the arch-mage, 540 XP for the mechanician.

The services of an arch-mage and a skilled mechanician (such as a gnome) are required to construct a press of this type. The arch-mage must know (or research) the spells *Bigby's clenched fist* (described below), *floating disc* (sometimes called *Tenser's floating disc*, after the mage who invented it) and *permanency*. The material components required are a glove stitched from finest soft leather, inlaid with steel wire; the blood of a basilisk; and 20 pounds of ambergris, which must be mixed into the iron used to build the press. A smithy and facilities for constructing the complex mechanics of the press are also needed. A wise constructor will buy Veridai Jechk's seminal book on the subject, *Darak's Machine: a critique of magical printing*, which details the steps necessary to build it.

Printing plates can be made out of wood or metal. Wooden plates are cheap and can be made by a skilled craftsman in a few hours at a total cost of only three gps. Metal plates are more expensive, but last longer than wooden ones. Finer print and more detailed illustrations are possible using metal plates. A jeweler is

required to construct metal printing plates, at a cost of 20 gp each, including materials. Each one takes three days to complete.

* **Statistics:** Size: 20'x12'. Weight: approximately 8 tons.

Output: The press has two speeds—slow and fast. At fast speed, the quality of the output is poor, and is only useable for printing posters. The press can churn out around 1,500 sheets per day at this speed. Fine quality printing, such as the pages of a book, is possible only at slow speed at a rate of 500 pages per day. These figures assume that the press runs for eight hours. If it runs for more than eight hours, there is a risk that it will overheat (see Hazards, below).

Supplies: The press mangles about one in every 25 pages. It uses one gallon of ink per 500 pages. Paper is expensive (remember how difficult it is to make): 500 sheets cost three gp. Ink is cheaper; one gallon costs only two gp.

Operators: The press requires at least two operators when it is running. One watches and operates the controls. The other feeds paper to the machine and ensures that it does not run out of ink.

Print Plate Life: A wooden printing plate lasts for 100 copies at most. Metal plates last for perhaps 2,000 copies. Each plate is 18" by 12", and weighs 20 pounds (metal) or 16 pounds (wood).

* **Functioning:** Paper is fed into the press by rollers at the front, and taken into the heart of the machine. The printing plate is suspended above the printbed by a number of large, powerful springs. The *floating disc* carries a large dish filled with ink from the barrel, which floats under the plate to spread ink onto it. Meanwhile, the paper is rolled onto the printbed below the printing plate. The dish is removed, and then a massive, disembodied fist forms above the printing plate and slams the plate down onto the paper, printing the image onto the paper. The fist fades away again, and the springs pull the plate up off the printbed. The whole print sequence is swift and violent. It lasts only a second or two from the formation of the fist to the plate being pulled up by the springs again. The paper is then moved away by the rollers, giving it time to dry, before being placed in a stack of completed sheets.

The press is powered by turning the crank handle on one side. Opinions differ about the best source of power. A few operators have tried using water power or wind power, with little success. More often, some creature of suitable strength is given the job—enslaved ogres are not uncommon. More dubious operators are not above using zombies, which are as effective but less comfortable to work with. Powerful arch-mages sometimes use a golem.

The control levers are used to change the press's operation while it is running in order to improve the print quality. Only a skilled operator who understands the machine thoroughly can run the press properly.

Speed is regulated by a complex and massive gearing system. The gears should only be changed while the machine is stopped. The color of the ink can be altered by changing the reservoir and cleaning the plate carefully. The press requires regular and careful maintenance, and must be oiled every morning before operation.

Notably, the device cannot produce magical texts or scrolls, despite repeated attempts to build a press that can do so. The final disastrous attempt at this was made by Mage Hleeid 16 years ago, with the result that his tower was burned to the ground. Sorcerers believe that a living mind is required to place magical words onto vellum and that the press is incapable of imitating this process.

* **Hazards:** Fire is the greatest hazard for the press. The press begins to run hot if it runs for more than four hours. If it runs for more than eight hours, there is a 20% cumulative chance per extra hour of operation that there will be a fire, which could spread swiftly. The ink is inflammable; if there is a fire, ignites, releasing poisonous fumes with the effects of a *cloudkill* spell. If the fire burns for more than fifteen minutes, the press itself melts, releasing the magical energies locked within it in a massive 16d6 fireball.

A second hazard comes from the printing plate itself. Clearly, the plate must be accessible to enable it to be changed. However, if the press begins operations while a person is bending over the printbed or changing the plate, he is swiftly smashed by the printing plate, suffering 4d12 points of damage.

Thirdly, there is always the risk of getting hands or clothing caught up in the gears or the rollers. A person so caught could be mangled by the iron gears or crushed by the massive rollers. Damage inflicted is up to the DM to determine. There are no guard rails or covers over the machinery to keep out prying fingers. Wise operators do not permit children anywhere near the press.

A fourth danger is the press's power source. Ogres get very unhappy spending all day turning a handle, and they need little excuse to strike out at people nearby—usually with the handle itself. Alternatively, a clever ogre might crank the press too fast, causing it to heat up faster and lose control. This is also a problem with a power source—such as a golem—which cannot easily be stopped.

There is a cumulative 10% chance per hour of operation that the control levers seize up so the press cannot be turned off. When this happens, paper and ink are no longer fed through the device, but rollers continue to turn and the printplate to stamp. As this continues, the press begins to heat up. The fist continues to smash the plate against the printbed, destroying a valuable plate. This can only be stopped by jamming the press so it won't work, by disabling the power source, or by persuading it to let go of the crank handle.

* **Staging:** There is usually at least one printing press of some design in any major town or city. Obviously, if a press catches fire or its power source gets out of control (for instance, a golem that will not stop work, or an ogre that refuses to start work), the press operator is likely to hire a group of adventurers to sort the

problem out.

Some towns and cities have more than one printing press. Professional rivalry between two presses turns into open warfare. One press owner hires the PCs to throw a monkey wrench (figuratively or literally) into his rival's works. The other might hire a party to defend his printing works.

Player characters who are opposing the local ruler might try to capture or borrow a local printing press to print their own propaganda. More subtle rebels might try to sneak into the press building to alter or replace the printing plate, so that supposedly official documents include rebel propaganda. On the other hand, the party might be hired by a ruler to rescue the press from rebels, or to destroy propaganda being printed.

* **The Effects of Printing:** The printing press is a very powerful force for change, and DMs are warned to take great care introducing them into their campaigns. Printing is a powerful tool because it quickly reproduces very large numbers of any desired document, book or poster. Ten thousand posters pinned up around an Empire spread their message far faster than could a man on a horse riding through the villages proclaiming the message. If no one can read, a printed picture communicates as effectively as a hundred words.

If a particular message is spread widely enough, it gains credibility even if it is not true. Thus, whoever controls the presses can control what people think, and therefore control what those people do. Propaganda is the key to power. This means that an intelligent ruler keeps control over the presses. He does not let any book or poster be published that suggests that his rule is oppressive or unjust, even if it is. If he fears that sort of criticism, he is likely to introduce censorship of some form. Anyone caught printing subversive material is likely to be in jail by nightfall.

A ruler may also print material of his own to bolster up his regime. No ruler can afford to spend all his time making speeches in every small village to maintain his popularity, but a handful of posters widely distributed are just as effective. Nor is there any risk of a poster raising an army and opposing the government, whereas a human orator traveling around the King's realm speaking the ruler's words might become popular enough to gain a following of his own.

There are limits to what can be said by pictures. A far-sighted ruler might therefore order that all children be taught to read. His posters can then put across more complex propaganda ideas.

As literacy spreads, so does the demand for books. As books become more common, so does learned knowledge. Suddenly, villagers learn of things beyond the scope of their own small village. They may become dissatisfied with their lot if a book tells them that in other lands the peasants sleep in feather beds, have six good meals a day, and walk on streets paved with gold. The ruler must be cautious about what he permits a press owner to publish.

Rebels swiftly realize how effective posters and leaflets can be. By spreading their own propaganda they can gain support among the common people. Without that support, their rebellion is likely to fail, and a propaganda battle can become just as bitter as any physical battle. (DMs are recommended to make rebel player-characters write out any propaganda they print, so that the DM can judge its effectiveness). There may even be physical battles to gain control of the printing presses.

The printing press has effects outside politics. Religious influence can be spread by the same techniques: a temple might have to build a press or lose its worshipers to other religions. Similarly, researchers and philosophers can publish books describing their research, assuming that their discoveries or theories are not censored for conflicting with official dogma. As more people are exposed to such theories and discoveries, they may in turn begin their own research or lines of thought. Intellectual thought increases and blossoms once ideas can be spread more widely. In particular, magical research is likely to advance, once theoretical and practical texts on magic are widely available (referring, that is, to books about magic, rather than magical tomes). A wizard will find it far easier to build up a suitable library for magical research, and new discoveries and technologies—like that of the printing press—spread faster. Finally, the DM must not forget that all manner of skills can be increased through greater knowledge. Even the poorest blacksmith can improve his trade if he buys a book written by an expert.

The power of the press can be limited through such factors as censorship or shortages of paper or ink, but whatever limitations are put on them, the press will always be mightier than the sword.

Bigby's Clenched Fist: This eighth-level spell forms a huge, disembodied fist that can punch with considerable force. Although created as an offensive spell, Darak adapted it to run the press. Range: 5′ per level of caster. Duration: 1 round per level, unless made permanent. Effect: 4d12 damage, and victim is stunned for the next four rounds. In the AD&D® game, saves are treated as a *crushing blow*.

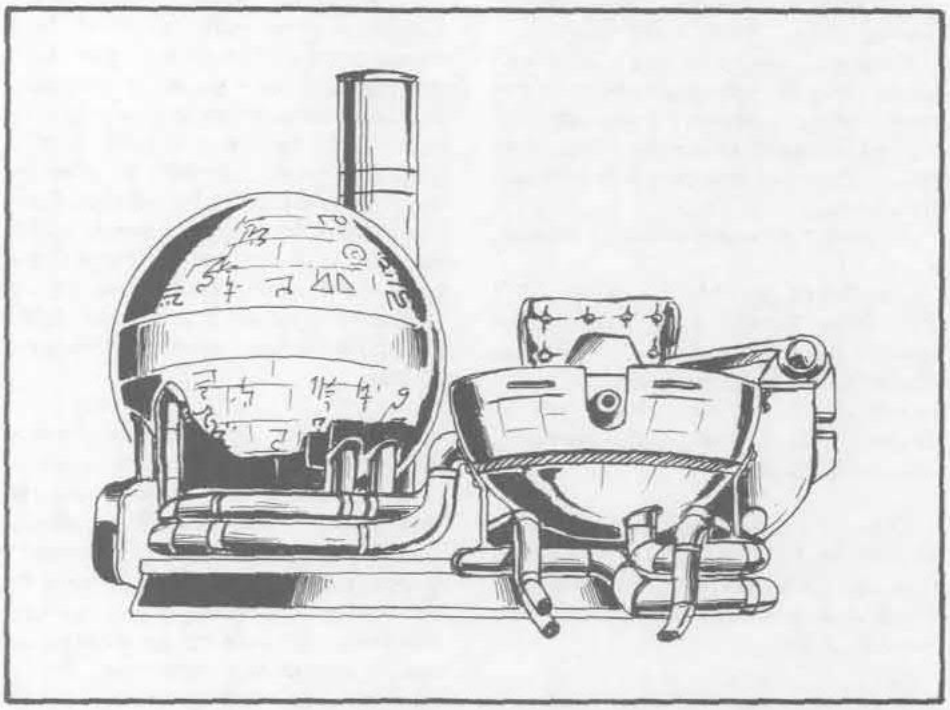
Power sources:

Ogres: AC 6; HD 4 + 1; MV 9″; AT 1; D 1d10 (crank handle counts as a club); AL CE.

Zombies: AC 8; HD 2; MV 6″; AT 1; D 1d8; AL N.

*** Janet and Peter Vialls
Huntingdon, U.K.

Death Engine



* **Definition:** A steam-driven machine which hurls large quantities of projectiles over a wide area.

* **History:** One of the most inventive thugs of all time was that noted assassin, Turgan Jethlarh, better known as the Eel. The Eel, who swore an oath to slay only chaotic and evil creatures, was an excellent alchemist, poet, scholar, and a patron of the arts, as well as "the finest friend or most fearsome enemy a man could have." The Eel's tiny fellowship, each an expert in a different field, put fear into the hearts of his rivals for many years.

Eventually, his rivals decided to eliminate the Eel. Since he was too cunning to be caught by stealth, the thugs decided on a less subtle method; an open assault against the Eel's fortress. The thugs, using what they thought was a secret entrance, discovered that the Eel was prepared for them and had constructed a secret weapon. The few hired swords that escaped told the most horrific tales, of a bellowing beast that shot bolts of steel—like a manticore and dragon combined, but much worse.

Spending a fortune on mercenaries, the thugs tried again the following day. The Eel had fled, but his weapon, the Death Engine, was too large to move quickly. They captured it, intending to use it against him, but when they investigated the weapon, they released the fire elementals within it and were slain.

The whereabouts of the original engine is a mystery, but several variants, built by the lunatic mage Oskar Wyrdsson, are still intact. These engines shoot mud and ooze, and are meant, as are most of Oskar's devices, to humiliate his foes.

The Eel has retired from thuggery; he lives, old but still deadly, on a large estate. Oskar wanders the universe in a flying fortress; it is thought that he is an Immortal, although what Sphere would elevate him to that status is a mystery.

* **Description:** The Death Engine is a large, polished brass sphere eight feet in diameter, engraved with runes and glyphs. It is set on a huge platform, connected by pipes to a machine that holds the projectiles and shoots them through a long hollow tube. The machine's operator sits in a chair, which is protected by a large hemispherical shield, with eye slits that allow the Engine to be aimed. Cases of bolts (or mud and ooze pumps) line its sides. A long pipe shoots excess steam high into the air, giving rise to comes the Machine's nickname, *Dragon's Egg*. The machine makes a highly unpleasant hissing sound when activated, and gives off an ear-piercing whistle when fired.

* **Construction:** 137,500 gp (plus labor); 79 days. The Engine requires two brass spheres. One is a four-foot diameter inner sphere which contains apparatus to hold in place four Braziers of Fire Elemental Summoning (cost 6,000 gp for the inner sphere; 37 days construction time; cost 25,000 gp per Brazier). The other is an eight-foot diameter outer sphere, which holds water that is poured into the inner sphere to create steam, and which must be built around the inner sphere after its completion (cost 14,000 gp; 21 days construction time). Once the two spheres are completed, they must be enchanted (12,500 gp cost, 20 days). The firing tube, storage platform, and steam pumps cost 5,000 gp, and require seven days of construction. These devices are extremely complex and require an expert artificer to design and build.

* **Statistics:** Size: 8-foot diameter sphere, on a 14-foot diameter platform. Weight: 6,000 lbs.

Range: Short Range (160'); Medium Rnage (320'); Long Range (480'). Armament holds enough ammunition for 25 rounds of fire.

Damage (Eel's version): Either (1) strikes all targets in a 480' long by 60' wide triangle, doing 6d6 damage at short range, 4d6 damage at medium range, and 2d6 damage at long range, (must roll "to hit" against all targets, if the target is missed they take half damage), or (2) against a single target, doing 12d6 damage at short range, 9d6 damage at medium range, and 6d6 damage at long range

with a successful "to hit" roll (doing half damage if the "to hit" roll misses).

Damage (Oskar's version): Covers all targets in a 30′ wide radius in mud and ooze, *slowing* all targets if a successful "to hit" roll is made. Otherwise, there is no effect. The mud and ooze is smelly and humiliating.

Its inventors' statistics are as follows:

The Eel (thug) (AC −3; Move 120′; TH 12; hp 68; #AT 1; DM By weapon type (+2); SA *sword +5*, all chaotics struck by the blade must save vs. magic or all of their magic items will be drained; AL N (but highly vengeful); ML 11; XP 6,500)

Oskar Wyrdsson (AC 3; Move 120′; MU 36; hp 108; #AT 1; DM By weapon type; *staff of elemental control, ring of memory, ring of truth, pouch of security*; AL C; ML 10; XP 12,000.

* **Functioning:** The Death Engine is quite heavy, and must be pulled into position by a train of carthorses—or by slaves, for masters cruel enough to engage in that foul practice. It requires a full turn to be activated and requires a magic-user to trigger the *summoning*. Then a lever on the side of the control chair releases the water which is housed in the outer sphere and allows it to pour into the inner sphere, generating large quantities of steam. The operator's seat is big enough for two men; if one is killed, the other will quickly take his place. The operator uses foot pedals positioned at the bottom of the chair, moves the ammunition into the firing chamber; steam is released that shoots the projectiles with deadly force. Excess steam is blown through a steampipe. Two men, stationed behind the chair, pull it from side-to-side while the engine is firing to produce its area of effect attack. If these men are not present, the triangle area of effect is reduced to a five-foot width. The pedals must be pushed twice per second with a constant rhythm, alternating between left and right pedals, or the Engine will malfunction.

* **Operating Costs:** The Death Engine was originally meant to be a steam-powered crossbow; the Eel's designs did not work as planned, requiring a much larger machine to be constructed. Special steel bolts must be forged for its use, specially designed for this machine. Enough bolts for one firing cost 200 gp. In addition, there is a 20% cumulative chance per 25 firings that a brazier will require replacement, a a cost of 25,000 gp for the brazier, and 10,000 gp for dismantling and reassembling the Engine.

* **Hazards:** The major hazard involved in using fire elementals to create steam is the possibility of the elemental breaking free. Both spheres are laborously covered in the necessary glyphs, runes, and symbols to keep the elementals inside the inner sphere. However, they may escape through the steam pipe during operation. Precise timing is required by the operator while manipulating the Death Engine; if he fails to press the foot pedals exactly twice in each second, the Elementals escape through the pipes and come out through the firing mechanism. These fire elementals are 12 Hit Dice each (1d8 + 1 hit points per die) and do not enjoy being drenched in water. The rhythm required for the pedalling to work is a well-guarded secret.

* **Staging:** Characters learn that the great mage Oskar Wyrdsson is offering to share some of his secrets with a group of enterprising adventurers who complete seven tasks for him. One of these tasks is to recover one of his Death Engines, which is now located in a huge Red Dragon's lair. The Red Dragon's lair is underground, accessible on through a series of caverns filled with slime and other gross encounters. When the player characters get there, they find Oskar playing poker with a red dragon; he had lent it to the dragon to take care of some greedy adventurers, and needed someone to cart it home for him. (The DM can design six other similar tasks if the players still want to take Oskar up on his wager (which will provide worthless "secrets" such as the color of the princess Daphne's underwear, etc.)

In another scenario, a prince who hears rumors of rebellion hires the PCs to contact the Eel and acquire his Death Engine. In truth, the prince is trying to usurp his father's throne. The Eel, knowing this, will not give over the Engine, but believing that the PCs are the evil prince's agents, lead them into a trapped cavern complex and seal them inside (or into any place filled with traps that suits the DM's purposes).

*** Scott Bennie
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Disteron's Dismal Disposal

* **Definition:** A garbage disposal for magic-users and alchemists.

* **History:** The powerful mage Disteron of Kerendas became the head of the alchemists' guild in Thyatis many years ago. In his hidden laboratory, he built a device that he used to destroy leftover ingredients, particularly those that might be harmful. As Guildmaster, he communicated with Guildmasters from other cities. In so doing, he sold several disposals to friends, and a few to enemies. Some of these disposals are still in use today, although Disteron himself was killed when he failed to keep his own disposal in good working order as explained below.

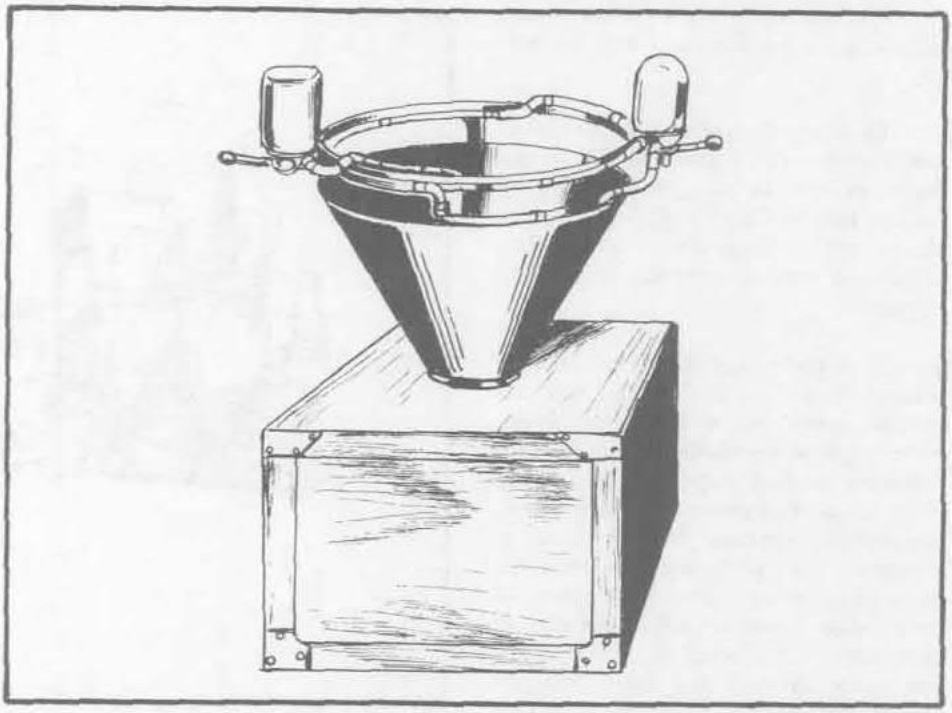
* **Description:** The dismal disposal is a wooden box lined with stone, three feet on a side, with a conical metal chute leading into its top. This chute, made of a dull black metal, is two feet across at the top and one foot in diameter at its base. The lip of the chute is painted a bright red where it attaches to the box.

An inch above the top of the chute is a silvery ring of metal, also two feet across. The ring has small holes along its underside, and a complicated network of pipes and levers leads into it from two glass receptacles. Peering down the chute reveals nothing but inky darkness.

A small gold plaque is affixed to one side of the box. In the lyrical language of the wood elves, it reads "DANGER! To prevent electrical shock, do not remove cover! No user servicable parts inside. Refer servicing of this device to Disteron of Kerendas."

* **Construction:** 8,000 gp (plus labor, creatures, and potions), and two weeks of time.

Typically, a disposal is made of oak, iron, silver, stone, and glass. The box itself contains three separate creatures: a black pudding, a gray ooze, and a green slime, all resting peacefully in the stone inner lining. The hardest part of creating a disposal is catching these three monsters. As a rule, young ones are easier to work with.



* **Functioning:** One of the two receptacles above the box contains *oil of slipperiness*; the other contains a quantity of Disteron's *potion of gooey warding*, his own invention. Adjusting the levers allows minute quantities of both liquids to drip onto the chute, thus greasing it to a slippery state.

Anything dropped onto the chute then slides down into the box, where the hungry monsters within devour whatever is given them.

Naturally, the *oil of slipperiness* and the *potion of gooey warding* would eventually run out; Disteron was more than happy to sell these two "secret formulas" to disposal owners at grossly inflated prices. The *potion of gooey warding* served two purposes at once. First, it kept the three creatures to a manageable size by interfering with their growth hormones; second, it kept them sedated enough that they were not tempted to crawl out of the box. Since both potions ran out regularly, Disteron was assured of steady customers.

* **Hazards:** Running out of *oil of slipperiness* can cause things to stick to the chute. One alchemist who improperly disposed of a troll was sorely disappointed to find a fully regenerated creature in his laboratory the next day.

Running out of *potion of gooey warding* will allow the three creatures within the disposal to run amok. The creatures are smaller than normal, with only half the regular number of hit dice, but they can still be deadly if let loose in the lab.

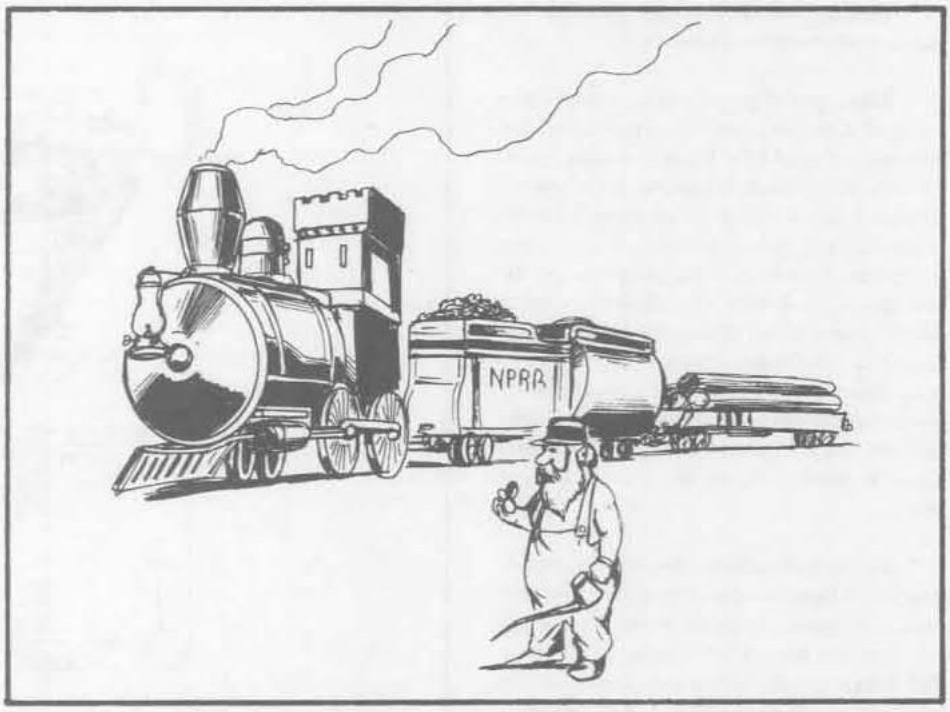
Since Disteron's death from just such a circumstance, it is much harder to find *potions of gooey warding* to keep the disposal in working order. In the cases of those disposals still in use, the owners luckily stockpiled a supply before Disteron died.

*** Gary L. Thomas
Boise, ID

The Train of the Dwarven Thane

* **Definition:** An Old-West steam train using a red dragon to heat the boiler.

* **History:** Centuries ago, the dwarven kingdom of Stonepeak fell to the forces of evil. In time, a fellowship of heroes led by Dorian Helmcleaver, a renowned dwarven champion, reclaimed their conquered mines and caverns.



In one of their final battles, the heroes struggled against a demon. Only the group's magic-user was free from physical engagement with the demon, but his wizardry proved impotent against the foe's magic resistance. In desperation, the young mage brought forth a scroll of conjuration he had long held with the hope of someday learning the powerful incantation upon it. Despite the danger of trying to read a scroll of such intricacy, the mage intoned the fluid, tongue-twisting spell upon the vellum. As he did, he concentrated upon a certain gargantuan purple worm whose nearby lair had been discovered earlier. With luck, perhaps the worm could be conjured forth to do battle with the demon.

Engaged with the demon, the rest fought on until finally the tide of battle turned. The demon began to weaken; no longer dominating the melee, his offensive attacks ceased until he was merely trying to fend off the concerted blows of his opponents. At last, a blow from Dorian shattered the enemy, and in a flash of feral light, the demon vanished to its plane of utter darkness.

For a moment, the victors congratulated themselves. Then they realized something was amiss—for behind them, entranced in speaking the words of power bound in the scroll, their magic-user continued to read on...

September, 1879. Somewhere in the Cascade range of the American Northwest, a Northern Pacific steam locomotive hauling a load of rails and ties to an isolated construction site neared a tunnel as bad weather closed in. Thunder showers were commonplace that time of year, but out of nowhere, an electrical storm of frightening intensity appeared. All about the train, blue streaks of lightning crackled and struck, and so it was with some relief that the engineer brought the train to a stop just inside the tunnel, intending to wait out the storm.

Both he and the rest of the crew had gathered at the rear of the train to observe the strangely intense storm when an earthquake hit. At the first shake, the terrified crew ran for their lives. The train, meanwhile, jolted by the tremor, started rolling in the opposite direction. As one of the men looked back, he swore it was swallowed up by an eerie blue fog.

The crew stumbled back into a nearby town, shaken but unhurt, and another locomotive ferried an alternate crew back to the site of the storm. But no trace of the train was ever found, and its strange disappearance became a legendary tale...

The magic-user finished reading and groggily returned to reality as his friends attended him. Then a rumbling began, and the chamber started to shake.

As they got to their feet, weapons set for whatever new enemy was coming upon them, a wall next to the heroes exploded in a shower of limestone as some sort of—*thing*—hissed and slithered out into the chamber, finally coming to a stop against a stone outcropping.

* **Description:** The device resembled some sort of great worm. Yet it was not a living creature, but a strange serpentine construct of iron and brass made in four sections. The first was a tubular water tank mounted, like the other sections, atop a wheeled carriage. An oil lamp was mounted at the fore of this section just ahead of a diamond-shaped chimney, still smoking. The section's rear held an open cabin with many valves and levers, and a fireplace filled with glowing coals. Beneath, steam hissed from a rod assembly attached to metal wheels.

The second section held extra water in a large U-shaped metal tank, while its open portion was filled with coal (a rarity in those parts) for use as fuel. Upon the outer siding were strange runes, their

meaning unknown (N.P.R.R.). The next section was a platform of oak and iron upon which were stacked odd metal bars, quite long and heavy. It was noticed that these bars were cast in such a way that they made a good match-up to the construct's notched wheels. Behind the bars lay some squared logs, their purpose not immediately clear.

The last section was a cabin of sorts in which were found living quarters—bunks, a stove, and a desk holding many indecipherable documents.

While the device was fascinating, there were yet other battles left to fight, and so the mysterious snake-construct was left where it lay.

* **Construction:** Months passed, and Stonepeak had been cleansed. With the return of his brother dwarves, Dorian was made Thane, and a golden era of rule began in his ancestral homeland. Finally, attention was once again directed to the abandoned train. Dwarven metalsmiths, intrigued with the odd device, guessed its function after some careful thought and deliberation. As such a machine could prove useful, the dwarves chose to experiment with the materials at hand—and to their surprise, the thing actually worked! For a time, it was used to ferry workers back and forth as a simple transportation device. Later, to increase its operating range, logs were purchased and new bars were cast at a cost of 1,000 gp per mile of track, and 10 days of construction time.

As the coal supply dwindled, the dwarves found themselves faced with the problem of fueling the boiler. Wood, while found in abundance in nearby forests, did not burn hot enough, and the dwarves seemed stymied. But, proud of their train, they determined to solve the problem. Finally, Dorian had an answer. While on an adventure, he fought and subdued a small red dragon. Returning with the beast to Stonepeak, the dragon was placed in the second section where the coal had been. By breathing into the boiler, the water was turned into steam and the train ran. Now the dwarves had a semi-dependable fire source, and things returned to normal. One beneficial side effect was realized that hadn't been foreseen: since the dragon's breath gave off little or no smoke, the train would no longer pose problems even in poorly ventilated areas. Tracks were soon laid throughout Stonepeak.

For years, the train ran dependably and was the dwarves' pride and joy. But then, as all good things must, this boon to transportation came to an end. The dragon got too big to ride in the tender, and ended its days heating a furnace in the Thane's palace. Another suitable dragon could not be found either in Dorian's generation or those following, and so the train was left in its storage house, carefully tended to and polished by the dutiful dwarves, who dream of getting another dragon and making the train run again...

* **Statistics:** Size: 90 feet total; each section, save for the locomotive, is 20 feet long. Width: 10'. Weight: 180,000 lbs. Water capacity: 1,000 gallons in boiler; 2,000 gallons in tender. Fuel use: 50 gallons/mile. Fuel is also required to feed the dragon, whose capacity to heat water is directly proportional to how much it is fed:

1 cow—1,000 gallons
10 sheep—750 gallons
1 horse—900 gallons
1 hobo—100 gallons

Speed: 20 miles per hour maximum/10 miles per hour cruising.

* **Functioning:** As noted, the dragon's breath heats the boiler water. An engineer is required to operate the train, however, and he occupies the cabin along with the dragon's head and neck. Removable sidings are available for the flat car, which can be used for making a pen containing snacks for the dragon. Otherwise, it is used to haul cargo.

Four bunks are located at the front of the caboose, while to its rear is a desk and a pot-bellied stove. Up to 10 humans or 20 dwarves can fit in the available space.

A door opens to the rear, leading to a railing and stair, where passengers may board or offload.

* **Hazards:** The most common hazard is the dragon catching a cold. The damp, drafty caverns of the dwarves are not to the dragon's liking, and there is 10% cumulative chance per week of use that the poor creature will get a cold. If this happens, there is a 20% chance each hour of operation that the dragon will sneeze, duplicating the effects of an 8d6 *fireball,* affecting all within the general area (including the unfortunate engineer...).

The greatest danger lies with the dwarves' lack of practical understanding of steam locomotives and boilers. Should the water level in the locomotive get too low (01% chance each week), the top of the boiler will crack, resulting in a tremendous explosion delivering 20d6 damage (half if a save vs. Dragon Breath is made) to all aboard—and certainly killing the dragon in the process.

The dwarves were simply lucky in avoiding these pitfalls up to the time when the train ceased to be used.

* **Staging:** A small red dragon has recently been spotted in the nearby hills. The present Thane hires the adventurers to capture the beast and return it to Stonepeak.

The dwarves have acquired a new small red dragon and their railroad is once more in operation. Tracks in an old tunnel lead to a pair of huge iron doors sealed since Dorian's time. No one knows where the tunnel leads—except that it heads down deep. The PCs are hired to head a mapping expedition into the area.

*** Vince Garcia,
with thanks to Dean Zook
Fresno, CA

The Dreadnought

* **Definition:** A large, powerful land vehicle used for warfare and revenge.

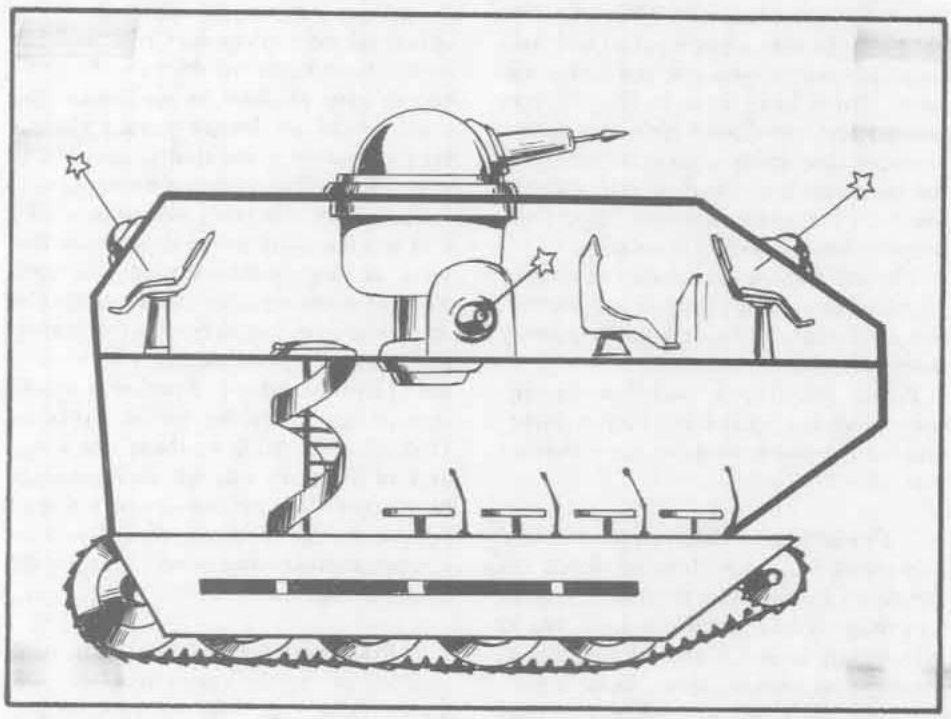
* **History:** Prinzan the Sly didn't earn his nickname by acting in any sort of respectable manner. Rather, he was a lying, conniving, power-hungry glory seeker. It was this nature of his that got him into trouble.

Prinzan was a native of Veluna (in the *World of Greyhawk*™ setting). Early in his career of magic, Prinzan entered into an angreement with the cambion Iuz. Once Prinzan came to power in Veluna he used his influence and magic to sow discord between the allied forces of Veluna and the Kingdom of Furyondy. This was done so that Iuz's own forces would not have to contend with such powerful opponents who normally acted in concert. If the distrust grew deep enough to cause warfare between the two nations, then so much the better.

For many months, Prinzan's machinations indeed began to separate the powerful allies. But in his greed for power he moved too quickly and alienated his supporters. Out of grace with the ruling powers of Veluna, Prinzan was exiled from the country.

However, Prinzan the Sly is not a man who gives up easily. He took up residence on the Wild Coast, where no man's past mattered. He continued scheming, now working only for himself, and began to build an army and a fortune. Prinzan still has the army, but the fortune has been spent—spent on the terrible Dreadnought, the vehicle of his revenge. He is determined to bring the countries of Veluna and Furyondy to their knees, without the help of Iuz.

* **Description:** The Dreadnought is a huge, armored, tread-wheeled vehicle of destruction. It is the size of several wagons, but is almost entirely metal. It rumbles and clanks and clatters as it rolls across the ground. On the top of the Dreadnought is a large turret from which extends a six-foot-long tube. There are also four smaller turrets on the Dreadnought, one on each of the four sides.



* **Construction:** 326,000 gp; 9 months, 13 days; 276,000 XP. The Dreadnought required a lot of work to be constructed. The figures above represent only the cost of the magics that were involved.

Before the Dreadnought could be enchanted, it first had to be built. This was done by a crew of hired gnomes who were paid 50,000 gp for finding the raw materials and putting the pieces together. Once the physical construction was completed, Prinzan began the magical enchantments. First, he created four *wands of magic missiles* that operate from a central power source (see Functioning, below). He also created various sorts of ammunition for use in the large turret of the vehicle. The spells needed for this machine are:

magic missile, for the four small turrets
teleport, for the teleporter, inside
invisible stalkers bound with *geas*
antimagic shell
continual light
transmute mud to rock on the two tracks
wizard eye for the helmets
fire ball and *cloudkill* for the launcher.

Prinzan's spells should be treated as if cast at fifteenth level to calculate damage effects, range and duration variations where appropriate.

* **Statistics:** Size: 35′ long, 15′ wide, 22′ high from exterior top to ground, 15′ high on the inside. Weight: Three tons. Speed: 120′ per round. Capacity: crew of seven, six passengers, and ten *invisible stalkers.*

* **Functioning:** The interior of the Dreadnought is actually very spacious. There are six different posts from which the crew operates. Prinzan sits toward the front of the vehicle and it is from here that he controls some of the magical capabilities of the Dreadnought, coordinates the attacks of the rest of the crew, and navigates (i.e shouts directions to the whipmaster—see below). The powers which Prinzan controls from this station are as follows:

An *anti-magic shell* may be created

around the vehicle. There are five charges of this effect and they are normally used as a last resort, for the *shell* also negates the Dreadnought's attack capability.

Continual light may be shone from any part of the Dreadnought. There are 20 charges of this power.

The power to *transmute mud to rock* has been cast permanently on the treads of the vehicle to ensure that poor terrain does not hinder it too badly.

Each crewman has control over a *wizard eye* spell. These are used by the crew to sight targets, and by Prinzan to coordinate the movements of the entire vehicle.

At four of the other stations, the crew members control *wands of magic missiles.* Each wand draws its energy from a central power source in the middle of the Dreadnought. This source has a 500-charge maximum capacity. Each charge allows the *wands of magic missiles* to fire a volley of four missiles. Since there is a turret on each side of the Dreadnought, it can effectively fire in any direction.

The remaining station is at the top of the Dreadnought. From here a crewman controls a rod capable of shooting *fire balls* or *cloudkills,* each using up one charge. The rod has 20 charges.

Each of these posts is within the upper half of the Dreadnought. The floor of this level is seven feet above the bottom floor inside the vehicle. It may be accessed via a spiral staircase in the middle of the lower floor. The lower floor is where the heavy manual labor takes place. As the Dreadnought was nearing completion, Prinzan was in so much of a hurry to put his invention to use that he decided not to take the time to figure out a way to propel it magically. Instead, he summoned a contingent of *invisible stalkers* that he chained to various benches. The Dreadnought now moves because of their galley-slave-like chore of turning huge cranks which in turn, by means of complicated mechanisms of gnomish design, cause the treads to rotate. A djinni friend of Prinzan's also hangs around down here, but he just makes sure that the *invisible stalkers* turn the cranks. The djinni's name is Whipmaster.

The Dreadnought is entered through a small teleportation chamber that is also on the bottom floor. This chamber allows instantaneous transport from Prinzan's tower on the Wild Coast to the interior of the Dreadnought. Also because of this teleportation chamber, there is no need for Prinzan to maintain supply lines and he can immediately replace tired crewmen.

* **Hazards:** The Dreadnought has one very major flaw which limits the effectiveness of its use in combat. Deservedly, the weakness is a result of Prinzan's failure to provide a means of magical propulsion. Even under the able eye of the djinni, Whipmaster, there is no way the *invisible stalkers* can keep perfect time with their counterparts on the other side of the machine. The cranks on one side inevitably turn quicker than those of the other, resulting in one tread moving faster than the other. Whipmaster tries to compensate for this by having the slower side speed up, but when they begin to crank faster than the others, Whipmaster has the first side speed up, etc., etc., etc. Pretty soon, all of the *invisible stalkers* are exhausted and the Dreadnought doesn't move at all. One tread moving faster than the other causes non-linear movement. That is, the Dreadnought won't move in a straight line, but weaves and meanders about the battlefield.

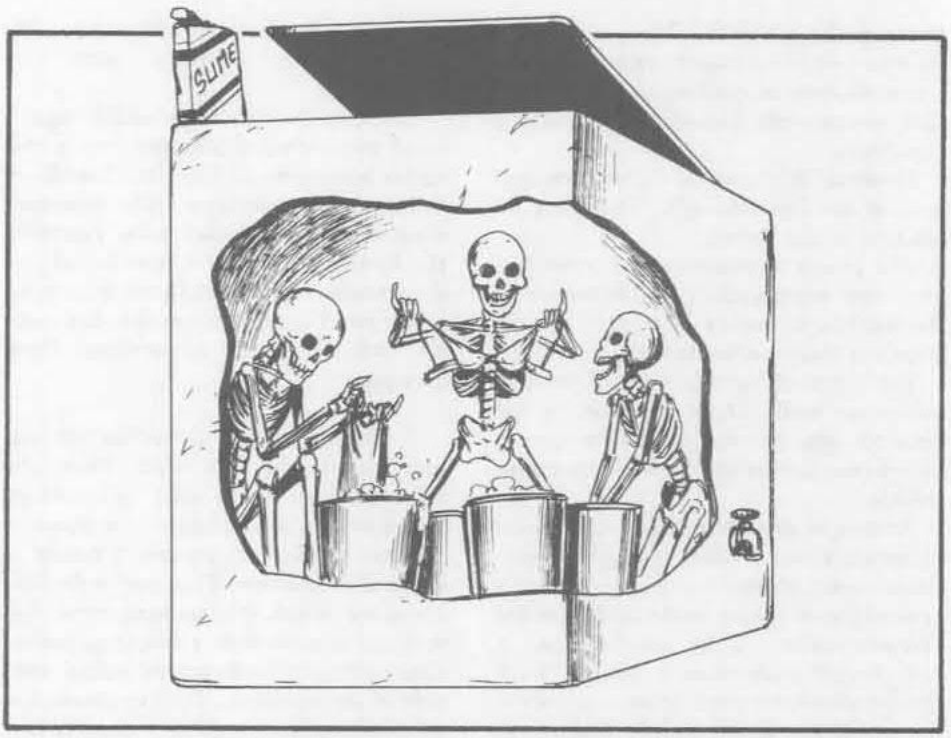
* **Staging:** If the DM's campaign is set within the WORLD OF GREYHAWK™ Setting, the DM might decide to utilize the entire background given for this invention. In that case, one obvious adventure would be for the characters to be hired by an NPC lord whose land is being threatened. The PCs are asked to stop the Dreadnought, if they can. Perhaps the PCs' own land is threatened in Veluna or the Kingdom of Furyondy. They would certainly want to defend their own land.

A similar history for this invention could be devised for any campaign world, in which case similar scenarios are feasible.

There is another way the adventures using this invention could be staged. Perhaps, for some reason, the PCs share Prinzan's sentiments, or perhaps in a particular game world Prinzan isn't really evil. In these cases, the PCs might decide to join with Prinzan. They may choose to do this on their own, or the characters might be approached and recruited by Prinzan or an agent of his. They might be given a station within the Dreadnought.

*** Stewart Wieck
Rocky Face, GA

The Economy Super-Wash Laundromagic II



* **Definition:** A combined skeleton-operated washer and "tumble-drier", with programmed settings suitable for every cleaning need from the most delicate gauze to the toughest armor.

The Laundromagic uses a range of special washing powders based on extracts from various monstrous "goos."

* **History:** The Laundromagic II is the product of many years of dedicated research and development. This started with the traditional "stone (rock)-golem-bashing-clothes-with-rocks" system and gave us the highly-efficient water-and-air-elemental clothes washer/dryer, sadly unpredictable and now obsolete.

In the absence of powerful cleaning agents, such early washers relied mostly on brute force to achieve the desired cleaning. The most important developments in recent times, however, have been in the field of low-temperature, biological washing powders, and it is these which have made the fully-automated, compact cold-water Laundromagic II possible.

* **Description:** When not in use, the Laundromagic appears to be no more than a large polished cube of white marble with a metal plate on the top and a brass faucet low down on one of the sides. The metal plate is actually a trap-door leading to the hollowed interior of the cube where the other components are stored: three animated skeletons and four buckets.

Washing Powders. These vary in color and consistency (depending on their main ingredients) and are usually supplied in small boxes.

* **Construction:** 500 gp; 10 days; 50XP. The most expensive part of the construction is making the tank from a solid block of marble or other waterproof stone. A metal tank or barrel will not do since these materials eventually succomb to the corrosive effects of the washing powders.

Animating the skeletons and instructing them is relatively straight-forward, but a difficulty arises in the choice of which skeletons to use. Most people settle for the skeletons of legitimately slain chaotic humanoids of appropriate stature. For the less scrupulous, however, human (or halfling, elf or dwarf as appropriate) skeletons are preferred since the clothes to be washed fit better. Some years ago, rumours abounded when a certain chaotic mage "retired" some of his aging servants "to the country" just before constructing himself a Laundromagic!

The costs for Washing Powders is variable. Most biological washing powders are made from one or more of the "goo-type" monsters, processed in such a way as to reduce their corrosive powers. There are three main types of powders, though several variations of each are concocted by different magic users.

Gentile is made from the spores of the yellow mold. These are collected (carefully!), stuck to strands of web from any giant spider and roasted in an oven until the strands are crisp. Then a *cure disease* spell is cast on the coated strands and they are crushed to form a pale yellow powder.

Magicleene is based on the gelatinous cube. A dead cube is cut into small pieces, petrified using a *flesh to stone* spell and ground into a powder. The powder is mixed with water, stirred and allowed to settle. The water is poured off, then the solid residue has a *stone to flesh* spell cast on it and is left to dry in the sun. The end product is a pale blue granular powder.

Glitto is made using grey ooze, ochre jelly and rust monster antennae. These are boiled together in white vinegar in a stone cauldron for a day. Then the liquid is strained off, a *neutralize poison* spell is cast over it, and it is boiled down until only small, white waxy flakes are left.

* **Statistics:** Size: 6′ × 6′ × 6′. Weight: approximately 1000 pounds. Wash time: A full suit of clothes or armor may be cleaned at one time, taking 30-45 minutes for the wash and 15-30 minutes for drying.

Washing Powder: Each wash requires approximately a quarter of a pound of powder.

* **Functioning:** The Laundromagic should be placed within easy access of a water source (pump or well), a drain or sump, and an open space such as a yard. The device operates in three stages.

1. Wash. The operator selects the appropriate skeleton by calling out its 'Wash Code': "A" for delicates, "B" for normal wash, or "C" for heavy duty). The chosen skeleton emerges from the tank; while it puts on the suit of clothes or armor to be washed, the other two use the buckets to fill the tank with water and the operator adds the appropriate washing powder. The clothed skeleton climbs back into the tank and wriggles around in the water more or less vigorously, depending on its 'Wash Code', until the clothes are clean.

2. Rinse. The two unclothed skeletons empty the tank using the faucet and refill it with fresh water. The skeleton inside wriggles around again to rinse the clothes.

3. Tumble Dry. While the other two empty the tank, the clothed skeleton climbs out, goes to a suitable open space, and tumble-dries the clothes by performing a non-stop series of energetic back-flips and somersaults. When the clothes are dry, the skeleton takes them off and folds them carefully.

Which Powder to Use?

Gentile is suitable for the most delicate of fabrics including the finest gossamer and gauze.

Magicleene is a general-purpose cleaner for fabrics and leather. It removes dirt, stains and grease (and, occasionally, dyes).

Glitto should be used only for the cleaning of metal armor, on which it produces a very high shine. It is very effective at removing rust, but it rots cloth very quickly and ruins leather, so any leather strapping on armor should be protected with a layer of grease before washing. The grease can then be removed by washing with Magicleene.

* **Hazards:** The most common hazard is operator error. Selecting skeleton "C" by mistake, for example, can subject a delicate ball gown to the "rusty plate mail" treatment and shred it to tatters. Adding the wrong powder can be equally disastrous. The skeletons themselves are simple creatures, and very unlikely to turn nasty. They are capable, however, of making mistakes, so the user of a Laundromagic can expect the occasional unrinsed wash, smashed button or flooded floor.

Washing Powder. Even when properly made, Magiccleene and Glitto will remove the skin from anyone unwary enough to come into contact with them after mixing with water. This can make an otherwise merely irritating "flood" very nasty indeed, and can result in serious injury if an insufficiently rinsed garment is worn out in the rain.

All three powders, however, can be very unpleasant if not properly prepared. If Gentille is not roasted sufficiently, the yellow mold spores can become active again after a few hours or even days—so the user should hold his breath when opening the box. If Magicleene is not dried in bright sunlight, then the flakes react with water to produce a poisonous gas. If too much rust monster antenna is included in Glitto, then plate mail can emerge looking like a rusty lace curtain.

* **Staging:** A Laundromagic is quite a common household appliance for the up-and-coming magic user or cleric. Unless interfered with, there is little to go wrong with such a device. But if, for example, a rival managed to gain control of one of the skeletons (or introduce a substitute), the owner could return to the laundry only to find that the skeleton had vanished—along with some of his most valuable (or magical) clothing. The embarrassed owner might hire the party to recover the clothes quickly (and discreetly).

An equally nasty trick to play on a Laundromatic user is to supply him or her with improperly prepared washing powder that reverts back to the original goo (or goos) as soon as water is added. Clearing a laundry of several such nasties (without wrecking it) could be a difficult task for a party.

For an unusual adventure, how about a short, fat baron who requires the skeletons of three humanoids for his personal Laundromagic? He's offering quite a reward. The only problem is that the three must match his height and build exactly.

Alternatively, the adventurers could be hired to investigate the strange disappearance of people from a town (or bodies from a graveyard) only to discover that their skeletons were being incorporated into Laundromagics.

Finally, it could be very interesting if the adventurers were to investigate the effects which the flushed away detergents were having on the flora and fauna of the city sewers....

*** Graeme Morris
Cambridge, U.K.

The Electric Cooker

* **Definition:** A safe, easy-to-use device powered by a *wand of lightning*. The cooker prepares foods to a reasonably high standard.

* **History:** Very few of these devices have been made, because according to rumour they are inherently unsafe. It was the mage Edison of Glantri, a crotchety old man despairing of the city's culinary efforts, who first hit upon the idea of using a *wand of lightning* to power his new invention, the cooker. Incidentally, Edison also invented copper-bottomed saucepans and potato peelers, and imported the first known apple strudels. His cookers became famous as novelties, until they started going wrong, and are now a part of Glantri's past—though some still exist in the city. In particular, the last cooker Edison made, the Electra 2000, was his greatest achievement and is thought to be an extraordinary device well worth finding. Cookers enjoyed a brief surge of popularity, when it became fashionable to own one, but as so many became cantankerous devices, seemingly with a will of their own, their use declined and now they are almost all gone. Only the most eccentric or old-fashioned of chefs will consider using one. Nowadays fires and spits are the norm, as they were before Edison.

* **Description:** The Electric Cooker is a device for either preparing hot foods and liquids, or cooking them in a controlled manner. It is used with other utensils, such as copper-bottomed saucepans, grilling trays and skewers, baking trays, ladles, vats, and many other typical kitchen utensils. The normal cooker has a cubic base, in which are the actual works, and on top four metal discs which are made out of one long spiral-shaped piece. Both ends go down into the base. Above this is another metal spiral positioned above a grilling tray, which in turn is held by a mounting attached to the base. In the base is a door, which opens onto a small area rather like a safe. At the back of this safe is another metal spiral, the two ends of which go to the works inside the base. The technical term for this is *oven*.

* **Construction:** 3000 GP, 22 days, 1250 XP. A large number of different skills are required to make an Electric Cooker. The six spirals of metal (copper is best) should be fashioned by a metalsmith. The base is easier to construct, but the inside works, a mass of copper wiring, and the *wand of lightning*, are best constructed by someone familiar with Edison's ways. Some of the mage's later cookers were placed on small wheels, which he called casters, thus facilitating movement. It is advisable to employ a metalsmith for the construction of the base, mountings, and tray. Most of Edison's original designs employed detachable top-pieces, which could be removed to allow cleaning. Similarly, the oven area should have a removable bottom shelf, otherwise the accumulated fats, grease, liquids and pieces of food will be very hard to clean. It should be noted that only *wands of lightning* that are themselves made of metal can be used, since connections are made to it by pieces of copper. In general, the name of the cooker is engraved on the top of the base, near the control knobs, and this is also the command word which starts things off.

* **Statistics:** Base: 2½′ wide, 3′ deep, 3′ high. The back mounting rises another 2′. Weight: varies, but averages 100 lbs. Oven: 1½′ wide, high and deep, and ridged on both sides to provide mountings which will hold trays. An oven can hold more than one tray. *Wand of lightning*: fully-charged wand provides power for about one year, allowing for one period of cooking per day.

Casters allow the device to be moved, but it should not be trundled over rough floors, since this might break a connection inside.

* **Functioning:** The cooker is powered by electricity supplied by the *shock* function of the *wand of lightning*. This use of the *wand* does not draw much current, so the number of charges in the Wand can be multiplied by three, giving the number of days of use—i.e. about a year

from a fully charged *wand*.

The oven functions when the spiral heats the air inside, thus cooking the food. Copper sticks inserted into the food help to cook it throughout; this especially applies to meats. When higher temperatures are needed, foods are placed on a tray near the top of the oven, the hottest spot inside the device.

The four rings on top of the base are used to heat copper-bottomed saucepans, frying pans, and kettles and the like, these items being placed on the rings. The grill merely heats food as a fire would. All six heaters are connected by copper cables to the distribution network, which is in turn powered by the *wand*. The distribuiton network is operated by knobs at the front of the base—hence the user can turn on or off the desired parts of the cooker, and even regulate, in a limted manner, the heat output of the spiral rings. To start the device, the command word of the *wand* is uttered, and from one to all six of the heaters are turned "on," as the user desires. Cooking can then start. The heaters are turned off by closing all six knobs to the fully "off" position. This also deactivates the cooker. It was once considered good style to use an "Unseen Servant" for manipulating the knobs, trays, vats, pans, etc. rather than use one's hands.

* **Hazards:** As has been mentioned, these Electric Cookers are not thought to be very safe. Various problems can arise, and the worst of these is total destruction of the device. If the inner connections happen to touch each other, or if the wand delivers too much electricity in too short a time, the works can spark, heat and even melt. Total destruction occurs when severe melting activates the *lightning bolt* function of the *wand*.

Other problems include the oven overheating, the spiral rings coming loose and starting fires, and so on. Also mentioned in Edison's writings are the effects of what he called "improper insulation," whereby persons touching the cooker receive a powerful shock. There is also a danger from heating the copper spirals. These are notorious for small scale overheating—anyone who touches the spirals, even if they are only warming up, receives a nasty burn.

* **Staging:** There are many kinds of situations that can involve the Electric Cooker. Apart from people who actually own one (there are thought to be a score or so in existence), there is the famous Electra 2000, a cooker of fabulous power. Stories say that this Electra 2000, the last great work of Edison, was capable of cooking food enough for a banquet of twenty. Its oven was as big as most ordinary cookers, and its grill could toast three hundred slices of bread simultaneously. It is rumoured to have such fine control in the distribution networks, that each of the ten spirals could be made to complete cooking its own particular dish at precisely the same time. Indeed, it had three distributors, and was powered by a triple-*wand* arrangement.

Adventurers may come across one of the lost cookers, and try to discover what the archaic device does. Most of these lost cookers have faults, especially of the shocking variety. Very rarely will a cooker work the very first time.

The PCs may be asked to locate and retrieve a *wand of lightning* for some cooker-owner of Glantri. Alternatively, there may be someone in the city who wants an Electric Cooker, and hires the party to find, buy, or steal one—or possibly even make one themselves, given plans and a *wand* to work with

* **Notes:** Among Edison's almost incomprehensible tomes is a plan for a "Gas Oven." The exact workings are obscure, but this mysterious device seems to run on rotting vegetation, and involves the controlled burning of gases. The notes imply that Edison actually made one of these, but it has never been found; perhaps it lies in some long-forgotten part of the city, waiting to be discovered. But this was not all that was found after Edison died. Amongst his cooker projects was one which used power supplied by an electric eel. The eel was taken out of its native water, and carefully clipped to thick copper cables. Power was thus supplied for a brief time; however, the eel seemed to die very quickly. Edison suggests in his notes that instead of connecting the eel directly into the cooker, the cooker should be wired to an arrangement of paper wetted in brine and very thin beaten metal sheets. The paper is placed between the two sheets, and two clips from the ends of the eel each go to one of the pieces of metal. Edison mentions something called the "burned toast effect" here, which happens if anyone touches the arrangement after it has been powered up by the eel. Apparently, the victim takes on the likeness of a small piece of overdone toast. However, the strange arrangement will power a small cooker for some time, from a few days to a week.

It should also be noted that the fraternity of halflings considers Edison's Electric Cooker to be a blasphemy against their religion, particularly that associated with the deities of food. Reports reaching Glantri suggest that the halflings can be very passionate in their denouncement of cookers, and there are rumors (albeit unreliable) of halfling clerics infiltrating the city in an attempt to locate these pestilential devices. Additional adventure scenarios can revolve around this concept. There could be, for example, a straight "investigation" scenario, party versus fanatical halflings; the adventurers can be secretly hired by halfling clerics to locate and destroy any cookers in Glantri; or the party is hired to protect a particularly rare or beautiful cooker.

*** Stephen Palmer
Egham, U.K.

Evem's Mirror of Enviable Image

* **Definition:** A mirror that shows the viewer an improved image.

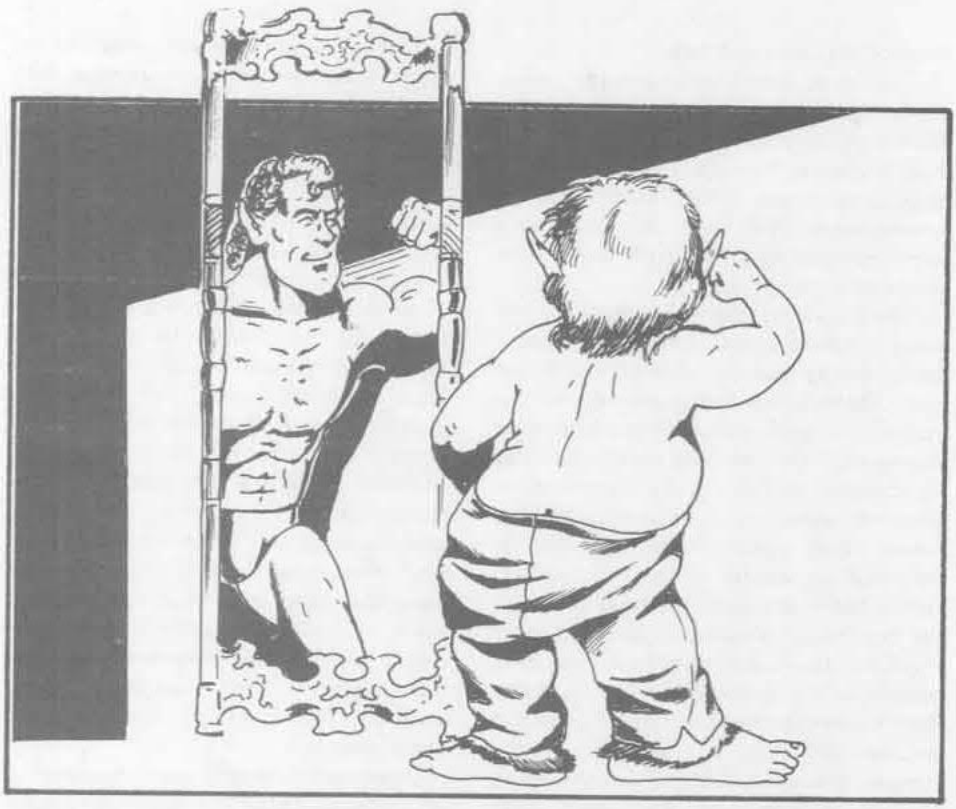
* **History:** Evem's mirror was an accidental development of Cragwig Evem, Assistant Artificer for the reputable firm Carruthers and Three-Toe. Intending to invent a *mirror of glimmering truth,* Evem's enthusiasm for making things really shiny created an entirely new type of mirror. Originally thought a disaster, Evem was demoted to pedicurist to Three-Toe. When wealthy clients liked what they saw and wished to buy the mirrors, Carruthers promoted Evem to Chief Assistant Artificer.

* **Description:** The mirrors come in many sizes, the most popular being the full length model. The mirrors are dazzling, reflecting images in sharp detail and brilliant color. The frames are intricately shaped from strips of different woods.

* **Construction:** 24,000 gp; 31 days; 4,000 XP. The enchantment requires *ESP* and *phantasmal force* spells. In addition, the mirror must be backed with three layers of purest silver. The silver must be polished with seven kinds of cloth; of each kind there must be seven, one for each color of the rainbow.

* **Statistics:** Size: 2′ wide, 6′ long. Weight: 40 pounds. Permanently enchanted.

* **Functioning:** The mirror bears a specially tailored *ESP* spell which probes up to three people at once. The spell looks for "problem spots," parts of the viewer's appearance which worry the viewer. The mirror then touches up the image with its illusionary ability. A viewer sees himself as being a bit trimmer, having a chin of slightly greater character, or having immaculately arranged hair—in short, an image which supports his vanities and eases his insecurities about his appearance. Since the illusion is cast on the silver, which is protected by glass, the illusion will not be dispelled if the mirror is touched.



* **Hazards:** If the viewing character fails his save vs. Spells, roll 1d20. If the roll is 9 or less, the mirror functions normally. On a 10 or 11, the mirror overdoes it. The viewing character appears to have become much more handsome, dashing, and charismatic than all but the most foolish or vainglorious character could ever believe. On a 12 or 13 the mirror exaggerates the very traits the viewer fears most: extra weight, grey hairs, increased wrinkles, whatever bothers the character most about his appearance. A 14 or 15 means some *other* image is projected by the mirror: how the viewer sees other characters around him, food, if the viewer is hu has captured his attention. On a 16 or 17 the mirror does not reflect the viewer at all, just as if he were invisible—or a vampire. An 18 or 19 means the viewer has tapped into the power of the mirror. For 3d6 rounds he may change the mirror image of other characters in any way he chooses. A viewer also taps into the mirror on a 20. In addition to the change image ability, the viewer may use the mirror's *ESP* spell to probe the minds of other viewers of the mirror, even if he is not normally able to use spells.

* **Staging:** Noble houses and merchant guilds favor the mirrors. If members of two opposing houses happen to be viewers of a mirror when it malfunctions, all sorts of misunderstandings can take place. If player characters are present they might be part of the misunderstanding. If not, one of the houses may hire the party to avenge itself of any slight caused by the malfunctioning mirror. An NPC might try to modify the mirrors so as to spy on other houses. The party could be hired to aid this scheme, or hired by Carruthers and Three-Toe to protect the firm's reputation by preventing the misuse of *ESP.*

*** Greg Gorden
Chicago, IL

The Extra-Dimensional Safe

* **Definition:** An extra-dimensional strongbox designed to be particularly difficult for thieves.

* **History:** Jon McSpereson was a magic-user who was extraordinarily fond of making puzzle-boxes — plain, non-magical puzzle-boxes. Generally, he just gave them away to friends and family, curious to see how long each box took to solve. He became known (perhaps rather infamously) for the intricate and devious nature of his puzzles.

Thus, it seemed almost natural when a proverbial tall, dark stranger appeared at McSpereson's door one day. With a flourish, he set a purse on the table and said, "There's fifty grand in cut stones here. It's yours with a catch. Design a safe I can't break into and you can keep the bag, old man. Build your safe well, 'cause I'll be back in a year. Then we'll see if it can keep your stones safe." With that audacious challenge, he strode out the door.

Fifty grand in untraceable gems was no small amount of money and McSpereson was determined to keep it. Finally, after several sleepless weeks, he hit upon a plan.

* **Description:** The safe appears to be a decorative block of wood, the size of a small jewelry box. There are no apparent hinges or lid. On the top of the cube there is an inlaid rainbow, the different arcs formed from different colors. Below this arc is an inlaid metal disk, half black and half white.

* **Construction:** 44,500 gp, 30 days. The extra-dimensional safe is composed of two parts—the door and the vault. The door is the wooden block described above. This is normally found in the dwelling of the owner. The vault is a 10′ × 10′ × 10′ lead box with no openings of any sort.

The door is actually a trigger device. Contained inside the wooden case are a clockwork mechanism and an *ethereal transporter*, a new magical device (for AD&D® rules, this is an *amulet of the planes*). In addition, McSpereson was required to research several special spells. The first spell was the *magical resetting trigger* (a modified version of the *contingency* spell in AD&D rules), and a permanent *blanket of mystery* (a modified *non-detection* spell for AD&D rules). The *magical resetting trigger*, a seventh-level spell, uttered a single command word whenever a certain condition was met, while the *blanket of mystery*, a fifth-level spell, allowed a single object to be hidden from all types of detection spells. The cost of producing the door is 40,000 gp.

Compartively speaking, the vault is cheap to build. The lead sheeting (1″ thick), even allowing for the welding and construction, only costs 1000 gp. Enclosing it in a permanent *wall of force* shell cost another 3000 gp. Moving it to the ethereal plane costs another 500 gp. All other materials required for the vault (paints and a *continual light* spell for the interior) are minor expenses.

* **Statistics:** The door weighs approximately 5 pounds and is 8″ × 5″ × 4″ in size. The vault is a 10′ × 10′ cube and weighs thousands of pounds, a discouragement from stealing it at all. It can contain up to 1000 cubic feet of material.

* **Functioning:** The extra-dimensional safe operates by a combination of mechanical and magical principles. The safe is opened by activating the door. The first step in doing so is to spin the black and white disk (which turns in its mounting) counter-clockwise. While this disk is spinning, every other arc of the rainbow (starting with the top one) is pressed. Its internal mechanism activated, the rainbow design rises out of the top of the box. Now those arcs that were skipped before are pressed. This sequence triggers the *magical resetting trigger* (or the permanent *contingency* spell), which utters the command word for the *ethereal transporter* (or *amulet of the planes*).

At the instant this command word is said, the owner must visualize the inside of the vault on the ethereal plane. To aid in the visualization, a particular painting is limned on one of the inside walls of the vault. Thus, the owner need only think about the painting to reach the proper location. If the owner does not visualize the desired location, he is sent to a random plane. Wherever the owner is sent, the door makes the trip with him.

In designing the extra-dimensional safe, McSpereson had as a goal the defeat of any attempts to get at the materials inside. Thus, he took precautions against the following methods.

Finding the Door: Unless a thief knows about the door and what it looks like, he will have a very hard time finding it. First, there is no reason to suspect an innocent piece of decorative wood. Secondly, the *blanket of mystery* on the door hides its magical nature, making it impossible to find by detection spells.

Lockpicking: The vault of the safe cannot be picked since it has no door. The door cannot be picked since it has no lock. The door is a puzzle, therefore lockpicking is of no use.

Cutting into the vault: The vault itself is protected by a *wall of force*. This does not have a great effect on the ethereal plane, but comes into full effect if the vault is moved elsewhere.

Ethereal and Astral visitors: The vault is made of lead, preventing access in these forms.

Commune and Contact Higher Plane: Each element of the door has been carefully consecrated to a different god or goddess (or Immortal Being). Thus, each tends to jealously guard the information. No single being knows the full operation of the door. Theoretically, the secret could be pried from those denizens of the outer planes, but each step would take careful investigation and spell-casting.

Bashing the Door: Breaking or destroying the door serves no purpose, except to make the safe unusable until it is fixed.

* **Hazards:** The obvious and most

persistent hazard of the safe is that the owner will incorrectly visualize the plane on which it is located. If this is done, the owner may find himself in a dangerous and unpleasant situation, for the door always goes to the vault (a function of the *contingency* spell). A would-be thief may find himself stranded in a very hostile environment.

The second great risk is that the owner will lose count of the number of times the door has been used. This particular amulet has a limited number of charges and if the last charge is used it will crumble to dust. If this happens while a person is inside the vault, they are stranded there unless they have some other means of escape.

* **Staging:** His work done, McSpereson waited, confident that his mysterious patron would be defeated. The true test would come at the end of the year and so McSpereson placed the gems in the vault. The year passed and the gems remained. McSpereson had won!

Now, knowing that his safe had worked, McSpereson moved his other valuable items into it. Thus, it was with surprise, horror and dismay that one day he opened the safe to find it empty — except for the body of stranger! A baffling murder and theft had been committed in the style of a classic locked-room mystery. Obviously, whomever committed this crime had a great knowledge of magic and the criminal arts.

Fearing that he will be blamed for the murder, McSpereson is reluctant to call the authorities. Instead, he makes discreet visits to some old acquaintances of his (the player characters). While he finds puzzles challenging, he has no taste for intrigue and danger. Still, someone must solve this crime before he lands in serious trouble and he asks the player characters to help.

For the case to be solved the following questions must be answered:

Who is the dead man in the vault? McSpereson swears it is not the same man who commissioned the project. Indeed, he insists that he has never set eyes on the stranger before.

Who is the stranger who commissioned the vault? Although he has no proof, McSpereson is convinced the man was a master thief. It is perfectly possible that this stranger robbed the vault and left the body.

Who robbed the vault? This may have been the stranger or it may have been another. In any case, it is likely that person was also the killer.

How was the vault robbed? McSpereson is convinced that his vault waexplain its construction and precautions to the player characters. In order to solve the mystery, they will have to show how the killer got in.

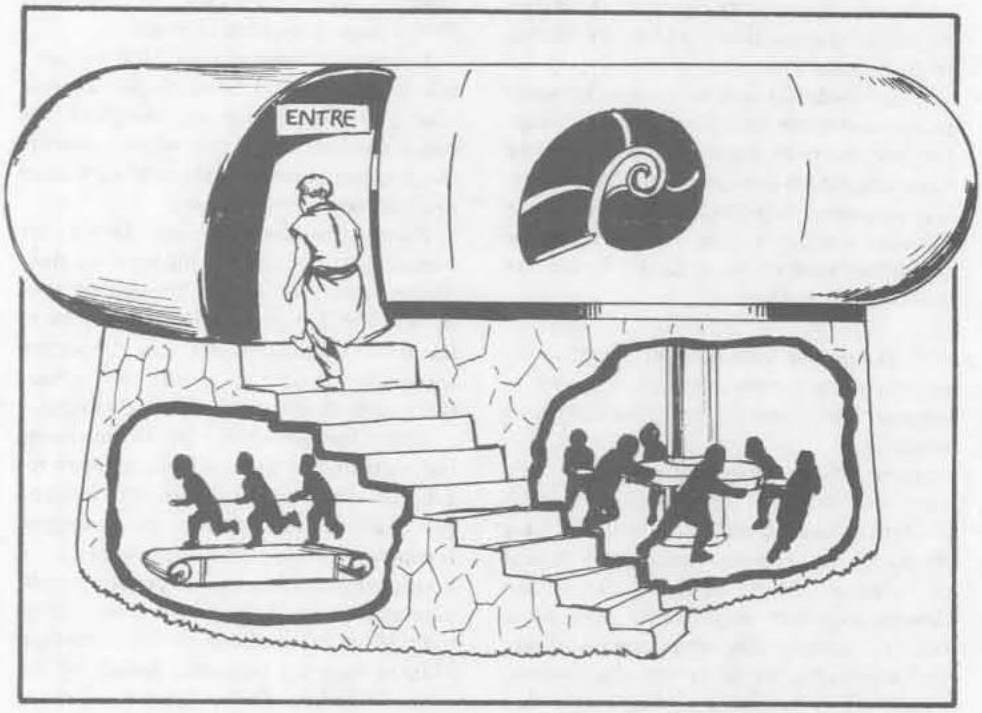
Learning the answers to these questions will not be easy. McSpereson can give a fairly good description of his employer, but has not been able to learn anymore about the man.

Examination of the corpse shows the man died from a single knife blow to the back. There is no identification on the victim. Attempts to get information from the dead man prove futile. He was struck from behind and has no idea who killed him. However, he can give a lead on McSpereson's employer, though he denies the man's involvement.

At this point, the DM must determine who is the true criminal in the case. Anyone can be selected: the mysterious employer, McSpereson himself, or some outside agency. The motive can match the criminal: a partner in crime, a cold-blooded trap, or pure greed are good choices. Do not worry how the vault was entered: that should be left to the players to figure out. Given that challenge, they will undoubtably come up with an answer the DM did not anticipate.

*** Helen Cook
Lake Geneva, WI

The Fiendish Exercise Machine of Bardolpho the Mad



* **Description:** A very large gnomish exercise machine divided into several chambers and minimally refitted as a torture device.

* **History:** The young emperor Bardolpho's interest in physical fitness was well known. The gnome king Bibbloon the Inflated sought favor by giving him this unique exercise device. Emperor Bardolpho may not have been insane before he received this gift, but he went completely around the bend afterward. Possibly a run through this machine convinced the Emperor that health, fitness, and indeed life itself were not really worth close attention. Sages can only speculate on this, since most records of the time perished in the hectic period known as Bardolpho's Gnomish Massacre. Evidence indicates that King Bibbloon was captured at that time and made the first victim of his own exercise machine, slightly refitted as a torture device.

In the centuries since, Bardolpho's machine has passed from court to court. In civilized times it is a white elephant, while in more decadent eras its use has provoked populist revolts and the toppling of bloody monarchies. Its current whereabouts are unknown.

* **Description:** A giant spiral frame of sturdy oak construction encloses several connected rooms that lead, tunnel-fashion, to the center of the spiral. Low, narrow access tunnels line both sides of the rooms almost to the center. The walls of the rooms are slotted for the chains that run from rooms to tunnels, so that gnomes in the tunnels can pull victims along through the rooms. The central room is a furnace lined with iron. A wooden staircase leads from the ground to the entrance above.

Beneath the rooms is an enclosed lower level where servants run on treadmills, turn thick windlasses, and operate other devices that power the rooms overhead. About 40 servants must run or push at full speed to keep the machine going. This creates constant roars, squeals, and thrumming noises that drown out victims' screams.

In place of a ceiling or roof, wooden catwalks with railings cross over every room. These observation platforms allow spectators to witness, in comfort, the victims' exertions below.

Beside the machine's entrance is a huge wooden emblem, its paint flaking and discolored. The emblem shows a cross-section of the shell of a chambered nautilus. The entire structure is modeled on and derives its name from the nautilus shell: it is called, of course, "The Chambered Machine."

* **Construction:** Legend places the cost of the exercise machine at over 25,000 gp, though that figure is certainly exaggerated. Much of its value came from the gold filigree work and precious gems inlaid in its support pillars. These trappings have been gouged or pried away over the centuries. Its construction time is given as two years, unusually long by human standards. But this is a typical figure for gnomish engineers, some of whom have religious taboos against blueprints.

Today, monarchs of cruel disposition could construct a Chambered Machine in three months, for perhaps 5,000 gp. The only materials needed are wood, leather, some iron for the central room, and servants to power the device.

* **Statistics:** Size: 15′ tall, 40′ diameter. Weight: three tons, plus the weight of the servants who power it and the victims. Central room: 10′ diameter, hold 800 pounds (one hour's supply) of firewood.

* **Functioning:** At the entrance, victims are shackled by the wrists to long steel chains that run into slots on either wall. Magic-users and thieves get rigid metal gauntlets that prevent gestures or lockpicking attempts.

Gnomes hold the victims' chains. They run along the access tunnels on both sides of the torture chambers, pulling their victims through the ordeals. The gnomes proceed at a constant, well-rehearsed rate, fast enough to keep the

victims off-balance. With strong or vigorous victims, the gnomes hold the chains in clamps that prevent the victim from pulling free.

The treadmills and windlasses beneath power conveyor belt mechanisms, tough leather carpets that run over freely spinning wooden rollers in endless loops. Victims move to meet their next exercise without lifting a foot. Observers use overhead walkways to move from one amusement to the next.

* **Hazards:** Victims run a strenuous course of six exercises, each given a murderous twist by Bardolpho's refitting.

First Chamber—Stretching: Every exercise session should begin with stretches. The gnomes give each victim a thorough treatment, pulling the chains for arm stretches, bringing them into descending slots to promote deep knee bends, occasionally stopping suddenly and starting again to create torso twists. This inflicts no damage, but characters should groan a lot.

Second Chamber—Push-Ups: The chain-slots descend almost to the floor, and gnomes pull victims flat on their faces. The center of the conveyor belt in this low-ceilinged room is riddled with holes. Up through the holes thrust sharp iron spikes. The victim must do a push-up to avoid them—then, when they sink back into the floor a second later, he must drop back down to avoid the spikes that plunge from above!

This up-and-down cycle repeats every two seconds, 25 times, as a windlass mechanism raises and lowers two enormous spiked plates in the ceiling and floor. In game terms, the character must succeed in a Strength ability check to avoid hitting the spikes (1d6 damage).

Third Chamber—Jumping Jacks: The victims are pulled back onto their feet in this room, just in time to jump over an onrushing five-foot sword blade, sliding along in a wall slot at knee height above the ground. Jumping the blade calls for a Dexterity ability check. Failure means the blade bites for 1d6 damage, then swings back on a hinge to continue past the character. Beyond it are more blades—one for each Dexterity check the DM wants characters to make.

Because of their chains, victims can't fall to the ground beneath the blades. The gnomes run up on ramps in the tunnels beside this room, while a gearing mechanism rotates a belt of blades in an endless loop beneath them.

Fourth Chamber—Sit-Ups: Down the victims go once more, this time on their backs. The belt and the low ceiling both have holes for protruding spikes, as in the second chamber. But now the victim must do sit-ups to evade the spikes (Strength check to avoid 1d6 damage).

Fifth Chamber—Pull-Ups: In this room the victims see their gnome captors for the first time. The gnomes, still holding the chains, rush up onto the overhead walkway in this room, lifting each victim by a clamp mechanism on polished rails. The gnomes pull the suspended victims over holes in the floor of this chamber. Flames leap up beneath, fueled by the central furnace. Each victim must make a Strength check to pull himself high enough over the flames to avoid burns (1d6 damage).

Sixth Chamber—Running in Place: At last the chains are released—just in time for the victim to run frantically on a fast-moving conveyor belt, two feet away from the mouth of the central furnace. Here the room has narrowed to about five feet across, and the access tunnels and chain slots end. The victim has no company except the four-foot lengths of chain dangling from his wrists. Staying in place for 30 seconds, out of the furnace, requires a successful Constitution check. After that, either the next victim in line has been flung into the room, and both go into the furnace together, or the gnomes stop the belt abruptly, making the victim fall, and start it again to toss him into the fire.

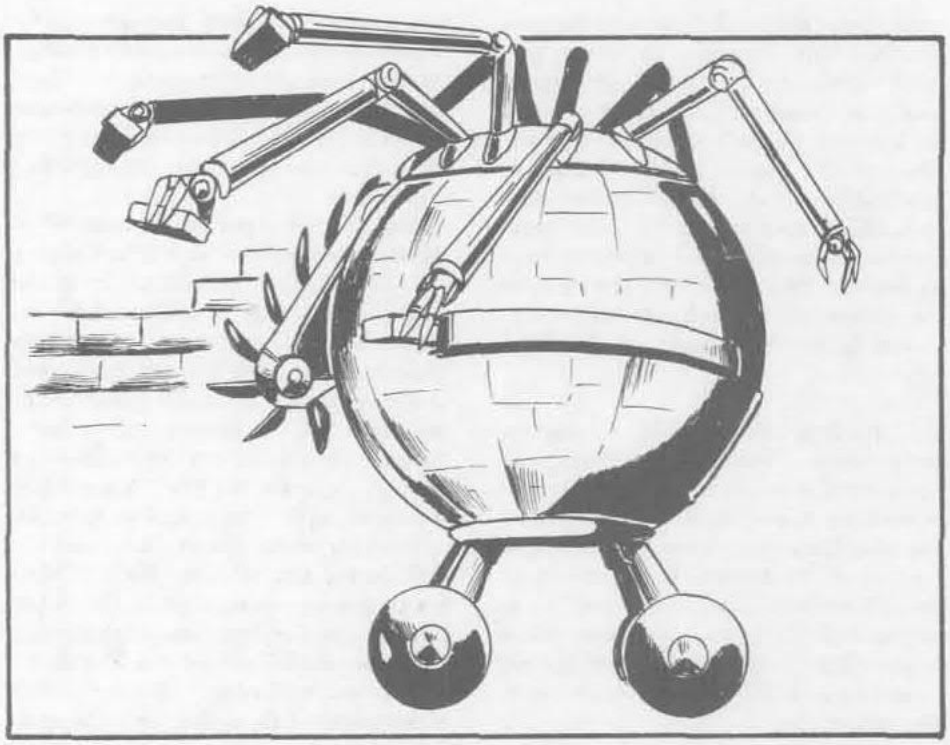
But don't panic. The fire is a cool alcohol blaze, a thin sheet of flame to provide incentive for the victim to exercise. (Psychological torture is the worst kind.) The victim plunges through the flame without harm and lands sloppily in a vat of water, where he is hauled out under guard. If he came through without harm, he might be sent through again!

These hazards are part of the Chambered Machine's function. Unintended hazards of operation include snapping conveyor belts (with victims thrown sky-high, gnomes clinging to chains close behind); aged support beams that break, injuring the servants who power the thing; and exposed gear mechanisms in the access tunnels. These have been known to grab up and mangle unwary gnomes.

* **Staging:** Since nobody knows where the Chambered Machine is now, it can turn up in any convenient dungeon, castle, or aerie as the DM wishes. It lends atmosphere to any stuffy torture chamber. A villain who traps the player characters could put them through a workout. The machine's deadliness can be adjusted to the party by multiplying the standard 1d6 damage times one third of the average party level. If the DM plays up the device's silly nature and throws exercise at the players quickly, it works as comic relief—and gives the PCs a reason to hate the bad guy.

The DM should remember that this is a torture device, as close to escape-proof as Bardolpho could make it. Ordinary escape attempts must fail, or else every prisoner would get away. Only remarkably creative efforts should succeed. Also, PCs shouldn't die here. This is an offbeat episode in any adventure, but an awfully undignified way for a hero to perish. The DM can assume that the machine's current owner just wants to "soften up" his prisoners for questioning or further amusement. He stops the machine and releases wounded characters before they go to that great exerciser in the sky.

*** Allen Varney
Austin, TX



* **Definition:** An automated tunnel-digging, bricklaying maze builder.

* **History:** Always on the forefront of technology, the gnomes of Highforge are responsible for the creation of this bizarre and often unpredictable machine. Years past, when the gnomes and dwarves of Highforge first began their full-scale mining of the precious metals of the Black Peak Mountains, a number of the city's wealthier citizens developed a fear that the city treasury was no longer fit to securely store their wealth. This fear was fueled by a number of unaccountable robberies which had taken place around the city of Highforge at that time. Local merchants and moneylenders were most often the targets of these larcenies. No clues were ever discovered in any of the thieveries. It was, locals believed, only a brief matter of time before the dilapidated city treasury would fall victim to these offenses.

Compelled by their miserly fears, many of Highforge's affluent citizens began hiring the services of local engineers and stonemasons (there were three, to be exact). Worried greed enflamed a bidding war for these services, driving the cost of building personal vaults, trapped treasuries, and secret safes to a ridiculous peak. Wealthy merchants and nobles placed bids for increasingly elaborate treasuries in an attempt to lure the dwarven builders to their personal projects. It is in this environment that Fleabottom's Brick Mac was introduced.

Acting on the timeliness of these fear-inspiring crimes, Flavion Fleabottom, a toymaker of local repute and a sage of minor note, began making plans for an automated maze-building machine. After toying with the idea for a brief while, Fleabottom put together a miniature model of the Brick Mac and demonstrated it before a host of potential clients. The result was nothing short of moneymaking.

Within a day, Fleabottom had contracts to build 12 Brick Macs; within a week, construction on the full-scale machines had begun. Two months after construction began, however, the culprit of the recent rash of robberies was apprehended. Life returned to normal in Highforge—save for one exception. There now existed 12 nearly completed, purchased, and utterly purposeless Brick Macs.

A number of locals weasled out of their contracts, leaving Fleabottom to sell the items outside the area. Other purchasers, however, tried to find local uses for the machines. Due to their "eccentric" nature, however, even these machines eventually made their way out of Highforge, being lost or sold to unwitting parties outside the area. To date, only one Brick Mac remains in the city of Highforge: the prototype model which is now a part of Flavion Fleabottom's toy collection in the Royal Collection of Historical Goods.

* **Description:** Fleabottom's Brick Mac resembles a hamburger, or possibly a truncated spider on wheels. The oblate sphere of the machine is ringed at the top by a disk which has eight highly articulated metal arms protruding from it. Each arm has a cylindrical hand with four L-shaped metal fingers. Surrounding the equator of this squat sphere is a circular tray which ends at the front of the Brick Mac. Two rectangular ports mark the beginning and end of the tray.

At the front of the Brick Mac are two claw-scooped wheels which protrude from the inside of the oblate sphere. This portion of the machine resembles a large paddlewheel—the only differences being that the paddles are sharp scoops and that the paddlewheels move up and down independently of each other. At the base of the Brick Mac is a second circular dish. Four metal supports protrude from this circle, each of which ends in a large rubber wheel. There is a small, square hatch at the back of the Brick Mac; this port, however, is usually locked from the outside.

* **Construction:** One Brick Mac costs 10,000 gp and takes three months to build. Basically a steam-driven vehicle, each Brick Mac contains one cap-

tured fire elemental. The enchantment holding this creature in place is a combination of a *summon fire elemental* spell and a magical circle for restraining the creature. A spell of *permanency* is also cast on the magic circle, essentially binding the fire elemental for all eternity (or until the spell is broken). Other spells may be added to the enchantment, such as *haste* or *slow*, which vary the speed of the vehicle. These can be controlled via a switch in the back hatch of the Brick Mac.

* **Statistics:** Size: 6′ tall, 5′ long and wide. Arms: 8 four-foot long arms, with three circular joints for articulation: one at the base, one in the middle, and one at the end. Hands: each has four L-shaped fingers, 5″ in length. Brick trough: 3′ deep, 6′ wide. Wheels: 1′ tall by 6″ wide, supported on 1 ½′ long legs. Claw wheels: 2 ½′ in diameter. Speed: 90′ per round on soil, 180′ per round on stone. Elemental:??

Fire Elemental: AC 2; HD 8; #AT 1; D 1-8; MV 360′(120′); SA F8; ML 9; AL N

* **Functioning:** The Brick Mac is essentially a steam-driven vehicle. The wheels, digging scoops, and arms are all operated by steam, which is created by a captured fire elemental. In this state, the fire elemental is allowed to exude its extreme degrees of heat. Water for this steam-drive is extracted from the dirt which is drawn into the Brick Mac via its claw-scoops. Using a system of chains and gears, the arms, wheels, and claws of the Brick Mac are driven continuously—a sidelight of the Brick Mac which has contributed to its eccentricity.

This heat is used not only to create a "pot-boiling" effect for driving the Brick Mac. It is also used to superheat the scooped dirt, which is in turn molded into bricks. As each claw scoop brings a new scoop of dirt into the Brick Mac, another brick is expelled from each of the side ports. The articulated hands of the Brick Mac scoop the bricks from the muddy trough (mud is used for cement) and place them along the sides of the tunnel created by the machine's passage. As the claws continue to dig, the Brick Mac moves slowly forward. Dirt is used for bricks, water is drawn from the earth, and the tunnels are subsequently created.

The digging apparatus consists of two steam-driven claw wheels. Each claw is also a scoop; three pounds of dirt can be held in each scoop. Both claw wheels are able to move up and down, and operate independently of each other. Each wheel is also able to dig from side to side within an angle of 15 degrees, creating a passage roughly seven feet wide—just enough room for the Brick Mac to pass through and line the tunnel with bricks.

Each leg on the Mac is able to turn in a 360 degree arc, allowing for 90 degree turns at a moment's notice. The device operates at varying speeds, depending upon the make-up of the soil. The speeds given under *Statistics* can be altered accordingly with a *slow* or *haste* spell. Movement is thus enhanced as delineated by each spell.

* **Hazards:** "Eccentric" is a word which often pops up in relation to Fleabottom's Brick Mac. This is due to the number of hazards which are a result of operating the Brick Mac. The device radiates a tremendous amount of heat; it is uncomfortable to stand nearby, and can inflict 1-4 points of burn damage on anyone who touches it for longer than it takes to turn it off. It works mindlessly, and will run over anything in its way.

In addition, the Brick Mac is capable of running continuously—a problem which was best exemplified in the dwarven mines of Highforge. The foreman of the mines, Rig Bindle, purchased one of the Brick Macs for use as a mining implement. No alterations were made in the machine; it was simply set in motion and allowed to run its course. Planting the Brick Mac at the foot of Bel Dalen (a mountain in the Black Peak range), Rig turned the button which started the Brick Mac and stepped back to watch it run. The machine shuddered briefly, and began digging its way through the mountain. The extreme heat emanating from the Brick Mac made it impossible to follow the machine, so Rig and his men sat upon the surface until the tunnel walls had cooled enough to allow them to follow. Once inside the "mines," the men were never again seen. To this day, neither the men nor the machine have been found. The Mines of Bel Dalen are recognized as the most formidable maze network in the range. Local sages believe the Brick Mac is still functional, and that as a result the Mines of Bel Dalen have no end.

* **Staging:** Not all of the Brick Macs were as enduring as the one responsible for the Bel Dalen Mines. Often, it was possible for an owner to stop the machine before it laid waste to the countryside by undermining the region. In other instances, the Brick Mac may have run into obstacles which it could not circumvent. Likewise, cave-ins and other natural disasters may have led to the break down of the machinery. The party may, for example, find the Brick Mac at the end of a maze network. In this case, the machine will most likely be broken open, and the fire elemental escaped. All that will remain, then, is the husk of the machine.

In cases where the owners of the Brick Macs were able to stop the machines, the party may locate a dusty, slightly rusted Brick Mac as part of the inventory of a local magic or curio shop, or forgotten in someone's cellar workroom.

*** Robin Jenkins
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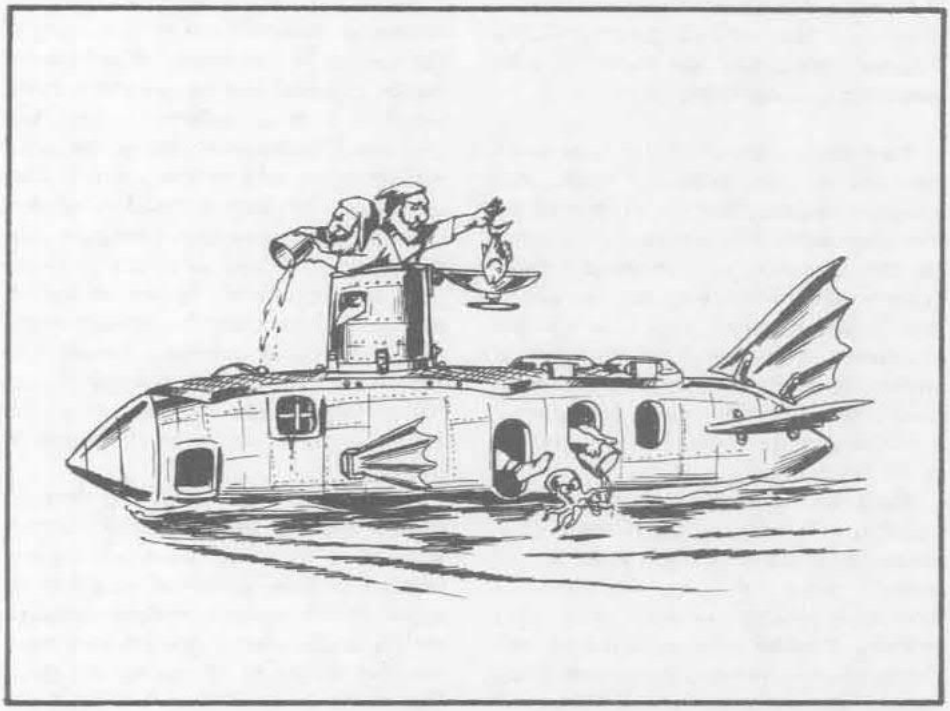
* **Definition:** Golem-powered vehicle for underwater travel.

* **History:** The gnomish submersible was originally refered to in an ancient fantasy tale as "Orchana's Fabulous Machine." The vehicle described therein was a fantastic device that worked by means of unknown and unknowable magics. The tale was heard by the gnome Winchesmira of New Mistraven (Old Mistraven was blown up ten years previously).

Winchesmira constructed the Fabulous Submersible, but had to cut a few corners to make it work with the magics available. He was aided by a number of powerful wizards, who assisted only after Winchesmira promised never to try to help those wizards in any of their future research.

Winchesmira sought originally to mass-produce these devices, with an eye towards creating an undersea gnomish kingdom. However, after creating his prototype, Winchesmira found he had exhausted the mages willing to work with him. At that time, the city of New Mistraven blew up, suffering the same fate as its predecessor when magical experiments went awry. Winchesmira disappeared in the cataclysm, and the city was replaced by New New Mistraven. It is believed that a series of hidden workshops lies beneath the ruins of the old city—workshops said to house the hulls of two dozen Fabulous Submersibles, plus a large quantity of the necessary magic items and inanimate (it is hoped) stone golems.



* **Description:** The Gnomish Submersible is a long cylindrical vehicle, tapered at both ends, with fins along the rear sections. Two huge poles are attached to the lower portion of the craft at right angles to the cylinder, and jut ten feet out from each side. A small command center juts from the top of the cylinder. (This was the first piece of the submersible constructed, and Winchesmira carted it around the countryside as a visual aid to con the wizards into helping him — hence it is also called a "conning tower"). The body of the craft is pierced with a number of hatches, doorways, and windows. Since the gnomish science of waterproofing was an inexact art at the time, these open directly into the heart of the craft (allowing water to freely pass within as well — more on that later). The gnomish submersible is slate grey on the top and dark brown on the bottom. This makes for easy location if it is lost. If necessary to hide from pursuers, the craft may be turned upside down.

* **Construction:** 400,000 gp, not including the price of animating the Golems (130,000 gp Each). Time: 10 months — 3 months if the ancient cache at New Mistraven is found.

Creating *reduced, held, charmed,* gargoyles: Place the unconscious gargoyles into a pool of mercury and salt water. Add two *potions of water breathing* for every gargoyle, along with one *potion of diminuation* for each gargoyle and the crushed remains of one scroll inscribed with the *charm monster* spell. Add the remains of a *ring of wishes* dissolved in acid. Bring to a boil, stirring often. Strike with a lightning bolt of no less than 12 dice in strength. Make the wish "I wish these gargoyles to be charmed and held until I need them." Speak the command word to activate and deactivate them. There is a 10% chance each use that all gargoyles in the same group will break their charm and attack. Garnish with parsley. Serve hot. — From "The Gnome's Book of Cooking and Magic Item Creation," New New Mistraven, appearing in paperback soon.

* **Statistics:** Size: 20 feet in diameter, 50 feet in length. "Conning" tower rises 12 feet above the main body. With golem propulsion units deployed, the structure is 40 feet across and 40 feet high.

* **Functioning:** The original Fabulous Submersible, called in myth and legend Orchana's Wondrous Device, was said to be able to travel from the surface of the ocean to its greatest depths and be able to travel hundreds of miles beneath

the ocean. Winchesmira was unable to duplicate the magics powering this fabulous craft, and has made do with available magical technology.

Engines. Instead of the unknown engines of the fabulous craft, the gnomish submersible is supported by two huge poles, which in turn are carried on the shoulders of four stone golems (clay tended to dissolve, iron to rust) in the same manner that wheels are attached to a carriage. This arrangement makes the craft very heavy, so it does not move through the water, but rather travels across the ocean floor. Movement is 20′ per round.

Back-up systems. There are a number of features on the bottom of the ocean (mud-pools, chasms, giant octopi) which tend to slow down a bottom-traveling vehicle. For that reason, Winchesmira maintained two dozen *charmed*, *reduced*, permanently *held* aquatic gargoyles on board. When the main team of golems became mired, the seaborne gargoyles were released to pull the craft out of the predicament, or to transport craft and golems separately across the obstacle. The gargoyles are stored in the rear compartment of the submersible, where the mystic engines were kept on the original craft.

Steering. Winchesmira sought to retain the original design concept of steering by means of large metal flaps suspended from the ship in the water. The gnome, however, accomplished this by hanging these steering surfaces near the golem-porters, and attaching them by light chains to the "con". The pilot pulled the chains, which caused the "control surfaces" to bash the golems in strategic locations, and cause them to turn the craft.

Distance detection. When underwater, surroundings and distances are detected with a variant of *Marianita's Relentless Spy*, detailed elsewhere in this book. In this case, the metal dish is attached to a *charmed* dolphin, who circles the ship either beneath the ocean or on the surface, giving the gnomes within an idea of what can be found around them.

Surfacing. Stone golems, as noted before, are rather heavy, so that rising to the surface is a problem. Winchesmira solved this problem by placing a small wand by each golem. When the command word is given, the wands cast a *wall of ice* at each of the golems. The creatures are coated in a thick blanket of ice and rise to the surface, taking the ship with them. The *walls* melt in four hours (less in hot climes, longer in colder regions). To activate the golems more rapidly for quick descents, the ship has *automatic oil devices* that coat the golems with oil and set them on fire, melting the ice. This procedure takes 10 rounds to complete.

Breathing. With all the oil devices, control planes, windows, and weapon systems in the ship, there are a great number of holes in its hull which let in water. Winchesmira solved this problem with a magical spell that bestows *water breathing* ability to all within the ship. This ability is lost if the individuals leave the ship, or the ship is destroyed. Those within the ship may talk and converse normally, but all objects and magic are treated as if submerged.

Weapon systems. The actual armament found on the Gnomish Submersible is under debate, since Winchesmira tried and discarded a number of systems. Likely ones include:

* A trio of *fireball wands* mounted to the conning tower, all with the same command word.
* Two spring-driven underwater ballistas in the fore part of the ship, with a range of 12″ and damage of 3-18 points each.
* Explosive canisters made of glass balls filled with tightly bound, razor-edged watch-springs. Thrown off the back of the ship, these "depth charges" sank to the ocean floor, exploding for 3-30 points of damage in a 20-foot radius when they hit bottom. They were abandoned when it was noted the submersible was usually within the area of attack.
* Similar explosive canisters which were thrown off the back of the ship and would rise, exploding when they hit the surface. These "shallow charges" inflicted similar damage to the "depth charges." Winchesmira called them "mines", because "I invented them, they're mine." The submersible carried 10 of these. Each explosive device costs 200 gp and may only be made by gnomes. A reliable version of the devices may be constructed by a gutsy alchemist for 2000 gp.

* **Hazards:** As with any gnomish invention, the hazards involved in operating the Gnomish Submersible are legion. The *charmed* creatures may not remain that way, making reliance on them dangerous. The use of Stone Golems may result in the craft being mired at the bottom of the ocean, and the use of any of the weapon systems is at the user's own risk.

* **Staging:** Finding the Gnomish Submersible opens a new world to the PCs. It allows them to travel underwater without worrying about travel in three dimensions. All the component parts may be found in a number of caves beneath New New Mistraven, so that the PCs or other individuals may build their own.

The Gnomish Submersible could also still be in operation, crewed by the decendants of Winchesmira, providing a mysterious (and quite accidental) navigation hazard near the ports. The PCs may be brought in to defeat the "sea monster" threatening the region, only to find that the true hazard to navigation is the sub.

*** Jeff Grubb
Home for the Mentally Woozy
New New Mistraven

Honest Obie's All-Night Armor Merchant

* **Definition:** An automatic device that determines the metal content of scrap materials, and pays fair market value (more or less) for it.

* **History:** Obadiah Knackerstes fancies himself the "king of the junk merchants," a distinction only a greedy gnome like himself would strive for. Obadiah is very good at getting the better end of a bargain, so good that he has amassed a considerable fortune. But the money isn't all that important—the thrill of the haggle is what makes Obadiah's otherwise unfeeling heart race.

Obadiah Knackerstes manned the front counter of "Honest Obie's" resale shop for hours at a time, when merchants with a fraction of his wealth were leaving the "dirty work" to hirelings. "My only regret," a satisfied Obadiah remarked one day to a stock clerk after a particularly one-sided deal, "is that I can't do this 24 hours a day." The impact of those words hit Obie like a thunderbolt, and he was struck with an idea that was to change both his life and the face of junk-selling everywhere.

Obadiah stopped visiting the resale shop every day, and instead kept himself busy in a private workshop. He frequently worked 12- and 18-hour days, not healthy for a gnome of his age. Despite warnings from his few friends, he kept on, putting all his gnomish ingenuity (and no small amount of investment capital) into his work. He also began meeting with certain less-reputable members of the Magic Guild, and rumors began circulating that Knackerstes dabbled in the foulest of the magical arts to perfect his machine.

Finally, with great fanfare, Obadiah placed his "All-Night Armor Merchant" outside the front of his store. It was obviously empowered with great magics, and many of the denizens of the lower-class neighborhood where Obadiah's shop is located were too afraid of the machine to use it. Slowly, it became more popular as the neighborhood's fear subsided.

Obadiah, however, was not satisfied. The machine was wondrous, to be sure, but it had limitations. Obie went back to his workshop, in search of even more powerful magics and even more intricate gadgets. Late one night, the entire neighborhood heard a terrible rumble and unnatural howlings coming from Obadiah's workshop. There was one last small, pitiable wail, and then silence. The curious found the interior of the workshop completely empty except for deep scorch marks on all walls, the floor, and the ceiling.

Obadiah's kind-hearted niece, Ophelia, took over the business. Ophelia found some simple instructions for reloading the coin supply and removing the salvaged metal, and once a week she braves opening the lock on a small side door in order to perform the required maintenance. Only she—and no one else—has any idea how the machine works.

* **Description:** The All-Night Armor Merchant looks like a large gray box. Toward the back of the right side is a small door. It has a padlocked latch, a lock set inside the door, and radiates magic. (The whole box radiates magic, actually, but the door has an especially strong dweomer.) The sides and back also have "Honest Obie's All-Night Armor Merchant" painted on in bright-red letters.

The front has the same sign across the top, but it also has an opening in the center that is three feet square and three feet deep, and three feet above the ground. There is a small sign above the opening, reading, "Place metal here," and a larger sign in the back of the opening, reading, "Metal objects ONLY!" To the right and below the large opening is a much smaller opening (3 inches wide, 4 inches high, and 2 inches deep) with a small sign above it that reads, "Collect payment here."

* **Construction:** One month and 15,000 gp.

The heart of the Armor Merchant is a bound fire elemental that lives inside the box. It provides the heat that melts the deposited armor (see next page) into ingots; it also serves as a dandy watchdog

to discourage thieves. The operation of the scale and money counter is also essentially magical. Construction of an All-Night Armor Merchant requires the following spells: *magic mouth, shatter, wizard lock, conjure elemental, telekinesis, permanency, symbol of death,* and *wish*. The AD&D® game spells *magic mouth, shatter, permanency* and *symbol of death* should be replaced with spells appropriate to the D&D® game system if that is used.

Obadiah's notes went wherever he went that awful night in his workshop. The only way to build a duplicate of this machine would be to take apart the existing one. As will be seen, that is no easy task.

* **Statistics:** Size: 8′ high, 6′ wide, 15′ long. Weight: 8,500 pounds. Small door, rear right side: 3′ high, 1-1/2′ wide. Exterior and inside of openings: AC −2. Each face of the box has 150 structural points.

The door on the right side is protected by a padlocked latch (−10% chance to pick the lock), another lock in the door (−20% chance to pick it), and is also held by a *wizard lock* and protected by a *symbol of death*.

The beast inside the machine is a standard, garden-variety, 12 HD fire elemental. The only difference with this one is that it is extremely unhappy about its current situation. Should it ever be released, the general vicinity where that happens is likely to undergo some serious redecorating.

* **Functioning:** When any metal items are placed in the large opening, a spring activated switch in the floor of the opening turns on the machine. Five seconds after the weight stops changing (this gives the depositor time to load in items), a door slides up from below to cover the opening.

Once the front cover slides closed, the back wall of the opening slides down, allowing the elemental to inspect the merchandise. If the pile is substantially metal (leather fittings on discarded armor is acceptable—a body wearing armor is not), the elemental envelops the pile, melting the metal content within 10 seconds (the organic content is turned to ash, which is moved to a waste area).

If the elemental decides the pile does not contain enough metal (there should at least be 90% metal by weight), the back panel closes, the front panel reopens, and the *magic mouth* intones, "These items do not contain sufficient metal content to be redeemed. Please try again." If the items are not removed within ten seconds, the floor of the opening tilts up, dumping the contents out on the ground in front of the machine.

Note that the machine makes no distinction between gold and lead, silver and pig iron. All it knows is metal. It also cannot detect magic in any way; if a *sword +5* is dumped in, only the value of the weight of the metal is redeemed. These were the improvements Obadiah was working on when he suffered his unfortunate accident.

When Ophelia services the machine, she uses two keys to unlock the two locks on the side door. Using the proper keys disarms the magical protections. Beyond the door is a small opening two feet deep. Along the left wall are three slots for replenishing the coins, including a counter which tallies the number of coins paid out. Along the right wall is a chute opening for ash disposal. Ophelia simply puts a bag beneath the chute, presses a button, and the ashes are dumped into the bag.

Against the back wall is a small sliding door—when that is slid to the side, a small conveyor belt starts feeding out metal ingots. Ophelia needs only to take the ingots as they come out and load them on a cart. When she's done, closing and relocking the door reinstates the magical wards.

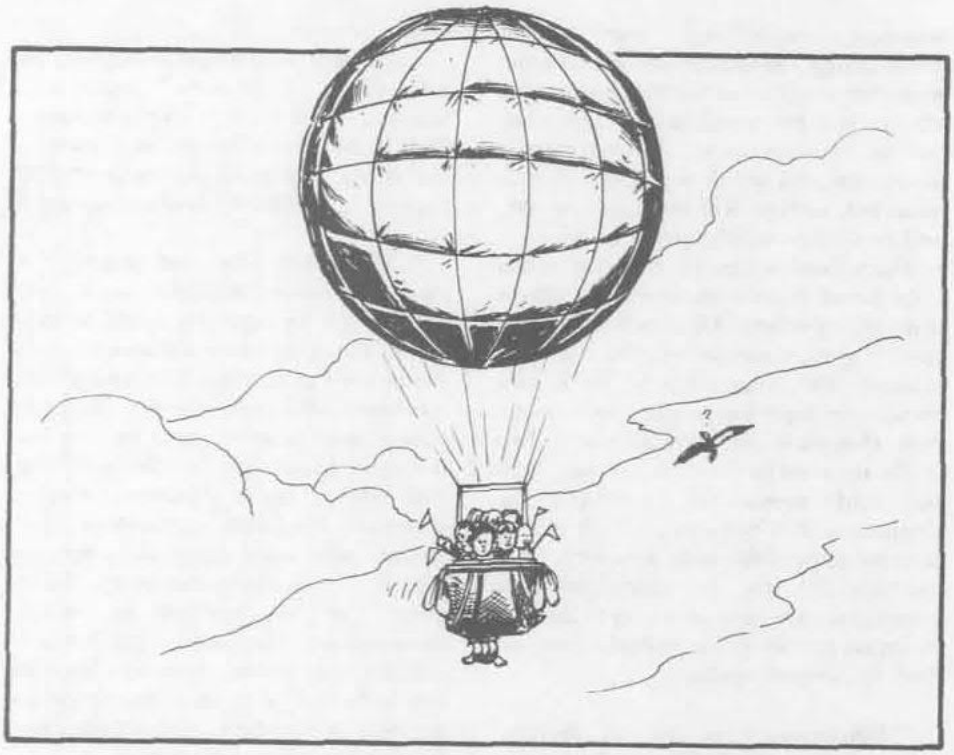
* **Hazards:** The machine actually pays a fair price as long as it is fed simply dross metal. It pays 1 gp for every 100 gp weight (about 10 lbs.) of metal. Anyone putting in items that can still be used—or, heaven forbid, magical items—will get the ripoff he or she deserves.

If a live character climbs into the machine to see what happens, the front door closes, the rear opening slides down—and the character is face-to-face with a *very* angry 12 HD fire elemental, one that hasn't gotten to kill anything in a long time. Should the elemental be killed, the machine will no longer operate.

* **Staging:** Some of the binding magic has worn off on the fire elemental inside the machine. It still can't leave, but it begins to reach out to the minds of some of the other low-life of the area, commanding them to bring it victims ("Feed me, Seymour...").

*** Scott D. Haring
Austin, Texas

The Hot Air Balloon



* **Definition:** A wood and paper balloon powered by spells and natural weather.

* **History:** The use of the hot air balloon in aviation is quite complex, but there is no doubt that it originated in the halfling community of the Duchy of Geoff, in the *WORLD OF GREYHAWK*™ campaign world. Halflings can be imaginative and clever people, and a small group, calling themselves the Daredevil Cloudleapers, first drew up designs for the invention. It seems that these pioneer halflings were often druids, since the spells they used are part of the druidic faith, and it may well be that they desired closer communion with the nature spirits of weather. However, they soon realized the advantages offered by a balloon, especially over battle grounds. They seem to have appreciated also the joy and beauty of flying. Once the halflings had refined their designs down to the best, the first large-scale model was built, a paper balloon twenty feet in diameter, which could carry a cat in its basket. After this successful test, they expanded to the four halfling-sized passenger model, and that is their current size limit.

The idea of the balloon got around, and soon human artificers were copying it, with mixed results. Not all worked, and some who tried real fires to generate hot air died a flaming death. The halfling varieties invariably used the *heat air* spell, which was a variant either of *heat metal* or *control temperature*. Humans have certainly used the hot air balloon with success, notably during periods of warfare, but it is generally accepted that halflings are the masters of this particular invention. All the human balloons were built to a larger scale because of the size differences between the two races, but never have they exceeded a four-man capacity.

The Daredevil Cloudleapers were not the only group of halfling aviators. There were rival groups such as the Cloudbusters, the Cloudhoppers, the Skymobiles and the Airfarers. These groups, each with its own insignia and color of balloon, engaged in fantastic races and even stunt-flying, in an effort to out-perform their rivals. Indeed, it was during this first explosion of talent that most halflingish aerial skills were developed. Human balloonists have not engaged in such races as far as is known, but instead use balloons mostly for military purposes.

* **Description:** A fully operational balloon is a magnificent sight, and the illustration shows a typical halflingish model. A framework of curved wooden struts and beams, all very thin, forms the main support. Inside this, tied on or fastened by clips and pins, is a paper balloon, which contains the hot air. This is usually treated with organic substances such as thinned tree sap, gelatin, gluten obtained from flour, thick sugar solution, etc. These liquids glaze the outer side of the paper, and prevent tearing. As a consequence, a halfling balloon often smells as fantastic as it looks.

The struts increase slightly in number at the very top and bottom, for increased support in these stressed areas. From the bottom-most come the wires and ropes, again as thin as possible, which support the basket. This latter item is made of raffia- or wicker-work, often crafted by female halflings. The floor, having to support the fliers, is more sturdy than the sides. Hung outside the basket are bags of sand which allow the aviators to control their elevation without resorting to a spell. A typical basket also contains such necessities as food and drink, pillows in case of crash landing, aerial maps, etc. Most halfling balloons are brightly colored, often in greens and yellows, while many human ones are blue, to provide some measure of camouflage in military operations. Halfling balloons never carry weapons, while those of other races do.

* **Construction:** 10,000 gp, 31 days, 4200 XP. Making a hot air balloon from scratch is a major undertaking, requiring not less than a month of construction time. Plenty of wood, paper, glazing fluids, wicker and rope are needed, along with all the necessary tools, metal clips and pins, and support structures (such as

wooden scaffolding) used when constructing the actual balloon. All the materials must be of the highest quality, and picked for strength and lightness: oak, for example, cannot be used since it is so dense. All woods used must be well seasoned, or they will warp during use, and could damage the paper interior.

Thick flexible paper is best, but it has been found that the quality of the glazes is more important. All glazes need to be pretty well waterproof, for obvious reasons. The rope must be light, and metal-core rope has worked well in the past, though it can be a bit heavy. Two spells are used in the construction, *resist fire* and *permanence*, resulting in permanent fire resistance. This is cast onto the paper balloon to prevent it from catching fire, for the paper glazes in particular are prone to ignition. A variation on this spell is *protection from fire*. Both are druidic spells.

* **Statistics:** Size: varies. Weight: varies. A one-man halflingish balloon is about 30 feet in diameter, and weighs a few hundred pounds. A four-man human war balloon can weigh over five hundred pounds and be 100 feet in diameter. Speed: varies according to the weather, but ten miles an hour is an average drift rate. There is little correlation between size and top speed because of the aerodynamics involved.

* **Functioning:** Hot air rises since it is less dense than cooler air. The balloon, filled with hot air, displaces an equal volume of cold air. At the start of the flight, the pilot casts a *heat air* spell, directing it into the balloon's inner volume. This normally makes the balloon rise, but if not, a second spell is cast (see spell description below). Though there is no control over direction unless magical weather control is used, the altitude can be altered by using the sandbag ballast, or further *heat air* spells. Magical control includes such spells as the clerical/druidic *control winds, control weather, weather summoning,* and the magic-user spell *gust of wind*, though this latter is not normally used since it is relatively weak.

Landing is the trickiest maneuver, and normally a "crash-land" approach is adopted, since there is little alternative. This is the time when the wooden stays and struts, important for restraining the paper interior, are most often damaged.

* **Hazards:** The vast majority of problems occur in flight. It is quite possible, for example, for a balloon to be forced down by winged denizens of the air, or even missile fire from the ground (perhaps ballista or catapult). Fire is an ever-present hazard, since the hot air inside the paper may heat the metal clips and stays, thus igniting glazing materials. The fastenings between ropes, basket, and wood must be extremely secure. The danger of fastenings coming loose can be reduced by careful construction. Landing in particular is difficult, and so far there has been no easy solution. Skill and experience are the only things the halflings have come up with to make landings safer.

A small tear or hole in the paper is not a disaster, since the hot air will escape only slowly. However, such flaws should be seen to quickly lest they become bigger rips. A major hole in the balloon paper invariably brings it crashing to earth.

* **Staging:** There are plenty of adventure opportunities involving the hot air balloon. The characters may have heard rumors of these extraordinary devices, and try to find out more. Perhaps they are employed by someone to do this. The characters may acquire a balloon of their own, in which case they are going to have to learn some aviation techniques. If there is a war going on, the balloon can be used to spy out the land, drop missiles or propaganda, fire upon the enemy, scare away ignorant tribes, or secretly enter walled cities (at night, of course). Or they could reach an inhospitable temple on the summit of a mountain, explore uncharted territory, and so on. Perhaps the adventurers have been asked to steal a balloon, a scenario which could pose many interesting problems — naturally, they would have to fly it away.

* **Notes:** *Heat air*: Level 1, range 120', duration 3 turns per level of caster. Affects a 100-foot diameter sphere of air. A small flame must be lit during the spell casting as component for the spell effect. A caster of second level or above does not need to have the spell heat his air continuously. Thus a fifth-level caster could have five half-hour heatings spaced out during a five hour flight. The spell is druidic in nature.

It seems that certain other inventions should naturally follow from the hot air balloon, but humans have not developed them, and halflings' balloon advances are kept highly secret. For example, aerial mapping skills have not transferred to human balloonists, and the parachute, a fairly simple invention, has not appeared either. Neither has any human (and presumably halfling) performed a free-fall stunt leap. Here then is another source of scenario ideas, for there is probably quite a selection of technological secrets owned by the various ballooning halfling communities which might filter through to humans. Perhaps the adventurers could be hired by human balloonists to steal halfling secrets.

*** Stephen Palmer
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Hotspur's Selecto-Staff

* **Definition:** A multi-purpose polearm with internal mechanical workings, designed to function as a staff, a missile launcher, a grappling hook launcher and a "spear."

* **History:** Hotspur Herethol was a magic-user from the realm of Wendar (see Module X11, *Saga of the Shadowlord*) who began life as a carpenter. A fellow with a practical disposition, Hotspur was extremely frustrated to discover that magic-users were limited in their range of weapon use. Upon the occasion of his first adventure in the Heldann Freeholds, Hotspur cast his only spell (*sleep*) against a band of attacking orcs. The spell had a minimal effect and the hapless medium was left to face the creatures with nought but a small walking stick. Always wry and witty, even under duress, Hotspur turned to the well-shod fighter beside him and said: "What do I do now—cane them to death?" Noting the unenviable armor class of the magic-user, the fighter replied: "Quite frankly, old chap, if I were you I'd hide behind a rock."

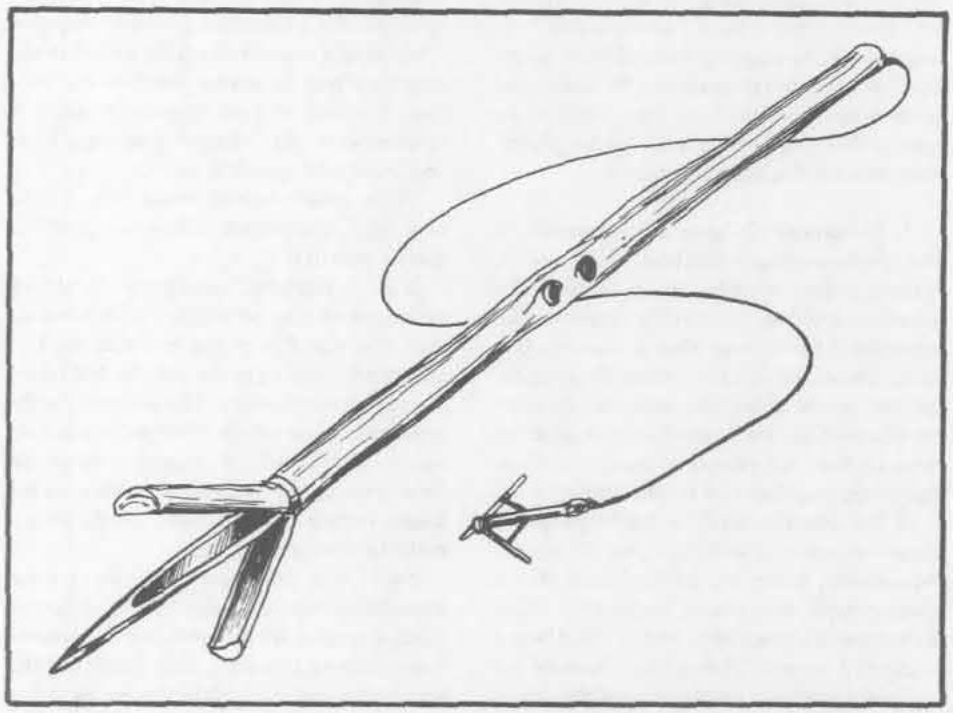
It was an unforgiving invitation for Hotspur who in the end narrowly escaped death. Actually, it was his speed of movement that saved him, and not a rock at all. And so it was that the crafty magic-user became resolved to develop the wondrous Selecto-Staff, the ultimate magic-user's all-in-one weapon system.

* **Description:** The casual observer notes that the Selecto-Staff looks like a conventional ten-foot pole. A careful examination, however, reveals two small knots in the middle of the device (triggers). At each end there are carefully crafted metal "gates" on hinges. A seasoned staff-wielder also notes that the pole is considerably heavier than most, although still perfectly balanced.

* **Construction:** Four months; 650 gp. Hotspur took three weeks just to split the pole down the middle and hollow out the required cavities. At great cost, the magic-user had to employ the services of an elven smith to fashion the sundry triggers, catches, and housings for the mechanism. Furthermore, metal springs had to be imported from the city of Freiburg (H.F.), known as the "spring capital" of the Known World. Finally, an elven weapon smith was retained to design the "fly-prong" grappling hook for the back end of the staff. Once again, Hotspur discovered that while they're agreeable fellows, elves don't come cheap. The prototype construction cost of the Selecto-Staff was a whopping 650 gold pieces. The improved second prototype costs are given below, and include the fee for a *mending* spell (explained under Hazards, next page):

Joiner's fee: 200gp
Materials: 250 gp (magical dagger not included)
Smiths' fees: 200 gp
Mending spell: 500 gp

Total: 1,150 gp



* **Statistics:** 10′ long, 4″ diameter; approximately 22 lbs (220 cn); made of hickory and metal. Internal weapons include: dagger (with *+1* option), fly-prong grappling hook, and 20 feet of very fine but very strong elven twine.

* **Functioning:** Apart from its use as a conventional staff, the device has two dagger functions and one grappling hook launcher function. The "knots" on the staff are carefully-designed triggers. Moved to the first position, the dagger switch causes the dagger to spring out like a stiletto knife, effectively providing the staff with a spear-like function. If moved to the second position, the dagger switch shoots the dagger from the device like a throwing dagger (damage range of 20 feet).

The back end "knot" switch causes the fly-prong grappling hook to fly out of the end of the staff (20-foot range). As the hook emerges from the staff, the two fly-prongs whip out to form an anchor-like configuration. Of course, the hook is attached to the staff by 20 feet of elven twine with a strength equal to 20 feet of climbing rope.

The staff is re-loaded by replacing the

dagger and grappling hook (plus twine) in the appropriate receptacles. It requires 12 strength points of force to re-load the internal springs. Because the staff may be aimed by the wielder, its user will enjoy +4 to hit with the flying dagger and the grappling hook.

* **Hazards:** Hotspur's first version of the Selecto-Staff worked quite well, although he sliced his hand quite badly when he tried to re-load the dagger. The grappling hook was also a success but alas, the magic-user accidentally triggered the switch at an inopportune moment and caused his dwarven friend, Lotho, to sustain four hit points of damage when the latter was beaned by the thing.

If the Selecto-Staff is made properly then the springs will function 75 times. Thereafter, there is a 23% chance that a spring will fail (each occasion). The springs will automatically fail after being used 100 times. The springs cannot be replaced without cutting open the staff: In this event, the device will be useless due to irreversible material fatigue. Spent Selecto-Staves have the same value as rotting furniture.

All in all, the staff was "champion" until Hotspur used it in its traditional role as a bashing instrument. Then, sadly, the staff snapped in two on the first strike. Not surprisingly, the Selecto-Staff was weaker than an ordinary staff because of the hollowed-out spaces within. Lotho the dwarf made this observation to Hotspur as the magic-user frantically searched about for his lost springs. An indignant Hotspur replied: "My dear Lotho, I am fully aware of the engineering concerns related to this project. You will aid me greatly if you will confine yourself to hacking at orcs, hewing trees and quaffing ale."

With quicker-than-usual wit, Lotho replied: "You forgot 'using my head for target practice'."

The structural integrity problem emerged as a major design weakness. In part this was due to the fact that the two lengthwise halves of the pole had to be re-joined by iron bands. The solution to the problem arose when Hotspur's teacher, Anzo, Master of the School of Material Shadows, suggested that the Wendarian sage, Bensarian of Kevar, could magically fit the staff together.

So it was that Hotspur solicited the venerable sage, and Bensarian of Kevar used a special spell of *mending* to re-unite the halves of the staff, thus restoring the structural integrity of the device to something approaching that of a normal hickory wood pole. A reasonable chap, even at the worst of times, Bensarian only charged Hotspur 500 gp for the job.

Unfortunately, Hotspur was forced to sell the Selecto-Staff to pay for its repair. At least he broke even in the end.

One year after the sale the magic-user who purchased the staff returned to Wendar, claiming that the dagger and hook only functioned 100 times each. The springs had apparently given up the ghost. Hotspur, who at the time was developing a collapsible cane, waved the irate magic-user off with a disclaimer of *caveat emptor*: "My dear fellow, if it's a warranty you're looking for, you won't find it here..."

* **Staging:** Word of the Selecto-Staff has spread far and wide, especially in the northern region of the D&D® game Known World. Hotspur Herethol filed a patent for the device in the City of Wendar through the offices of the Wizard-King, Gylharen.

However, this patent is not binding outside Wendar, so anyone may attempt to reproduce the item provided they employ a master joiner (unless this is their own vocation). If the staff is to function in all respects, then a sage must be retained to perform the magical *mending* process. The costs incurred are listed under Construction, above.

Besides the opportunity for PCs to create and use their own Selecto-Staff, other adventure possibilities exist. Characters may be asked by a wizard to recover his Staff, stolen by a thief; to locate detailed plans for the construction of a staff; or to find the fabled True Selecto-Staff, a non-existent device said to be the original inspiration for Hotspur's own creation. Of course, PCs won't find out it doesn't exist until they've spent a lot of time and energy trying to locate it.

*** Stephen R. Bourne
Islington, Ontario, Canada

House Vacuum

* **Definition:** A built-in house cleaning device powered by a captive air elemental or vortex.

* **History:** Cleo, the live-in maid at the townhouse of Don Wand, Archmage Extraordinary, was fed up with being treated like a slave for so many years. Despairing of ever escaping her condition, she eagerly and happily accepted any time-saving convenience that came her way. This was a fact not lost on the local craftsmen and merchants and so it came to pass that one day there was a knock at her door. Standing there was a little dwarf clutching a portfolio as large as himself.

"Tim Nigel Malone's my name, ma'am, and I have come with just the item you need," he cheerily said, thrusting the portfolio into her hands. "A small portion of my work files that comes with me when on interviews like this. I know what you need to solve all your work problems." With that he pulled five files out of his case and spread them on the step in front of her.

Cleo looked at the files. She did not really know what she was looking at. "I don't understand. What is a va-va—?"

"That's 'vacuum'," he said. "Let me explain. This house vacuum is a wondrous labor-saving device which picks up all the trash in your house and stores it out of the way until you can dispose of it. It's quick, it's easy, and it's affordable! We at Wonder-Vacc install complete vacuum units in your home, *completely guaranteed*! If you are not satisfied, your money will be returned with no questions asked!"

* **Description:** "The basic unit of the Wonder-Vacc is a small domed cage made of fine metal mesh about 16" in diameter. In this cage is a small air elemental (or vortex) that we provide. At the bottom of the cage is a round swivel plate with the correct protection spells to keep the beastie in. This cage is enclosed in the receiving bin, where all the trash winds up.

"In each room where you want an outlet, we install a wood or metal box. These come in all colors of paint or, if you want, we can match your wallpaper. Furthermore, we have custom molding, if you so desire. Inside the box are three different sized tubes—large, medium and small. All you have to do is pull the chain at the bottom of the box, and the tubes drop out.

"We offer two models of the Wonder-Vacc. The Basic Model is a box unit, mounted on the wall in each room. This model is inexpensive and very easy to install. We cut a hole in your ceiling to run the tubes to the processor. Of course now, you do have that box mounted on the wall of your room. A very tricky decorating problem, that is. For a cleaner look, we offer a built-in model. All the tubing is hidden behind your walls, so there are no unsightly box units to mar the look of your rooms. Naturally, installation charges are a bit more for this model."

* **Construction:** "Now ma'am, if you're interested, I have here a simple breakdown of the Basic unit costs." Tim pulled out a ready-made contract.

Wonder-Vacc Installation

Basic Wonder-Vacc Attic Unit: 1000 gp
Wall-mount Vacuum Tube Unit: 500 gp
gp/per room
or
Deluxe in-wall installation: 5000 gp
1 live motive unit: 5000 gp
One year supply of food: 500 gp
Magic-user services for:
Wizard lock 500 gp
Permanent wall of force: 5000 gp
or
Wish: 10000 gp
Installation Charges: 1000 gp

* **Statistics:** Basic attic unit: 3'x3'x 6'. One unit services a standard-sized house or 8 to 12 rooms. Wall-mounted boxes: 2' × 4' × 1'. Vacuum tubes: 6' long. Average unit weight: 500 pounds. Duration of Operation: 30 minutes per day before the elemental is exhausted. Trash bin capacity: 10 pounds of dust and garbage.

* **Functioning:** "I can see you're just a little confused," the dwarf said as Cleo peered at the brochures and contracts. "Let me show you how it works. To start the vacuum operation, uncap the right-sized tube and give it a pull. This releases a small portion of food in the attic, where your little air beastie is kept. He gets excited, the suction pulls the dirt up through the tube and comes to rest in the recepticle bin outside his cage. The cage is real fine mesh so your motive unit, as we like to call it, doesn't choke or clog up. At least once a month you should refill the food hopper, more often if you clean a lot. If you notice the suction getting weak, you should check the trash bin because it has to be emptied every now and then."

* **Hazards:** Of course, every great deal has hazards. The fine print on the contract that Cleo didn't read explains a few of these.

"The Wonder-Vacc Corporation holds itself inculpable of harm to person or property caused by the operation of the Wonder-Vacc unit. The Corporation is expressly not responsible for structural failure caused by vibrations of the Wonder-Vacc. The Corporation is not responsible for damages caused by the motive unit when it out-grows its containment vessel. The regulation of the creature's growth is the responsibility of the purchaser. The Corporation is not responsible for damages caused by the over-stimulation of the motive unit which may result in uncontrolled suction."

* **Staging:** One point the salesmen of the Wonder-Vacc Corporation often neglect to mention is that the motive unit of the Wonder-Vacc will eventually outgrow and burst from its confinement. Thus, in any town where a Wonder-Vacc salesman has had reasonable success, there are, sooner or later, a number of overgrown "motive units." Growing at the same rate, these tend to escape at about the same time, and thus there are frequent plagues of highly irritated (and powerful) air elementals (or

vortexes) in the wake of any Wonder-Vacc salesman. There will also be a number of highly irritated ex-customers of the Wonder-Vacc Corporation looking for a little revenge. PCs may be hired to deal with the escaped elementals, or to track down sales representatives of Wonder-Vacc Corporation.

Even before the beastie escapes it will be causing the homeowner problems. As the creature increases in size its suction power increases accordingly. As the creature gets larger, the draft created by it starts to suck up small objects like vases, books, and dishes. A little later the it grabs cats, small dogs, birds, coats and cloaks. Just before the creature breaks free, it is capable of sucking up anything that can fit through its tube.

Once an elemental escapes, its first action is usually to devastate the house where it was confined, both for the exercise of free movement and out of pique at its long confinement. It lingers in the area for some time afterwards, until it becomes bored and departs.

Vortex (AD&D® system): AC 0; MV 15″; HD 2+2; #AT 1; D spinning for 1-3 points per round, 5% cumulative chance per round of death; AL N.

Air Elemental, immature (D&D® system): AC 5; MV 360′; HD 3; AT 1; D 1-4; AL N; ML 8.

*** Helen Cook
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Jaggar's Transforming Gargantoid

* **Definition:** A huge man-shaped battle machine made from a gargantuan metal golem, imbued with limited shape changing: the ultimate weapon in warfare.

* **History:** Far away to the south, beyond Specularum and the Sea of Dread, lies a mysterious continent. Legends say that only gnomes and their huge frightening machines populate this part of the world, called by some the *Land of Earthshakers* (see module CM4, *Earthshaker*).

It was there that Jaggar, a Glantrian Wizard-Prince, spent part of his life in exploration of the land. During his many adventures among the gnomes, he discovered Alphatian outposts that were quite hostile to the gnomes and their machines. As an answer to the horrendous gnomish creations, the Alphatians introduced the Gargantoids, their own version of the Earthshakers.

At the end of a huge battle against gnomish steam powered earthshakers and Alphatian magical gargantoids, the gnomes were defeated and Jaggar nearly captured. As a desperate measure, the prince managed to enter a gargantoid, and dehim to take over the magical machine and escape with it. He reappeared months later in Glantri and concealed the infernal machine in a secret cave coated with lead, high in the mountains.

Jaggar hasn't used the device since then. He keeps his Gargantoid secret until such time as his dominion or the nation may need it. Jaggar has been unable to reproduce the machine, the enchantments requiring more wealth and knowledge than he presently has. So far, he only managed to repair damage done to the Gargantoid.

Since the Gargantoid's hijacking, Alphatian agents have tracked the machine and suspect it to be somewhere in Glantri. Alphatians may go to great lengths to recover their secret weapon, including a possible war against Glantri. The original function of the Gargantoids was to seek out and destroy new inventions that could threaten Alphatia's advance in magic-use or technology.

* **Description:** The invention looks like a huge red and yellow iron man. It can change its shape, altering its four limbs and head to imitate a shark's fins and snout, or an eagle's wings, tail and beak. A door not visible from more than 30 feet away opens on the gargantoid's back, allowing a crew to get inside. Small ladder rungs run from the top of the gargantoid's head down to its right heel, passing next to the door.

* **Construction:** Enchantment costs are 632,620 gp; parts and interior finishing require another 20,380 gp; labor costs 242,500 gp. The gargantoid final value totals 873,500 gp. The enchantments require one year and nine months. Many of the enchantments are done on separate items that are fitted on the gargantoid later on during assembly. Experience points gained for the creation of the gargantoid are spread among the participating wizards (633,000 XP).

The single largest item to be created is the gargantoid's body. It is a giant version of the common bronze or iron golems. Using D&D® system rules and the system described at the end of this book, the enchantment process requires a *create any monster* spell to create a normal bronze golem body. A *wish* spell is needed to enlarge the golem to a gargantuan size, and a *symbol of power* to infuse life into the creature. A *fly* and a *reverse gravity* enchantment allow the gargantoid to fly. Finally, five *shape change* enchantments (one for each limb and one for the head) allow the gargantoid to transform.

For AD&D® rules, replace *create any monster* with a *monster summoning VII*, and the *symbol of power* with a *simulacrum* spell. *Permanency* must be cast on all spells and the use of a *Manual of Golems* is mandatory.

A large number of separate pieces is then added to the gargantoid, requiring the following spells: *lightning bolt, fireball, water breathing, wizard eye, continual light, force field, wizard lock, magic missile, lore, animate object, anti-magic shell,* and *locate object*. For AD&D rules, replace the *force field* with a *wall of force*, *lore* with *legend lore*, *animate object* with *unseen servant*, and make sure all functions have a *permanency* bestowed upon them. Assume in general that all enchantments are made at 20th level of magic-use.

* **Statistics:** Size: 48′ high. Weight: 16,000 lbs. Capacity: 1,500 lbs. and six passengers. Flying alitude: 5,000′ (6,000 maximum). Max. diving depth: 600′. Cruising Range: special. Armament: a *staff of fireballs* on the right wrist, a *staff of lightning bolts* on the left wrist, a *wand of magic missiles* in the head, and two fists to pummel giant foes.

Gargantoid*: AC 0; HD 80**** (400 hp average); MV 180′ (60′) swimming or walking, 240′ (80′) flying; AT up to 4: two fists, one trample, a *magic missile* burst, a *lightning bolt*, and a *fire ball*; D 12d10 (fist or trample), 9d6 + 9 *magic missile* burst, 20d6 (*fire ball* or *lightning bolt*); Save as F36; ML 12; AL N; XP 34,000 if destroyed in combat.

* **Functioning:** The gargantoid is a living machine with two hollow areas inside its torso and head. These two rooms are used to carry passengers and the gargantoid's crew. It is a living creature, similar to a giant bronze or iron golem, capable of walking, flying or swimming. It is immune to fire, missiles and weapons causing d6 basic damage or less. For D&D game players, the gargantoid lacks any special defense due to the bronze golem's "fiery blood". For AD&D game players, it does not have the *cloud kill* attack, nor any of the iron golem's usual immunities and advantages. In both versions, it is vulnerable to non-magical weapons.

The crew enters the lower cabin in the chest through a door located on the gargantoid's back. The door is *wizard locked*. A ladder reaches a hatch on the cabin's ceiling, accessing the commander's cockpit in the gargantoid's head. The commander and his lieutenant fit in the cockpit while another four passengers remain in the lower cabin, with their equipment. If none of the passengers carries any bulky gear, an extra

passenger may squeeze in. Both cabins are lit with faint, red *continual light*.

The cockpit contains all instruments for maneuvering the gargantoid. Its eyes are fitted with a *wizard eye* enchantment to allow the commander and his lieutenant to see outside. Their two seats are mounted on independent axles that keep them in an upright position when the gargantoid moves (the gargantoid shifts to a horizontal configuration when swimming or flying, as opposed to a vertical station when walking). The outside view is transmitted directly to the commander and his lieutenant as soon as they sit down.

The gargantoid's two eyes form a thick metal panel that opens from inside. It is *wizard locked* and airtight. A man-sized being can crawl out this way if need be.

The commander sits on the left. By pressing on small gems and moving a small T-shaped lever on his seat's arm, the commander controls the gargantoid's course (forward, back, right, left, up, down, stop), and its shape (humanoid, shark, eagle). The gargantoid ignores orders to go up or down when walking unless there are stairs, or orders to go backward when flying. When ordered to swim underwater, the gargantoid triggers a *waterbreathing* effect to allow all crew and passengers on board to survive.

The commander must have intensive training, such as that provided by the Top-Ballista Squadron in the Alphatian Navy. If not, he must make an Intelligence check to perform some of the more complicated maneuvers, such as running, trampling, jumping over or crashing through obstacles, flying off, landing, hovering close to an obstacle, swimming or flying in stormy conditions, and performing any combat maneuver.

The commander loses control over the gargantoid's course when he fails this check. If running or jumping, the gargantoid falls to the ground (normal falling damage applies at the rate of 1d6 per 10'). If crashing through an obstacle, the gargantoid takes as much damage as it causes to the obstacle, unless a successful roll saves the gargantoid from damaging itself. A failed check when attempting to trample a smaller foe causes the attack to miss completely.

Failing a check during flight causes the gargantoid to fall 100'/round. To resume control, the commander must make successful Intelligence checks each round. If the construct crashes, the gargantoid takes 1d10 pts of damage per 100' fallen (or fraction thereof). The crew suffers half damage (one quarter if they save vs. Paralysis). Flying above 5,000' requires one check per round.

Failing a check when swimming causes the gargantoid to sink 50'/round. The commander regains control as described above. At a depth of 500', water pressure has a 25% per round of crushing the gargantoid, killing all passengers on board. It will collapse beyond 600'.

The commander can only cause the gargantoid to *shape change* three times a day. He must choose the right moment to switch shapes, for this may cause the gargantoid to fall to the ground or sink like a rock. The magical staves used in combat appear under the gargantoid's wings or at the shark's sides. Shape shifting takes one round and much of the gargantoid's energy (see Hazards).

The seat to the right is the lieutenant's. He is in charge of all combat and detection activities. A metal panel rotates down over the lieutenant's knees when he sits at his post. A battery of small joysticks fitted with gems controls the following equipment: *staff of lightning bolts, staff of fire balls, magic missile wand, continual light beam, anti-magic shell, force field*, one of the two fists, and a magical detector.

When the lieutenant activates one of the two staves, the gargantoid stretches the corresponding arm forward, bends its wrist down to expose the staff and shoots once at his target, for 20d6 points of damage. When the wand is activated, the gargantoid opens its mouth (or beak) and fires a burst of nine *magic missiles* for a total damage of 9d6 + 9. If fist attacks are triggered, the gargantoid punches one target in front of him, causing 12d10 points of damage for each fist. The commander controls trampling attacks. The gargantoid fights as a 35 HD creature when punching or trampling foes.

The difficulty of the lieutenant's task is to choose the right attacks at the right time and coordinate them. He can easily handle one attack per round. For multiple attacks, he must roll under his Dexterity for each. A failed check indicates a miss (disregard spell descriptions for this matter). Also, when firing a staff, the gargantoid cannot use that arm to punch an opponent.

In addition to his task, the lieutenant controls a light beam. It may be used as an attack, as per the spell description. When activated, a strong beam of *continual light* shoots forth from the gargantoid's chest. It is a permanent enchantment: a *continual darkness* will only cancel this effect for one round.

The lieutenant may activate a *forcefield* once a day only. It will cover the entire gargantoid until the lieutenant deactivates it. He may turn on or off an *anti-magic shell* that covers the gargantoid's head, however, this willtemporarily dispel the *wizard eye*, the *magic missile wand* and the magical detector (see below).

The lieutenant is also responsible for the magical detector. It is a flat crystal screen on the lieutenant's control panel. It is linked to a seeker: a small metal dish appearing on top of the gargantoid's head. During combat, the seeker may be cranked back inside its container to prevent damage. When exposed, the seeker constantly rotates, thanks to a permanent *animate object*.

The detector triggers *lore* and *locate object* spells when activated. The lieutenant asks the screen about the desired magical "invention" (as described in this book). The detector may take up to several days before it can locate the item. When the task is accomplished, the screen gives a description of the item's whereabouts, its distance, directions to get there, and a map. The detector cannot locate items encased in lead.

When the gargantoid is stationary, the

lieutenant may use the arms to pick up loads. The arms can carry up to 10,000 cn of weight each; however, this negates any use of the arms in combat.

The lower cabin in the chest contains a circular bench for the passengers. All gear is stored in containers above their heads and under the bench. All seats have straps to prevent the crew from being flung across the cabin during combat or flight. An engineer stays in this cabin as part of the crew. He checks the various gauges for excess heat in the gargantoid's core (see below).

A thick metal hatch opens on the lower cabin's floor. It is *wizard locked*. It connects to the gargantoid's heart. There, a large gem focuses the magical energy of the creature. If removed or destroyed, all magical energy aboard immediately shuts off (see Hazards). All weapons aboard have an unlimited supply of magic drawn from the heart.

* **Hazards:** This huge piece of magical machinery requires awesome amounts of energy. The Alphatian scientists had difficulties enchanting this big an item. Their best solution so far consisted in using a large gem in the gargantoid's core to contain its magical power. The magical energy is then redistributed from the gem to the gargantoid. Unfortunately, this requires the use of excessively precious stones.

A slow, regular tapping of the gargantoid's energy is possible nearly forever, but a sudden increase in energy use can cause the gargantoid to "blow its fuse." Literally, the diamond melts down and the gargantoid shuts off completely until the gem is replaced.

Meltdown may occur when a gargantoid is turned back on (after replacing a gem), or when it takes 50 points of damage within the same round, or when it is reduced to fewer than 40 hp. Meltdown may occur for each extra 10 points of damage. The gargantoid should be turned off after 24 hours of use to avoid overheating its core. If not, there is a chance of meltdown for each subsequent hour. Shape changing can also be the cause of energy overload.

Each time one of the above happens, the gem has a 50% chance of melting down, *minus* 1% per 1,000 gp of value of the gem. Chances can never be reduced to less than 5%. Whenever meltdown occurs, all magical energy aboard shuts off. If the gargantoid was moving on foot, it falls to the ground (1d6 pts of damage). If it was flying or swimming, it either crashes or sinks (see Functioning). The engineer needs 1d4 rounds to change a gem.

Meltdown automatically occurs when the gargantoid reaches 0 hit points. The lower cabin's floor then starts melting, causing 1d6 points of damage each round. Within 2d4 rounds, the entire creation melts down to a pile of bubbling metal, killing all who remained on board. All equipment is lost.

* **Operating Costs:** Aside from the inevitable gems used in the gargantoid's core, the only operating costs are the repairs of damage. This is done at the rate of 1,000 gp per point of damage, plus labor. Equipment on board does not require magical charges.

A typical crew of three men operating in the Alphatian Army costs another 1,000 gp per month. Their training requires 10 hours of duty maneuvering in each of the gargantoid's configurations, each month.

* **Staging:** Alphatian spies discovered the hidden gargantoid and drove away with it. They are on their way smash Jaggar's tower and plan to steal a collection of unique gems they need to reach their closest Alphatian ally (the Emirates of Ylaruam — see GAZ2 for details).

Horrified, Jaggar hires the PCs to stop the infernal machine. He illegally commandeers two *Dragonflies of Doom* (detailed elsewhere in this book) from the Glantrian Army to transport the PCs to the site during the night. Their mission: to break into the machine and return it to the secret cave. If they fail, they may use the two Dragonflies to destroy the gargantoid. If the PCs succeed, Jaggar will make them his gargantoid crew. If they fail and damage the dragonflies or the gargantoid, they earn his temporary enmity. A serious diplomatic incident occurs if the spies reach Ylaruam.

*** Bruce A. Heard
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Kruze's Magnificent Missile

* **Definition:** A self-propelled missile weapon employing gas spores.

* **History:** The wizard Kruze tired of the dishonesty and intrigue of Glantri society and retired to a lonely keep in the Five Shires. He devised his missile to aid local halflings against raiding orcs.

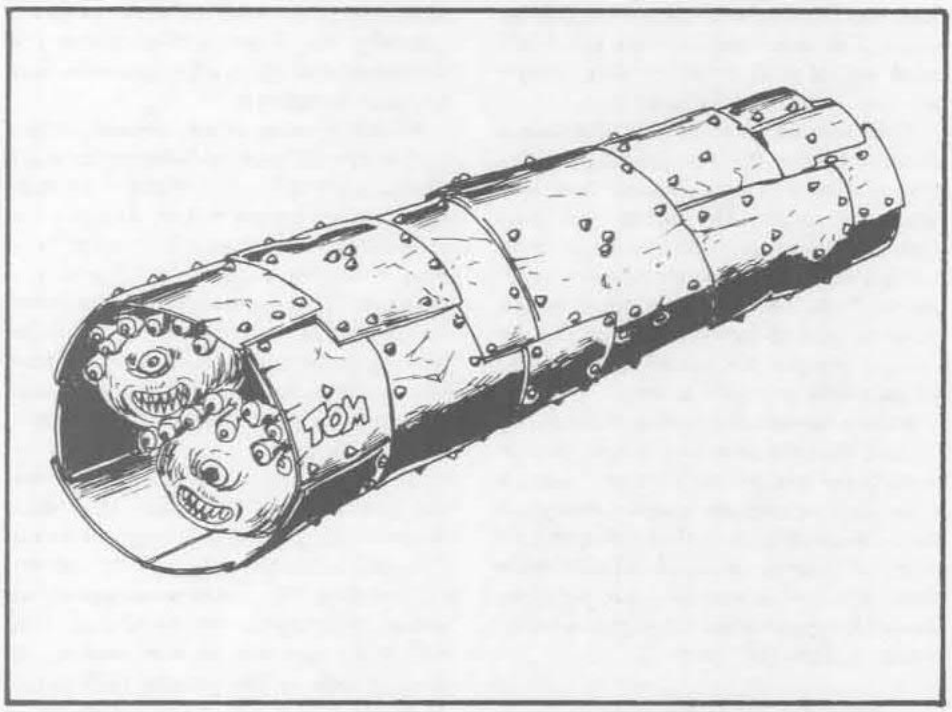
* **Description:** A Magnificent Missile is a large, open-ended tube of rusty metal plates bolted loosely together. Inside the open ends can be seen two or three spherical creatures with large central eyes and many smaller eyestalks.

* **Statistics:** Size: 20′ long, 10′ diameter. Weight: averages 400 pounds.

* **Contruction:** 22,000 gp; 28 days; 7,600 XP. The missile's body is a tube made of metal, usually of old or damaged plates of armor to minimize costs. The initial enchantment is the *enchant an item* spell (AD&D® game system only). A *magic missile* spell gives the missile its activation and guidance system. A *fly* spell propels it, and is cast with the dust or ashes of a pixie or other creature who could in life cast an *Otto's irresistable dance* (AD&D game system) or *dance* (D&D® game system) spell. This allows the missile to 'dodge'.

Two *walls of force* (AD&D game system) or *force field* (D&D game system) spells are then cast to curve around the missile's monstrous cargo, completely isolating them from the metal walls of the tube and from each other.

* **Functioning:** The cylindrical missile is fired by speaking a secret activation word while touching the missile. It rises from its resting position instantly and flies towards any target seen and mentally visualized by the being activating it. The target must initially be within view of the person activating the missile, although use of *crystal balls* and other means of seeing at a distance are permissable. The target may be any distance away on the same plane. The activator must continue to mentally visualize the target until the missile strikes, or the missile flies at random (see "Hazards," below). The missile flashes towards the target at a rate of 360′ per turn. (120′ per round, or 12″ in AD&D game system).



In flight, the missile dodges any solid bodies between it and its target. There is a 30% chance per obstacle that it will strike the object and explode. This chance increase to 55% if an obstacle is moving, or is thrown deliberately to intercept the missile.

Upon striking anything solid, the missile goes off. The walls of force cease to exist, and the gas or blast spores within fly out the front of the missile, carried by the momentum of their flight. When exploding, these spores deal 6-36 (saving throw versus Spell halves damage) points of blast damage to all creatures within a 20′ radius. A saving throw halves the damage, but any target struck directly may be infected with tiny spores. Damage is calculated for each spore that explodes. The rusty plates of the missile tube also fly apart on impact. Creatures within 30 feet of 'ground zero' must make a successful Dexterity check to avoid flying shards of metal. Shrapnel damage is 4-24 points; a direct hit by the missile inflicts 1 point of structural damage and 8-64 points from shrapnel.

* **Hazards:** The missile flies at random if no target is selected by a missile's activator, if concentration on a selected target ceases before the missile hits anything, or if the target escapes to another plane of existence. The missile continues to move forward at its usual rate, but for each round of random flight, roll 1d6 and 1d4. The d6 determines the direction of flight: 1 = as before, 2 = 45 turn to left, 3 = 90 turn to left, 4 = 45 turn to right, 5 = 90 turn to right, 6 = as before. The d4 determines the height of the missile: 1 = as before, 2 = climbs, 3 = descends, 4 = as before. Once control is lost, it can never be regained.

*** Ed Greenwood
Colborne, ONT

The Levelmaker

* **Definition:** A large box which raises the user's experience points once a day.

* **History:** The wizard Arroman the Ambitious was tired of adventuring, but desired the greater power that comes with greater experience. His invention, the Levelmaker, was intended to be a short-cut to gaining experience without the effort of tedious adventuring. When he saw it would cost him too much to use the device himself, he settled for placing it in a strategic adventuring location and growing rich off the proceeds of his venture.

* **Description:** A tall brass-studded wooden box with a small slot on one side next to a lever. A painted legend by the slot reads, "Insert Gem, Then Pull Lever."

* **Construction:** The construct requires wood and metal, an anvil, a pulley and cable, an eighth-level cleric or ninth-level wizard (referred to hereafter as the "Wizard," regardless of character class), access to many skeletons, and a friendly dwarf.

First, the builder must engage the services of a qualified carpenter to construct a large box. This box must be extremely sturdy. Good hardwood is recommended, such as oak or hickory. The box should be reinforced with brass bands. The pulley is bolted to the inside top and the cable threaded throught it. The anvil is hung from one end of the cable, and the other end is attached to a lever's catch. A shelf wide enough to sit upon is constructed near the inside top, near a small exit door. A skilled blacksmith and carpenter should be able to make this box in less than a week, and are unlikely to charge more than 1,000 gp—a mere pittance. Once the box is complete, *continual light* is cast on the interior.

Next, the wizard must be captured. The wizard's capture is the most difficult part of the manufacturing process, and the details of this task's completion should be determined by the DM.

Once the wizard is captured, he is enchanted with a *charm person* spell. If need be, he can be ensorcelled several times until the builder is sure he is properly *charmed*. Once this part of the task is complete, the builder's new friend is conducted to a nearby ancient battlefield and asked to raise a number of skeletons. After he complies, the wizard leads to the skeletons to the Levelmaker.

One skeleton is ordered into the box and told to stand directly beneath the anvil. The wizard then climbs up and sits on the shelf at the top of the box. The dwarf is placed on the same shelf, but next to the lever.

The wizard is let out of the box every few days to stretch his legs and seek out another ancient battlefield for a new force of skeletons.

The manufacturing magic-user must never forget to re-cast *charm person* on the wizard periodically. Failure to maintain this effect has drastic consequences.

* **Statistics:** Size: 8′ square, 15′ tall. Weight: 1,000 pounds. Structural strength: 20-40 hit points, depending on how well-made it is. Saves against damage as either hard metal or thick wood. It does not detect as magic or evil. The Levelmaker is top-heavy because of the location of the anvil inside.

* **Functioning:** The operator inserts a gem or other item of jewelry in the slot. The dwarf inspects it with his trained eye and if he decides it is good enough, i.e., worth at least 20 gp, the dwarf unhooks the lever's catch. The operator then pulls the lever, which drops the anvil solidly upon the head of the hapless skeleton below. This destroys the skeleton and bestows five experience points on the operator who pulled the lever.

The dwarf, who, like most dwarfs, should be quite strong, pulls the anvil back to the top of the box and resets the lever. The wizard then orders a second skeleton to march through the rear door of the box and stand under the anvil. At the end of the day, the bone dust is swept out of the device.

The dwarf must be willing to cooperate with the builder in the operation of the Levelmaker. This is not unlikely, since the dwarf shouldn't mind sitting around in the cramped box for hours on end—after all, dwarves like claustrophobic places. To ensure continued loyalty, however, the Levelmaker's owner should give the dwarf at least half of all the gems obtained from the box's operation. No dwarf worth his salt gives up a chance at free loot, and this offer is likely to retain the dwarves services for some time.

A Levelmaker is commonly located at the entrance to a lair or dungeon. This allows the device's owner to get as much treasure as possible. All adventurers living nearby are happy to visit it frequently in order to insert their gems and jewelry to boost their experience points.

Clerics should not be allowed anywhere near the Levelmaker. They might succumb to the temptation to turn the owner's hard-earned undead, ruining the nature of the whole enterprise.

* **Hazards:** The major hazard is that the *charm* spell may fade, causing the captive wizard to seek vengeance for his beguilement, supported, perhaps, by platoons of reanimated skeletons.

The box is safe from theft, since the *charmed* wizard is an excellent safeguard against thievery. However, any uninformed thief who attempts to rob the valuables accumulated in the Levelmaker will have to deal with everyone—and every *thing*—he encounters inside.

When making the box, the owner must not succumb to the temptation to use zombies rather than skeletons. Zombies are worth twice as many experience points, but they aren't worth the trouble. They stink, they look disgusting, and they are continually threatened by enterprising vultures and other carrion-feeders.

* **Staging:** If a character is trying to make a Levelmaker, the adventures revolve around the efforts to capture the wizard. The character must be very, very careful that the wizard's friends never

succeed in freeing him from the *charm* spell. If this happens, he is likely to be irate at his long confinement and virtual enslavement. A character with this problem on his hands must be careful that he doesn't find himself in a box the day after the wizard escapes.

Another adventure possibility occurs when an enemy magic-user has captured one of the player characters and used him or her in the box. Naturally, the PCs will want to go on a rescue mission to save their friend, but to do this, they must deal with their possibly-*charmed* friend, perhaps a greedy dwarf, and the Levelmaker's owner: a clever magic-user who has access to lots of experience points and shoeboxes full of gems. Also, most of the local adventurers are likely to team up with the enemy magic-user. Those adventurers want to protect that box. After all, they get experience points from it, too.

* **Other:** Levelmakers have been invented independently several times. They are created by clever and greedy magicians. When playing under the AD&D® game system, a number of modifications are possible. For one, a fifth-level cleric is sufficient to provide the animated skeletons. If a trapped cleric instead of a magic-user is used, a hat of stupidity (described in *Unearthed Arcana*) can be quite useful. If one of these handy chapeaux is available, the *charmed* cleric should be forced to wear it. In this way, his Intelligence is significantly lowered, and the charm spell's duration extended to a month before another saving throw is made. It also helps keep the wizard content while he is cooped up in that little box.

Giving both the wizard and the dwarf a ring of sustenance (see UA) reduces the need to provide them with food and drink.

*** Sandy Petersen
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Melrond's Foolproof Dishwasher

* **Definition:** A mechanism that lowers dishes and glasses into a black pudding. The pudding eats all organic material on them, and the dinnerware emerges sparkling clean. Maybe.

* **History:** Melrond was a mediocre wizard until, on one adventure, he *charmed* a small black pudding moments before it could devour him. In a stroke of brilliance, he gave up dungeon-crawling, guided the pudding back to his home town, and put it to a useful purpose. Now wealthier than he would ever have been as an adventurer, Melrond "breeds" puddings for restaurants and kitchens everywhere.

* **Description:** The pudding lives in a spherical bowl of thick gray glass, about 5′ in diameter. A glass plug rests tightly in a 2″ hole in one side. Dishware rests on a vertical stone rack beside a two-foot-wide opening in the bowl. A large wooden frame holds the cranking mechanism. The pudding makes bubbling sounds.

* **Construction:** 300 gp and 5 days for the bowl and rack (no XP). These are easy tasks for a glassblower, carpenter, and stonecutter. Small (2HD), pre-*charmed* puddings cost 400 gp from Melrond, or 350 if a character haggles. Puddings can be found on the hoof (on the ooze?) in most dungeons.

* **Statistics:** Size: 5′ wide, 5′ deep, 8′ tall. Weight: 600 pounds. Feeding: The pudding eats about ten pounds of organic material a day, but isn't choosy—most owners just make arrangements with a nearby stable.

* **Functioning:** One or two scullery boys turn the crank that raises the rack and lowers it into the pudding. After a minute or two they crank it back out again. One employee runs a torch around the cleaned dishes and cups to kill any stray pudding. The dinnerware is rinsed to remove soot and ooze.

Once a week the pudding grows large enough to fill the bowl. One brave employee pulls out the glass stopper, lets some pudding ooze through the hole into a glass container, and plugs the hole again. The surplus pudding, usually still *charmed,* is burned or resold.

* **Hazards:** The puddings are *charmed* to remain in the bowls, but not to change eating habits. With time, the puddings learn to use dishes and glasses—as bait. A crafty pudding removes dishes from the rack and lets them float loose on its surface. Sometimes an unwary scullery boy reaches in to retreive the items. Then there is one less scullery boy on the payroll.

As the pudding is drained over the weeks, the *charm* spell weakens. Tentative exploration over the edge of the bowl is a sure sign of trouble. Because of this, the dishwasher owner usually hires some itinerant magic-user each month to re-*charm* the pudding. After losing a scullery boy, the owner calls in Melrond to cast his *feeblemind pudding* spell. This enchantment, known only to Melrond, erases all the pudding's "learning" to date. Unlike the common *feeblemind,* Melrond's spell lets the pudding re-learn its old, bad habits from scratch, providing him with a perpetually renewed market.

* **Staging:** Because Melrond's dishwashers are popular, the DM can throw in a quick pudding adventure whenever the party is eating in a tavern or restaurant. The bowl breaks, the stopper comes loose, the *charm* spell wears off or is *dispelled*—in any case, the pudding breaks out, and so does a fight. When the PCs defeat the monster, they earn the gratitude of the owner, a diner, the scullery help, or some convenient patron at the bar.

* Black pudding: AC 6; HD 10; MV 60′ (20′); #AT 1; D 3-24; Save F5; M 12; AL N. Can only be killed by fire; other attacks break it into five smaller (2 HD, D 1-8) puddings.

*** Allen Varney
Austin, TX

Moodarvian Rings of Emotion

* **Definition:** A ringed item which casts an illusion affecting one or more of the five senses, drawing from the emotions and intents of its user.

* **History:** Moodarvian Rings were pioneered within the last 100 years, quickly becoming popular and widespread. Several masters of illusion have claimed credit for their invention, among them Percus of Gorias, Alstor the Magnificent, and the recluse Dor, but the archivist Thelma reports that one can only be sure of the region in which they first appeared, hence the name.

* **Description:** A Moodarvian ring (or "Mood Ring") consists of a band of woven wool, encased in amber, embossed around a golden ring. It can be any diameter, from finger-sized up to several feet across. A Mood Ring can be worn or mounted, perhaps around the base of a hanging candelabrum or as part of a circular picture frame. It is not always obvious and is easily disguised.

* **Construction:** Ring affecting one sense: 12,000 gp, nine days. XP: 2,000.

A Mood Ring must be enchanted with the proper spells. The principal one is a sensory illusion—*phantasmal force* when is it intended to affect sight, and nearly identical spells to affect smell, taste, sound, and touch. When it is created, a Mood Ring can be attuned to the nearest person, to a specific person, to one fixed image, or to the combined thoughts of a group of people. The effect is attuned to a specific person by that individual holding the ring as the final enchantment of its creation is cast. To tune the effects to a specific image or emotion, the ring's creator must concentrate on that image or emotion as the ring is completed. In all other cases, the enchanter must take care to concentrate on his task emotionlessly, lest unintended feelings color the ring's subsequent use.

* **Functioning:** Mood Rings present an illusion of appearance, smell, taste, sound, or touch. When attuned to a person, the illusion is altered by changes in that person's emotions and thoughts. When set for a fixed image, the Ring projects that illusion at all times. When attuned to a group of people, the illusion is influenced by the melange of emotions of all within its range.

Mood Rings have proven useful for a wide variety of applications, from the preparation of gourmet food to the warding of unwary intruders. When tuned to a specific person, a personal *ring of sight* can enhance its owner's presence, making plain girls pretty, shy men valiant, and timorous men courageous. With practice, one can use it to disguise appearance when one wishes to pass unrecognized.

A personal *ring of smell* acts as a deodorant, radiating the most expensive of sachets or colognes. It can clear the air of clinging odors or foul the nearby atmosphere to the point that no one would want to approach its wearer.

A personal *ring of taste* most often serves as a shortcut to elegant dining. By imagining the dish desired, the most extravagant banquet can be served, if the chef is sufficiently skilled with the illusions his ring can devise. Woe betide, though, if the chef is upset or depressed, for these emotions will work their way into his creations as well. Governor Dmitri is well-known for having lost the knighthood he sought, and his head as well, after serving Prince Logan oysters stewed by a chef whose true-love had just jilted him for the fishmonger.

A personal *ring of sound* can be the most entertaining of the set, providing its wearer with his own individual theme music and sound effects. A rousing theme for adventuring, passionate strains for courtship, and martial chords for combat are all within this ring's capacity. Care must be taken that it does not control its wearer in a tense situation, however: a fearful flourish has served to rout more than one panicky wearer, unaware that he had provoked the very tremolo that spooked him.

A personal *ring of touch*, although less generally useful than its brothers, can render the coarsest complexion satin-soft and subdue the roughest hemp into velvety smoothness.

A Mood Ring, when worn, generally attunes to the nearest person, that is, its wearer. Rings which enhance rooms or larger areas are usually tuned to a specific individual, so that the ring's illusion will not be constantly shifting.

When mounted in a non-descript room, a *ring of sight* can transform it into a scholarly study, a rosy boudoir, or an elegant salon. Of course, furnishings must roughly conform to the image presented for any lengthy effect, and a *ring of touch* might be added to harmonize the impressions of any who come into the room. Skillfully combined, these two *rings* and a single room can serve as several distinct chambers.

Similarly, a *ring of smell* can impart a pine-fresh fragrance, a stimulating seabreeze, or other refreshing aromas dependent on the mood and impulse of its owner.

A *ring of taste,* when one hasn't the skill to evoke savory detail in each dish sufficient to fool a gourmet, can be mounted in the dining room to add an overall flavor to each meal, called forth by its owner. It can serve to make bland food tasty, but one has heard of infamous dinners in which each course was even more garlic-filled than the last, or so bitter that guests had to pry open their puckered lips with forks to voice their thanks for the meal and regrets for an early departure. Such disasters are usually due to an undiscriminating palate or taste buds temporarily warped by a head cold or other slight illness.

Perhaps the most ill-used of this class of *rings*, however, is the *ring of sound.* Background music is a useful addition to any social occasion, and such Mood Rings are more versatile and prompt than most orchestras. They certainly require less upkeep. This has not escaped the notice of professional musicians, and musical groups from all over have been among the most vociferous in their opposition to Mood Rings. In scattered cases, musicians have struck back, lurking nearby and producing discordant music calculated to jar the tinniest of ears when combined with a Ring's music.

One of the most memorable of such clashes occurred between Squire Frye, a devoted music lover and confirmed *ring of sound* user, and the renowned Damacron Ensemble. Pride forbade the ensemble from actually producing discordant noise, so when it attempted to disrupt one of the Squire's progressive Mood Ring musicales, Master Damacron chose a rousing patriotic march to clash with the rhapsody wafting out of the Squire's windows. Frye was quick to respond, however, moving swiftly into a spritely jig in perfect counterpoint to the ensemble's march. Damacron switched to a dirge, and the struggle was on. For hours, all within hearing sat enthralled as point and counterpoint sang through the evening. Four symphonies were born that night, among the most innovative in several centuries, though witnesses bear that none do justice to the exhilarating chase that Damacron led Frye on through the enchanted night.

Closely related to the *rings* just discussed are those tuned to one fixed image or emotion. These *rings* are particularly useful in cases where their users lack the expertise and emotional control to maintain the positive image they wish to project, or where only one image is necessary. Fixed personal Mood Rings enhancing sight, smell, and touch are not uncommon, but similar rings of sound have proven maddening for all in range, particularly the wearer. After hearing the same tune repeatedly, without pause, for days in a row, most early users developed severe mental aberrations. The experiment is seldom repeated.

Fixed *rings* mounted in rooms are similarly useful. The most common place to find such a *ring* is in a privy, where a *ring of smell* can overcome the strongest of disagreeable odors with rosewater freshness. Fixed *rings of sound* or *taste* are seldom constructed, but *rings of sight* or *touch* can perk up even the drabbest of rooms.

Mood Rings tuned to the combined thoughts of a group of people comprise the final class to be described. Such rings are governed by the emotions of everyone within their range, and in normal circumstances produce pleasant but bland accompaniment for those gathered. *Rings of sight* and *touch* cloak the setting in agreeably soft beiges, *rings of sound* provide harmonious and inoffensive background music, *rings of smell* induce slightly sweet but unidentifiable odors, and *rings of taste*, when used in public restaurants and taverns, mask the food with bland flavor.

However, such use always includes the risk of a strong negative emotion overriding the generally positive flow. When this happens, blackened walls, prickly seats, discordant caterwauling, and the stench of rotting eggs predominate. Wise owners make sure that such rings are easily removable when circumstances demand it.

These *rings* are also popular in children's playrooms, although only the wealthy can afford them. Children's imaginations, when reinforced by *rings*, can take them anywhere, soaring above the clouds, battling to save a kingdom, or adventuring in the depths of the earth. Strong-willed guardians should always be present, lest children literally scare themselves to death.

* **Hazards:** Perils occur when Mood Rings come under the control of inexperienced or unaware users. Just as Rings provide positive feedback to positive emotions, anger, distrust, nervousness, and especially fear, are reinforced by *rings* in a vicious circle of escalating images. In particular, it was soon found that *rings* mounted to enhance social gatherings also provide thieves and other intruders with those images they fear most, beginning with flickering shadows in the corners, the hint of a dragon's sulphurous breath, the sting of hidden traps, and the tread of approaching footsteps. The most imaginative fall prey to other-worldly guardians and worse, terrors that previously existed only in their darkest nightmares.

*** David Ladyman
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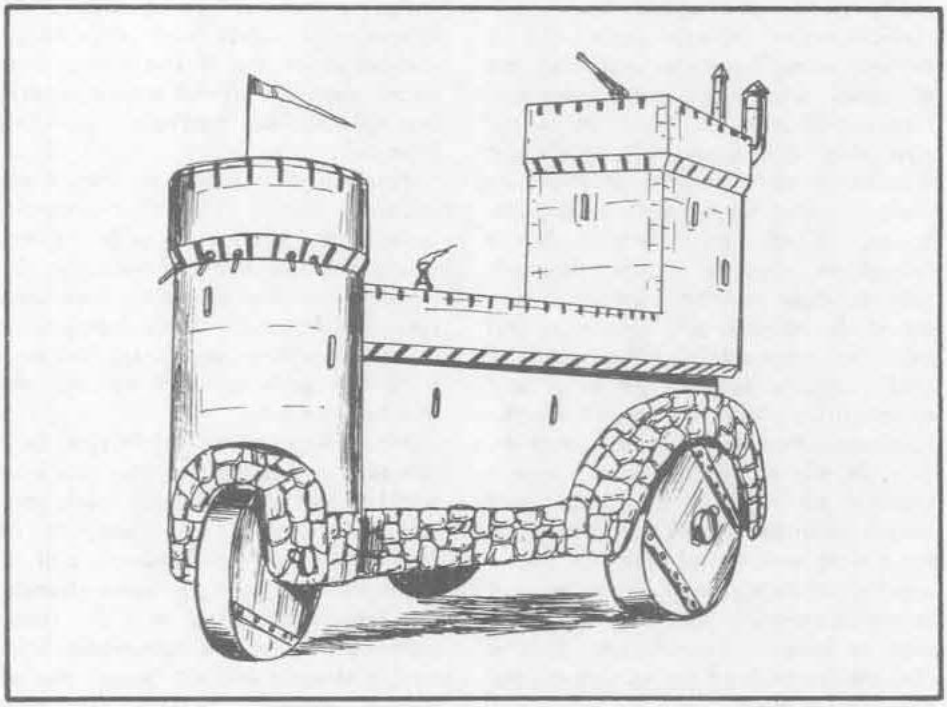
Morath's Mobile Manor

* **Definition:** A miniature castle on wheels, the steam-powered Mobile Manor is equipped with a variety of weapons and other features.



* **History:** On the lists of the world's greatest heroes, the name of Morath the Migrant does not stand out as that of a particularly renowned warrior or warlord. Instead, he is remembered chiefly on account of the odd contraption which bears his name. Though few details of the man's life are known, a brief description of it may illuminate the original purpose and construction of the device.

Morath came from an exiled people, driven from their homeland and preyed upon wherever they went. Most members of the group were killed or enslaved in the course of their wanderings. Morath became the leader of the few survivors.

On occasion they would find a refuge, for a time a place of safety. But always their repose would end violently as some horde of men or humanoids would again drive them out. Morath led his people through three decades of this chaos. During this time, he considered various ways that he might establish a place of refuge that was both secure and movable. Morath himself created the first rough design of the Mobile Manor, but he died defending his dwindling folk before the project was completed.

His successor continued to support research and development, considering it to be his people's only hope for a secure future. Finally, the first Mobile Manor was completed, and the device was named after Morath.

The contraptions enjoyed only limited success in the field: especially when the "field" was terrain any less even than plains, many a Manor was immobilized. They also quickly became obsolete as Morath's people settled down in a peaceful land and intermingled with the locals. When war did arise, real castles were found to be far safer sanctuaries for defenders, and the Mobile Manor was not quite agile or armed enough to warrant widespread use in offensive warfare.

The Manors were eventually mothballed or discarded. Presently there are at least four still in existence in the private museums of collectors of weapons and oddities. Rumors have alluded to others in various states of repair out in the wilderness.

* **Description:** This invention appears to be a small, metal castle with two towers. The shorter, round one hold the main entrance and a single wheel, and forms the front of the Mobile Manor; the taller, rear tower is square and has two wheels. The top of the Manor has battlements; on the roof of the rear tower are the smoke-belching chimney and a steam gun for defense against aerial attacks. Arrowslits and curious black nozzles (steam guns), pointing at the ground, are in various locations on the walls. Small windows are found on the upper decks. The whole invention is painted to protect against rust, and decorated in varying colors and designs vary: camouflage, brick, stone blocks, etc.

The interior, divided into three decks, varies from vehicle to vehicle according to the owner's tastes and needs. In all, however, the lowest deck holds the engine, steering room, and fuel storage; the kitchen and lavatory (complete with hot running water) are in the rear tower of the second deck. Wastes are flushed out behind the Mobile Manor.

* **Construction:** 35,000 gp for materials, plus at least 75,750 gp for labor; at least 35 weeks. The builder must have a copy of Morath's Manual (see below). Magic is not necessary to construct a Mobile Manor, although some spells and devices may be useful for saving time and/or funds. Also, magic may be used to customize a manor with unique special features (such as additional weaponry). For those playing the AD&D® game, *decanter of endless water* is an invaluable supplement to the steam engine.

The first requirement to build a manor is Morath's Manual (a copy of which is worth about 5,000 gp). This book contains the blueprints and operating instructions for the Manor. One copy

was placed in each original Manor, but some have been lost, and some new copies (possibly lacking some of the necessary information) are believed to have been made.

In order to decipher the Manual's contents, one or two sages must be sought and hired. One must know the ancient language of the Manual; another must have the expert knowledge of physics and engineering necessary to relate the archaic details to more modern equipment, materials, and methods. (For example, a common engineer used to building castles and siege machines would be unfamiliar with the physical properties and use of steam and pressure.) These individuals are extremely difficult to locate, costing the characters considerable time, effort, and money (as judged by the DM); and they are also very expensive to hire—500 gp per week apiece, and they must be employed for the entire interval of time that it takes to build the Manor. If one sage with expertise in both areas is found, he may be hired for not less than 750 gp per week.

It will take two or three weeks of intensive studying for the sages to familiarize themselves with the Manual's contents. Then preparations for the construction, lasting another three to four weeks, may begin. Material costs run 35,000 gp, and includes tools and facilities such as smithies; if the DM judges that these resources are already available, the cost may drop to as low as 27,500 gp. Skilled laborers must be hired and taught additional skills for this job. These laborers require a total of at least 1,500 gp per week in wages.

The actual construction may then begin. This would take at least 30 weeks under ideal conditions. In reality, problems with resources and labor will add 0-5 (1d6-1) weeks to this time. Also, this does not leave time for experimentation and testing during construction. If the builders are to test as they go along, it will cost another 4-16 (4d4) weeks of time, but such testing lessens the chance of the whole project failing.

After the 35 to 58 weeks the construction is completed and ready to test. There is a 75% chance of the Manor operating normally, or 95% if it was tested during each step of construction. If the roll fails, the work is not necessarily all wasted, but it will require 3-12 (3d4) more weeks (1-6 if it had been tested) of work before it can be tried again. At that point, percentile dice are rolled again to see if the machine is functional.

At the DM's choice, impatient characters who also happen to be wealthy may speed production by hiring additional workers and experts and having people work overtime. This raises the weekly labor cost from 1,500 to 3,000 gp and reduces the success chance from 75% to 65%. As a result of the haste, the basic thirty weeks of construction may be reduced to twenty weeks.

Customized features (magical or not) may be added, as the owner desires, after the machine is functional. Details of such features, and the time and expense to install them, are left to the imagination of the owner and the discretion of the DM; but it is always necessary to hire sages as consultants for the basic construction, at the same wages and for the duration of the construction of custom additions. Unless the same sages, already familiar with the Mobile Manor, are procured, it is necessary for the new specialists to study Morath's Manual and acquaint themselves with the structure and functioning of the Manor for two weeks.

* **Statistics:** Size: 64′ long by 24′ wide by 28′ high. Minimum crew of nine; may hold up to 50 people in reasonable comfort, or carry up to 8,000 lbs of cargo.
Maximum speed: 7 mph, maximum distance traveled without refueling: 100 miles. The steepest slope it can climb is 10 degrees. Turn radius: 100 feet (i.e., when making the tightest turn possible, it turns in a circle of that radius). Armed primarily with steam guns; might have additional armaments (such as a ballista). The Manor has an AD&D® system defensive point value of 250 (see DMG, p. 110); in the D&D® game, it has 1,000 hp, AC −10 (6), and is otherwise treated as a stone structure (see Master Players' Book, p. 28).

* **Functioning:** The Manor's power is provided by steam, which is produced in the boiler on the lowest deck (rear tower). The boiler's furnace can be fueled by coal, charcoal, peat, or wood. A crew of two trained engineers works in the engine room, monitoring the pressure and making sure that the rest of the machine continues to function normally.

The engineers also control the speed and mode of the drive mechanism. The normal speed of the Manor is 5 miles per hour. If the furnace is stoked up and 50% more fuel than usual is used, the Manor can go 7 miles per hour. Idling, the furnace consumes 1/10 the normal amount of fuel. A full store of coal fuel will run the Manor for 20 hours at normal consumption (this can be described as "20 standard hours of fuel"); charcoal, for 18 hours; peat, 15 hours; and wood, 10-13 hours, depending on how hot and long the specific type burns.

Example: A Manor with a full load of peat fuel (15 standard hours) runs at normal speed for 8 hours, traveling 40 miles and leaving 7 standard hours of fuel; then the crew rests and sleeps, leaving it idling (to keep it warm and maintain pressure in case the steam guns are needed) for 8 hours (leaving 6 standard hours). The next morning, scouts report that the Manor is being pursued by enemies, so it sets off at maximum speed; it can travel 4 hours (28 miles, consuming the last 6 standard hours of peat) in this way.

In order to produce steam, water is needed. Although most water is recycled, some is always lost through leaky pipes and the discharge of steam to reduce pressure. The boiler's supply must be replenished with one gallon of water for each standard hour of fuel used, and another two gallons for each blast of a steam gun (see below). For a Manor equipped with a *decanter of endless*

water, finding the fluid is not a concern; but an engineer must be familiar with operating the device to regulate the flow.

Steering is done with the single front wheel. The steering bars (see diagram) connect to the axle through the wheel casing (which keeps things under the Manor from getting in). Four men cooperate on the steering bars, pushing or pulling to steer the vehicle.

Coordinating all this are the commander, navigator, and lieutenant. The commander can fill in for any position, as needed; he otherwise keeps track of the operation as a whole. The navigator, on the third deck of the front tower, is concerned with directing the vehicle. He shouts commands for the engine and steering to the lieutenant on the first deck (see diagram, lieutenant's platform). The lieutenant repeats steering commands by mouth, but indicates directions to the engineers by means of a simple apparatus: a lever next to the lieutenant, marked for mode and speed (reverse, idle, forward, full forward) is anchored by a wire to a spring in the engineering room, where the engineers can see what is to be done.

The Manor's unique weapon is the steam gun. They all operate in the following manner.

A steam gun has two valves, initially closed. Opening the first allows high-pressure steam from the boiler to enter the pipe leading to the second valve. Opening the second valve releases the steam in a cone-shaped spray; creatures struck by the scalding steam suffer 3-12 hit points of damage (save versus Breath Weapon for half). The second valve is then closed, and pressure builds up for another blast.

Three distinct varieties of steam guns are mounted on the Manor, each with special characteristics. The downward-pointing black nozzles located around the walls are placed so that all of the ground around the Manor can be fired upon. Each gun shoots a cone of steam up to 30 feet long and 10 feet wide at the base. The swiveling steam gun beneath the front entrance is operated from the lieutenant's platform; it defends against those who would crawl beneath the Manor or attack the front gate and shoots a cone of steam 60 feet long and 10 feet wide at its base. (The front is also protected by black nozzles.) Finally, there is the aerial defense gun atop the rear tower. This gun fires a more tightly concentrated stream of steam 70 feet long, and does 5-20 points of damage if it hits. It can be aimed at aerial foes or those on the ground who are 50-65 feet from the Manor.

Because the boiler can produce only so much steam, the use of the guns is limited. Typically the furnace is stoked up to maximum; it then replenishes the steam and sustains pressure in the pipes so that three blasts of steam may be released per round (from any three guns). Any other attempted blasts will not have enough pressure to have any effect.

* **Operating Costs:** The Manor requires a minimum crew of nine (minimum monthly salaries in parentheses): a commander (450 gp), a lieutenant (250 gp), a navigator (275 gp), two engineers (250 gp), and four steersmen (25 gp). All of these people are trained in the operation of steam guns. Additional steam gunners may be hired for 25 gp per month. Other hirelings may be employed at standard rates.

Fuel prices vary between one region and the next according to supply and demand. The following prices per standard hour (see Functioning, above) are recommended: coal, 50 gp; charcoal, 35 gp; peat, 25 gp; wood, 10 gp.

Miscellaneous minor expenses for maintenance and upkeep will amount to 210-400 gp (200 + 1d20x10) per month. (This does not include special repairs mentioned in Hazards, below.)

* **Hazards:** Terrain presents the greatest obstacle to the Manor's mobility. The invention has a base chance of 10% of becoming mired down and requiring 10-100 minutes to be freed. That chance is checked each hour spent traveling and is adjusted cumulatively as follows: road: −5%; fog or smoke, night, sandy terrain: +5%; hilly terrain: +10%. Forest, mountain, swamp, and water are impassable unless traversed by a road, in which case they have a +10% adjustment.

There is also a chance for every hour the engine is running (1% when idling, 5% at normal speed, 10% at maximum speed) of a major mechanical problem occurring. Roll d8 to determine its nature and the cost to repair (including labor).

1-2. Malfunctioning pressure gauge (roll 1d6: 1-2, reads higher than actual; 3-4, lower than actual; 5-6, always staying as if at normal pressure). This is not harmful in itself, but may keep later pressure problems from being detected until it's too late. 400 gp to fix.

3-4. Broken steam valve. This may be just one valve on a steam gun (75%), disabling it; or two (25%), causing a pressure loss and immobilizing the Manor. 300 gp to fix.

5. Broken pipe. Steam spray does 2-12 hp damage to all within 15 feet (save vs. breath weapon for half damage); pressure lost. 250 gp to fix.

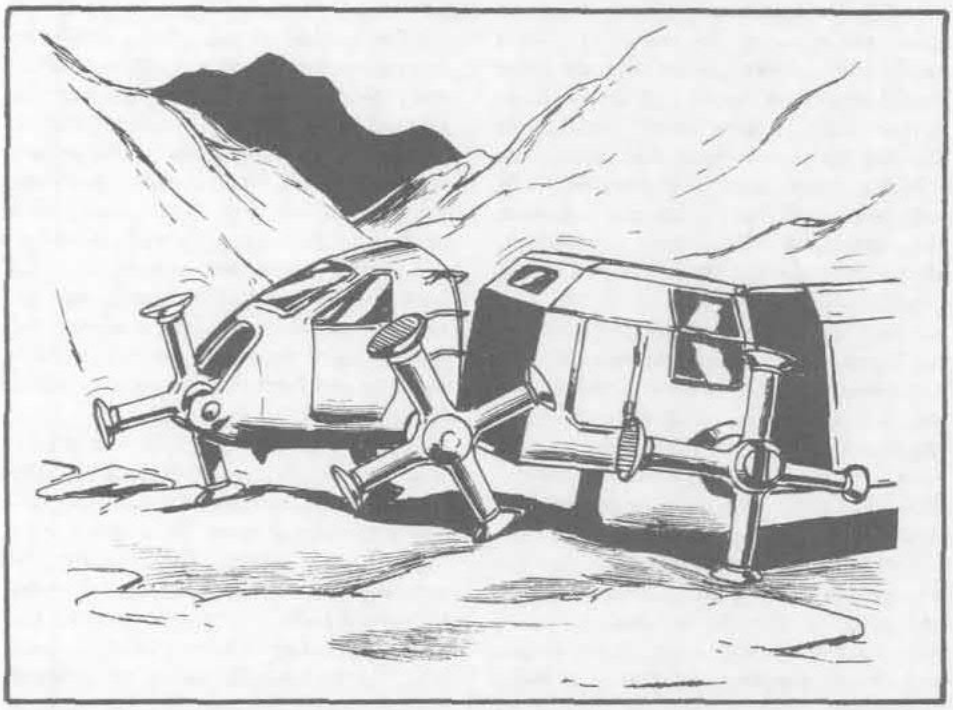
6. Broken axle or wheel. Immobilizes Manor. 2,500 gp and 1 week to fix.

7. Broken engine part. Immobilizes Manor. 2,000-8,000 gp and 2 days to fix.

8. Overheated boiler. Creates excess pressure. If pressure is not released and the furnace cooled, the boiler will explode. Such an explosion will jar the entire vehicle (all on board save vs. Petrification or suffer 1-3 hp damage), wreak havoc in the engine room (everyone there suffers 3-30 hp damage from steam and flying metal, save vs. Breath Weapon for half damage), and of course immobilizes the Manor. 15,000 gp and one month to fix.

*** John Nephew
Duluth, MN

The Oddwaddle Centipede



* **Definition:** A land vehicle serving not only as a form of mass transit, but also as a means of transporting goods.

* **History:** The city of Highforge is renowned for its variety of odd inventions. This is no doubt due in part to the city's population of dwarves and gnomes. In several instances, the dwarvish knack for construction and the gnomish ingenuity for invention have melded to create a variety of inventions. One such collaboration is known as the Oddwaddle Centipede.

Fifty years ago, a large silver vein was discovered in the Black Peak Mountains, and the mines began turning out more silver in one day than the dwarven miners could haul away in one week. To deal with this problem, Kreeg Talawain, the head of the dwarvish clan and foreman of the mines, hired a notable gnomish inventor, Wictar Oddwaddle, to devise a vehicle for transporting the silver. Oddwaddle in turn hired the services of the legendary dwarvish craftsman, Sig Rumbottle, to aid in the construction of the device.

Shortly after construction began on the Centipede, the vein of silver ran out, and the need for the vehicle no longer existed. With services already paid for, Oddwaddle and Rumbottle decided to continue construction. The first prototype was completed in AC 956, one year after silver was discovered. As often happens with gnomish inventions, this prototype nearly cost the life of one of its creators. While testing the vehicle on the steeply descending paths leading from the dwarvish mines to Highforge, Wictar Oddwaddle lost control of the Centipede, which hurtled into the village and crashed into the back wall of the End of Journey Tavern. The remains of the vehicle—a seat, steering wheel, and one tire—are still on display in the back wall of the bar. A popular tale among the gnomes, this bit of lore is commonly referred to as "Oddwaddle's Desperate Journey."

The second incarnation of Oddwaddle's Centipede proved more successful; the vehicle reached top speeds approaching 200' per round and had brakes, which were lacking in the prototype. As a result, several Centipedes were created for various parties over the course of the next five years. To date, the location of only one such vehicle is known; that vehicle, which is composed of one driver car and six cargo cars, is currently on display in the city square of Highforge. The location of all other Centipedes is unknown.

* **Description:** The Oddwaddle Centipede is a strange looking vehicle which vaguely resembles the arthropod it is named for. There are three basic car designs: driver, passenger, and cargo. Driver and passenger cars are able to hold two gnome or dwarf-sized passengers comfortably, but it is not possible to carry larger passengers. The driver and passenger cars are closed compartments with doors; the cargo car has a door and is roofless. The passenger and cargo cars have two wheels each, while the driver car has three "wheels": one for direction and two for propulsion. These wheels are each composed of a hub which has four spring-loaded pegs coming from each. At the end of each peg is a large suction cup. This cup clings to any surface. The front wheel is the same as the two propulsion wheels, save for the fact that it is smaller and rolls inside the driver car.

The driver car is vaguely bullet-shaped to reduce the amount of drag on the vehicle. It has one front window, two side windows, and one side door. The driver car contains the steering bar which controls the direction of the Centipede. Three hand- and footholds run up the back of the driver car; these are to facilitate movement in and out of the Centipede in case of emergency.

The passenger cars are box-shaped, as are the cargo cars, with the difference that the cargo car is an empty compartment. Passenger cars come in two types, idle and active. Idle cars are used for transporting persons of noble class or higher. As a general rule, the design of these cars varies from owner to owner. For instance, cars used to transport members of the Talawain family were

somewhat larger and more decorous than those used to transport local landowners. Nevertheless, certain basic descriptions do apply. As opposed to active cars, which have small side windows, one side door, and pedals, the idle cars have larger side windows, two side doors, and drive mechanisms (which the passengers are expected to employ). Passenger cars do not contain steering equipment.

Cargo cars are the simplest of the three car types. These compartments have no windows, no drive mechanisms, no steering capability, and are generally simple in design and appearance. These cars are used to transport goods, although they have also been used to transport individuals and livestock.

Centipede cars are linked together via a locking coupler at the back of the driver car and at the front and back of passenger and cargo cars. A cotter pin locks these couplings in place; in some instances, locks may be used to guarantee an unbreakable link between cars. Any number of cars can be linked together in a series—the only limitation is that a sufficient number of pedallers must be provided. Two pedallers are required for each filled cargo car (or passenger car with idle passengers).

* **Construction:** Driver cars cost 2,500 gp and take three months to complete. Passenger cars cost 2,000 gp each and take two months to complete. Cargo cars cost 1,000 gp each and take only one month to complete. Construction of specialized cars is possible, at a cost comparable to that of driver cars (price increases and decreases are variable, and as such, are left to the discretion of the DM).

* **Statistics:** Driver cars: 4′ tall, 6′ long, 5′ wide. Topside door: 5′ wide, 2½′ long, hinged at the front. Side door: 2½′ tall, 1½′ wide, has a connected window. Passenger cars: 4′ tall, 5′ long, 5′ wide. Cargo cars: 2½′ tall, 5′ long, 5′ wide.

* **Functioning:** The Oddwaddle Centipede is basically a "gnome-powered" vehicle. The principle is similar to that of a recumbent bicycle: the passengers sit in a reclined position with their feet resting on pedals at the front of each compartment. Pumping the pedals turns a set of gears, which in turn drives the wheels and provides propulsion for the Centipede. Both passengers of a compartment (including the driver and his passenger) are required to pedal. The cargo cars are open on top, have no drive mechanisms; neither they nor passenger cars have steering and both require a driver car to function.

Steering is performed by the driver. The steering bar, which is nothing more than a rotating handle on a metal post, operates on the same principle that a boat rudder does. By moving the steering bar to the left, the driver is able to make a right turn; by moving the bar to the right, the driver turns the vehicle left. No other vehicles in a Centipede are able to control the steering of the train of cars.

The steering bar is located in the driver car between the driver and the passenger. By itself, a driver car is able to turn in a 45 degree angle. With other cars in tandem, the driver car is able to turn in a 30 degree angle. A single driver car is able to reach speeds which vary from driver to driver (and which depend on the presence or absence of a passenger). In initial tests made by Wictar Oddwaddle, a single driver and passenger were able to achieve speeds of up to 200′ per round, excluding the extreme speeds achieved in Oddwaddle's first historic journey. With a full load of cargo and one set of pedallers per cargo car, speeds of 100′ per round are not uncommon. As a final note, Oddwaddle's Centipede is capable of climbing and moving across any solid surface, such as walls, ceilings, etc.

* **Hazards:** As with all inventions of gnomish devise, certain hazards are inherent in the design of Oddwaddle's Centipede. The most notorious hazard is the vehicle's braking ability. In most of Oddwaddle's constructs, the braking lever for the Centipede is controlled by the driver. No other brakes were included in passenger cars or cargo cars, save for those specially installed in the idle cars of nobles. This oversight presents no problem on level terrain; braking occurs in these regions at a normal rate. The true danger becomes apparent in hilly terrain, where the combined weight of several cars often causes a failure in braking. Local sages believe this is the main reason for the disappearance of several of these vehicles.

Another hazard inherent in this design comes from the vehicle couplings. Since the coupling mechanism for these vehicles is on the outside of the cars, it is possible for these units to be opened by accident (or on purpose), thereby separating the following cars from the driver.

Finally, the Centipede does not always cling to surfaces as it is supposed to. This has proven to be quite a problem in cases where the Centipede attempted to traverse a wall or ceiling. This hazard is all the more dangerous because if it occurs, it only takes place *after* the Centipede is already suspended from a height.

* **Staging:** Not all of Oddwaddle's Centipedes ended their employment on a disastrous note. Frustrated with the vehicle's lack of reliability, a handful of owners merely junked the vehicles. PCs may find abandoned or disrepaired Centipedes in any of a number of settings. Those found in mountainous terrain, however, will most likely be the remains of some gnomish disaster.

***Robin Jenkins
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Olaf Grunndi's Stupendous Repository of Arcane Lore

* **Definition:** An artifact holding almost all the knowledge of the known world, capable of answering factual and philosophical questions.

* **History:** The Stupendous Repository of Arcane Lore was built by that great dwarven terranaut and explorer, Olaf Grunndi. Many centuries past, Grunndi befriended a large clan of sprites, who determined to accompany him on his quest for knowledge. Many years later Olaf and the sprites, all aboard his celebrated golem howdah, returned to the dwarven city beneath Mount Caylorne. Olaf, painfully aware of his own mortality and fearing that the great collection of worldly knowledge accumulated on his travels might be lost to the world upon his death, began to construct a medium through which the information might be disseminated in an efficient fashion to future generations. When, after many years, Olaf Grunndi's contraption was finally complete, the peoples of the neighboring realms trekked for miles to visit the subterranean chamber that housed the Stupendous Repository, there to seek explanations and answers to the many secrets of the Multiverse.

For centuries, the city beneath Mount Caylorne has lain deserted. If the Stupendous Repository still exists, it awaits discovery in the city's shrouded depths by a brave band of adventurers.

* **Description:** At a glance, the chamber that houses the Repository looks like any other ornate dwarven chamber, for the Repository is built into the walls and its workings hidden from prying eyes. Thin fluted marble columns support a ceiling studded with globes of green crystal. The floor is paved with slabs of flawless amber inlaid with a delicate filigree of golden wires. Thin vertical slots pierce one wall of the chamber, dominated by a large central niche that shimmers with a faint magical aura. If the Repository is approached quietly and an ear is pressed to one of the slots in the wall, a listener can just hear faint twitterings in the darkness beyond.

* **Construction:** Time: up to several centuries. Cost: prohibitively expensive. It is entirely possible that the feat of creating a Repository could not be duplicated today. Olaf Grunndi had the assistance of hundreds of eager and diminutive scribes, the sprites, armed with tiny notebooks and regimented into specialist fact-finding groups. During Olaf's travels, he sought out sages and libraries and the sprites were set to work copying manuscripts and noting the sages' words of wisdom. When Olaf was satisfied there was no more knowledge to be gleaned from these sources, he steered the golem howdah with its precious bibliographical cargo back to Mount Caylorne.

Similarly, a vast amount of worldly knowledge is essential for would-be Repository builders, and an efficient method for gathering the data and its subsequent storage should be carefully investigated. Such knowledge-gathering generally entails several centuries of extensive research throughout the surrounding lands. The actual cost of this initial research is variable and depends upon the rate of inflation and to a lesser extent the rate of exchange from kingdom to kingdom. Should the builder be unable to persuade any sprite scribes to accompany him, he will need a tremendous amount of ink and parchment, which can put quite a strain on his treasure hoard.

Dwarven miners built Olaf's Repository, excavating the special chamber in which the creation is housed and the intricate tunnels which shelter the sprites and their libraries. A team of alchemists worked day and night concocting great vats of *potion of diminution* which reduced the miners' stature to a size in which this delicate and precise task could be more easily undertaken.

Modern-day Repository-builders will find that dwarven miners can be expensive to come by, but are a worthwhile investment in the end. A builder may be tempted to employ other humanoid races to save a few coins, but goblins and their ilk are generally lazy and cannot be trusted—consequently a veritable army of overseers must be employed to beat them into shape. Alchemists are somewhat rarer these days and their fees tend to be exorbitant. Also, the builder will need a plentiful supply of powdered kobold horn and wererat blood for the fabrication of the potion itself.

A balanced ecosystem was created within the original Repository of Arcane Lore and a complete sprite city, together with the vast libraries collected during Olaf's travels, was established within its tiny tunnels. The sprites were organized within a strict caste system, with the menials who tended the fungus farms at the bottom of the social scale and the pure thinkers, who ponder the final solution to a question, at the top. In between are the messengers and runners who relay the questions from the slots to the libraries, the librarians themselves, the clan which lives behind the slots and reads the questions, and finally the clan which composes the visual display when an answer is finally obtained.

If a builder intends to construct a Repository of Arcane Lore and is unable to coerce any sprites into service, he is in trouble. Conceivably, he could persuade friends or hirelings to constantly drink *potions of diminution*, but this would be a costly and unsatisfactory solution.

* **Statistics:** Size: Chamber housing the Repository is 40′ square, ceiling is 10′ high. Wall slots: 2′ high, 4″ wide, leading to the internal passageways which are 1′ high and 8″ wide. Libraries: 4′ square, 8′ deep; 100 in number, they are situated beneath the chamber floor and are accessible from the chamber by lifting the amber slabs.
Spheres of knowledge: In the D&D® game there are ten major spheres of knowledge divided into ten subdivisions, with one library assigned to each: History, Science, Geography, Language, Magic, Multiverse, Mythology, Earthly Religions, Economics, and Philosophy. In the AD&D® game there is a library on each subject listed under "Sage Fields of Study and Special Knowledge" (*DMG* p. 32), with additional libraries acting as back-up or in a storage capacity.

Answering speeds: Base 1-100 hours per question. There is a 5% cumulative chance per question that it will be referred to another specialist section for further information with a further 1-100 hours added to the answering time. No answers are given until all the questions have been satisfactorily researched and answered.
Sprites: (AD&D® game stats: MM, p. 92) (D&D® game stats: BD, 38).

* **Functioning:** Questions directed to the Repository of Arcane Lore must be inscribed onto large discs of the purest silver. These discs are inserted into the various slots in the chamber walls. Once inside the Repository, the discs are read by sprites on "slot duty" who determine to which specialist group the question should be referred. The question is then referenced in the respective "library" and a reply passed back through the tunnels to the sprite clan in charge of visual display. The answer is displayed in the central niche in delicate runes etched out in *faerie fire*. The silver disc is retained in payment for services rendered.

Asking the questions is a fairly complex procedure. The question must be engraved onto the silver disc in the sprite language, thus the aid of a silversmith fluent in the repective tongue would be a boon at this stage. Depending on the relative complexity of the question there can be some delay before a satisfactory answer is relayed to the petitioner. It was not unknown in the Repository's heyday for a delay of up to twenty years when an answer was required for a particularly profound metaphysical question. In order to speed up the process, *haste* spells were used and in one or two extreme cases where a rapid answer was of such grave importance to warrant it, *time stop* spells have been utilized.

* **Hazards:** Hazards, with a system of such size and complexity, can be all too common in the day-to-day functioning of the Repository of Arcane Lore. Bugs in the system are probably the most common—an infestation of ants in the Demi-Human Biology section, for example, could be potentially disastrous and may result in sprite casualties. Those who use the Repository must also bear in mind that the information may in some instances be out of date. The Repository may indicate that a deceased king's treasure is guarded by a single immature red dragon—however, that dragon may be over 1,000 years old now and a much larger threat to the physical well-being of the average band of adventurers.

* **Staging:** Finding Olaf Grunndi's Stupendous Repository of Arcane Lore is an adventure in itself. The entire dwarven city beneath Mount Caylorne must be explored, and any number or kind of dangerous beasts may lurk within its shadowy halls.

The Stupendous Repository of Arcane Lore is also a potential starting-point for thousands of adventures, considering the arcane information that might be contained within it. Lost cities could be located, clues and rumors abound within its data banks, and ancient scripts could be translated with ease—characters need only ask the questions.

Supposing there are bugs in the system that the sprites are unable to deal with themselves, they may request the aid of a party of adventurers to tackle the intruders. The brave heroes would have to avail themselves of *potions of diminution* in order to squeeze into the network of passages within the Repository of Arcane Lore and battle the fearsome bugs.

*** Rik Rose
Cambridge, U.K.

Rahn-Ko's Ranger Fooler

* **Definition:** A floating box pulled by a party member, which erases the party's tracks and creates false tracks in their stead.

* **History:** In a far-off land called Nalorian, one of the mightiest (and strangest) archmages is a man named Rahn-Ko.

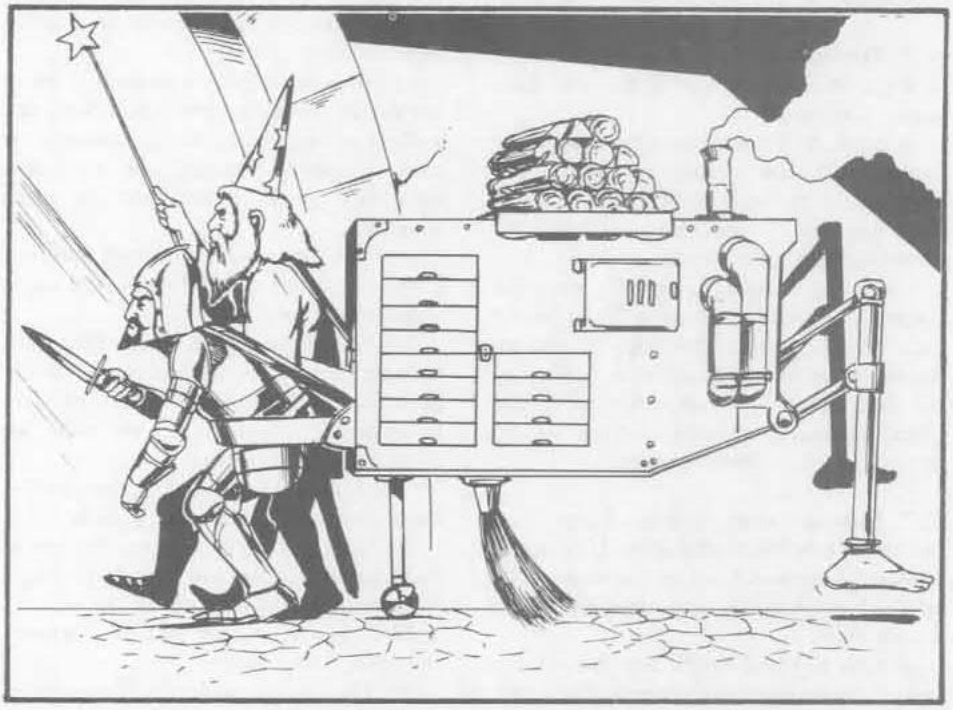
Rahn-Ko is a paranoid genius of Chaotic Neutral persuasion, and there is nothing in this world that terrifies him more than the existence of warriors that can track him by his very footprints!

The knowledge that this is possible serves only to increase his paranoia. He took to looking over his shoulders dozens of times every hour. He shuffled his feet to blur his prints. He lashed dozens of pairs of different shoes to his robe and changed shoes in mid-stride. He shunned elves, since they make good rangers. He avoided woodlands and long journeys.

One day, after a disastrous run-in with a leather monster, Rahn decided that a more practical and permanent solution was needed.

Laboring in his workshop, Rahn-Ko came up with a box-like contraption to take with him on trips and adventures. Delighted, he took a prototype to different Thieves' Guilds, Adventurers' Guilds, and his Mage Guild. He was laughed right out of them all; his hasty exit from the latter was responsible for the destruction of the first prototype after an unfortunate run-in with a wood monster.

Undaunted, Rahn built a second prototype. Rumors have it that he built another half-dozen. A year passed, and his guild didn't hear from him. Curious, they sent a group of adventurers to his home to inquire after him, but Rahn-ko was not there. A ranger tried tracking him, but found a trail that began with a set of orc prints, then red dragon, demon, gorgon, rust monster and finally, pixie. After that, the tracks disappeared.



* **Description:** The device is a large wooden box. A leather harness used for pulling the contraption is attached to the front. A set of thick, hairy brushes are set on the underside of the box near the front. Thirty six drawers set in columns of six are located on the flanks of the box, 18 on each side. Each box is clearly marked in Common, and tells what sort of track prints are stored within. A set of iron rods juts out from the rear of the box, and attached to them are two vertical iron rods that reach the ground. Set on the left side of the box, near the back, is a small door that allows loading of firewood for the steam engine. A spout on top of the box allows replenishment of the water tank.

* **Construction:** 2,000 gp (cheap!); one month time.

The box is a simple affair, requiring six sheets of wood nailed together. A small boiler, furnace and piston are installed inside the box, in the rear section. A set of iron rods is attached to the piston by universal joints. This can all be done by a carpenter and a blacksmith in one week's time.

The second set of iron rods is located on the outside of the box and connected to the first set by another pair of universal joints. The ends of the rods are tipped with iron clamps, where the different footprint molds are fastened. This metalwork takes two days.

The drawers are installed on both sides by carpenters, and are completed in one week. Acquiring the molds can be a problem, because the builder must find the tracks he wants and make plaster molds out of the prints.

The leather harness is attached to the front with spikes, to keep it well fastened. Two man-sized beings can pull side by side like a team. Making the harness and attaching it takes two days.

The molds are made of plaster reinforced with steel. A clamp on each mold secures it to one of the iron rods. Each mold takes one day to make, and can be done by anyone.

A set of big hairy brushes is attached to the front and takes a few hours to install.

A *levitate* spell must be cast on the device to keep it off the ground. First, an *enchant item* spell is cast, then *levitate*, then

permanence. This takes two weeks at most.

* **Statistics:** Size: 20′ long, 10′ wide, 6′ high. Weight: about 750 lbs with fuel, water and molds.

Range: As long as the operators have water and wood, they can keep the machine running indefinitely. The foot printing requires that the party travel no faster than 90′ per round.

Damage capacity: AC 8; one hit causes it to stop functioning. If the hit die roll was 4 greater than the minimum number needed, then the thing collapses on itself. If the hit roll is 6 greater, the thing explodes, causing 5 hp damage to everything in a 20-foot radius.

* **Functioning:** Before usage, the water tank is filled, and a fire is lit in the boiler. Extra wood can be stacked on top of the box. A small iron handle controls steam flow.

A pair of track molds are taken from one of the drawers and placed on the iron clamps at the end of the two vertical rods. One or two men are placed in the harness, the small handle is turned to allow steam into the piston, and off it goes.

The hairy brush obliterates the party's tracks and replaces them with a single set of tracks of the party's choice. The brush reaches far enough to clean a 10-foot-wide path.

When the fugitives wish to switch tracks, so they turn the little handle, cutting off the steam the tracks can be switched.

* **Hazards:** To say that this thing is utterly useless is an understatement. Any ranger above fifth level can easily see that the tracks are fake, since they are stamped into the ground uniformly instead of with a depth varying from heel to toe.

The steam piston is very primitive, and makes lots of whistling, grunting, groaning, and razzing noises. No party can surprise anything when carrying this device around.

Due to the overall unstable nature of the device, there is a 5% chance for every 3 hours of use that something dreadful will happen. Roll a d20 and consult the table below:

1: The *levitate* spell fluctuates, sending the device floating upwards, taking the pullers along with it. If indoors, it crashes into the ceiling and splinteres into tiny pieces—and then the spell wears off.

2-4: A very loud, flatulent noise is emitted, attracting the notice of a wandering monster.

5-9: The *levitate* spell wears off slowly, causing the device to come to rest on the ground. Ten minutes later, the spell kicks in again, causing it to rise an unpredictable distance.

10-14: A mold shatters because the rod came down too hard or hit a rock.

15-17: The piston pops out the top of the box and rockets skyward, hitting a wandering aerial monster in the gut.

18-19: The piston rod is jammed, requiring 1d4 hours to fix.

20: The thing speeds up, running over the pullers, marking their backsides with footprints, and continuing in a straight line at 150′ per round for 2d10 minutes.

The thing does not work well on clean floors, roads paved with bricks or other very smooth surfaces.

* **Staging:** Rahn-Ko is still alive. His tracks disappeared because the device blew its piston and hit a red dragon in the belly. The dragon was curious enough about this that she picked up Rahn and his device and took him back to her lair. If the party follows the chain of tracks mentioned earlier, they eventually regain the trail, which is now comprised solely of dragon tracks.

These tracks are real, and they lead to a cave. The dragon is a huge, old red female. Rahn is alive and the Fooler is still running. If the party is about to sneak up on the dragon, the device explodes, ruining the party's chances for surprise.

Red dragon: AC −1; Move 90′, flying 240′; HD 11; AT 3; Damage 1-8/1-8/3-30; SA breath weapon; AL CE; Size L (50′ long).

If the party slays the dragon and rescues Rahn-Ko, he *teleports* himself and the party to his quarters. As a reward for rescuing him, he lets them have all of the dragon's hoard (roll for random treasure) and gives them a working Fooler.

Should the party refuse the gift, Rahn casts *geas* on the party leader, compelling him to take it and use it on the next adventure. Then, with a wave of his hand, Rahn *teleports* the party back to their favorite inn, where everyone in the place immediately pokes fun at the party for carrying around such a stupid thing.

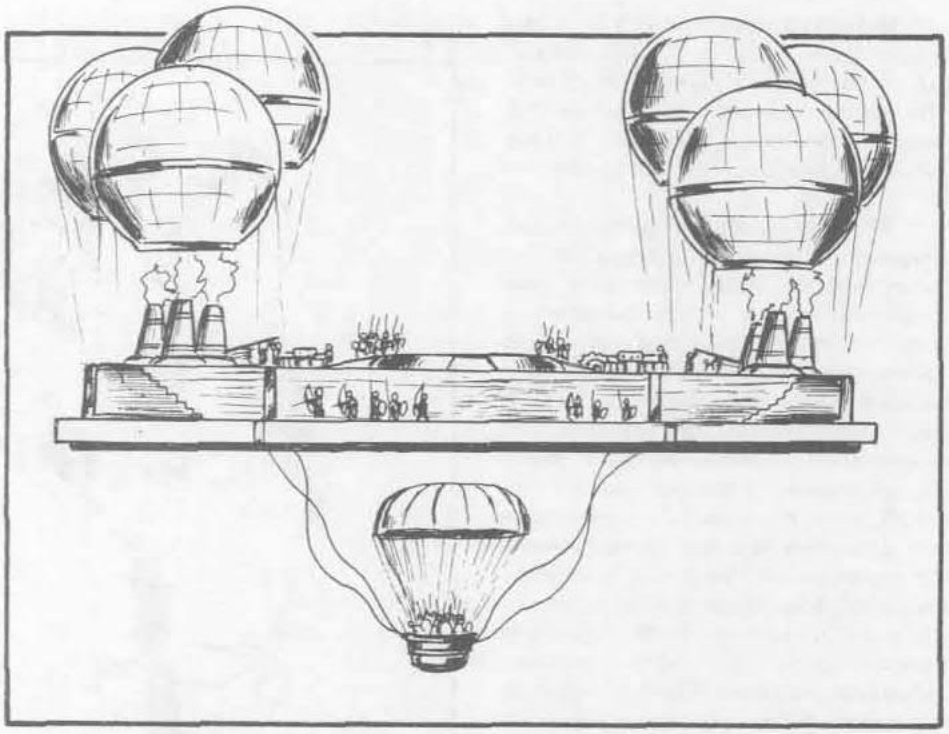
Another wonderful possibility is that a local druid becomes extremely irritated at this mechanical, un-natural contraption. He tracks down the party and destroys their device with a *warp wood* spell. He is not gracious and may appear to be attacking the party.

Rahn has a brother called Ungah who is pathologically neat. There is a good probability of running into both archmages.

* **Other:** The types of tracks included in Rahn's prototypes are: goblin, orc, elf, pixie, rust monster, demon, gorgon, duck, green dragon, minotaur, skeleton, bare human foot, ogre, hill giant, horse (shod), rabbit, wombat, badger, bear, dog, cat, elephant, troll, dryad, werewolf, basilisk, lizard man and chimera. Others can be made at the player character's discretion.

*** John Terra
Randolph, MA

Rumblebotty's Flying Nightmare



* **Definition:** A huge, airborne assault platform held aloft by hot air balloons and staffed by a horde of orcs.

* **History:** Scheming to conquer the lands of man, the vile orc-lord Rumblebotty captured Brodgett, a renowned gnomish artificer, and tortured the little fellow into helping the orcs fulfill their ambitions. Brodgett was forced to design and supervise the construction of the horrible Flying Nightmare, an exotic super-weapon with which Rumblebotty's orcs could penetrate the formidable fortresses of men.

* **Description:** The Flying Nightmare is a huge, two-level platform, constructed out of wood, reinforced with steel bands. Six huge hot air balloons (three at either end) keep the device aloft. In the center is a large opening that provides access to a parachute structure, used to rapidly send troops to the ground. On either end are three tall flame towers, used to keep the air in the balloons hot.

* **Construction:** 170,000 gp; 6 months; 2500 XP. Anyone attempting to build a Flying Nightmare must have access to a forest full of very tall trees (such as redwoods or their fantasy equivalents). In addition, several thousand square yards of tough canvas or leather is required to construct the balloons and the parachute. It takes a construction crew of seventy-five laborers six months to build the Nightmare. Fewer laborers increase the construction time proportionately.

* **Statistics:** Size: 150′ × 100′. Weight: approximately 10 tons. Capacity: can carry up to 500 troops. Crew: 50 slaves. Movement: travels at speeds up to 20′/round, can climb 40′/round.

* **Functioning:** The purpose of the Flying Nightmare is to land troops inside of castles without having to assault heavily defended walls—the fantasy equivalent of the airborne assault. The crew propels and steers by beating a huge bladder located toward the rear. When directly over an enemy stronghold, four ropes are dropped down to the ground. Fifty troops at a time travel down these lines in a huge car fastened to a parachute. When the troops debark, the orcs aboard the Nightmare turn huge gears, hoisting the car back up. Troops can be lowered from as high as four hundred feet.

The lower level of the Nightmare provides a firing platform for missile weapons. Up to 100 bowmen can man the area. The Nightmare usually softens up ground resistance with a battery of missile fire before landing troops.

* **Hazards:** Combat and hot air balloons don't always mix well. If any two balloons are punctured and deflated, the entire craft and everyone aboard comes tumbling to the ground. Treat the balloons as AC 5. After a balloon receives 50 points of damage it completely deflates in three rounds. Fire is also a problem. The hull is soaked down before entering combat, but it is still possible to set the craft aflame during longer battles, after the wood has a chance to dry. Of course, the orcs aboard the craft require the usual number of guards and overseers. The occasional rebellion is not unheard of.

* **Staging:** The Nightmare makes a great addition to a semi-serious fantasy siege. It is best employed as the tool of some bumbling but sinister invader who is trying to overrun the PCs' dominion. PCs could be captured and find themselves slaves aboard the craft, they could be in the fortress attacked by the Nightmare and organize the defense against it. They could also be charged with the task of sneaking aboard and sabotaging the craft before it is able to attack.

*** Ray Winninger
South Holland, IL

Saonuihun's Speeding Sphere Game

* **Definition:** Saonuihun's Speeding Sphere game employs a small metallic ball within a slanted, glass covered box. The goal of the game is to direct the ball towards targets within the box. Striking the targets produces interesting effects.

* **History:** Saonuihun the Sorcerous, a powerful wizard with a talent for tinkering and for using alliteration, was commissioned by a rich member of nobility to create a source of exciting yet abstract amusement. The magic-user decided upon the Speeding Sphere game. After delivery, the employer was disappointed with the device's (then) lack of a sense of competition. Grumblingly, Saonuihun added a scoring system that allowed competition between two participants in the game. Soon all of the noble's friends wanted Saonuihun to construct a duplicate of the Speeding Sphere game for their estates. Saonuihun complied. The first owner of this device, jealous that others now had what he did, demanded this his game be improved further. Spitefully, Saonuihun obeyed the command and filled the game with magic that ranged from benign and amusing to dangerous. After the first play of the newly enhanced Speeding Sphere game, the noble barely escaped with his life. Saonuihun thought the game would be the end of his own life. He was incorrect; all of the owners of the Speeding Sphere game demanded that their's contain the same element of risk. Saonuihun's Speeding Sphere games are now found in the homes of the very wealthy throughout the land.

* **Description:** The invention is a glass-enclosed, wooden case mounted on four wooden legs. It is slanted so the front is lower than the back. The back has a scoring board with two rows of numbers and three switches. The inside of the case contains obstacles that deflect the ball and triggers that, when hit, produce spell effects and score points. At the front of the box is a spring-loaded firing mechanism for shooting the spheres into play. Buttons on either side of the front trigger flippers that keep the speeding sphere in play. The surface of the game is decorated with hand-carved images and icons. In modern day terms, this is a pinball machine.

* **Construction:** 198,000 gp; 205 days (approximately seven months); 198,000 XP. The enchantment requires the following spells: *magic mouth, sleep, charm person, blur, phantasmal force, colored lights, web, hypnotic pattern, invisibility, fascinate, change self, tempus fugit, wish.* The triggers in the game are enchanted with each one of these spells. The components for this game include a half pound of colored sands (red, blue, green, yellow, etc.), a spoonful of phosphorus, a handful of fleece, 12 one-inch-long iron rods, and a handful of dust from an adventurer's backpack. The magic mouth can be set to say something akin to "Try again, sport!" or "Rattle me for a high score!"

Make an Intelligence check after construction to gauge whether the game operates properly. If it fails, a spring, a gear or a rod breaks and the game malfunctions in some way (eg. a spell is cast repeatedly, or a score is very far from what it should be).

* **Statistics:** Glass case: 2′ × 4′. Height: from floor to top of backing, 6′; legs, 3′ long at the front and 3′4″ at the back. Weight: approximately 80 to 100 pounds, depending upon materials used.

* **Functioning:** Each game is played using metallic balls. After each game, these three balls remain in a chamber. A player takes the balls and loads them into a magazine on the right hand side of the game. A plunger that propels each ball into play is pulled back to serve a ball. When the plunger is released, it shoots the ball into the game. The ball bounds off of deflectors and hits a trigger before gravity takes hold and the ball rolls toward the front of the game. If it isn't stopped using flippers, the ball goes out of play and another must be served. When all three are played, the game is over.

When a trigger is hit, it both turns a gear that advances the scoring system

and casts a spell. The gears that advance the scores are of varying sizes and teeth. Different gears produce different scores. A switch on the backing lets a player of the game either a) reset the two existing scores, or b) preserve the second score, allowing the first to be reset and used.

The spells enacted through play are the true wonders in Saonuihun's Speeding Sphere game. When a ball is first shot into play, roll 3d6 and apply the result to the table below. Whenever a new ball is shot into play, a modifier is added to that character's roll, based on this formula: (Strength/4) − 2. The adjusted die roll indicates what spell is cast and how many points were scored. If the modified die roll is zero to six, the ball hits nothing, rolls past the flippers and out of play. After each roll, the character makes a Dexterity check to activate the flippers. If the check is failed, the ball is lost.

3d6 Roll	Occurence	Points
0 - 6	ball leaves play	0
7	*magic mouth* cast	10
8	*sleep* cast	20
9	*charm person* cast	25
10	*phantasmal force* cast	50
11	*blur* cast	75
12	*hypnotic pattern* cast	100
13	*web* cast	200
14	*colored lights* cast	400
15	*invisibility* cast	500
16	*fascinate* cast	750
17	*change self* cast	1,000
18	*tempus fugit* cast	2,000
19	*wish* cast	5,000

All spells last for one round but those that require concentration last for 10 seconds. Each roll on the above table also represents 10 seconds of time. The spells affect everyone playing and observing.

Any character who plays Saonuihun's Speeding Sphere game and survives, conscious and unharmed, receives one percent of his score in the game as Experience Points. Observers who come through just as well get a half percent of the score as experience. For example, if a character played the game, ended it unharmed and still awake, and he received a score of 4,000, he would receive 40 XP for playing. Observers who survive just as well receive 20 XP.

If a participant reaches a 200,000 + point score, an internal mechanism ejects a golden ball, a bonus play. When the ball is lost, however, it goes back into its hiding place within the machine.

* **Hazards:** The possible misfortunes that can arise through use of Saonuihun's Speeding Sphere game are numerous and amusing, or possibly deadly. Keep in mind that any spells the game produces affect the playing character first, then those observers nearby. If an enemy were in the room where the game were being played, that enemy would have to either be playing the game or be near enough to it when a mass effect spell goes off.

Some of the spells mentioned above may be unfamiliar to DMs. A brief description of the effects follows. If a trigger that activates *fascinate* is hit, the character refuses to stop playing for a round. This may anger characters that have been awaiting their turn and may possibly start a brawl. When *hypnotic pattern* is triggered, a character is stunned for a round. When *phantasmal force* is triggered, the player should be asked to name something found in a fantasy adventure. Whatever this is, it appears in front of the playing character, remaining for a round and behaving according to its nature. This conjured phantasm could be anything from an unarmed kobold to a major deity. *Blur* causes the playing character to become wavy or blurry (− 2 to hit). *Colored spray* creates a vivid spray of color striking characters with less than 12 Hit Dice and stunning them for 2-8 rounds. *Colored lights* is a minor spell that creates hovering spheres of pastel light. *Tempus fugit* speeds up time by a factor of six for the playing character, making him incredibly fast for one round.

Also, the devices within the game can fail. If this happens, the ball might jam a trigger and cast the attached spell until the ball is freed. The game could the characters may have to tell the rightful owner that they've broken a magical game worth well over 200,000 gold pieces.

* **Staging:** The rich possess these particular magical items. They are found in the galleries and sitting rooms of kings, emperors and maybe even interdimensional travelers. Therefore, they are unlikely to be found in the back of an old home, a dungeon or the dank corner of a bugbear's cave.

The value of the Speeding Spheres game may spur a crimelord to send underlings, in the form of thief characters, to infiltrate a rich man's home, steal it and return with the treasure. Similarly, the PCs may be sent to track down a stolen game. They might have to infiltrate a crimelord's lair, find the game and return it safely to its rightful owner.

If the item were to break down, its owner would not want to direct undue attention to the fact that he owned such a luxury. He might instead call upon a party of Neutral or Lawful Good characters to transport the item to its inventor for repairs. The inventor could be on the other side of town or on the other side of the world.

This game could also be the center of a a short but distracting encounter in the home of a powerful person. The characters are told to wait in the same room with Saonuihun's Speeding Sphere game. The game looks compelling and harmless to the eyes of a character—until they pull the plunger, that is.

*** Michael DeWolfe
Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

The Sultan's Uncanny Ghost Ride

* **Definition:** A magical contrivance designed to provide entertainment by giving a ride past a range of illusory ghosts and monsters.

* **History:** The Ghost Ride was originally constructed two centuries ago by order of Sultan Jalinas, the despotic ruler of a small eastern province. He wanted it to be an entertainment for his numerous children. He asked the arch-mage Liirghvul to construct the Ghost Ride, and increased taxes greatly to pay for it. Jalinas was delighted with the contrivance, and paid Liirghvul handsomely. He then cut off the mage's hands and cut out his tongue to ensure that no one else could buy such an entertainment. This action, combined with the Sultan's other excesses, led to a rebellion against Jalinas. His palace was stormed and his family executed. However, neither Jalinas nor his Ghost Ride were found by the mob. He had fled secretly with the aid of a group of gypsies. He paid the gypsies for their aid by giving them the Ghost Ride and showing them how to use it.

Since that time, the gypsies have traveled in many lands with the Ghost Ride, giving shows to villages and towns where they camp. The gypsies are unwilling to reveal any details about how the amusement came into their possession.

* **Description:** At a distance, only the large and brightly-colored facade of the Ghost Ride can be seen, bedecked with flags and banners and bearing a distinctly eastern appearance. The entrance to the facade is painted to look like a cavern entrance. Ten ornate wooden horses stand outside. Each is beautifully carved from a different hue of hardwood, and inset with jewels and pearls. Polished leather straps are attached by exotically-shaped golden buckles. A number of the gypsies who run the Ghost Ride are normally in attendance, clad in bright, garish clothes.

The gypsies permit visitors to mount the wooden horses for a small fee. The horses then come to life and canter gently into the "cavern" entrance. As the visitors ride through the maze of dark tunnels within, they see strange apparitions and sights around them, combined with eerie groans and cackles emanating from the images. Some of these are frightening; others are merely comic. The riders have no control over the horses, which follow a pre-determined path. The ride lasts about a quarter of an hour.

The structure of the Ghost Ride is made out of a large number of light wooden panels and sheets of cloth, which can be slotted together to form the maze. Alternatively, the Ghost Ride can be set up using a local natural cave formation instead of the wooden panels to form the maze of tunnels. If the Ride uses the assembled framework, it can be dismantled and packed away into five large wagons for transportation. The wagons are pulled by the animated horses. The ride can be built in a number of different internal designs.

The illusions are created by a set of 20 magical cubes of smoked glass, which are placed discreetly around the maze where they will not be noticed or broken. Reputedly there were originally 24 such cubes, but the final four have disappeared over the centuries.

* **Construction:** 2,392,000 gp; 1399 days; 1,392,000 XP

The Ghost Ride's construction required the services of a fine woodcarver to create the horses, as well as a skilled jeweler and leatherworker to add the ornamentation. An arch-mage enchanted them, giving them animation and life. To do this, he first had to research an equivalent to the clerical spell, *animate objects*. Material components for the horses' enchantment included a large piece of finest seidonwood (at a price of 800 gp), the ichor of a demon horse (a nightmare), two of the most precious turquoise gems (at least 1,000 gp value each) and a pinch of silver dust.

The illusion cubes were created by the mage with the spells *phantasmal force, hallucinatory terrain* and *ventriloquism*. The cubes were formed from the finest glass made from sand from the hottest part of a nearby desert, into which was mixed powdered fungi, diamond dust, and the eyes of a doppleganger.

The controlling amulet required the spell *charm monster*. The material components were a mixture of gold and pomegranate seeds, plus the eyes of the nightmare.

The canvas for the facade and the wooden panels used for making the maze are not magical. Any carpenter could construct suitable paneling, at a cost of 320 gp including materials. The canvas costs around 470 gp.

* **Statistics:** Area covered: 1,000 square feet if made of wooden panels; 5 mile diameter if inside a natural cavern. The latter size limit is determined by the range of the magical horses.

Horses: Each has the same statistics as a riding horse.

Cubes: 20. Each cube produces a different illusion. Effects detailed under Functioning, below.

Assembly: 5 hours by skilled gypsies; 4 days by unskilled laborers such as PCs. Volume: 2500 cubic feet when properly packed into the five wagons. Weight: 7,000 lbs. The cubes are normally packed separately for safety.

* **Functioning:** The Ghost Ride must initially be set up with some care. First of all, a suitable maze must be built or a cave complex mapped out. Each illusion cube must then be correctly sited and keyed into place using the control amulet, which is owned by the leader of the gypsies. This involves placing the cube on a flat surface, touching it with the amulet and speaking the word "Verikluss." Until this is done the cube will not produce its illusion. Some of the illusions are enhanced by being placed in appropriate surroundings.

A cube is apparently immobile once keyed into place. More than five points of damage by a single blow will shatter it. However, if a powerful magical item (one that is +2 or better, or produces the effect of a third or higher level spell, such as a *wand of fireballs*) is touched against a cube it will release the cube. Thus, it is possible for cubes to be stolen or moved.

The horses are continually animated,

and are commanded by the control amulet. They can travel outside the Ghost Ride, but will never stray more than five miles from the amulet. The horses do not normally attack or take any aggressive action, but can be commanded to do so by the holder of the amulet.

The illusion cubes respond to the approach of anything magical (usually the horses), producing a variety of images and encounters. It is possible to trigger the illusions using the control amulet once the cubes have been keyed into place.

The images produced by the cubes are intended purely for entertainment. These effects are described below. Under most circumstances they have no effect on observers, but characters who are unaware that the images are illusions suffer the effects listed in italics.

1. This cube projects a traditional winding-sheet ghost, which moans and rattles chains. *Characters are affected as by a wand of fear.*

2. A large ogre is projected by this cube, menacing the riders. *It hits one character for 1d10 damage.*

3. The riders enter a chamber containing three skeletons which do a comical dance, including swapping skulls and using them as footballs and so forth, accompanied by magical music. *No ill effects.*

4. The riders suddenly see a purple worm coming straight at the riders, and apparently swallowing them whole. *Characters believing this fall unconscious for 2d4 turns.*

5. This cube projects seven large bats sweeping low over the riders, screeching loudly. *No ill effects.*

6. A female spirit appears, reaches out to the riders and then screams before fading away. *Characters are affected as by a wand of fear.*

7. The riders see a group of goblins sitting in a circle in front of the approaching horses. They scatter as the horses ride through them. *They hurl stones after the riders, doing 1-3 points of damage to each person.*

8. A large basilisk blunders out of the wall towards the horses. *It appears to petrify one character, who falls unconscious for 1-4 turns.*

9. An efreet rises out of the floor in front of the lead horse, and hurls a fireball that bursts over the riders' heads. *No ill effects.*

10. A silly-looking owl bear bursts out of a side passage and falls flat on its face. It then wanders off looking embarrassed. *No ill effects, apart from a fit of laughter!*

11. A powerful and pompous-looking mage appears ahead of the group, surrounded by smoke. He holds up his hands, and is about to speak when the horses ride past him. He shoots a shower of sparks and flames after the horses. *Each character takes 1d4 points of damage.*

12. For a short distance the horses are accompanied by a group of four unicorns. *No ill effects; pure maidens are* not *befriended.*

13. A side entrance apparently leads into a vast chamber, containing a dragon coiled upon a hoard of treasure. The dragon wakes as the horses pass and it roars, breathing out fire which narrowly misses the last horse. *No ill effects. It is impossible to enter the dragon's chamber.*

14. A shadowy demon appears before the group, rising out of the ground. "Go back!" it screams before fading. This cube is often placed near the entrance. *Characters are affected as by a wand of fear.*

15. The horses pass an area of flames. Salamanders rise out of the fire and throw flaming spears over the heads of the riders. *No ill effects.*

16. Gargoyles detach themselves from niches above the horses and sweep down over the riders, screeching. *No ill effects.*

17. Hundreds of giant ants swarm around the feet of the horses. *Bare-footed characters take 1d4 points of damage each.*

18. A mighty warrior bursts out of a side corridor brandishing a massive, glowing scimitar. He raises it above his head as if to hack the lead horseman — and topples over backwards due to the weight of the sword. *No ill effects, except 1d4 rounds of laughter.*

19. The horses ride around a lake, out of which rises a terrifying sea serpent with blood red eyes. *No ill effects.*

20. The riders enter a large chamber. A fire burns at the center. As the riders pass through, an egg in the heart of the fire hatches, and a phoenix rises up, spreading its golden wings. *Characters are frozen with awe for 1-6 rounds.*

If the DM lets his players find one of the missing cubes he must decide what illusion it produces.

Not all the cubes will always be used for one show. If the entertainment stays in one place for more than a day or two, changes are made in the arrangement so that previous customers are tempted back. Also, the gypsies consider the nature of their audience. If there are many young children, the frightening illusions are replaced by the more comical ones.

* **Hazards:** There is a slight chance of one of the horses going out of control within the tunnels if the horse encounters a situation it is not programmed to cover. There is no risk of this occurring when the ride is being used normally, but it may happen under unusual circumstances. For example, if the gypsy wearing the control amulet is seriously injured or falls unconscious, *all* the horses go out of control. The actions of each horse should be determined by rolling a d20 and finding results on the table below. This table should also be used if an individual horse goes out of control for any reason, such as being attacked, or finding the passage blocked.

1-7	The horse stops moving completely.
8-11	The horse continues on its programmed course as though nothing had happened.
12-17	The horse bolts through the tunnel, and out into the countryside. There is a 30% chance that the rider is thrown.
18-19	The horse bolts in a straight line, crashing through the wood paneling, automatically throwing any rider.
20	The horse immediately turns and attacks any human within range of teeth or hooves, such as someone on the back of another horse.

There is also a danger that part of the maze will collapse, either as a result of out-of-control horses, or because the structure is not completely secure. There is a 2% chance of this happening if the maze was assembled by skilled laborers, and a 20% chance if it was put together by unskilled hands. The wooden panels do only 1-2 points of damage, but any patrons caught in the maze are likely to panic. The heavy canvas has a 20% chance of suffocating anyone trapped under it.

Finally, there is always the risk that one or more important parts of the structure might be stolen or lost during transportation.

* **Staging:** When the gypsies are encountered, the PCs are hired to recover a part of the Ghost Ride which has become lost or stolen.

The amusement is being used as a cover for pick pockets, or to kidnap one or more children. The kidnapers have introduced a secret trap door to the tunnel structure, through which a child disappears. Alternatively, abductions are done with the aid of an unusual animated horse which runs away with the intended victim. The scheme may have the aid of some or all of the gypsies, or they may be as much in the dark as the PCs.

If the Ghost Ride is set up within a cave network, an actual monster could be hiding among the illusions of the ride. This is very effective if the monster is intelligent and corresponds to one of the illusions. The party is hired to get rid of it.

A townsman who objects to the entertainment because it frightens local children tries to get the ride closed down. The party is hired to aid either the gypsies or the local resident.

A rival amusement tries to put the gypsies out of business by organizing "accidents" to scare off their customers. The PC party is hired to organize the accidents, or to protect the Ghost Ride.

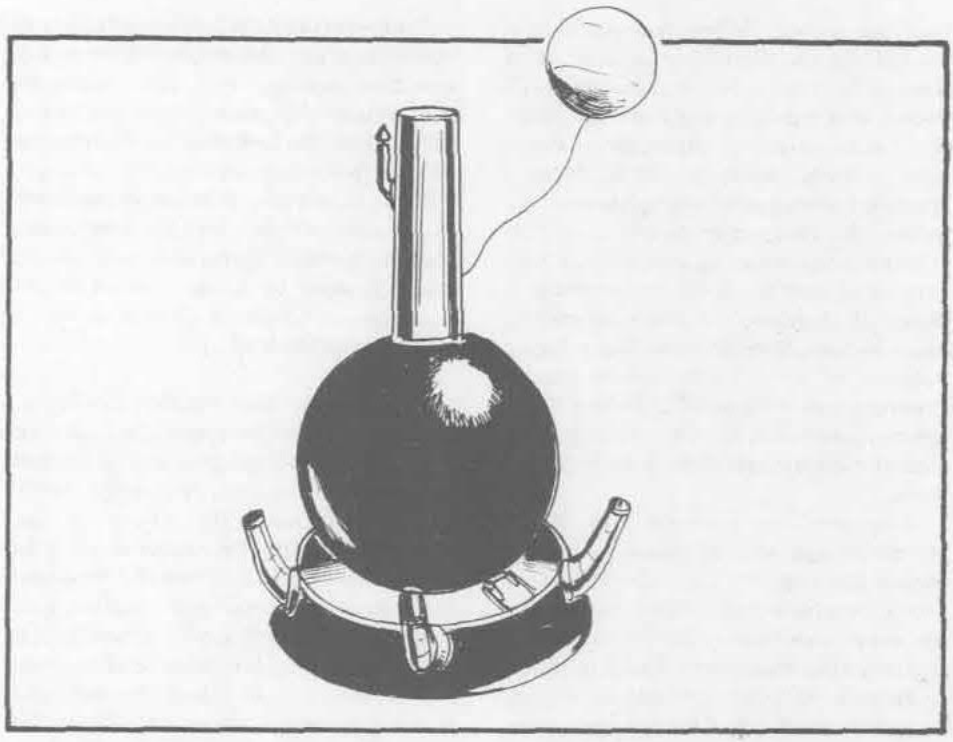
Four of the original illusion cubes have become lost during the last two hundred years. The PCs are hired to recover a lost cube. Alternatively, the party might discover such a cube without knowing what it is. They are then plagued by the gypsies' attempts to recover it. The DM should remember that most users of the Ghost Ride are quite unaware of the presence of the illusion cubes.

Horses: AC 7; 4 HD; 24 hp; MV 24"; AT 3; D 1-3/1-3/2-5; AL N.

Gypsies (average statistics): AC 8; 1 HD; 5 hp; MV 12"; AT 1 (dagger); D 1-4; AL N. Fifteen gypsies (three family groups) travel with the Ghost Ride. There are six men, five women, and four children, ages six to 14. These traveling folk roam the lands in brightly-painted wagons. They are close-knit and dislike strangers. Rumor has it that the gypsy women possess magical powers, and especially the ability to see the future. It is also rumored that the women can curse those who annoy or harm the gypsies.

*** Janet and Peter Vialls
Huntingdon, U.K.

The Rainmaking Machine



* **Definition:** This device creates rain with a chemical reaction and magical devices.

* **History:** Glamus the Weather-Master developed this machine, but Yaman, the sheik of a rural area to the south of Ylaruam (see the D&D® Expert rules), refused to fund its construction. A witch doctor was already paid to perform rain dances, and the sheik's troops drove the persistant Weather-Master out of the Emirate.

Several years later, Jun, one of Glamus's apprentices, went to the sheik. He dazzled Yaman with wonderous magic and sold the project to him as "The Thermoaerohydrometeorological Precipitation Generator." This allowed farmers to grow crops, but put the witch doctor out of work. One night, members of the shaman's tribe crept into Jun's tents and slew the rainmaker in his sleep. They intended to topple the rain machine, but hail and lightning drove them away. The machine still stands, unused, since only Jun knew how to run it. The shaman has been hired again to make rain; meanwhile, the sheik's servants hunt for Glamus, so they can apologize and beg him to run the device. The witch doctor hunts Glamus, too—for another reason.

* **Description:** The rain machine looks like half of a dumbbell, with four protruding pipes and a balloon floating above. The Generator rests on a circular base, with steel air-intake pipes curving upward from the disc. There is a heavy iron hatch atop this base, providing entrance to the machine. A brick tower rises 30 feet above the disc, with chimneys jutting from its walls.

* **Construction:** 78,000 gp; 118 days; 8035 XP. This machine is built somewhat like a castle tower, except that it must be watertight and capable of withstanding powerful acids and roaring fires. An 18,000-foot-long rope tethers the balloon; the rope moves along a track on the outside of the tower. The invention also requires a strong silk balloon filled with hydrogen, capable of floating for long periods of time. Building non-magical parts requires 70 days and 35,000 gp, and is worth 35 XP.

The Generator requires a special *wand of permanent cold* and *wand of permanent lightning bolts* to attach to the balloon. The *wand of permanent lightning bolts* requires 18 days to make, costs 3,000 gp, and an additional 15,000 gp to instill permanence. It is worth 2,000 XP. The *wand of permanent cold* is made in 30 days, costs 5,000 gp, and an additional 25,000 gp to induce permanence. It is worth 6,000 XP to its maker. A *levitation* spell is cast on the machine to accelerate the movement of air currents.

* **Statistics:** Base: 40′ wide, 10′ high. Tower: 15′ wide, 30′ high. The balloon soars at 10,000 feet.

* **Functioning:** The rain machine is controlled from inside its base, which serves as a wastewater tank. The operator enters through the hatch and climbs down a ladder, entering a room four feet deep in water and getting unavoidably wet. Well above the water level, a series of wheels lines the inner rim of this area. They control valves which allow acid to drip onto 16 zinc rods in glass tubes. When the valves are opened, hydrogen is released through a hole at the bottom of each tube, along with any excess acid. The operator raises a flaming rag high into the tower on a pole, igniting the hydrogen overhead. After that, he leaves at once, because of the dangers inside the rain machine (see Hazards).

The gas is burned in the tower, heating and humidifying the air within. Most of the water, created by oxygen from the air combining with the burning hydrogen, is absorbed by the air; the rest drips back down the tower into the base. As hot air rises from the tower, more air is sucked into the base of the tower. The warm, humid air inside the tower rises and forms clouds at higher, cooler altitudes. A low pressure area forms around the tower and wind rises as air pours in from surrounding areas.

Most crops need about two inches of

rain per month. When the machine is turned on, a light drizzle falls in a three-mile radius, extinguishing small flames and precipitating one inch every five hours. A storm cloud forms every 1-20 rounds, drizzling throughout a six-mile radius and creating a downpour within the three-mile radius that lasts 1-10 rounds, dumping one inch of rain every five rounds. If the temperature is below 30 degrees, the machine creates snow instead of rain. Snow fills a larger volume of space than liquid water, resulting in a volume of snow ten times greater than that of rain. That is, one inch of rain is equivalent to 10 inches of snow.

Windspeeds within one mile of the machine average 20 mph, causing missile fire to be at −1, −2 and −3 for short, medium and long ranges. If occurring amid sandy dunes, the winds create a mild sandstorm, limiting vision to 20 feet. Winds grow weaker farther from the machine. Outside one mile, violent effects are not felt, and at ten miles there is only a gentle breeze.

Even when air is extremely damp, it will not rain unless something causes droplets to fall, hence the need for the balloon. A *wand of cold* fires once per turn from the top of the balloon, freezing droplets high in the clouds around which raindrops form. The *wand of lightning* shoots each turn from the balloon's bottom, creating negative electrical charges in nearby droplets. These merge with positively-charged droplets, growing until rain tumbles from the sky.

A *wand* discharging at a living creature causes 6-36 points of damage, halved if a save is successful. There is a 30% chance per turn that a *lightning bolt* will strike anyone within 300 feet of the balloon. There is also an 80% chance per turn that a 30-foot-wide *cone of cold* will strike anyone within 60 feet. Each *wand* can be turned off by a character holding it and speaking a command word, different for each *wand*. Usually the balloon and *wands* are never disturbed after the rain machine is built. They float and fire continually, whether the machine is working or not.

* **Operating Costs:** After 40 hours of continuous use, the rain machine needs new zinc rods and acid. Each of the 16 rods weighs 94 pounds (940 cn) and costs 100 gp. One loading uses 377,496 ounces of acid, for which an alchemist charges 100 gp per ounce. Adventurers may wish to use concentrated acid from monsters such as black dragons and gray oozes. Enough acid to cause one point of damage is equal to 200 ounces of alchemist-made acid.

* **Hazards:** The burning hydrogen creates oven-like temperatures, causing one point of damage per turn to anyone inside the Generator. Acid drips every 1-8 rounds near the edges of the chamber, causing 1-6 points damage to anyone beneath it. Powerful updrafts form in the center of the chamber and suck objects up the tower. Unanchored things weighing less than 200 pounds (1,000 cn) will be lifted through the flaming hydrogen and ejected from the tower. Characters experiencing this take 6d6 points of fire damage and appropriate falling damage. There is a 10% chance per hour of operation that airborne debris, such as sand, will block the air pipes. This stops all artificial rainfall until the pipes are cleared. If the winds have created a sandstorm, vision is limited to 20 feet and an unprotected character is blinded on a roll of 1 on 1d6 (−4 to hit, +4 to AC). A blinded character's sight returns after 1-12 hours, or half that time if the eyes are flushed with water.

A rainmaker *prevents* rain for 1-12 days in the area 20 to 100 miles distant. Clever characters might exploit this drying effect. In a dry grassland, the machine could create farmland and protect it with a "moat" of waterless desert. Generators could be used to draw rain away from a swamp or other area that receives too much water. Greedy, powerful lords might want to devastate nearby farms so that their neighbors will have to buy food from them.

The balloon explodes if exposed to fire, inflicting 3-18 points of damage to everybody within 100 feet (save vs. Breath Weapon for half damage). If the balloon's tether is severed it drifts at random, firing its *wands*. The balloon stays in the area of the rainmaker as long as the tower creates winds. After 1-8 days, it falls to earth, 1-20 miles from the rain machine, and lies on the ground releasing bolts of *cold* and *lightning*.

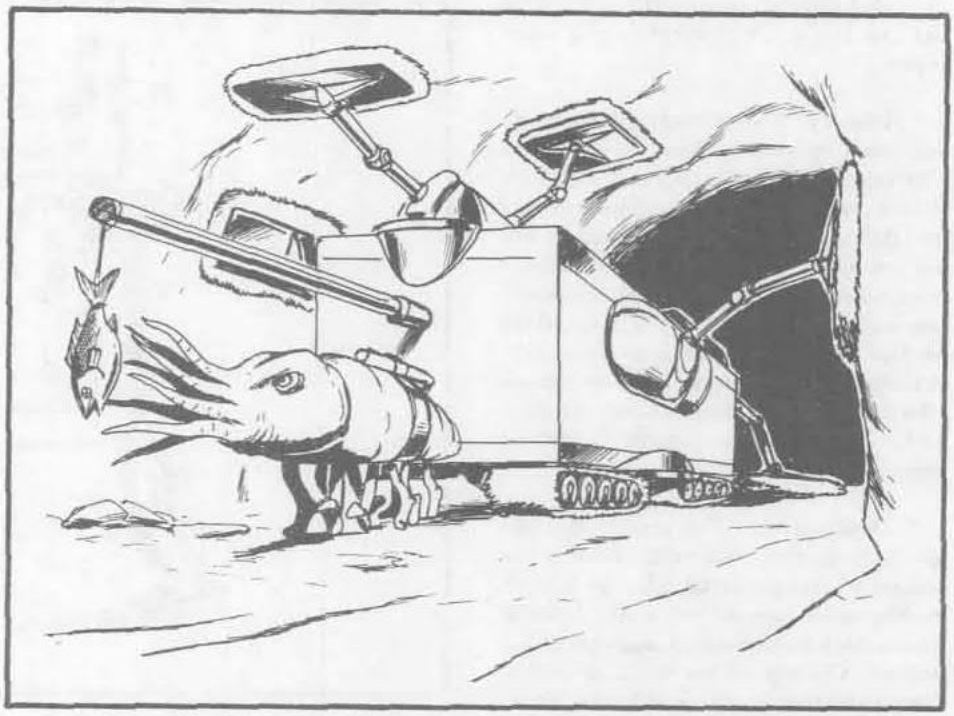
When characters use captured acids from monsters to fuel the machine, the DM should check the supervising character's Intelligence. If the roll fails, the rainmaker accidentally produces the toxic gas nitrogen trioxide when it is activated. The machine spews the gas over a one- to three-mile radius. Characters who breathe it must save vs. poison each round or choke. The victim may attempt a new saving throw each round. A choking character loses 1-4 hp per round, is automatically surprised by any attack, and fights at a −3 penalty for hit and damage rolls.

If the rainmaker's central tower is completely clogged, perhaps by saboteurs, it may explode. Hydrogen accumulates for 1-8 turns; then flame erupts from the machine, followed by a devastating blast. Anyone within 100 to 2,000 feet (d20x100) of the explosion suffers 10d6 points of damage, and is blown 1 to 100 feet away. A saving throw vs. Breath Weapon halves this damage, and cover may reduce it further. An explosion utterly destroys the tower and releases the balloon. All buildings within the blast radius lose 1-20 structural points. If the tower is blocked, the machine must be swiftly turned off to stop the explosion. Plugging all the air intake pipes extinguishes the flame; the tower bursts from gas pressure, but there will be no blast.

* **Staging:** PCs may be hired to obtain acid for the device. If they have flying mounts, they might be hired to deactivate the machine's *wands* and recover the balloon for refilling with hydrogen. The party might be hired to destroy a rain machine.

*** Thomas M. Kane
Farmington, ME

Ungah's Dungeon Cleaner



* **Definition:** A carrion device that cleans dungeon floors of messy debris, cleans walls of untidy adventurer stains, and does windows.

* **History:** The mage Ungah, twin brother of Rahn-Ko the Archmage, comes from a family known for its mild insanities. Ungah's mania is his pathological neatness.

His castle dwelling is rumored to have treasures of almost unfathomable quantity, which brings many greedy opportunists to search for it. Like any self-respecting mage, Ungah has monsters and traps galore in his dwelling. Of course, so great was the expense in setting up his defenses, that his treasure trove has been reduced to something quite average for a wizard of his level (18th).

But greedy adventurers came anyway, and they died all over Ungah's nice, clean floors. Ungah soon realized that a device of some sort would be needed to keep his complex as tidy as could be.

* **Description:** The Dungeon Cleaner is a large metal box on rollers, drawn by a carrion crawler. A dead fish on a stick dangles in front of the beast. Metallic arms with large cloths on the ends stick out from all sides of the box, each cloth made of soft, durable fabric measuring 10 feet wide. A magnet is set inside the box, facing a hole in the bottom of the box between the two sets of rollers.

* **Construction:** 43,000 gp; one month. A blacksmith creates the body box, silver bowl, the seven rollers, the pole to hang the fish, the gears inside the box, and the arms that hold the cloths. The large magnet is placed between the roller sets. A leather worker forms a harness for the carrion crawler, and a tailor creates the cloths. This is done in three weeks' time.

The silver bowl has a *create water* enchantment cast upon it by a cleric of at least eighth level. It is placed inside the box at the front end, with a small spout to allow the water to spill onto the floor. The spell is a variant of the fourth-level spell *create water*; it can be turned on and off at will and lasts for ten years. Any eligible cleric who is faithfully following his alignment can receive this spell once per year.

The carrion crawler can be acquired either by going out and finding one and casting *charm monster* on it, or hiring a party to capture one. The cost listed assumes the builder is doing the latter.

* **Statistics:** Size: 10′ long, 10′ wide, 10′ high. Weight: 1,000 pounds, not including the crawler. Speed: 10′ per round. Armor class: 2. The Cleaner can take 25 hp before buckling. Saves as *metal, hard*.

* **Functioning:** The carrion crawler, lured by the fish dangling just out of reach, moves forward, pulling the device and eating any organic matter it comes across. The enchanted bowl pours water on the floor, dislodging loose dirt. As the front rollers scrub the floor, a belt connected to the rollers moves gears which work the arms up and down, thus scrubbing the walls. The magnet draws ferrous objects into the hole as the Cleaner moves by. The rear rollers dry the floor, and the back cloth polishes it.

* **Operating Costs:** The fish and cloths must be replaced after each use.

* **Hazards:** The carrion crawler may get unruly and buck, breaking loose from its harness and wandering off on its own. The Cleaner is slow and noisy, and does not recognize friends of the household. The spell on the bowl may not obey verbal commands, causing a flood. This is especially likely if the caster was chaotic.

* **Staging:** A group of druids protest the treatment of the carrion crawler and hire the party to set it free.

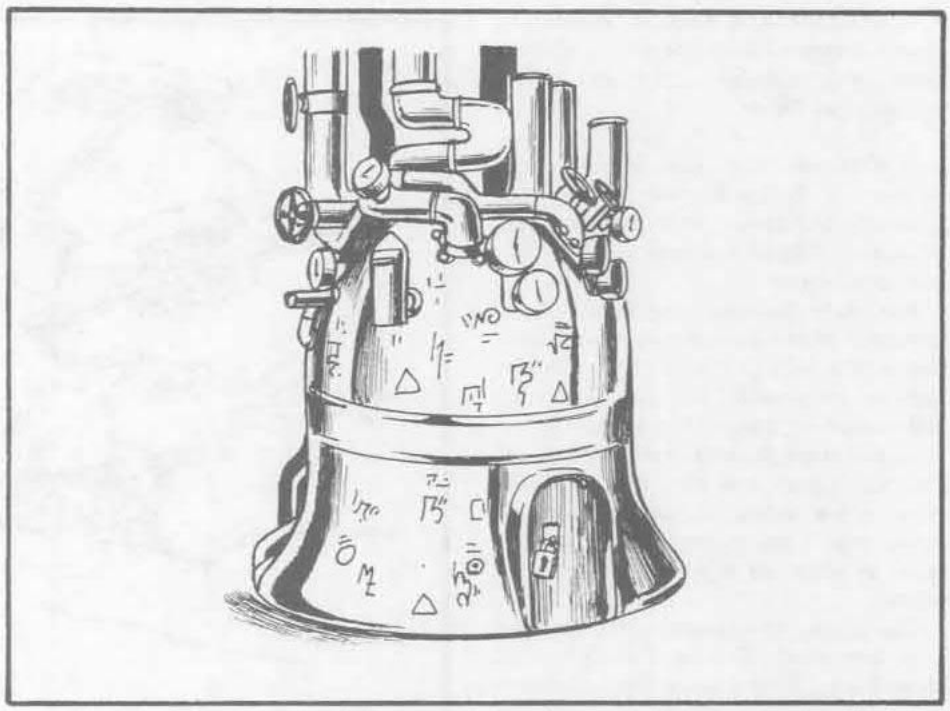
*** John Terra
Randolph, MA

Vanserie's Wondrous Elemental Heater

* **Definition:** A magical central heating unit using fire elementals and water pipes.

* **History:** The elemental heater was first used by wealthy wizards in Glantri City (see D&D® Expert Set and GAZ3 for details on Glantri). The original inventor had difficulties restraining elementals and his first attempts failed miserably. He was responsible for the release of angry elementals in the streets of Glantri. The creatures torched his house, and those of several other neighbours. It was only years later that a Glantrian Wizard-Prince, Lord Vanserie, added the appropriate magic to restrain elementals.

* **Description:** The invention looks like a large iron bell with metal pipes coming in and out on all sides. Runes are engraved all around the bell. A small door with a large padlock appears at the bottom. On top of the whole are small tubes, whistles, gauges and knobs. Once in awhile, steam blows out of one of the tubes, producing a loud whistling sound.



* **Construction:** 32,000 gp; 39 days; 30,500 XP. The enchantment requires a *conjure elemental* (one charge only), and a *hold monster* for the magical circle restraining the creature. The enchantment components suggested for the circle are a pound of shrieker powder, two ounces of phosphorus, a pinch of phoenix eggshell crushed, and a fire salamander tongue. For AD&D® rules, an *enchant an item* and a *permanency* spell must also be used in the process.

* **Statistics:** 10′ × 10′; approx. 800 lbs. One elemental will heat a simple house, two to three for a manor, and a dozen for a large castle or palace. Requires food once per week.

Fire Elementals: AC 2, 0, or −2; HD 8, 12 or 16; MV 360′ (120′); AT 1; D 1-8, 2-16, or 3-24; Save F 8-16; M 10; AL N.

* **Functioning:** The iron bell is the boiler. It contains a pentacle engraved inside, preventing the fire elemental from breaking out. The cold water pipes enter the boiler at the bottom and spiral all the way up, enabling the water to warm up at the contact of the fire elemental. The hot water pipes come out at the top of the boiler, run through the house and return with cold water.

The gauges indicate the pressure inside the boiler. When it gets to high, a jet of steam comes out one of the tubes, alerting the owner. The knobs allow the user to turn off or reduce the flow of water to control the temperature.

* **Hazards:** Once in a while, the elemental becomes enraged, violently shaking the boiler to break loose. When this happens, the tubes on top of the boiler blow steam out to alert the owner.

In this case, the cold water should be turned on all the way to calm down the elemental. The irate creature takes an hour to cool off. Then, when it goes dormant, the small door at the bottom of the boiler should be opened to throw in a shovel full of phosphorus or coal. This acts as food for the fire elemental and should keep it quiet for about a week.

If no one intervenes, the boiler blows up after 1d4 hours, causing 2d20 points of steam damage to everything in the room, and the elemental goes on a rampage, burning everything in the house.

* **Staging:** Wealthy wizards often use this kind of equipment. An adventure might occur when the elemental manages to break free. This can happen several ways—either someone cast a *dispel magic* in the same room, allowing the elemental to break through the bottom, or the cold water wasn't turned on to calm the elemental before opening the door.

When this happens, the wizard (or his butler) may hire the party to track down the elemental and bring it back to the boiler. Meanwhile, the elemental will try to burn down the tower.

Another adventure occurs when a wizard needs some repair done, or the construction of a new boiler. A PC magic-user could handle this for gold.

*** Bruce A. Heard
Lake Geneva, WI

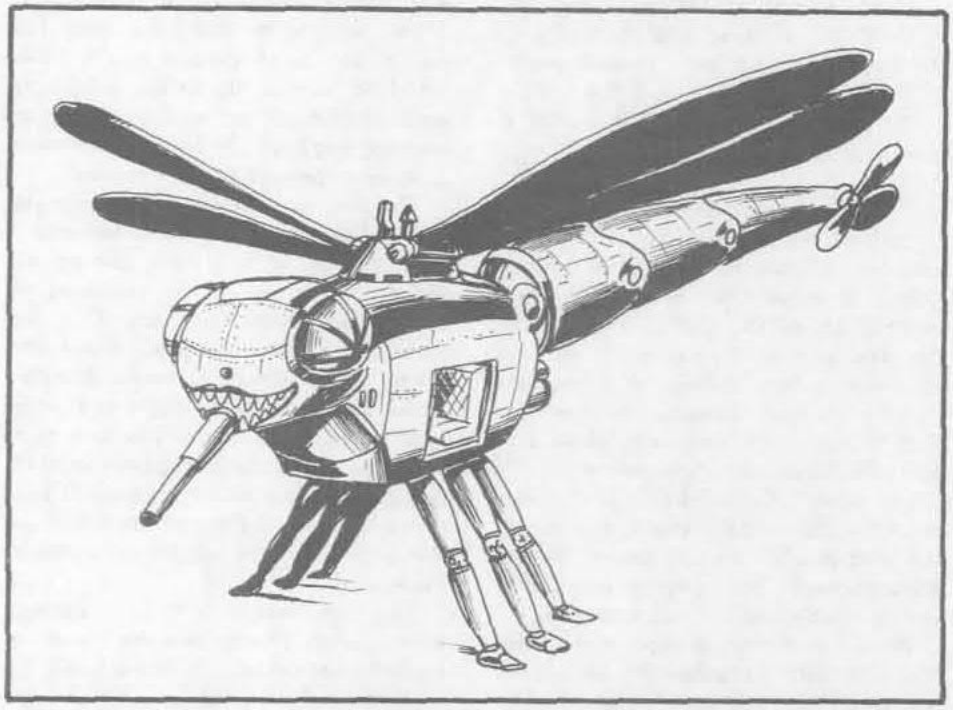
Volospin's Dragonfly of Doom

* **Definition:** A flying machine made from a giant firefly construct, often used as a dragon-buster.

* **History:** A new type of flammable ore was discovered in the southern Glantrian foothills (see D&D® Expert Set and GAZ3 for details on Glantri). The ore was notorious for attracting red dragons. The fiery lizards were especially fond of the ore and used it as much for food as for a way to improve their fiery breath. Appalled by the prospect, Glantrian Wizard-Princes studied ways of counter-attacking. By that time, the dragons infested the foothills and traditional armies proved incapable of clearing the region. Prince Volospin came up with the *Dragonfly of Doom*, a powerful golem variant called a construct. It was designed to blast dragons out of the sky, or to move troops to and from the scene of the carnage.

Unfortunately, the device needed the very same ore the dragons craved to sustain the magical properties of the construct. Fierce red dragons opposed the few Dragonfly Squadrons the wizards were able to line up, until both sides suffered horrendous casualties. The war ended when the ore supply was exhausted. These mines are now rare, and the constant object of rivalry between men and dragons. Only one squadron of twelve dragonflies remains in active duty in the Glantrian Army, at the citadel of Glantri City. It is considered the "creme de la creme" of their armed forces, an elite unit they will only commit in the most critical situations.

* **Description:** The invention looks like a giant metallic dragonfly, with four large insect-like wings on the top, a large round body, a long tail, and six legs to support the whole. The construct's body is hollow and can be accessed through two large openings on each side. Two thick crystal semi-spherical canopies bulge out in the front at the location of the eyes. A large metal tube sticks out of the mouth. The dragonfly is usually black, with a painted mouth grinning wickedly to scare the enemy.



* **Construction:** 300,000 gp plus labor; 11 months and 18 days. The construct itself requires no less than six spells and 5,000 gp worth of bronze and crystal. For D&D® rules, *create magical monster* shapes the bronze and the crystal. *Hold monster* allows the use of commands inside the construct. *Fly* and *reverse gravity* give this heavy metallic creation the ability to fly. *Disintegrate* must be cast at the core of the construct. It activates the mechanism that burns the ore and generates magical energy to sustain the construct's abilities. Then finally, a *wish* is necessary to bind all the spells and awake the construct. This process alone costs 233,000 gp and takes at least eight months.

For AD&D® rules, replace the *create magical monster* with a *monster summoning VII*. Each spell requires an *enchant an item* and a *permanency* spell. Using a *Manual of the Golems* is mandatory. The two staves of *magic missiles*, and their six ammunition discs (see Functioning), the *meteor swarm* shooter and its two containers, the *magic mouth*, the six doses of *potion of healing*, and the flood light cost a total of 59,200 gp. They require three months and 18 days of work. Interior finishing, complete with training manual and painting come to another 7,800 gp. Time required for the enchantments of all these items can be reduced if more than one wizard works on the task (one per item). Construction time is then reduced to eight months minimum. NPC wizards participate in the construction of the device at the rate of 500 gp per level per month of work. This can easily add up to an extra 150,000 to 200,000 gp.

* **Statistics:** Size: 40′ long by 40′ wide (wing span) by 14′ high. Body size: 20′ long by 10′ wide. Weight: 4,000 lbs with ore. Payload: 1,000 lbs. or 1,500 lbs. at half speed. Ceiling: 9,000 ft. Range: 250 miles, at the rate of 50 miles a day with normal payload, or 125 miles at the rate of 25 miles a day with maximum payload (use statistics below for melee). Armament: two *staves of magic missiles* on swivels and a *meteor swarm* shooter in the front.

Construct: AC 0; HD 20**; hp 160; MV 60' (20') walking, 360' (120') flying; AT 2 *magic missile* bursts, 1 *meteor swarm*; D 15d6 + 15 × 2, 8d6 × 4, 8d6 × 4; Save F10; ML 12; AL N; XP 8,900 if destroyed in combat.

* **Functioning:** Although the inside is hollow, the dragonfly is a living creature, similar to an iron or bronze golem. It can walk slowly on its six legs if ordered so, or fly. Enchantments allow the crew to control its movements. It is immune to fire, missiles and weapons causing d6 basic damage or less. For D&D® rules, the dragonfly lacks any special defense due to the bronze golem's "fiery blood". For AD&D® rules, it does not have the *cloud kill* attack, nor any of the iron golem's usual immunities and advantages. In both game systems, it is vulnerable to non-magical weapons.

Behind each crystal canopy is a seat. The dragonfly's commander sits on the left. A joystick and pedals allow him to control the flight. Unless the commander had intensive training, he must make an Intelligence check to take off, land, hover close to an obstacle, or perform any combat maneuver. Failing a check causes the dragonfly to fall 100' per round. To resume control, the commander must succeed another Intelligence check. A crash inflicts 1d10 pts of damage per 100' fallen (or fraction thereof) to the dragonfly. Passengers suffer the same amount of damage (save for half damage). The seat to the right contains the mechanism controlling the *meteor swarm* shooter. *Meteors* are launched one by one or in salvos of four each round. The joystick points the shooter 45 degrees right, left, up or down. Pressing on the red button on top of the joystick releases one *meteor*. The gunner must roll against the target's AC to hit it, or make a Dexterity check when armor classes are not appropriate. He may shoot all four *meteors* at the same target or attempt to shoot separate targets at −2 to hit per extra target. The gunner also controls a beam of *continual light* from his position (150-foot range). The cabin at the rear contains a few chests, simple benches with straps and room for passengers. Three passengers and their gear can comfortably fit in the rear cabin. More could fit as well, up to the maximum payload of 1,500 pounds, assuming an average weight of 200 lbs. per passenger, including commander and gunner).

The two side openings lead into the rear cabin. They may be closed with a sliding door, or left open during the flight. Two staves can be mounted on swivels, one at each opening. They are *staves of magic missiles* capable of shooting up to 15 missiles each round. Missiles automatically hit their target as per the spell of the same name. The two *magic missile* gunners must be strapped in when firing out of the two openings. If not, they must make a Dexterity check or fall out each time the construct makes a maneuver.

The weapons have limited ammunition. The *meteor swarm* shooter is loaded from outside, before takeoff. Its magazine holds a container with enough magical energy for 2d6 + 40 individual *meteors*. Each *magic missile* staff comes with a thick metallic disc that fits over it. The disc contains 1d6 + 8 bursts of 15 *magic missiles*. These may be changed during combat with a successful Dexterity check. Missing this attempt causes the disc to fall out.

The chests in the cabin hold one extra container for the *meteor swarm* shooter, four extra discs for the *magic missiles*, and a first aid kit with two *potions of healing* (6 doses total). The passengers' extra equipment may be secured into the empty chests. Whenever the dragonfly flies into combat, it activates an effect called *magic mouth*. To scare the enemy, the *magic mouth* chants a familiar valkyrie song in a shrieking voice. It may be turned off.

* **Operating Costs:** The device requires a rare type of ore to function. It comes in fist-size pellets and must be loaded at the rear of the construct before take off. The construct holds 25 pellets, at the cost of 400 gp each (10,000 gp total). One pellet of ore allows 10 miles of flight, or four rounds of combat. Extra pellets can be loaded in the rear cabin for future use. They weigh a pound each (equivalent to 50 coins). A typical crew of four men operating on dragonflies would cost 1,000 gp per month. Their training requires 50 miles of flight duty per month. *Meteor swarm* containers can be recharged at the rate of 900 gp per charge; *magic missile* discs at the rate of 100 gp per charge. The construct may be repaired if damaged. Repair must be performed by a wizard familiar with the dragonfly's enchantment process, at the cost of 1,000 gp per point of damage.

* **Hazards:** The commander may lose control over the construct's flight or run out of ore in midair, either of which causes a crash. A dragonfly must land at once after taking 140 points of damage or more. At 160 points of damage, the dragonfly blows up, creating a 20d6 *fire ball*. The construct and all items aboard are lost. The dragonfly is a semi-intelligent being. Although it is normally subjugated to the commander's control, it may go haywire if it takes 50 points of damage or more in a single attack. In this case, the construct resumes control over itself and turns against whatever caused the damage. It ignores the commander's orders until the latter succeeds an Intelligence check at −10, or the object of the construct's anger is destroyed.

* **Staging:** A wizard-prince summons the party to his palace. A commander unhappy with the current regime has defected to another country. He and his crew are currently flying away with a stolen dragonfly. The party may use one or two dragonflies to catch up with the fugitives. Interception occurs near an active ore mine. If capture is not possible, the orders are to destroy the stolen dragonfly at all costs to prevent its capture. For more fun, red dragons could come out of the mine and hunt down all three dragonflies for the ore they carry.

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Dorfin's Little Shop of Horrors

* **Definition:** Although not an invention itself, the Shop of Horrors is a gnomish shop famous for selling loads of inventions at various prices. These items can easily be used in dungeons, monsters' lairs, or fitted on common vehicles and larger inventions such as the ones described earlier in this book.

* **History:** The gnomes of Highforge (see GAZ1 — The Grand Duchy of Karameikos) are famous for their imagination and the number of devices the dwarves help them build.

All through their lives, they accumulate heaps of unused items. Added to this is a number of magical items they trade for or mysteriously find in their dungeons. Once their initial interest is gone, gnomes quickly forget their past inventions and get busy on others. Just recently, King Dorfin, the gnomish monarch, passed an edict allowing open sale of all unused inventions, as a way to clean up his ever-so-cluttered passageways. Thus was born Dorfin's Little Shop of Horrors.

The shop, open all year round, draws crowds of strange clients hoping to solve some technical problem. The shop now expands to meet the demand, since many clients require customized devices that are not in stock at the shop. One may wait several months before an order is filled, but the gnomes do offer delivery services for a fee (see Express Delivery below).

* **Merchandise:** *Regular*-sized inventions, the ones kept in stock, are described in the following pages. Larger devices come in the following categories: *Deluxe, Special,* and *King Size*.

These categories indicate the various sizes, performance and prices of an item. For example, a *Deluxe* model is twice as large, efficient and expensive as its *Regular* counterpart, three times so for a *Special*, and four times so for a *King Size* model. For example, *Deluxe* "hammer-bashers" affect a surface twice as large, require twice as many crewmen, cause twice as much damage, and cost twice as much as *Regular* ones.

Engines & Machinery

These devices are used to provide a power source needed to move heavy items like drawbridges, large trap mechanisms, or vehicles, or the curious mobile inventions described in this book. *Regular* models are sufficient for human-size/weight loads, *Deluxe* would handle a horse, *Special* an elephant, and *King Size* a large red dragon.

Golem-Muscle: This machinery uses a number of golems turning cranks as a source of power. This type of machinery offers reliability, unlimited use, and great strength, but is best suited for slow action.

The *Regular* machine comes with one golem at 132,000 gp, two for the *Deluxe*, three for the *Special*, and four for the *King Size*.

Pedal-Transmission: This system is a true gnomish invention, using the strength of many gnomes as a source of power. This involves anywhere from one to 100 gnome-size workers whose responsibility is to pump pedals. Although cheap, this system is also unreliable, since the workers get tired or ignore orders to go or stop at a critical moment. Transmission breakdown is also common. The typical *Regular* model has 25 gnome-size seats for 1,500 gp.

Spring-Load: The origins of this system are not well known, but the gnomes learned to reproduce it quite skillfully. This mechanism involves a large metal spring. It is cranked up before use and released when power is needed.

The *Regular* mechanism requires three gnomes to wind up, operates for one hour (+1d20 rounds), and costs 3,000 gp. When winding up the mechanism, the user has a 10% chance of breaking the spring because it is difficult to sense the maximum tension the spring can take.

Steam-Power: The gnomes are specialists in this strange science. It consists of heating water in an enclosed area in order to build steam pressure. The steam is then released to activate machinery. This system is best suited for heavy but slow machinery use. The boiler needs water and combustible fuel. The user must bear in mind the weight of the boiler. The steam machine is complicated to use, with many gauges, levers, knobs, and whistles, usually requiring a minimum crew of four engineer gnomes.

A *Regular* wood-burning version costs 5,000 gp. More sophisticated versions exist, using various *fire elemental* creatures as a permanent source of heat; a *Regular* device of this sort would cost 32,000 gp. Any of these machines have a 5% chance per day of use of blowing up (the Gnomish Law Factor requires the DM to make a secret roll at the beginning of the day and choose the worst possible moment for the accident).

Wind-Cycle: This latest gnomish invention consists of a series of wind bags, sails, windmill vanes, and/or large propellors designed to catch the wind. Power is delivered in proportion to the strength of the wind. This machinery is suggested for vehicles to be used on a flat, windy area (sea, desert, smooth grasslands, etc,) or as a permanent fixture pumping water or activating traps and elevators, etc.

The *Regular* wind-cycle costs 900 gp and needs no supervision. Unfortunately, its functioning is subject to the winds and mechanical breakdowns (10% per day of use). Some wind-cycles are equipped with permanent magical winds. This increases the price to 18,900 gp (using the AD&D®'s system's *gust of wind*) or 30,900 gp (using the D&D® system's *control winds*).

Weapons & Combat Devices

The following inventions are designed to attack a foe or defend against one. The range of weapons does not increase in the higher categories, unless one of the engines described above helps *launch* the projectiles. Use the Merchandise guidelines regarding the categories without any further change.

Dorfin's Organ Pipes: This device is made of large metal pipes hooked to a *wind-cycle* engine (see above). Aside from their musical effects, King Dorfin's army often uses these to shower opponents with hails of stones, arrows, oil, tar, or anything potentially harmful that might be lying around.

The *Regular* device continuously showers a 20′ × 20′ area, up to 120′ away. Anything within the affected area suffers 2d6 points of damage per round (save for half damage). At least four gnomes are required to feed the tubes with the various projectiles. The pipes have a 10% chance per round of clogging up and blowing debris away in all directions.

Hammer Basher: This device consists of a large wooden hammer mounted on a hinge. When needed, its users crank it up and then release a powerful spring that hurls the hammer back down.

A *Regular* hammer basher does 2d10 points of damage within a 3′ × 3′ area. It requires two gnomes to crank up, and another to release the spring. The hammer hits every two rounds. Unfortunately, the hammer has a tendency to bounce back if the spring breaks, a 5% chance per hit. The mechanism is usually smashed to bits when this happens.

Hunting Ballista: The gnomes have been selling this device to sailors on quests to hunt large sea monsters. It consists of an oversized crossbow shooting a harpoon or spear fitted with a large suction cup. A thick rope and a steam powered winch then allow the users to pull back their prey (or winch themselves closer, as the case may be).

A *Regular* hunting ballista can cause 3d6 points of damage at a range of 300′, and costs 400 gp. It requires three gnomes to handle the projectiles and the ballista, plus the crew to operate the steam powered winch (see above in "Engines & Machinery"). A hunting ballista has a 5% chance of malfunctioning, in which case the rope and its projectile swing around 1d4 gnomes standing nearby.

Net Thrower: This device throws a net to great distances. It uses a spring loaded wheel and a circular net with small weights attached to it. The wheel spins and launches a net that flies to its target. A net thrower comes with a mechanical- or steam-powered winch to haul the net and its cargo back.

The *Regular* net thrower has a 100′ range and affects a 10′ × 10′ area. It costs 600 gp. It requires a three-gnome crew, plus those needed for the steam powered winch (see above). A net thrower has a 25% chance of malfunctioning each time the net is thrown, in which case the entire crew is trapped by its own net.

Pedal Crossbow: This machine uses a series of belts and wheels to hurl quarrels in rapid succession. A gnome sits on top and pedals as fast as he can to activate the wheels and their belts. Meanwhile, another gnome drops quarrels on the belts' notches, shooting the projectiles forth.

The *Regular* pedal crossbow requires a two gnome crew and costs 800 gp. It can launch six quarrels per round, up to a 120′ maximum range. The wheels and belts take 2d4 rounds to come to a complete halt. The pedal crossbow has a 10% chance of malfunctioning per round of use: some of the belts snap, causing the quarrels to shoot at random in every direction until the wheels come to a complete halt.

Wheel of Flails: This consists of a horizontal rod with a dozen spiked chains hanging from it. A steam machine causes the rod to spin thanks to gears and belts connected to both ends of the rod. The spinning rod causes the chains to fail. This is perfect for dungeon entrance or the front of a heavy vehicle.

The *Regular* wheel of flails costs 5,500 gp with a common steam machine (see above, "Engines & Machinery"). It inflicts 2d20 points of flailing damage per round to anything within a 10′ × 20′ area immediately in front of or under the rod. The rod has a 5% chance per round of use of breaking, sending its chains flying off in random directions (2d6 points of damage for each chain).

Miscellaneous Inventions

Many of the items described below have been enchanted by local Karameikan arch-mages, or perhaps even by a few Wizard Princes of Glantri, in return for some odd gnomish invention. The various categories described in the Merchandise section affect these items' performances.

Ambreville's Watershoes: A gnome made a fortune in Glantri City for inventing this device. The rights were sold later on to one of the d'Ambreville brothers. It consists of two narrow wooden boxes, measuring about six feet long. The user's feet fit in holes in the middle.

The watershoes contain a leather mechanism that must be wound up before use. When released, it causes two small propellers to spin, and thus pushes the watershoes forward. Upon departure, the user must make a Dexterity check or fall into the water. All watershoes have a 300′ (+1d%) range after which the user slowly sinks. The leather mechanism has the usual breakdown chances for spring-loaded devices (see Engines & Machinery).

The *Regular* device moves at 60′ per round and sells for 250 gp. Subsequent categories only affect the speed *or* the maximum weight the shoes can float.

Bargle's Infamous Firepack: This invention is named after a nefarious Karameikan wizard from whom the gnomish inventor stole dozens of *wands of fireball*. The invention consists of a thick leather backpack solidly fastened with two *wands of fireball* facing 45 degrees down and backward. The wand tips are stuck in hollow metal tubes. Upon uttering the command word, the wands shoot *fireballs* into the narrow tubes, which channels the flames out with great force. In effect, this causes the user to suddenly leap forward, away from a pursuing foe.

The *Regular* B.I.F. comes with two wands, at a cost of 15,000 gp. It allows a 240′ long leap in one round, arching 40′

upward. A Dexterity check is needed to avoid each obstacle in the path. For each use, there is a 5% chance one of the wands runs out of charges, causing the user to spin wildly about for one round. Anything immediately behind a B.I.F. takes 20d6 points of fire damage (save for half damage). Subsequent categories increase the number of wands and the maximum size/weight of the user only.

Emergency Halting Device: This device can be fastened to most mobile inventions. It is used for emergency stops. It consists of a crossbow shooting a grapnel with a rope. The other end of the rope is fastened to the vehicle. It may otherwise be used as a simple grapnel shooter.

The *Regular* thing has a range of 60′ and costs 250 gp. It may be used to stop any other *Regular* device. It weighs 50 cn. Because of the violent stop, the device to which the grapnel is fastened has a 30% chance of being damaged (double all malfunction chances and pay half the invention's price for repairs).

Express Delivery Network: Ever wondered how that gnomish delivery system works? The gnomes littered their hills with small trading posts equipped with catapults, launching ramps, and spare wooden wings. When a delivery is needed, they fasten the wings to the merchandise, load the whole thing on a catapult and launch it to the next trading post. Upon arrival, a large cloth opens above the merchandise and softens its landing. There, the gnomes read its label, fold the landing cloth, and launch it to the next trading post, and so on until it reaches its destination.

This system is not for sale, and the fee amounts to 3 gp per mile for *Regular* items, 6 gp for *Deluxe*, 9 gp for *Special* merchandise, etc. The chances of merchandise getting lost or damaged are surprisingly low—just 1% per mile, although the management is not responsible for lost or damaged merchandise.

Field Cloaking Device: This invention is made of a spring-loaded tube filled with a large camouflage net. When the spring is released, the net is launched upward, unrolls and lands over the user. The net may be dyed to match the place where it will be used. Several extra features can be added, like phony paper leaves.

A *Regular* model costs 200 gp, weighs 200 cn and affects a 10′ × 10′ area. It totally conceals the area from anyone standing 100′ away. Anyone closer has a 50% chance of seeing the net. The spring may backfire and pull the net back, either trapping its user or removing it at the worst possible moment (10% chance/use).

King Dorfin's Giant Mower: This invention looks like a heavy chariot equipped with a golem-muscle device (see Engines & Machinery). The golem turns a crank that causes the wheels to turn but also allows a series of rotating blades to appear on the sides and the front. Several wide rakes drag behind the chariot and recover any fallen debris.

This *Regular* mower moves at 120′ per round and causes 2d10 points of damage to anything in its path, including grass, trees, wooden structures, people and other obstacles. It has been used in combat a few times, but the gnomes controlling the golem often got shot by archers, causing the mower to move at random, regardless of what armies it was decimating. The gnomes will get rid of the device for a mere 150,000 gp.

Marianita's Relentless Spy: This device makes heavy use of magic and was offered to the gnomes by Lady Marianita, the Glantrian ambassador to Specularum, in exchange for a great service. After a short period of amusement (as usual), the gnomes returned to their inventions and put the Relentless Spy up for sale.

The item consists of a metal dish rotating over a retractable arm, thanks to small gnomish cranks and levers. A gold wire links the dish to a *crystal ball with ESP*. As the dish rotates, it scans the area around it and sends the information to the crystal ball. A simple luminescent diagram of the area appears in the crystal ball. The dish requires the use of various optional magical wands to function. These are installed on the dish itself. The wands and their effects are given below:

Detect Invisible: (12,000 gp) for each *invisible* target detected, a small green dot appears on the map glowing in the *crystal ball*.

Detect Metal: (12,000 gp) as above, except only a specific type of metal is detected. A blue dot flashes in the ball.

Detect Evil: (12,000 gp) as above; a blinking black dot appears.

Detect Magic: (6,000 gp) as above; a blinking yellow dot appears.

Clairvoyance: (18,000 gp) as above; a three dimensional diagram of the detected object rotates in the *crystal ball*, showing all its features.

Infravision: (18,000 gp) as above; a red dot appears.

The *crystal ball with ESP* and the dish (without the wands) cost a total 30,500 gp. Each time an intelligent creature is detected, its name, nature, and immediate purpose appear written in the *crystal ball*. This invention only comes in *Regular* size and has a range of 300′.

Portable Falling Softener: King Dorfin's loyal gnomes found that strange alchemical substances produced air when mixed together. This led to the design of the falling softener, a safety device whose purpose is to limit falling damage. It looks like a thick padded leather vest with a hood and extra leg protections.

When falling, the user pulls on a ring releasing the two alchemical compounds. The device rapidly fills with air and forms a soft protective cushion. Falling damage is reduced to 1/10, unless falling on sharp objects. If this happens, the user flies wildly through the area, bumping into all possible obstacles, until all the air escapes from the vest (2d4 rounds). If falling on a hard surface, the user must make a Dexterity check or keep on bouncing for 2d4 rounds (don't forget to check again for sharp objects.)

The *Regular* device sells for 200 gp and is usable only once. It weighs 150 cn. Subsequent categories only affect the size of the device and its price. There is a 15% chance the ring will break, preventing a normal functioning. A variant provides a source of breathable air when submerged, lasting 1d4 turns (of course, the thing always forces the user back to the surface... a flaw the gnomes corrected by attaching big boulders).

Secure Sighting System: This is commonly used by gnomes to secretly watch the surface from their burrows. It consists of a long tube with mirrors and lenses, mounted on a swivel. It comes with cranks and levers to pull it up or down and rotate it. A system of counter weights helps lifting the tube.

The *Regular* thing costs 750 gp and allows clear vision up to 120'. Each time the sighting system is pulled there is a 10% chance the counterweights will push too fast and launch the tube up into the air, or cause the tube to remain stuck in its shaft until repaired.

Teldon's Ever-Glowing Beam: A powerful Karameikan wizard gave King Dorfin a bag full of *continually lit* marbles as a gift. The gnomes took the opportunity to insert them in one of their most common trinkets. It consists of a short metal tube, containing a series of tiny mirrors and lenses. The light coming from the marble is multiplied and shoots forth from the opening at the front of the tube.

The *Regular* beam of light has a 30' range and costs 50 gp. It has all the advantages of the *continual light* spell. If the user suspects *dispel magic* activities nearby, he may close the tube (an interior lead coating will prevent the spell from being negated). Any violent shock will break the lenses and mirrors inside.

Vehicles & Transportation Devices

These inventions use one of the mechanisms described in the "Engines & Machinery" section. Their maximum loads vary according to their engines' performance. Other inventions described above may be fitted in these vehicles.

Gnomobile: The northern gnomes built this strange machine for transportation across the frozen reaches. It looks like a sled made of cloth and light wood, with a large rotating propeller facing backward.

The propeller is part of a wind-cycle engine (see "Engines & Machinery") pulling a spiked track under the sled. The track grabs the snow and pushes the sled forward. A *Regular* gnomobile carries two gnomes, or one gnome with 250 cn of cargo weight. It moves at 150' per round on snow and ice only.

Hopping Ornothopter: This vehicle looks like a small boat made of cloth and wood, with four long spring-loaded legs and two collapsible leather wings. The legs cause the hopper to spring forth when released. Meanwhile, as the crew rewinds the springs, the leather wings open up and allow the ornothopter to safely glide down.

The *Regular* ornothopter sells for 3,500 gp. It requires two gnomes to crank up the springs and control the gliding path. After a hop, it glides for 1d6 rounds, at a rate of 60' per round. Cranking up the springs takes three rounds. Aside from the crew, an ornothopter can carry 800 cn of cargo. Springs are subject to the usual breakdowns for this type of mechanism (see Engines & Machinery); in addition, the crew has a 1% chance per hop of forgetting to unfold the ornothopter's wings because of fatigue.

King Dorfin's Lepidopter: This looks like a large paper butterfly with spring-loaded wings, a saddle, and a joystick in the middle. Before take-off, the user winds up the springs with a small crank and then releases the paper wings.

A *Regular* lepidopter flies one hour (+1d20 rounds) at 60' per round and costs 3,600 gp. It carries one gnome and 100 cn of cargo. Springs have usual breakdown chances (see "Engines & Machinery"). The brightly colored wings are treated with oil to avoid vulnerability to weather.

Morphail's Night Wings: The creator of this invention was a gnome servant working for Prince Morphail (see GAZ3 — The Principalities of Glantri). The gnome built this device so he could follow his master. It looks like an oversized backpack containing a spring-loaded motor. The backpack also contains two leather, foldable, bat-like wings to be pulled out before use. The motor flaps the wings and allows the gnome to fly.

Regular night wings will flap for 1 hour (+1d20 rounds) at 60' per round, and allow only the weight of the gnome and some light gear. The spring is subject breakdown problems for this type of mechanism (see "Engines & Machinery"). Its costs 3,500 gp.

Paddler-Wheeler: This looks like two large canoes held together by several transverse beams. A flatbed for cargo use rests in the middle of the paddler-wheeler. Twenty five gnomes sit on a row of seats with pedals and handlebars, in front of and behind the flatbed.

The pedals activate a series of small paddles located between the two canoes, causing the paddler-wheeler to move back and forth. The paddles connect to small wheels located on the sides of the canoes, which allow the paddler-wheeler to move on firm ground. The *Regular* craft moves 80' per round on water, or 120' per round on the ground, and carries up to 12,000 cn of weight. It costs 2,500 gp, with 10-20 hull points.

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Creating Spells and Magical Items

The guidelines suggested below are designed to function especially for the D&D® Game. For the AD&D® Game, refer to the *DMG*. AD&D® Dungeon Masters may use the system suggested below, adding appropriate modifications whenever needed for AD&D® rules.

Spell Research

To research a spell, a magic-user must first have access to a large library such as the ones that can be found in major cities (see guidelines on creating a personal library at the end of this section). Then, the wizard must find components for that spell. The nature and number of components are up to the DM or the players, the average being one per spell level. Typical components could be red dragon scales for a potion of *fire resistance*, fresh troll blood for a *ring of regeneration*, a unicorn's horn for a *cloak of dimension door*, etc. Limits are up to the players' and DM's imaginations. In other words, before attempting spell research, a magic-user must go on an adventure to acquire the basic spell components needed.

The magic-user must then be prepared to spend large amounts of gold pieces during the course of his research. The amount to be spent comes to 1,000 gp per spell level. The DM decides what the spell level will be, according to the effects the player describes.

Research takes a week for the initial research, plus a day per 1,000 gp spent. The player does not necessarily know how much time is needed. The PC spends 1,000 gp per day of research (not including initial research time) until the DM informs the player to make an attempt roll (a sure sign the research has come to its end). If the wizard runs out of gold before then, he may interrupt his research, and leave on an errand to earn more money. He may come back later and spend more time and money to advance in his research.

The chances of success to discover a spell vary depending on the spell level researched and whether it is a new spell or a common one (one described in the rules). For a common spell, add the magic-user's intelligence score to his experience level, and multiply the result times two. Then substract 3 per spell level researched. For a new spell, substract 5 per spell level instead of 3. Any roll of 95 or more is an automatic failure.

Common Spell: (Int + Lvl) x2 −3 per spell
New Spell: (Int + Lvl) x2 −5 per spell

Example #1: A level 5 magic-user with a 15 Intelligence, researching a common 1st level spell has (15 + 5) × 2 − 3 = 37% chance of success. The research would cost him 1,000 gp and take eight days (a week plus a day).

Enchanting Miscellaneous Items

A magic-user must be a wizard to even hope to make a magical item. As with spells, he must go on some adventure to find one basic spell component for each effect of the magic item he wishes to produce.

The first thing to do is to list all of the magical item's effects. Compare them to existing spells in order to know their (spell) level of power. A wizard must know the spell he is trying to imitate with his magical item. For example, a wizard who does not know the *invisibility* spell cannot make a *ring of invisibility*. If an item's effect does not compare to an already existing spell, then the wizard must research a new spell that will produce the desired effect.

Once this is done, add up all spell levels involved with the item and multiply the result per 1,000. The result is the amount of gold pieces necessary to make the initial enchantment. If the item has charges, add 10% of the initial enchantment cost per charge. A permanent enchantment costs the equivalent of 50 charges.

Initial Enchantment: Total Spell Level × 1,000
Cost of Charges: (10% Init. Ench.) × # of charges
Cost of Permanency: (10% Init. Ench.) × 50
Total Cost: Init. Ench. + Cost of Charges, or
Init. Ench. + Cost of Permanency.

Example #2: A *ring of flying* compares to a *fly* spell (3rd level). It has only one function and is permanent, therefore it costs (3 × 1,000) + (300 × 50) = 18,000 gp. The enchantment takes 25 days.

The cost of recharging items is equal to the original cost of charges (10% of the Initial Enchantment). Potions or scrolls are items with charges (one charge per dose or per spell). Different spells on the same scroll are considered separate magical items.

The actual procedure for enchanting items is otherwise similar to researching spells. If this is the first time a wizard enchants this sort of item, his chances of success are equal to discovering a new spell. If the wizard has successfully enchanted a similar item before, chances of reproducing it later are equal to discovering a common spell.

Multiple Effects: If an item has several separate powers, like a *crystal ball with clairvoyance and ESP*, then each effect must be rolled for separately, with the appropriate chances of success. Each successful attempt indicates the item gains the effect rolled for. A failure indicates the corresponding effect is lost as well as any other not yet rolled for. In other words, if the first roll fails, the whole item is spoiled, the money spent, and the time lost. Once an item is created, the wizard cannot add new powers to it.

Example #3: A 16 Intelligence wizard makes a *crystal ball with ESP* (*clairvoyance* is used as the base spell effect). It would cost him 30,000 gp, and take 37 days of work (see example #2 for details) at the end of which the two success rolls are attempted. Chances of success for *clairvoyance* are 41%, 44% for *ESP*. If the first roll fails, the whole item is spoiled. If the second fails, the wizard still has a *crystal ball* without *ESP*.

Time Limitation: Items may be permanently enchanted and still be limited as to their number of uses within a given time period. This allows the creation of permanent items at a lower cost. Simply

reduce the Initial Enchantment cost 20% for an item with hourly uses, 25% for daily uses, 30% weekly, 35% monthly, etc. Then add the cost of 30 charges, plus one per use during the chosen time frame.

For example: a *wand of fire balls* usable only twice a day comes to 2,250 gp (Initial Enchantment Cost) plus 7,200 gp (the equivalent of 32 charges) for a total of 9,450 gp (as opposed to 18,000 gp for a *wand of fire balls* with unlimited uses). In this example, if the item is used twice in a day, the user must wait for the next day to be able to use it again.

Enchanting Weapons and Armor

The procedure for bestowing "pluses" or "minuses" to items requires a different enchantment than for other magical items. To find the Initial Enchantment cost, multiply the item's normal price (gold) by its encumbrance (coins). For armor, divide this result by 3; for weapons, multiply it by 5 instead (always round up to the next 10).

Armor Initial Enchantment Cost:
item price (gp) × encumbrance (cn)/3
Weapon Initial Enchantment Cost:
item price (gp) × encumbrance (cn)x5

Example #4: a sword normally costs 10 gp and weighs 60 coins. Its initial enchantment costs 10 × 60 × 5 = 3,000 gp; a plate mail enchantment costs 60 × 500 / 3 = 10,000 gp.

The initial enchantment makes a "+1" or "−1" item, according to the wizard's choice. Each subsequent "plus" or "minus" for either a weapon or armor, costs 50% of its initial enchantment. Success chances are similar to discovering common spells, each "+" or "−" being equivalent to a spell level.

Important: For the sake of game balance, the minimum Initial Enchantment cost should be no less than 100 gp for weapons, 3,000 gp for armor. Daggers are considered short swords for purposes of calculating their Initial Enchantment cost. All enchantments should be limited to +/−5 maximum.

Adding Extra Powers: Extra magical effects can be added to weapons or armors. Proceed as if enchanting a separate item as described for miscellaneous items. The cost and time is added to that of making the magic weapon. Success chances are rolled separately for each extra effect. If the effects of an enchantment have limitations, the cost of extra magical effects is reduced 10% per restriction (to a maximum of −50%).

Example #5: a *+5 green dragon slayer* costs 9,000 gp for a *+5 sword* (see example #4 for details), plus 36,000 gp for a permanent *disintegrate* spell effect (6th level — see example #2 for details). It is restricted to: (1) *dragons*, (2) *green* dragons. The extra cost is thus reduced 20%, coming down to 28,800 gp. The final cost is 37,800 gp, 52 days of work, and the wizard must roll twice: once for the *+5 sword* and once for its special power.

Special Swords: If an extra bonus is necessary vs. a special opponent, like a *+1 sword, +3 vs. dragons*, simply add the extra "pluses" to the original enchantment costs, at half price. Talents are considered spell powers (see miscellaneous items. For complex weapons, the DM should adjust the guidelines at his discretion, to cover unexpected cases and safeguard game balance.

Intelligent weapons are accidents of nature and can only be created on purpose by Immortals. Every time a wizard makes a magical sword, check if it is Intelligent on Table 12c, page 46 of Companion Book Two.

Optional Bonuses and Penalties

As an option, the DM may modify chances of success depending on the situation. For example, each time a wizard interrupts his spell research or the course of an enchantment, the DM may penalize his chances of success 5% per interruption. Only the number of interruptions should be considered, not their length in time. The character should still have the option of adventuring to keep up with his research cost.

Using special material can affect chances of success as well. Precious gems or metals might retain magic powers better than rough wood or stones. The list below shows possible modifiers for using a variety of materials:

Precious stones (gems, crystal): +6%
Precious metals (gold, silver): +4%
Rare, elaborately carved woods: +2%
Common metal: - Common wood: −2% Common stones: −4% Other mundane material (*): −6%
(*) Bone, claw, leather, powder, balm, liquid.

For example, add a gem for each spell-like effect, at the rate of 100 gp per spell level for each gem, over and above the normal cost of enchantment. Precious metals would cost another 500 gp, precious woods 100 gp, etc. Powdered diamonds are better than common sand.

Depending on how well a wizard was played, the DM may want to further modify his chances of success or even the cost of research and enchantment. Good thinking and role-play is always more desirable than using mathematical rules. The DM should feel free to reward good play in a commensurate manner, or penalize abuses of the system.

Eventually, the DM can make secret attempt rolls for the player and not reveal the results until the wizard actually uses his new creation. If game balance is at stake, the DM should not hesitate to intervene and change the rules. The guidelines given above are designed to avoid these problems as best as possible. Any modification (penalty or bonus) should be well considered beforehand.

Generic List of Enchantment Costs

Magic Item	Cost in GP	Time Needed
Dagger +1	1,050	9 days
Scroll (3 Charm spells)	1,300	9 days
20 Arrows +1	2,000	9 days
*Potion of Invisibility**	2,600	10 days
Leather Armor or Shield +1	3,000	11 days
Sword +1	3,000	11 days
Long Bow +1	4,500	12 days
Chain Mail +1	5,340	13 days
*Wand of Fire Balls***	9,000	16 days
Plate mail +1	10,000	17 days
War Hammer +5 of Flying	29,250	32 days
Helm of Clairvoyance	18,000	25 days
Ring of Teleportation	30,000	37 days
Lance +3 of Speed	45,000	58 days
Talisman of Meteor Swarm	54,000	61 days
Staff of Wizardry	156,200	164 days

(*) Three doses
(**) Twenty charges

Creating a Library

Some wizards may need to compile their own libraries because their towers are located far from civilized centers and thus do not have access to public libraries. The guidelines below explain how to acquire these rare tomes.

As the power of spells being researched increases, the importance and expense of the library increases accordingly. For a library of minimum value, 2,000 gp must be invested. This allows research on first level spells. For each subsequent spell level to be researched, another 2,000 gp must be invested.

For example, a library suitable for researching a ninth level spell would cost 18,000 gp. Every time a wizard discovers a spell, 10% of the gold spent for that effect is added to the library value. For every 2,000 gp of library value above the minimum required, the wizard's chances to discover his spell increase 1%. This bonus is only valid if the wizard owns the library (i.e. it is located within his own workroom and knows it inside out). Bonuses due to large libraries should be limited to +10%.

Finding rare tomes is a valuable task for a wizard. In a large city, the wizard will spend about a day per 100 gp of expenditures (or fraction thereof) to find the desired tomes. Any single book found in a treasure, in an abandoned library or for sale on the market costs 10 gp multiplied by a percentage roll.

When role-playing with book merchants (or library thieves), a wizard should appraise the value of what he is offered. The basic Appraisal Score of a wizard is equal to his Intelligence score plus his level, multiplied by two. The DM makes a secret check and informs the player of the perceived book value. If the roll was successful, the wizard appraises the book value correctly. If the roll failed, the difference between the Appraisal Score and the dice roll gives the percentage of error. If the difference is an even number, the wizard thinks the price is higher; if the difference is an odd number, the wizard thinks the price is lower.

Example #6: A wizard with an Appraisal Score of 50 tries to buy a book worth 500 gp. The DM rolls a 98 and informs the player the books seems to be worth (98-50 = 48%, higher) about 750 gp. The PC starts haggling from there. A roll of 01 means the seller's price seems right to the wizard.

A book merchant has an average Appraisal Score equal to his Intelligence × 5. He will set his price according to his perceived value of the book, plus a profit margin of 30%. A thief of libraries has an Appraisal Score equal to his thief level × 2 and sells for double that price. Whether both are likely to sell their books below their perceived values is a question of how good the wizard was role-played. In any case, merchants never sell 20% below their sales price; a thief never sells for less than half price, unless Constables are after him. Several days later, after studying the book, the wizard realizes its true value (the DM reveals the actual price). Studying a book takes a day per 100 gp of actual value.

Experience Value for Making Inventions

If an invention's XP value is unknown, the following guidelines may he helpful to the DM. If an invention only uses various magical items described in the AD&D® Game, simply add up the XP value of these items.

Gaining Spells: Depending on how he acquires spells, a wizard gets more or less experience. The basic XP value for spells is 1,000 XP per spell level. Use the XP values indicated below, according to the situation:

— Researching a New Spell:	+1/2
— Researching a Common Spell:	all
— Discovered in a Treasure:	1/2
— Spell given by Master:	1/4
— Trade, purchase, theft:	1/10

For example: a wizard creating a new, unknown 1st level spell would gain 1,500 XP; finding a scroll with a 1st level spell would be worth 500 XP; gaining it when reaching second level would be 250 XP; stealing or trading the spell with another wizard would only earn him 100 XP.

Enchanting Items: This can produce large amounts of XP if the wizard is successful. The basic XP value of magic items is 1 XP per gold piece spent, under the following conditions:

— Attempt was successful:	all
— Attempt failed:	1/10

Acquiring a magical item should not give the wizard XPs because he already benefits from its powers, which is already sufficient in itself. He may sell it later if he wishes, and gain some experience for the gold, at the DM's discretion.

Final Note: In the case of inventions using several magical items, add up the experience value of all the magical items involved in the invention.

Some inventions are purely mechanical (no magic involved). In this case, the inventor gets 1 XP per 1,000 gp spent. For a purely mechanical invention to work, the DM makes a secret Intelligence Check for the inventor to see if each separate mechanism was built properly. The DM may penalize Intelligence Checks depending on the complexity of each mechanism. If all succeed, the proud inventor earns the full XP value of his invention. If he fails one or more checks, the amount of XPs he could have earned is reduced proportionately.

For example: if there was only one single mechanism and the attempt failed, the inventor gains nothing; if there were ten different mechanisms and one check was failed, the inventor's XP gain is reduced 10%. Naturally, experience points should only be awarded after thoroughly trying out the invention.

The inventor might not be aware of any faulty mechanisms in his inventions until they fail to perform. As a matter of fact, NPC inventors will often refuse to admit something is wrong with their magnificent invention! Of course, the exact effect of a faulty mechanism on the whole invention is up to the DM.

As an option, if the inventor just barely succeeded an Intelligence Check (exact minimum score needed was rolled), the DM should make a secret check every time the invention is used to see if the incriminated mechanism fails to function properly. Now, just who will try the invention is an entirely different story....

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ISBN 0-88038-497-2

9220XXX1401

$8.95 U.S.