



DISCERN
REALITIES
ANNUAL

Codex

The Gauntlet's monthly RPG zine





THE DISCERN REALITIES ANNUAL

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Introduction

The first game I ever played with David was actually the board game Letters From Whitechapel. It was at a Houston Gauntlet Meetup, at a time when we were trying to add board games to our mix of offerings. At that time, David was mostly a board game player; his experience with RPGs had been limited to a few not-fun sessions of D&D and Pathfinder. But he had a good time at board game night and so he joined us at some of our RPG events, and I'm really glad he did.

In one of my DW games at that time, David played a ranger called Pigeonhead. Pigeonhead was an old man who basically functioned as a nest for the true star of the show: the repulsive demon-pigeon, Pidgey. Pigeonhead and Pidgey are really important to me, because they heralded a real turn in my personal outlook on Dungeon World, a game I had been running regularly for over a year at that point. Before Pigeonhead, my games of Dungeon World went like this: crawl through dark catacombs, fight the monsters, grab the treasure, go back to town for a Carouse, then rinse and repeat. But Pigeonhead wasn't necessarily interested in those things. Pigeonhead engaged in strange, ritualistic behavior vis-a-vis Pidgey, such as when he slavishly presented an ostentatious feast to the bird. Pigeonhead solved problems in ways that were weird and grotesque, such as when he had Pidgey eat a live dire crab from the inside out. Pigeonhead's story wasn't about monsters and treasure, but rather his existential struggle to break free from his demonic animal companion. It was a character fully steeped in the mad and the grotesque, and

it completely flipped the table on what I thought fantasy gaming was supposed to be.

Did the Pigeonhead story veer into the gonzo? Sure. But the Pigeonhead story was also a revelation to me, because I began to have a better understanding of both the possibilities and the limitations of Dungeon World as a system. And from that point forward, the games I run have been focused on testing the boundaries of Dungeon World, to see what sorts of stories we can get away with, and to explore the ways in which we can hack the system to get the outcomes we want. And David was right there in the mix, facilitating those conversations within our group and running his own games, too. When I decided to present our group's Dungeon World conversations in podcast form, I knew David would be a great fit to co-host the show with me.

Discern Realities has been a huge amount of fun. David is one of my closest friends, and being able to present this show to you all with him by my side has been one of the great privileges of my life. The Discern Realities Annual, which collects much of the original material we have presented on the first 40 episodes of the show, as well as select contest entries, has been a lot of work, but we're so excited to present it to you.

Thanks also to Oli Jeffery and Will Patterson, who have been invaluable in putting this thing together.

We hope you enjoy it!

Fason

Two years before we started the podcast, I didn't know Jason. I didn't know about the Gauntlet. I knew I was moving to a new city for a new job and I wanted to get plugged in with a gaming group. I wanted to get more involved with an RPG, and I thought that I wanted to try and write a fantasy story for my own satisfaction. The Gauntlet changed things. Jason, Ferrell, Fowler, Dan, and all the rest of the crew were playing small press games and story games.

Turns out I didn't want to write a story, I just wanted to tell stories with friends. Wednesday and Friday quickly became the days for story games, and often, that game was Dungeon World. Almost always, Jason was running that game. I didn't know that Dungeon World was the game I had always been wanting to play when I would try Pathfinder or Descent: Journeys in the Dark. But once Jason and I started playing more and more Dungeon World together, I knew the game was something special.

Fast forward some time and some geographic distance later, we are still playing Dungeon World, but in different cities, with different people, and we are starting to organize the Gauntlet online. Jason asked me to co-create a podcast exclusively about Dungeon World, and I didn't hesitate. I knew I wanted more people to hear about and play Dungeon World, I knew the two of us would be able to contribute to the conversation around Dungeon World, and I knew it was the right time for our community to grow with the help of another podcast.

I didn't know the response our podcast would receive. Our listeners quickly grew in number and stuck with us. When we opened a small contest, we received a flood of submissions. Then we did another contest, and another after that. And you, listeners, responded even louder each time.

I didn't know we would ever have so much fantastic content that it warranted writing it all down. This annual is largely created to memorialize the fantastic listeners who have contributed to our show by submitting their own creations for all of us to enjoy. This wouldn't have been possible without you all listening every week, playing lots of Dungeon World, and sharing your creations with us.

Working on Discern Realities with one of my best friends has been a singularly rewarding experience. I hope you enjoy looking through some familiar content from the past 40 episodes mixed with some fantastic art from several artists, an outstanding layout by Oli Jeffery, and some tried and true tips and tricks for system mastery that Jason and I have used on many occasions.

Happy adventuring!

David, Keeper of the Six Questions

Procedures, Techniques & Hacks

UNDERTAKE A PERILOUS JOURNEY

As written, the **Undertake a Perilous Journey** special move is functional, but a little bit boring. The following procedure is a way of using the move to do a little bit of world building with the players, as well as giving them a chance to explore party dynamics.

You resolve the move normally, but additionally the GM asks each player the questions below, based on their character's role during the journey. The GM can then use the answers the players give to set up future encounters or set pieces. It is sometimes helpful to take a short break after the questions are posed so the players can think of something really good.

Trailblazer: Tell us about a distinct geographical feature or landmark you are using to navigate by. Is there a legend or story associated with this landmark? If so, tell us about it.

Scout: What are you particularly worried about running into during this journey? What rumors have you heard that make such an encounter so frightening to you?

Quartermaster: One of your fellow party members does something at camp you find particularly annoying. What is it? One of your fellow party members does something at camp you find surprisingly endearing. What is it?

If there is a character who does not have a role, the GM should ask them an establishing question about the upcoming adventure, such as one you might find in a dungeon starter.

Figure 1: An adventuring party undertakes a perilous journey.



PAINTING THE SCENE

Painting the Scene is a powerful GM technique for fostering player engagement. Use it when there is a particular thematic, emotional, or visual motif you want to highlight in a scene. You decide which motif you want to emphasize in the scene and then ask the player characters very specific, leading questions about what they see that emphasizes this motif. It works in a similar manner to asking the players establishing questions at the beginning of an adventure, but it takes place on a more granular level, and often does not have any direct connection to the player characters themselves (though it certainly can).

One piece of advice for using this technique: don't overdo it. Save it for big set pieces or particularly important NPC encounters. Here are some examples:

“As you enter the palazzo of Esbrigel, tell me what you see that lets you know she is a medusa. You also see evidence that she is a person who likes to keep secrets. What do you see?”

“Morning Mist Castle was the site of a bloody siege a hundred years ago. What do you see that reminds you of this dark history? What do you feel that indicates this place is still haunted by that tragic past?”

“As you are chatting with Lady Castafiel, what do you see on her person that lets you know she is not to be fucked with?”

“As you enter the ballroom of Lord Caspian Gal, how do you know this is a place of extreme decadence? Lord Caspian Gal is also an unusually short man. What do you see in his manse that is evidence of this?”

THE LABYRINTH MOVE

The original labyrinth move was written as a way of abstracting the party's journey through a vast, un-mappable maze (specifically, it was written for Jason's *A Red & Pleasant Land* campaign as a sort of “final boss” setup).

The idea is, as a play group, we're not interested in showing the step-by-step, turn-by-turn navigation of a massive labyrinth, but rather we're interested in the dramatic beats: feeling hopelessly lost, encountering guardian creatures, having a key insight about how the labyrinth works, finding hidden treasures, feeling

the excitement of reaching the heart of the labyrinth, and so forth.

The party's success at navigating the labyrinth is represented by hold, which becomes a currency they can spend to find treasures and eventually reach the heart of the labyrinth (or the exit). However, the more time they spend searching for treasures, the more likely they are to run into enemies or get lost in the labyrinth entirely.

The move is extremely flexible and can be easily adapted to your campaign. Here are some examples:

Jason's original version

When you attempt to navigate Vlad's palace, describe how you do it, and then roll +STAT. *On a 12+, hold 2 *On a 10+, hold 1. *On a 7-9, hold 1, but you also encounter a guardian. *On a miss, you encounter a guardian. *On a 1-3, also lose all hold.

If multiple party members navigate in turn, their hold is pooled together for the entire party. To find one of Vlad's treasures, spend 1 hold and describe the room it is found in. You may spend 3 hold at any time to find the entrance to Vlad's inner sanctum.

Logan Howard's adaptation for the Sword Breaker zine

When you search for the throne room in the twisted castle ruins, choose a leader and have them roll +WIS. *On a 10+, describe the terrain you travel through and the party holds 1 (on a 12+, hold 2). *On a 7-9, the party holds 1, but the GM will introduce a hazard (rickety bridge, treacherous slope, tight squeeze or something nasty only they can dream up). *On a 6-, the Baron's minions or random monsters attack the party while they are dealing with one of the hazards.

At any time, the party may spend 1 hold to come across a cache of valuables or resources. Describe the area containing this cache.

At any time, the party may spend 1 hold to encounter the Baron (because they are headed in the right direction and can hear the rattling armor of his knights). If the party defeats the Baron five times, they have reached the throne room.

Ray Otus's adaptation for the Plundergrounds zine

When you attempt to navigate the labyrinthine twists of the dragon hoard, describe how you do it, and then roll +INT. *On a 12+, hold 2. *On a 10+, hold 1. *On a 7-9, hold 1, but you encounter a hoard denizen and/or find yourself in a bad place. *On a 6-, the dragon is one step closer to detecting your presence and location! This is in addition to any hard move the GM has in mind.

Spend 1 hold to find something valuable or useful. (Spend 2 for both.) Spend 2 hold to get a clue as to the dragon's whereabouts. Spend 4 hold to get a clue as to how you might possibly harm the dragon.

Spend 5 hold to find an exit, locate the dragon, or find her nest.

One person rolls each time you navigate. The group's hold from multiple rolls is pooled together.



GEAR ABSTRACTIONS

One of the most powerful GM tools in DW is abstraction, and things like *Adventuring Gear* and the *Bag of Books* set a terrific precedent in this regard: we only care about the various tools and pieces of equipment you brought with you on the adventure when you are actually getting ready to use them. You can apply the underlying concept to all sorts of situations where it would not be convenient (or fun) to make a big list of everything on-hand. Here are some examples:

If the party raids a temple and finds a storage closet where the priests keep all their ritual

implements, instead of having the player write down every single candle, bowl and knife, have them note “Ritual Tools, X uses”.

If the party sacks a wizard’s lab, rather than give them an exhaustive (and exhausting) list of every book, scroll and jar of strange liquid they find, have them note “Wizard’s Lab Tools, X uses”.

If the party disassembles a blacksmith’s workshop, rather than do a bunch of research about what they might find there, simply tell them to note “Blacksmith’s Tools, X uses”.

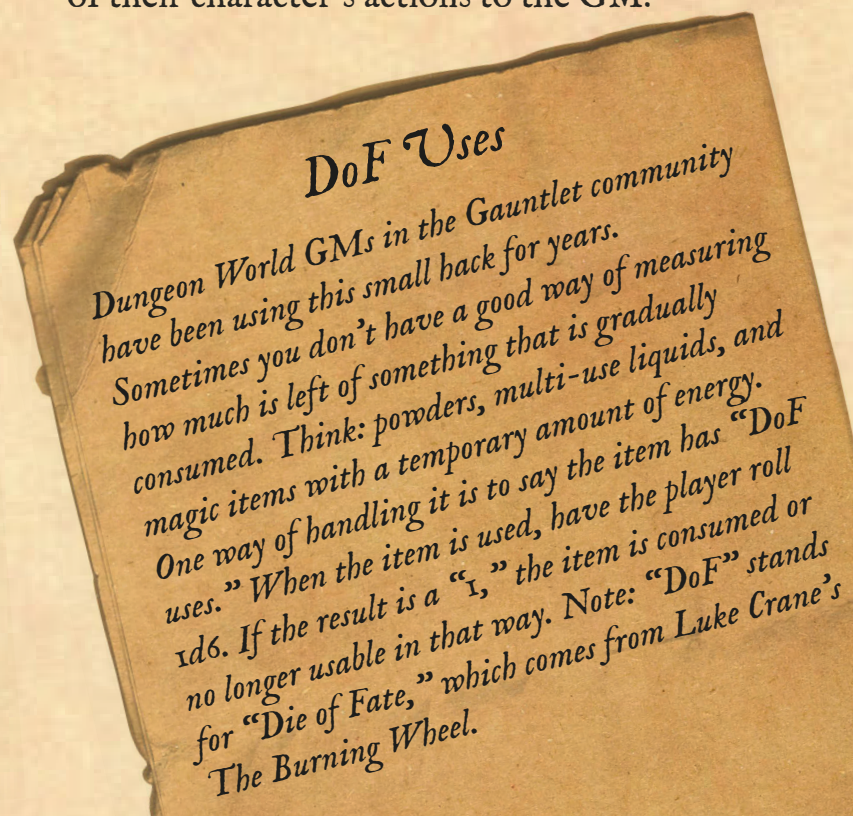
MIND CONTROL IN DUNGEON WORLD

Magical effects that lead to someone or something having control over a player character’s mind can be difficult to handle at the table. Nothing will alienate players faster than the GM taking over the actions of a player character. Instead, try the below technique, which was inspired by the Strings mechanic in *Monsterhearts*.

When a player character falls under the sway of some entity, the GM takes X hold (3 is a good number, but less is fine, too). The GM can then spend a hold to suggest a course of action that conforms to the desires of the entity that has sway over the character. If the player chooses to take the suggested course of action, they mark XP.

If the mind control is particularly powerful in nature, you can add the proviso that if the player does not take the suggested course of action, the GM gets 1 hold (bringing them back to the number of hold they had before).

Having used this technique for years, we know the temptation of an XP is extremely powerful and players will almost always take it. And yet the player still has the option to refuse, which negates any sense of resentment associated with losing control of their character’s actions to the GM.



Custom Moves

This section contains custom moves featured on the show and select contest entries.

VISIONS OF DEATH

by Jason Cordova

Use this move whenever a character consults a person or object that tells them something about how they might die. The below formulation of the move is for an NPC called “Inid of the Well,” a legless girl found living at the bottom of a well, but can be easily re-skinned.

If you consult Inid of the Well about how you might die, hold 3. Whenever you are about to perform an action that triggers a roll, you may spend 1 hold to explain how this situation relates to one of Inid’s visions. Mark 1 XP. For that roll, the 6- result is replaced with “Roll for Last Breath.”



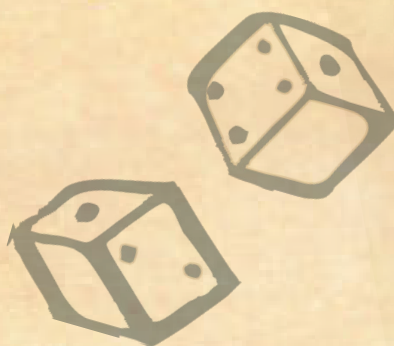
Figure II:
Visions of Death

SHRINE OF DUGMAREN BRIGHTMANTLE

by Jason Cordova

The door to the shrine depicts the dwarven god of discovery and invention, Dugmaren Brightmantle, holding a glowing gear in his hand. Inside the room are a few prayer plinths arranged in a semi-circle before an altar, atop which is a complex tower of gears, cogs, and pulleys known as the Holy Machine of the Brightmantle. A single brass lever is in a place of importance, at the top of the altar steps, just in front of the Machine.

If you say a prayer to the Brightmantle and then pull the lever, roll+CHA. *On a 10+, the Brightmantle grants you a major boon for an upcoming adventure. The GM will tell you what. *On a 7-9, he grants you a minor boon for an upcoming adventure. The GM will tell you what. *On a miss, the Brightmantle finds you wanting, and a piece of your equipment may fail you at a critical moment during an upcoming adventure.



SHRINE OF REEKESIK

by Jason Cordova

Reekeesik is a demonic rat god, powerful during the Beginning of All Things, but dormant in recent years. Reekeesik cultists seek out the rat shrines hidden in the underbellies of civilization, and there make sacrifices of cats, snakes, and birds of prey. Their holy symbol is a wooden disk that has been clawed and chewed by dozens of rats. Reekeesik appears as a titanic rat with twelve heads and six pairs of legs.

When you sacrifice an animal that preys on rodents at a shrine of Reekeesik, roll+CHA. *On a 10+, you gain the blessing of Reekeesik in the form of a rat companion who will follow you about and perform small tasks. *On a 7-9, as above, but the rat only stays for the remainder of the adventure. *On a miss, Reekeesik finds you wanting.

THE EHNITA ONEKWENHSA PACT

by Andy Katz

As is known to all, living things with red blood in their veins only come to be on worlds with a Moon, and those beings with the sacred power to bear offspring are bound deeply to this life-giving force. In exchange for a few children over a lifetime, the bodies of the bearers offer to the Moon their life-blood each moon-cycle.

What is known only to a few is the way that one may invoke the terrible power of the Pact, and exchange all one's future children to summon and bind a Child of the Moon.

When you sit upon the Altar and offer your womb to the full Moon according to the occult customs of your people, a torrent of blood pours forth from the Altar's cleft, and out of the blood-soaked ground is born a Child of the Moon. The GM will describe its otherworldly appearance. Roll+CON. *On a 10+, choose two.

*On a 7-9, choose one, and permanently reduce your Constitution by 1.

-Your control over the Child is absolute. If this is not chosen, the Child will heed you at times, but may rebel willfully as all children are wont to do.

-The Child is clever. Chose a level one spell from the Wizard playbook. You may ask the child to cast this spell once per day.

-The Child is vicious. Treat the child as an animal companion with Ferocity 3, Cunning 0, 1 Armor, Instinct 0. Follow the animal companion creation guidelines on pg. 131 of the Dungeon World rule book.

-The Child is kind. Chose a level one spell from the Cleric playbook. You may ask the Child to cast this spell once per day.

THE GODDESS OF BLOOD AND CRUEL FATE

by Jim Morrison

When vengeance pulses in your veins, travel west on the night of the blood moon until you reach the miserable stump of the Tree of Eternal Perfection. There, **drink of blood drawn from your enemy or from a suitable proxy, eat an unhealthy portion of the wild red-rooted wormwood, and go to sleep beside the stump, all while clutching a drawn blade.** Roll+number of Bonds with your enemy. *On a hit, you dream a vision of the Goddess of Blood and Cruel Fate, who weaves the destinies of men in crimson.

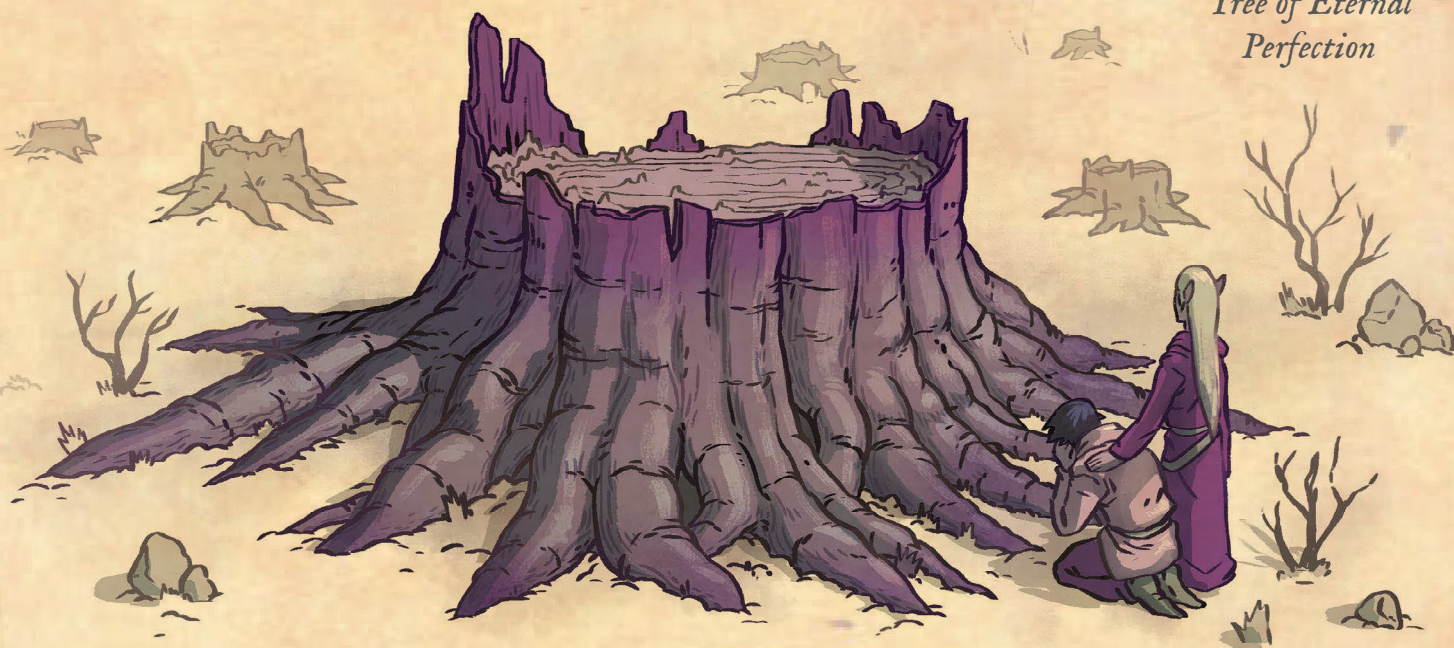
*On 10+, the Goddess asks you when and where you will meet your enemy. The words you speak will come true, though it will

appear to be the doing of mortal hands. When you wake, you expel the blood drunk as a black mass.

*On 7-9, the Goddess asks what advantage you will attain when next you meet your enemy. Impress her in your answer with cleverness or flattery, for the Goddess is fickle and may give the advantage you name to your enemy instead. When you wake, you expel the blood drunk, and much more, as liquid.

*On a miss, you suffer terrible seizures. The GM makes a hard move.

*Figure III:
The Miserable
Stump of the
Tree of Eternal
Perfection*



THE BARROW-MOUND'S THRESHOLD

by Jeremy Strandberg

This low hill of stacked stones has a single entrance, dug out of the earth and gaping like a maw. Large slabs of pale rock ring the entrance. You can tell they are laden with runes, but they swim before your eyes.

When you study the runes on the threshold, your vision blurs and your head pounds. If you force yourself to focus on them, take 1d6 damage (ignores armor) but you can then see them clearly (and potentially Discern Realities or Spout Lore about them).

When you approach the threshold with the intent to cross it, you are filled with otherworldly dread. **If you persist,** roll+CON. *On a 10+, describe a time from your past that you were deeply and terribly afraid and how you conquered that fear, then cross the threshold. *On a 7-9, describe the unconquered fear that still lurks in your soul, then cross the threshold. *On a miss, mark XP and describe an unconquered fear as above. If you cross the threshold, mark either the Shaken or Confused debility (your choice).

LOOTING THE DEAD

by Jeremy Strandberg

An open chamber, a few paces in each direction, with 2d6 grave-niches. Each niche contains the well-preserved corpse of an elven warrior, battle-clad and covered in a layer of fine white dust. Through the dust, you spot the glint of gold, elf-gem, or mithril buried with its owner. **If you disturb the corpse of an elven warrior,** it

will rise as an elf-wight. **When you attempt to remove a grave-good from an elven warrior without disturbing the corpse,** roll+DEX. *On a 10+, you get it without disturbing the corpse. *On a 7-9, you get it or you avoid disturbing the corpse, your choice.

THE BLACK STONE

by Jeremy Strandberg

A cylindrical chamber, like the inside of a tower but deep underground. At its center is a lead container, about two paces across and suspended from the walls by massive chains. The container bears a crack, and that crack has been carefully peeled back by...someone. A strange, tingling heat

pours forth from it. Should you be foolish enough to shine a light inside, you'll see a jagged black stone. But you won't get much of a look: the ancient fleshcrafters who built this place used the stone's foul emanations to bend muscle and bone to their whims.

When you are exposed to the black stone, roll+CON. *On a 10+, hold 1 malleability. *On a 7-9, hold 1 malleability but also gain a random physical mutation. Spend malleability 1 for 1 to:

- Heal damage equal to half your max HP.
- Expunge a disease or poison.
- Temporarily gain an advantageous physical mutation.

When you bask in the black stone's emanations, roll+CHA. *On a hit, you may reshape your body in a manner of your choosing and gain a single adaptive mutation. *On a 7-9, you also gain a problematic mutation of the GM's choice. *On a miss...yuck.

(For random mutations, Jeremy recommends Johnstone Metzger's *The Metamorphica* product.)

THE TEMPLE OF UPSIDE-DOWN MASTERS

by Daniel Fowler

Although it is referred to as a temple, this place contains no idols or sacred texts. Instead, it is populated with a seemingly random assortment of unhinged hermits. The structure itself baffles visitors as it is carved into the side of a cliff with no permanent means of entry. Patrons must rappel from the top or climb from the bottom. Inside is a network of rooms and passageways built to normal human proportions. Many rooms are furnished with stone furniture still attached to where they must have been carved from the rock. The most notable feature of the temple is that all of its architecture and furniture appears to have been created upside-down. Visitors often bump their heads on the backs of tall chairs and tables hanging from the ceiling.

Shunned by many as a place of insanity, a few sages do make regular pilgrimages to the temple to speak with those residents known as Wise Masters. These Masters are installed into the furniture with the assistance of ropes and

waited upon by the temple's more lucid members. They dispense wisdom and insight to those who bring offerings to the temple.

A minimum offering of 100 coin worth of supplies is required to gain an audience with one of the Masters. Roll +X, where X is each additional 100 coin worth of supplies or other tribute. *On a 10+, hold 3. *On a 7-9, hold 1. *On a miss, hold 1 and the GM makes a move. You may spend the hold, 1 for 1, for the following effects:

- The Master beckons you closer and whispers a string of rhyming nonsense into your ear.
- The Master indicates a piece of equipment from your person. If you pass it up to him he will examine it, touch it in several places, taste or lick it, and converse with it briefly before returning it to you.

-The Master rummages through his robes and tosses down a small handmade item of little value and no immediate use.

Whatever the Master gives you seems useless at the time, but later your thoughts click together in unexpected ways and the

Master's meaning becomes obvious. You may use each to give you a +1 forward on a Spout Lore you would otherwise have no justification for knowing anything about. Explain how you came to this new understanding.

THE GARDEN OF BAO YU

by Tom McGrenery

A large, rambling landscaped garden surrounded by high stone walls, the Garden of Bao Yu is serene and tranquil. Among its lakes, streams, wooden bridges and winding paths, the grounds are sculpted to resemble the hills and karst formations of the Southlands. Elegant pagodas and pavilions offer visitors places to rest, take tea and enjoy the views. There is an atmosphere of gentle decay.

Bao Yu and his cousins lived here for many years. Chunying married an imperial official and died far away. The fey Yulin died of a broken heart when Bao Yu married Chun-tan. Cast aside by Bao Yu, Chun-tan departed the Garden years ago. Now only Bao Yu himself remains.

When you walk the paths with Bao Yu, he invites you to compose a couplet about the garden. If you consent, speak two lines of elegant poetry (rhyming is optional) and roll+CHA. *On a 10+, choose three. *On a 7-9, choose one:

- You and your friends may stay the night in the Bamboo Hall: Make Camp without needing to consume rations or stand watch.

- Bao Yu praises your creativity. Mark 1 XP.

- Bao Yu compares your couplet to an ancient poem. Take +1 forward to your next Spout Lore roll.

- Bao Yu relates how a feature of the garden recalls a real place. Take +1 forward to Undertake a Perilous Journey.

*On a miss, you have made a faux pas; Bao Yu becomes withdrawn and sullen.



THE WIND CAVE

by Logan Howard

You feel a blast of air coming down the passage. What does it remind you of? When you reach the end, you find yourself on a ledge, looking out across an expansive chamber.

You can't see the floor or the ceiling. Along the walls at about the same level, you see similar ledges to the one you stand on. There is nothing to grapple onto and the ledges are too far apart for any normal leap. However, there is such a mighty gust of wind coming up from the depths of the chamber, you think it might be possible to float across to one of the other ledges. Unfortunately, the same creatures that have been hounding you appear on the distant ledges. Some of them even throw themselves into the center of the chamber where they swirl around in mid-air,

trying desperately to reach you.

When you leap into the wind toward another ledge, roll+DEX. *On a 12+, you reach the ledge you were trying for and manage to displace numerous creatures in a way that is catastrophic for them. What does your heroic leap look like on screen? *On a 10+, you manage to safely navigate the empty space and land soundly on exactly the ledge you wanted to. How did you do that? *On a 7-9, choose one:

-You land where you wanted, but the creatures have you at a disadvantage.

-You made it safely across but landed on the wrong ledge.

BUZZARD'S BEAK CANYON

by Daniel Fowler

The rope bridge across Buzzard's Beak Canyon is older than living memory. Unfortunately, it is the only way to avoid an additional seven day journey. **When you cross the chasm**, the bridge creaks ominously under your weight. Roll-Weight. *On a 10+, the bridge creaks and sways, but you make it across safely. *On a 7-9, you make it across, but must choose one of the following:

-Some piece of your gear slips from your grip or your pack and is lost forever

-Someone else must risk the bridge to help you across.

-You gain a fear of heights and will never again have the courage to cross the bridge.

Magic Items

This section contains original magic items discussed on the show, as well as select contest entries. Some items refer to “DoF uses.” Please see the sidebar on pg. 8 for an explanation of what that means.

THE KEEPERS OF THE UNQUIET DEAD

Collection by Daniel Fowler

The Keepers of the Unquiet Dead are an order of monks dedicated to pacifying and securing the undead. Their temples contain vast tombs where they collect and care for the ones who cannot find peace. Above all, they honor who the undead were in life, providing comfort to creatures others fear and seek to destroy. Many years of devoted practice have allowed them to develop tools for safely handling their charges.

Lifesong Flute

This flute is fashioned from five pipes, each shaped into the likeness of a man at different stages of his life, from a small boy to an elderly gentleman. When played, the flute produces a music that is at first happy and excited, then fierce and noble, and finally, solemn. Undead will be transfixed by the music and will simply stand and stare so long as it is playing.

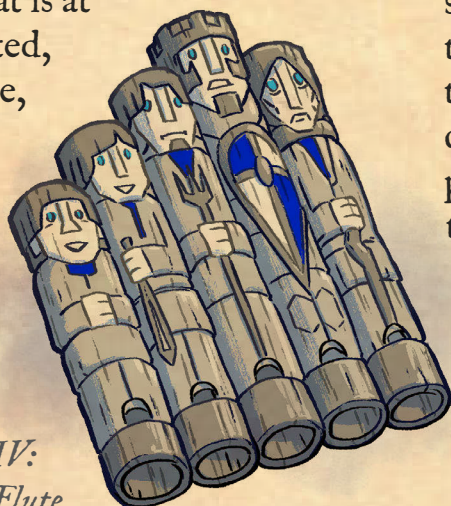


Figure IV:
Lifesong Flute

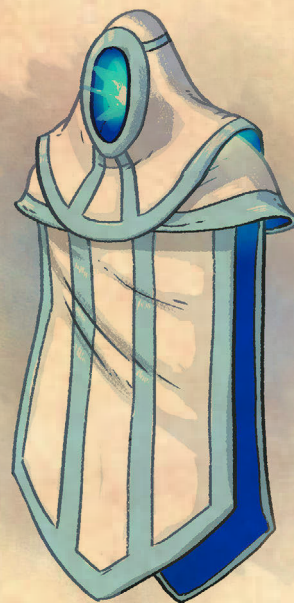
Grave Root Powder

This powder is made from a special plant that roots in grave soil. A pinch on the wind will attract any undead creature. If you lay down a trail, undead of lesser intelligence will be compelled to follow it. DoF uses.

Robes of Peerless White

The Keepers of the Unquiet Dead take great care to keep their clothing completely free of stains. In fact, their hooded robes are so pristinely white, they seem to glow by twilight. Undead eyes cannot perceive this peerless white, making the wearer invisible to them. Undead of higher intelligence may still be able to detect a wearer of the robes through other means.

Figure V: Robes of
Peerless White



Torch of Final Rest

These torches are made from the wood of ash trees sacred to the Keepers of the Unquiet Dead. The wood is only cut after the tree dies, a rare enough occurrence that the monks set it aside for their most solemn ritual: putting the undead to their final rest. Any undead creature that cannot be pacified or saved will be burned on a pyre. If the pyre is lit by one of these special torches, the undead will peacefully accept its fate.

Mirror of Lost Days

This simple mirror shows the undead a reflection of their former life. Intelligent undead will be fascinated by the reflection, and can be safely conversed with while they admire it.

MEAN OLD MINERVA'S WAGON OF GIFTS AND STORIES

Collection by Daniel Fowler

Old Minerva has lived in her covered wagon, traveling from town to town, for as long as anyone can remember. Local women go to her for advice on many practical things and children love her stories. She is generally tolerant of those who call on her, though she does not suffer idiots and has a particularly short temper with men. She is never far from her wagon, which is filled with many strange and old things.

If you happen to meet Old Minerva in your travels, maintain a respectful tone with her. She always has something to help with whatever vexes you, but you may have to pay for it with a bit of your dignity.

Custom Move: Old Minerva's Wagon

If you suffer Old Minerva's abuse while politely asking for her help, roll+CHA.

If you are a man, you make this roll at an additional -1. *On a 10+, she has something that will help you, either an object or information, and she offers it freely. *On a 7-9, as above, but she asks for something in return, the GM will tell you what.

The First Fear

They say all men grew up in fear of a certain stick, and the First Fear is the progenitor of those sticks. If you are a woman brandishing the First Fear, your promise to withhold violence from the stick is always leverage in a Parley with a man.

Old Minerva's Bag of Sweets

This bag always contains a handful of sweets hidden amongst the rags, buttons and lint. You may use the sweets as leverage in a Parley with a child.

Old Minerva's Broom

The way Old Minerva sees it, most people are careless fools, apt to misplace their foolish heads, if not for the fact they're attached to their foolish necks. Still, she often advises that giving the house a good sweep is a terrific way to find the things you've lost, as well as calm your nerves and clarify your thinking.

Her own broom is particularly helpful in this regard. **If you Discern Realities while sweeping an area with Old Minerva's Broom,** you may ask one additional question from the list, even on a 6-.

Old Minerva's Magnifying Stone

This perfectly clear shard of quartz helps Old Minerva read small labels and closely examine folks complaining about skin spots, yellowing teeth, or whatever damn thing they're on about today. **If you closely examine a person or object with the Magnifying Stone,** the GM will tell you a single fact about the subject that is hidden or secret.

Figure VI: Old Minerva's Broom



Needle of Idle Safety

The way Old Minerva sees it, idle hands get up to no good and it's best to chop them off. Given that, you should endeavor to keep them busy, and the mending of clothes is both practical and economical. The Needle of Idle Safety is distinguishable from normal needles by the fact it never rusts and cannot be bent or broken.

If you accidentally prick your finger while using the needle, it means some sort of danger is imminent, though the precise nature of the danger may be unclear. Perhaps something hostile is approaching your position, or your comrade's amazing plan is actually quite a stupid one, or the minstrel telling you tales by the fire has ill intentions.

Weather Wax

This marvelous beeswax, said to be a specially refined version taken from hives that have survived terrible storms, is often stored in a jar with a tiny, decorative weathervane affixed to the lid.

Any object covered in the wax will not succumb to environmental hazards related to the weather. A scroll will stay dry in the rain; swords will not rust. A room will stay dry and warm if you seal its windows with the wax, even during the most violent blizzard or storm. The wax can even be rubbed on clothing and armor, transferring its protection to the wearer.

Chester

Chester the Cat was Mean Old Minerva's first and only pet. When he died quite suddenly from unnatural causes, she had him stuffed. To her surprise and delight, the taxidermied tabby was even more charming and loyal than before! **If Chester is in your possession, and you leave some food out for him at night,** you will awake with the certainty that a cat was sleeping on top of you. Chester might even wake you if someone with ill intentions approaches during the night.



Figure VII: Chester



Figure VIII: Old Minerva's Wagon

A HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Collection by Ferrell Riley

The hopes of the world lay upon the shoulders of its young, who prove their courage by adventuring out into the world and not returning until a story is sung about them. But even a hero looks longingly towards home.

Smokeless Pipe

The faint scent of cherry tobacco lingers on the edges of the dark stained wood. Inside, a smoky quartz crystal flickers with an inner fire. **When you light your pipe**, the full richness of the taste relaxes your body. You may Make Camp without consuming a ration.

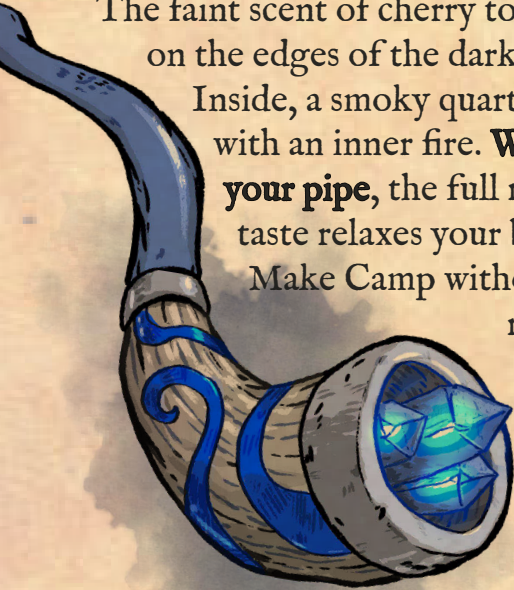


Figure IX:
Smokeless Pipe

Traveler's Notebooks

Batachikhan

the League Strider traveled across the three continents. He always wrote home to his mother, to tell her the amazing things he had seen. Whatever you write in one of these notebooks appears in another. The notebooks may or may not be found in pairs.

Brass Kettle

At every meal, and at every ceremony, the whistling of well-loved and well-worn brass kettles heralds good health, and some say the secrets of eternal life. But while many praise the leaves, no one pays much attention to what holds the brew. Tea from this kettle heals 1HP when consumed; bandages soaked in it will automatically stabilize wounds.



Figure X: Brass Kettle

CERBERUS COIN

by Jason Cordova

Marked with a stamp of the three-headed hound Cerberus, this coin is the currency used in the lands beyond the Black Gate. **So long as the coin is pressed into your hand**, you automatically take the 7-9 result on your Last Breath roll. The coin disappears when and if you return to the mortal coil.



Figure XI:
Cerberus Coin

THE IRRESISTIBLE MULE

by Daniel Fowler and Jason Cordova

An invention by the famed illusionist Xenos, the Irresistible Mule at first appears to be a simple bridle. However, after handling the bridle for a time, an illusory mule will appear, seemingly attached to it. This mule is luscious with fat, and appears to be hauling sacks bursting with coin, kegs of ale, and all manner of cured meats. The mule is positively irresistible to any who might

be drawn to such things. As a curious side effect, the mule believes it is real, and will insist on being fed and brushed. It is rather odd to watch it pretend to eat oats, which simply fall to the ground as you place them in its illusory mouth. Failure to treat the mule as anything but real causes the illusion to dissipate, making the bridle useless for a few months, at which point the mule can be coaxed into returning.

CHAIN LIGHTNING IN A BOTTLE

by Jason Cordova

This bottle is coursing with static energy; little sparks of electricity can be seen dancing behind the glass. **When you remove the stopper**, roll +CON. *On a 10+, a bolt of lightning will leap from the bottle and strike a target of your choice for 1D10 damage. The bolt will then jump to 4 more targets of your choice. The second target suffers 1D8 damage. The third target

suffers 1D6 damage. The fourth target suffers 1D4 damage. The fifth target suffers 1 point of damage. All damage ignores armor. Each target can only be struck once. *On a 7-9, same as above, except each additional target after the first is chosen by the GM (and can include yourself or your allies).

THE EBONY CAT

by Jason Cordova

When you call upon the ebony cat, singing its praises and proclaiming in what ways it is superior to all cats, this ebony figurine transforms into a full-sized black cat with burning blue eyes. The cat will go wherever commanded and you can see whatever it sees. Afterward, it will demand a reward for its service.

This is usually something utterly bizarre or tedious (like being petted exactly 386 times). If you refuse, it will never answer your call again, though it may answer the call of others.

BRAZIER OF SUMMONING FIRE ELEMENTALS

by Jason Cordova

When you burn sacred incense in this bronze brazier, roll +CHA. *On a 10+, a fire elemental is called forth and will do your bidding for a short period of time (GM's discretion, usually a battle or a scene), after which it will return to the Plane of Fire. *On a 7-9, as above, except the fire elemental will only do your bidding momentarily before returning to the Plane of Fire. *On a 6-, the fire elemental rages with anger at being summoned and will attack you mercilessly.



*Figure XII:
The Brazier of
Summoning Fire
Elementals*

THE PURSE OF EMPTY PROMISE

by David LaFreniere

Within the admission tent of the Circus of the Damned, you see the money changer's booth. A large coin purse rests on the table. Greedily taking it in your hands, you hear the jingling of coin. Such a heavy purse must contain a king's ransom!

Opening it makes your heart lurch, and you drop it in shock. It falls to the ground with a loud clinking sound, but looking down into it, your eyes confirm it is empty. **If money is ever placed in the purse**, it disappears once the purse is closed. **If the purse is ever disenchant**ed, 666 coins will appear.

TRAPEZE MASTER'S HAMMOCK

by David LaFreniere

Inside the main tent of the Circus of the Damned, above you, you see a nest of ropes. You have visions of a man flying about, swinging from one to the next, balancing on them, perilously near to falling. You also see a hammock suspended among them. Climbing up to it reveals a skeleton inside. He seems to have died peacefully in his sleep.

If, during Make Camp, you sleep in the hammock, roll. *On a 10+, you are well-rested and return to max HP. *On a 7-9, in the event of an attack during any watch, you are always last to wake up and are surprised. You still return to max HP. *On a 6-, you can't wake yourself. The other characters must do something drastic (probably dangerous) to wake you.

THE ORIGAMI BESTIARY

by Josh Gary

Ragged, 0 weight, 5 uses

An old leather-bound book with all but five pages torn out. **When you tear out a piece of paper and fold it into an origami creature**, describe what your creation looks like. The origami creature will then come to life and grow to the full size of its real-world counterpart. The origami creature will follow you until it is destroyed. **When you command the creature to fight with you**, add +2 to damage to any attack during which the creature assisted you.

When you command the creature to protect you during a battle, add +1 armor, but the creature is destroyed at the end. Be careful not to use an origami creature around fire or water, for they are still paper and are destroyed easily. Outside of combat, you can use the creature to accomplish almost anything within the real creature's ability. For example, an origami dragon can be used for aerial attacks or a means of transport, but it cannot breathe fire.

SPIDER RING

by Luke Cox

This simple silver ring with the depiction of a spider can produce a seemingly infinite amount of silk from its abdomen. This near-transparent silken thread is stronger than wire and remarkably flexible. Unfortunately, it lacks the adhesive properties of an actual spider web. Don't let that dishearten you, however, as this trinket will no doubt be invaluable to make trip wires, fishing lines, maybe even a garrote or two. Given enough time, you might even be able to knit yourself a very unique set of armour.

When the user produces more than 10 feet of silk they will notice a tiny spider bite appear underneath their ring, harmless at first, but who knows what will happen if they continue to harvest silk.

CYRIL'S LETTER OPENER

by Luke Cox

Just a simple copper dagger in most respects, but a cut made by the letter opener on any material will repair itself within a few minutes. It also happens to be remarkably sharp, unusual for a letter opener. The effect doesn't work if the object in question has been severed in two. In other words, a sheet of paper cut in half will not mend, but a sheet that has been almost entirely cut in half will.

MORDECAI, SKULL IN A BOTTLE

by Luke Cox

How on earth a human skull managed to find itself inside a narrow-necked glass bottle is sure to remain a mystery, but one thing that is beyond all doubt is that this skull is very much alive and talking. Mordecai may be quite brusque at the moment, but I'm sure deep down what he really is looking for is a friend or two. He may one day even become an ally.

Mordecai hates and won't answer questions, especially personal ones (characters will lose favour with him if they try), but loves to be given tasks such as standing watch or distracting an NPC. He is able to conjure

werelight in his eye sockets and wail a deathly howl making him an effective torch/alarm system. He is of a lawful-good disposition and will often ponder the dichotomy between law and ethics.



*Figure XIII:
Mordecai, the
Skull in a Bottle*

THE GLOVES OF THE MASTER OPENER

by Ray Otus

When you wear these exquisite gloves of supple blue-dyed leather, your sense of touch is at least as good as it is without the gloves on, though they still provide some protection. When you take them off after having worn them for at least a few hours, you discover that you can still feel them when you are not wearing them.

With a reasonable amount of effort and concentration, you learn the trick of manipulating them, just as if they were your hands, even when they are out of your sight. This remote control becomes more difficult with distance; the limit seems to be about a mile. Also, they cannot do anything, lift anything, etc., that your own hands could not, and you have no sense other than touch. They will, however, levitate in the air when

activated at the normal height of your hands (no higher than you can reach while standing on the ground). After exercising this mental link with the gloves, you will find they have a few quirks and sometimes act of their own accord. Their old master appears to have had a fondness for petting pretty things: jewels, works of art, attractive people...

When you “wear” the gloves remotely, roll+CHA. *On a 10+, the gloves respond perfectly to your commands. *On a 7-9, the gloves are responsive, but they get distracted at a key moment and also act on an impulse of their own.

THE AUDITOR'S NECKLACE

by Russell Williams

This leather choker is clasped in front with a coin-sized ivory disk carved with the sigil of the goddess of trade. If anyone lies to you while you wear the necklace, the disk turns cold against your skin. If you lie while wearing the necklace, the goddess rejects you and the necklace is inert unless you atone.

BEARD OF BEFRIENDING

by Daniel Fowler

Even the most prestigious dwarven lord would admire this mighty beard. It retains its luster and softness long after its owner passes away. **If you pull this beard off its deceased former owner and let it intertwine with your own beard**, it will permanently bind with your face. While you live, the beard will act to preserve you both. The beard acts as an animal companion as described in the Ranger playbook (choose stats for it upon letting it intertwine with your beard).

HIVEMIND HONEY

by Greg Baatard

A small jar of unusually dark honey with a cork stopper upon which a rune has been etched. Upon eating a spoonful of this honey, you feel your mind expand to become one with the Hive.

When you close your eyes in order to see through the many eyes of the Hive, roll+WIS. *On a 10+, you see a myriad of tiny visions from the surrounding region that coalesce into something useful. The GM must honestly describe what can be seen at a location you specify. *On a 7-9, the visions are fragmented. The GM may omit or alter an important detail when describing the location you specify.

When you focus your desires in order to command the Hive, roll+CHA.

*On a 10+, a large swarm of bees gathers in your vicinity and carries out your wishes, to the limit of what a swarm of bees can achieve. *On a 7-9, the bees are fewer and your control of them is fleeting – you won't get everything you desire out of their presence.

Your link to the Hive lasts for approximately one hour, during which you struggle to function as a lumbering humanoid. Take -1 forward to any non-Hive rolls during this time. Should you command the Hive in a destructive manner and fail to reward them with a source of nectar, the Hive will be reluctant to welcome you in the future.

GHOST HORSE

by Allan Dotson

This gaunt, white horse is wrapped and draped with dangling chains. You find the horse chained to a dungeon wall. **When you free the horse from the dungeon**, it stamps its hoof three times, and will follow you. It follows at a discreet distance, perhaps hidden in shadows, or invisible, but close enough for you to hear its rattling chains and for animals and superstitious peasants to be unnerved by its presence. The horse can follow you anywhere: over water, into dungeons, through locked doors, etc. As the horse is an animal, a Druid could speak with it.

When you call the ghost horse, it comes to you. **When you mount the ghost horse**, it will carry you wherever you wish to go. The horse flies faster than any mortal creature and can carry you through walls or other

obstacles. While you ride the ghost horse, you are insubstantial and cannot physically interact with the world around you. When you dismount, the horse stamps its hoof twice. The horse will carry one rider at a time, any distance, for a total of three trips. Once the horse has carried you three times, it goes beyond the Black Gate to its final rest.

The ghost horse can even carry you across the Black Gate. **If you call the ghost horse from beyond the Black Gate**, it will come to you, and carry you back to the mortal world. **If you ride the ghost horse from the mortal world into the land of the dead**, it can take you directly to the soul you seek. The ghost horse only carries one rider at a time, so you cannot bring someone back with you, but you could stay behind in their place.

THE MARVELOUS SCABBARD OF BRAN BAEREDDYN

by Logan Howard

This is a rather plain-looking scabbard with a simple knotwork motif near the top. It will change to fit any sword. **If you are its wearer and have fulfilled your alignment since you last rested**, it is activated. **Each time your weapon is drawn from it**, you may choose a single tag to apply to the weapon (forceful, sharp, serrated, elemental fire, etc.). **As soon as your weapon is returned to the scabbard**, it loses the tag.

THE SANGUINE SLURPER

by Daniel Fowler

This fist-sized stone appears completely inert until it comes in contact with blood or blood stains. As it absorbs seemingly endless amounts of blood it begins to writhe and moan. Multiple loudly slurping orifices open along its body. Several eyes open and seem to roll with glee. When every speck of blood is gone, the stone quickly settles down and becomes inert again.

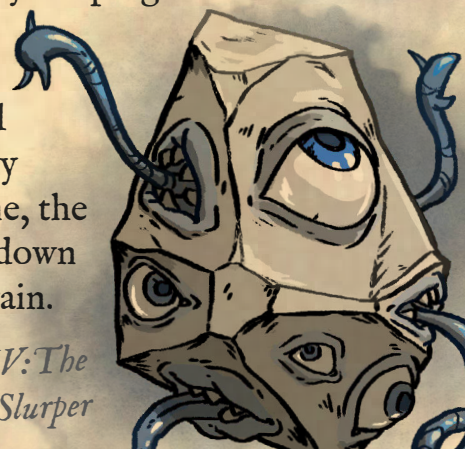


Figure XIV: The Sanguine Slurper

THE DANDY'S EVENT BAG

Author Unknown

This medium-sized carpet bag will produce clothing suitable for any high society event. The clothing it produces will be sized to fit you, and will be appropriate for the given social situation.

When you require fine raiment, roll+CHA.

*On a 10+, the clothing will be of the highest possible quality and in the newest style. You will be the belle of the ball and an important figure will be desperate for your attention.

*On a 7-9, you'll look nice, but to the discerning eye there will be some indication that you don't quite belong. For example, there may be a noticeable blemish, the clothing may be slightly out of style, or you may be wearing the same outfit as someone else.

The bag can only produce one ensemble per day and the previous outfit must be returned before a new one can be generated.

SMOKE OF THE EMERALD MOUNTAIN BLOSSOM

by Daniel Fowler

Dragons and all their kind love expensive and rare things. Nothing is more decadent than burning this flower which only blooms at the storm-shrouded peak of the Emerald Mountains during rare moments of clement weather. When the contents of this vial are added to a flame it produces a fume that most people would call pleasant. Any dragon or draconic creature that inhales the fumes will become intoxicated and generally adopt a friendly, talkative, even helpful mood. Each application only lasts for a short time, however, and a prolonged conversation may require several uses. A vial contains DoF uses.

THE REAPER'S OWN CLOAK

by Logan Howard

We've all heard the tale of Elmdren Spidersilk and how he cheated Death. Many claim it is merely an old myth or a delightful folktale for late evenings by the fire. Nevertheless, there are some details that may point towards an actual event. As you may recall, Elmdren didn't just steal his own life back; he even stole the cloak right off the Grim Reaper's back!

That cloak is real. There is an ash colored cloak with strange properties that surfaces from time to time. Some say it can bring the dead back to life. Others claim it can kill a perfectly healthy person.

When you lie down next to a person who is about to make a Last Breath roll and spread the cloak over you both, roll. *On a 10+, narrate how you manage to guide the dying person back to life. *On a 7-9, the dying person returns to the living but you must now negotiate with Death.

A POUCH FULL OF FEATHERS

by Jeremy Strandberg

3 uses, 1 weight

When you pick one or two of the feathers from the pouch and let them drop, they burst into small, brightly colored, rather agitated birds. Toss one or two feathers at a time and it'll last indefinitely. Toss a handful all at once and mark off 1 use.

THE CHROMATIC CUP

by Christopher Sniezak

This bronzed goblet has four gems set into the bowl. When you fill the cup with a liquid, the gems all take on one of five colors: ruby red, sapphire blue, emerald green, pearl white, or onyx black, which change every time someone drinks from the cup.

When you drink from the cup you feel a strange energy course through your body, which varies depending on the color of the gems.

- Red has a spicy heat to it as you drink, followed by heartburn.
- 28. Blue causes all the hair on your body to

stand on end and a tingling sensation fills your mouth.

- Green tastes foul and putrid and makes you nauseous.
- White gives you brain freeze and a frost covers your lips.
- Black has an acidic tang to it and then causes a bubbling feeling in your stomach.

The next time you speak or exhale, you let loose a dragon's elemental breath. The type depends on which color the gems were when you drank: Red is a wave of fire, blue is a bolt of lightning, green is a cloud of poison gas, white is a spray of arctic ice and wind, and black is a stream of acid. State your desired outcome and roll+CON. *On a 10+, choose 2. *On a 7-9, choose 1. *On a miss, some catastrophe occurs as a result of the draconic breath.

- What you intended with the draconic energy comes to pass.
- You avoid harming yourself with the draconic energy.
- You control the draconic energy.

THE KEYRING OF RIKUND WAYMAKER

by Logan Howard

This is a black metal keyring with three brass keys on it. When a key is put into any lock and turned, roll. On a *10+, all three. *On a 7-9, choose two.

- A secret of great importance is revealed to you.
- The lock is opened.
- The key does not disappear.

Compendium Classes

This section contains compendium classes written by Jason and select entries from our contests.

MONKEY FRIEND

by Jason Cordova

When you befriend a monkey, you may take the following move when you level up:

Monkey Friends are the Best Friends

You and your monkey have a special bond. You can't talk to it per se, but it will always act as you wish it to. **When you and your monkey work together**, take +1 forward to any action where a distraction or an extra set of hands would be useful. You may then select the following as class moves:

Oooh, Shinies!

When you let your monkey roam for a while in a civilized area and he returns, roll. *On a 10+, your monkey gives you an interesting or valuable item. *On a 7-9, the item is also dangerous or draws unwelcome attention to you.

Alarm Call

Your monkey is always looking out for you. It will scream at the first sign of danger, ensuring you are never surprised. When an enemy would get the drop on you, you get to act first instead.

Dial M for Monkey

Your monkey is exceptionally smart. It can follow complex orders and understand speech, though you are the only one who can understand what it says. **When you consult your monkey while attempting to Discern Realities**, you may ask one additional question, even on a miss.

*Figure XV:
Monkey Friend*



SPIDER THRALL

by Jason Cordova

When you have taken an action pleasing to the spider goddess **Malgoliant**, you may take the following move when you level up:

Student of the Many-Eyed Mistress

For seven nights in a row, your dreams are filled with visions of the secret history of the spiders, from The Beginning of All Things, down through the Age of Legend and the Age of Occlusion, and into the Present Age. The GM will describe these things for you. On the eighth night, you will stand before Malgoliant herself, and she will ask you what spiders desire most. **When you give your answer to Malgoliant**, mark 1 XP and roll+INT. You may no longer use this move.

*On a 10+, the following counts as an advanced move for you:

Children of Malgoliant

Malgoliant will visit your dreams and show you the location of a great spider egg. Once you've retrieved it, the egg will hatch after a day or two, and a baby great spider the size of a small dog will accompany you. Whenever you kill something (be it an animal, a monster, or a person), you can let the baby spider feed on the body.

Once the spider has consumed 25 HP worth of creatures, it reaches adolescence and is the size of a goat. The spider can then fight alongside you. When fighting humanoids or monsters, the spider adds +1d4 to your damage.

Once the spider has consumed 50 HP worth of creatures, it is large enough to fend for itself. It will go off to find a cavern or abandoned structure to make its lair. Mark 1 XP.

Malgoliant will then show you the location of another great spider egg.

*On a 7-9, the following counts as an advanced move for you:

Figure XVI:
Spider Thrall



Blessed of the Eight-Legged She

You have eight long, black spider legs growing out of your back. The legs can be tucked under a large shirt or cloak. These legs allow you to climb on any surface, ceiling, or overhang. The forelegs are barbed and can be used as weapons.

Spider Forelegs (close, reach, messy, +1D8 damage)

*On a 6-, you are deemed unworthy to be a true Spider Thrall, but you may select the following as a class move:

Oh the Webs We Weave . . .

When you devise a plan to ensnare a target, roll+INT. *On a 10+, ask all three from the list. *On a 7-9, ask one. Take +1 forward when acting on the answers.

-Where is the best location to trap my target?

-What can I use to lure my target in?

-Who can help me trap my target?

THE STORYSMITH

by Jason Cordova

When you captivate an audience by reciting a fairy tale or legend, you may take the following move when you level up:

Teller of Tales

When you tell a story, name it and give the GM a brief description of what it is about. The GM will then tell you one or two effects this particular story can have on your audience. Then roll+CHA. *On a 10+, hold two. *On a 7-9, hold one. Spend hold one-for-one to enact the effects.

You may then take the following as class moves:

Compelling Narrative

When you tell a story, name one person within earshot of you who must stop what they're doing and listen to it in its entirety.

Enchanting Narrative

When you remember a story about a legendary magical item, name it and give the GM a brief description of what the item did and how it was used. The GM will then tell you what related magical qualities you can imbue upon a similar, mundane item. Then roll+WIS. *On a hit, the mundane item takes the magical qualities described by the GM for the remainder of the scene. *On a 10+, as above, and the enchantment lasts until you next Make Camp. *On a 12+, as above, and you may spend an XP to make the enchantment permanent.

Heroes of Another Age

When you remember a story about a legendary hero, name it and give the GM a brief description of the hero's triumphs and tribulations. The GM will then tell you one

special ability and one weakness related to this hero. Then roll+WIS. *On a 10+, you take the special ability for the remainder of the scene. *On a 7-9, you also take the weakness.

SERPENT BROTHER

by Daniel Fowler

The ancient snake god Kar-Suet teaches us that strength and ruthlessness are the only things that matter. Survival requires abandoning your human weaknesses and grasping as much power as possible. Your motives mean nothing if you cannot force your will upon the world, coil around it, and squeeze out what you need.

When you ritually mingle your blood with that of one of the immortal serpent children of the snake god Kar-Suet, your features immediately take on a reptilian appearance and your humanity starts to slip away. You may take the following move the next time you level up:

Survival of the Fittest

Your mission is clear and you will not allow anyone to stand in your way. Mark an XP whenever you kill or orchestrate the death of a rival, or destroy an obstacle on your quest for power and authority. The following then count as advanced moves for you:

Serpent's Kiss

Your mouth drips with venom that paralyzes your prey and causes them unbearable agony. Deal your class damage if you manage to bite your target.



*Figure XVII:
Serpent Brother*

Shedding

You may elect to lose a normal limb to ignore the other effects of a single attack or damaging GM move. The limb that regrows after a full day is obviously reptilian and unnatural.

Mesmerising Gaze

Deep in its heart, the prey knows it exists only to nourish the hunter. **When you lock eyes with your prey**, you may Defy Danger +CHA to paralyze its body for as long as you hold its gaze.

Sssnakes, It Has to Be Sssnakes!

You may freely converse and parley with serpents of all kinds. Anyone who mocks your lisp should sleep lightly.

THE ONEIRONAUT

by Will Patterson

When you have spent a year in meditation with the yogis of the Shakyamuni mountain clan, you may take the following move when you level up:

Dream Signs

When you witness something that would be impossible on Earth, such as magic, you may roll+WIS. *On a 10+, hold 2 Lucid. *On a 7-9, hold 1 Lucid. You may never hold more than 3 Lucid at one time. Lose all Lucid and revert to your original form whenever you fall asleep. At any time, spend 1 Lucid to:

- Change an established detail in a scene.
- Change something about yourself.
- Summon a simple object or weapon.

You may then select the following as class moves:

Awakened

The waking world bends to your whims. At any time you may spend 2 Lucid to attempt something impossible in the fiction. Roll Defy Danger +WIS to find out what happens.

Limitless

You have learned to use intention as a weapon. At any time, you may spend 1 Lucid to Volley with WIS. Your damage die increases to d10 and you may choose to have either the forceful or the messy tag. If you would choose to reduce your ammo by one, instead spend 1 additional Lucid.

Only a Guest

You have realized that even the most fearsome foe is still just a creation of your

subconscious. At any time, you may spend 1 Lucid to change an established detail of a hostile creature.

THE REVENANT

by Michael G. Barford

When you have passed beyond the Black Gate with revenge still burning in your heart, erupt from your shallow grave and grasp vengeance. You may take this move immediately upon your resurrection:

Spirit of Vengeance

You have lost your sense of identity but have been granted a supernatural endurance. Erase your character's name and add 10 to your max HP.

The following then count as class moves for you:

Vendetta

Your soul is guided by a solitary purpose. Erase your character's alignment and race and add this question to the Discern Realities list: "What is the quickest route to revenge?" When you act on the answer, in addition to gaining +1 forward, mark XP.

Solitary Undertaking

Your allies only get in the way of your mission. When you roll a 6-, you may erase one of your character's Bonds and treat the result as a 7-9.

Vengeful Visage

Your appearance is twisted by your strong desire. When you Parley, you don't need leverage if you erase one description of your look.

Ultimate Vengeance

The moment you have been waiting for is finally here. When vengeance is at hand, you may successfully acquire it. Nothing will stand in your way. Destroy your character sheet (preferably with fire) and describe with great relish how your character achieves ultimate vengeance. Keep in mind: sometimes the best revenge is a life well lived.

THE SUNDERED

by Fraser Simons

Whenever you do something or witness something that irrevocably alters your sense of self, you are forever changed, revealing your true nature. Your memories come back in a torrent. They

partial leverage on your fragile psyche. For now. What is clear is this: you are not one of them. You never were and may never be. You fell or threw yourself from another existence into this one and when this happened, you sundered your past from

yourself. Now that past wishes to become present. As it does, who you are now is slowly being overridden. Did you belong to another plane? Are you the ghost or reincarnation of someone, or something, past? Why and how did you come to be here, and how have you changed?

The mystery is yours to unravel. You may take the following move when you level up.

Fractured

At the start of session, roll+CON. *On a 10+, the GM holds 2. *On a 7-9, the GM holds 1. They may spend this hold 1 for 1 during a session in order to do one of the following:

- Give you a fleeting memory from your past that gives you +1 or -1 forward, they choose.
- Tell you something your other self wants you to do or say. If you do it, mark XP.
- When you roll a miss, take temporary control over you as your other self.

The GM can also opt to give any of this hold to any other player during the course of the session, but never to you.

You may then take the following as class moves:

Educe

Whenever you Discern Realities, you may also tell everyone how the person or situation elicits a forgotten memory from who you used to be in an attempt to unravel the mystery of who or what you were before.

Fervent

The first time you speak to someone earnestly about the events that sundered you, or what is currently happening to your sense of self, you may ask them any one question in regards to it, and they must answer truthfully.

Congruent

Replaces Educe

When you reveal enough about your other self to know its nature, take a move from another playbook so long as you and the GM pick it together.

MONSTER HUNTER

by Scott Selvidge

When you have taken the time to learn about the different properties of monsters and the benefits of creating items from their remains, you may take the following move when you level up:

Monster Lore

When you Discern Realities about a monster (whether living or

dead) in order to determine which parts of it might be beneficial in crafting an item you wish to create, you may take +1 to the roll. Also, when you ask “What here is useful or valuable to me?” about the monster, the GM will tell you what

part or parts of it can be used and what traits they will give to the item you craft. The following then count as class moves for you:

Beast Crafter

You have gained the materials, now you must use them. **When you begin crafting an item from a monster's remains**, describe the parts of the monster you are using and the way the item looks. Then roll+WIS. *On a 10+, you may create 2 traits with the GM for your item in addition to the normal attributes it would get for its type. *On a 7-9, you may create 1 trait with the GM. *On a 6-, also create 1 trait, but the GM will also create a drawback for its shoddy craftsmanship.

Monster trait examples: allowing armor to count towards a type of energy damage (fire, cold, electricity, etc.); giving an energy tag to a weapon; allowing the use of a monster move when using the item.

Drawback examples: the item is useless against a certain material or creature type; the item does not protect against a certain type of damage; the item is easily damaged or broken.

In the end, the traits and drawbacks are limited only by the GM. You can always try to make a new item if you create one that is not what you were hoping for (so long as you can find another monster of that type).

Talisman

When you have time to work with the remains of a monster, you can use enough of its less valuable parts to craft a talisman of that monster. While you wear a monster's talisman, monsters of that type cannot sense you unless they can see you, and you gain +1 armor against their attacks. However, the powerful scent of the talisman may draw the

36 attention of other creatures.

Bane

When you use the Beast Crafter move to craft a weapon from the remains of a monster, the weapon gains the bane trait in addition to the traits you gain from the roll. The bane trait causes the weapon to ignore the armor of monsters of the same type.

Legendary Hunter

When you have 3 or more items made from one type of monster and you encounter a monster of the same type, take +1 ongoing against it.

Trap Master

When you attempt to lay a trap for a monster, describe what it looks like and what it does, then roll +WIS. *On a 10+, choose 2. *On a 7-9, choose 1:

- Your trap works well, hindering the monster in some way, giving you and your companions +1 forward against it.
- The trap does not accidentally hinder or ensnare one of your allies during the conflict.
- The trap disables one of the monster's moves; the GM will describe how.

Apex Predator

Whenever you encounter a predatory monster that would normally make you their prey, you may roll+CON. *On a 10+, it seems to acknowledge your prowess and leaves you alone, going on its way. *On a 7-9, it initiates a threatening display and will only attack if further provoked.

The Dreamer Palace

An adventure starter by David LaFreniere

On the other side of the dreaming doors lies the way to the Somnolent Ziggurat, its palace. It is the Sandman, at least, that's what people call it. It is the thing that lurks in the dark part of your dreams, the lethargy that begs you not to get up on cold days, the small deposit in the corner of your eye when you wake. And it doesn't want you to wake anymore.

IMPRESSIONS

The blurry edges of the tower looming upward.

A vague blackness as far as the eye can see surrounding the tower.

A sensation of lying on your back as you walk about.

The sound of gentle splashing as your feet go up and down on the solid, but unidentifiable, walking surface.

Thousands of bodies covered in dark, coarse sand, their chests slowly rising and falling.

A sensation of falling whenever you climb up or down the tower.

Feeling thirsty even after having a drink of perfectly cool water.

The vague impression of that thing from your childhood nightmares

moving about in the darkness.

Something that cannot exist flying above your head.

Several children hiding under furniture put a finger to their lips as you make eye contact.

When not paying attention, you find yourself floating in the air slightly.

Swimming through water doesn't feel wet or make you short of breath.

QUESTIONS

What happened to the children in the fairytale when the Sandman took them to the Sleepy Tower?

What about this world lets you know it does not operate like the normal world?

What night terror have you had that almost convinced you not to come here?

What is the magical property of the fruit you came to find that only grows in our dreams?

Someone has fallen into a sleep that you cannot wake them from by any natural means. Who are they to you and how do you plan to rescue them by coming here?

What magics must you employ to travel through the dreaming doors?

CUSTOM MOVES

The ziggurat is infinitely tall and deep, just as dreams are. Traversing it is difficult, as movement is not as rational in this place as it is when one is awake. How do we get from one place to the next in dreams? Sometimes it might be going through a door to a room, or climbing some stairs, or turning around and find ourselves somewhere, or swimming through water we can breathe, or flying. GMs may find it helpful to note down how the players progress from one room to the next, in case the players want to retrace their “steps.”

When you attempt to navigate the ziggurat, describe how you do it:

If you try to get directions from a dream creature, roll+CHA.

If you attempt an acrobatic feat that defies physics, roll+DEX.

If you try to move through a seemingly solid surface, roll+STR.

If you try to fly or swim an impossible distance, roll+CON.

If you notice something odd about the environment and interact with it, roll+INT.

If you pick between two obvious paths for no particular reason, roll+WIS.

*On a 12+, hold 2 *On a 10+, hold 1. *On a 7-9, hold 1, but the way forward is through a nightmare corridor. *On a miss, you find yourself in the middle of a nightmare, roll the nightmare for you and a companion of your choice. *On a 1-3, also lose all hold.

If multiple party members navigate in turn, their hold is pooled together for the entire party. To find treasure, spend 1 hold and describe the room it is found in. You may spend 3 hold to encounter a dreamer.

When you attempt to move through a nightmare corridor, describe the nightmare you most recently had and roll+WIS. *On a 10+, you manage to avoid the horrors within and get to the other side. *On a 7-9, roll on the nightmare table.

NIGHTMARE TABLE:

1. (A) Nightmare creature(s) appear(s)!
2. You start to pull worms from your own flesh! (Mark Sick.)
3. All your teeth fall out! (Mark Scarred.)
4. You are in your small clothes! (Armor disappears.)
5. You experience extreme vertigo, as though falling! (Mark Shaky.)
6. The Sandman appears! Run!

When a dreamer, a natural traveler in this place, completes a dream, a temporary way out is created. When you spend 3 hold to encounter a dreamer and you try to wake them, describe the most pleasant dream you can remember and roll+CHA. *On a 10+, the dreamer is ready to wake up, opening a window for you and your companions to awaken, immediately escaping the ziggurat. *On a 7-9, the dreamer needs your help to complete the dream before they are ready to wake up. *On a miss, the Sandman has deceived you by disguising itself as a dreamer. Run!

SLEEP IS THE DANGER

When someone falls asleep within the dreamland, they risk coming under the power of the Sandman and never waking again. When you undertake a perilous journey in the dreamscape, no rations are risked. Instead, you run the risk of dozing. The role of quartermaster is replaced with the role of the red-eye. The red-eye must describe how they attempt to keep everyone awake during the journey, then roll+WIS. *On a 10+, no one dozes. *On a 7-9, one party member per day of journey is overlooked for too long and dozes. The GM will say who.

When you make camp and attempt to regain health, no watch need be taken, but everyone must Defy Danger+CON to stay awake long enough to heal.

Damage from sleep:

Asleep for a moment: 4hp, ignoring armor

Asleep for an hour: 8hp, ignoring armor

Asleep for several hours: roll Last Breath as the Sandman bids you lie down forever.

THINGS TO FIND

Flying Parasol. Found in a rickety basket are a group of decorative umbrellas. When you draw one out and open it up, you find it oddly tailored to your personality, clothing, or equipment (tell the GM what it looks like). When you grip the handle of an open parasol with both hands, you will be carried in the direction you wish, about

20 feet above the ground at a leisurely, balloon-like pace. This item only functions in dreamscapes.

Essence of smelling salts (DoF uses). This item is repugnant to the dream creatures and the Sandman in particular. It is additionally useful for waking your companions who have been knocked unconscious, and will give a +2 on a roll to wake a dreamer.

ADVERSARIES

Sandman

Solitary, Magical, Devious, Amorphous

Sleep Sand (D10+2 damage)

Sand Smash

21 HP

5 armor

Close

Taller than a man and leaving a trail of coarse, brown sand behind it as it moves, the Sandman is relentless in its desire to put creatures to sleep. This is its domain, and everyone is supposed to be sleeping. It's unknown if this creature can even be killed permanently. Characters brought to 0 HP by the Sandman don't die, but are asleep unless they can be removed from the sleep sand. Instinct: Put everyone in permanent sleep

Bury with Sleep Sand

Set a Trap