

Living Greyhawk™

Journal

Artifacts of Berth!
Instruments of the Gods
Campaign News Returns!

no. ten, Colden 592 CY



RPGA
NETWORK



Campaign News

Sail on to the Isles of Woe

"Gone, like the three of Heraan."

—A strange saying among the Flan hillfolk of the Cairn Hills.

It all started with an eccentric wizard from the city of Greyhawk. His name is not important—after all, that city spawns crazed mages by the dozen. What is important is that he might have solved the most famous mystery of the Nyr Dyv: They say he's found the Isles of Woe.

The wizard hired a small mercenary company that worked out of Elmshire and giddily led his hired army into the Nyr Dyv, setting out upon ancient spell-constructed boats moored in a cove about a week beyond lonely Stankaster. According to the wizard, these boats were the only way a soul could set foot onto ancient Heraan—the city where the *Codex of the Infinite Planes* was supposedly first inscribed and where countless other treasures still rest. The mercenaries' captain, an ambitious and greedy warrior named Deneju, liked what the wizard told him about the ancient lost city. He only barely missed the great plundering of the Temple of All-Consumption, arriving at the foot of that dead volcano after would-be treasure-seekers began to find only ungilded death there. This new treasure trove would be his from the ground floor, so he followed the unstable wizard across the Nyr Dyv's waters to the fabled isles. While I do not know the entire story that followed, I know that the wizard and Deneju went their separate paths. The wizard grew more erratic the longer they stayed on the isle, and he eventually disappeared into a massive structure the captain called the Green Devil's Tower, while Deneju went on to search for his treasure in an abandoned temple devoted to some long-forgotten watery god.

Deneju has ... retired. What he found on the Isles of Woe put an end to his adventuring days, and his worries settle on coin no more. But before the end of his mercenary career, he told me where that arcane boathouse lies—the exact

What is Living Greyhawk?

LIVING GREYHAWK is the largest, most popular shared-world DUNGEONS & DRAGONS campaign in the history of gaming. Run under the auspices of the ROLE PLAYING GAMER ASSOCIATION Network (RPGA), the campaign offers gamers around the world the chance to contribute to the developing history of Oerth by taking part in scenarios played at conventions, game days, or in the comfort of home. For more information on how you can get involved in the campaign, visit www.livinggreyhawk.com.

spot—and I am willing to pass on that information to you. And it'll only cost you ten gold orbs ...

You Want Some of This?

At Origins 2002 the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign kicks off its 592 CY dungeon delve event: *The Isles of Woe*. During this event, your character will travel to the ruined ancient city of Heraan to unlock its secrets and unhinge ancient treasure hidden for more than a millennium.

But you're not there, yet.

This year, Origins takes place in Columbus, Ohio on July 4-7, 2002. If you are planning to attend Origins and participate in the *Isles of Woe* event, you must still face the challenges of the boathouse hidden in a once-sunken cove on the Cairn Hills coast of the Nyr Dyv. We've included encounters for three levels of play below. Before you come to Origins, find the most devious DM you know and have him or her challenge you with the encounter appropriate for your characters' level of play. When you arrive at the *Isles of Woe* event, your DM will ask you what challenges you faced at the boathouse, and the challenges and rewards you find on the Isles just might change based upon your answer. How? Here's a hint: If the DM is not amused or touched by your tales of valor and heroism, his or her heart will turn colder toward your plights in Heraan—so bring your best bard or suffer the consequences.

When you play these encounters, you don't gain experience points, and you don't gain gold. If your character dies, you can keep on playing it as if nothing

bad ever happened—though you might want to rethink your plans for plundering the *Isles of Woe* ... death there will be swift and real, and if you can't handle the foes below, it is doubtful your character can handle the challenges of the isle. In short, these introductory encounters are presented "for fun" only and don't "count" in the overall LIVING GREYHAWK campaign.

DMs Unite!

An encounter is only as tough as its DM—and we're always on the lookout for that excellent mix of devious and fair for our LIVING GREYHAWK DM pool. Read the encounters below, and set up strategies that will challenge your foes. When you have a top-notch strategy, point your Internet browser toward the Community section of the Wizards of the Coast website (www.wizards.com/community). Go to the RPGA message boards, and scroll down to the LIVING GREYHAWK boards. A thread called "Isle of Woe Strategies Contest" will be there waiting for you. Post your best ideas there. Each month until Origins, we'll pick the top three strategies posted on the list and send our top strategist a treasure chest of D&D and GREYHAWK prizes. At Origins we'll award a special prize to our top DM strategist. What will it be? Let's just say that the prize will be ... fitting. Next month, we'll give you another hint!

Delve Toward the Boathouse, EL 3 to 6

"The easiest way to the boathouse is by way of the cave next to the old Flan standing stones."

Living Greyhawk Journal



That's what the man who gave you directions to this place told you, and looking down into that cave—more like a pit with its steep limestone sides descending down to the shadow-shrouded floor some hundred feet below—dissuades you from searching for the “hard way.” Once you make it to the bottom of the pit, you have half a mile of twisted caverns until you reach the arcane boathouse.

Like the majority of the subterranean passages in the Flanaess, the natural limestone caves that reach down into the arcane boathouse are inhabited. Humanoid tribes from both the Cairn Hills and the waters of the Nyr Dyv use the caves, but they usually (and wisely) stay away from the magical boats. Lower-level characters encounter a group of these squatters on their way to their destination. These encounters can occur in whatever cave passage or chamber the DM deems fit.

Three to Five 1st-level characters, EL 3

➤ **Kobolds** (6): hp 4, 3, 3, 2, 2, 1; see *Monster Manual* page 123.
➤ **Zezzru**: female kobold Rgr1/Sor1; CR 2; Small humanoid (reptilian); HD 1d10+1d4; hp 13; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 13, flat-footed 13); Atk +1 melee (1d6-1, halfspear), or +4 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 8, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +5, Jump +4, Spellcraft +1; Ambidexterity, Point Blank Shot, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Zezzru suffers a -1 penalty to attack rolls in bright sunlight or with the radius of a daylight spell.

Possessions: Leather armor, halfspear, light crossbow, 10 bolts, spell component pouch.

Spells Known (5/4; Base DC = 11 + spell level; arcane spell failure 10%): *o—daze, ghost sound, mage hand, resistance, 1st—shield, true strike.*

Average Party Level 2, EL4

➤ **Lizardfolk** (2): AC 17 (touch 10, flat-footed 17); hp 14, 11, 11; see *Monster Manual* page 128.

Possessions: Large shield, greatclub, 5 javelins.

➤ **Pzartez**: male lizardfolk Drd2; CR 3; Medium-size humanoid (reptilian); HD 4d8+6; hp 29; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (touch 10, flat-footed 17); Atk +4 melee (1d8+2/x3, longspear), or +4 melee (1d6, club); SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Animal Empathy +4, Balance +4, Concentration +6, Jump +7, Swim +9, Multiattack; Spell Focus (Transmutation).

Possessions: Large wooden shield, longspear, club, spell component pouch.

Spells Prepared (4/3; Base DC = 12 + spell level; +2 Transmutation spells) *o—*

flare, guidance, light, resistance, 1st—entangle, magic fang (x2)

➤ **Snake, Viper, Medium-size (Pzartez's animal companion):** hp 9; see *Monster Manual* Appendix I: Animals.

Average Party Level 4, EL 6

➤ **Howlers** (2): hp 45, 39; see *Monster Manual* page 121.

➤ **Hertog the Quasit:** hp 18; see *Monster Manual* page 41. Hertog can take two forms, that of a large black dog, and that of a hunched and ancient human man.

Higher-level characters on their way to the *Isles of Woe* will encounter resistance in the boathouse. See us next month for Encounter Levels 8 to 12!

LIVING GREYHAWK Website Receives Facelift

With all the LIVING GREYHAWK activity of the last year, our campaign Web page grew woefully out-of-date. Just last month we unleashed a new page that features regular content. Some of the newest releases include all three Rules Updates and the Regional Dispatches that formerly appeared in the *LIVING GREYHAWK Journal*. Stop by www.livinggreyhawk.com and check it out. ★

On the Cover: Canadian artist Kalman Andrasofsky reveals a contemplative Canon Hazen of Rao, the mortal who used the *Crook of Rao* to expel legions of fiends from the Flanaess.

LIVING GREYHAWK BACK ISSUES STILL AVAILABLE!

Have you missed an issue of the *LIVING GREYHAWK Journal*? Back issues are still available to active members of the RPGA Network. Contact RPGA HQ via rpgahq@wizards.com to order up some GREYHAWK goodness. Issues 0 and 1 are already sold out, and our remaining quantities of the issues we do have in stock are waning fast.

Back issues cost \$5.00 US per copy, which includes shipping and handling. If you'd rather not pay upwards of \$10.00 per issue via online auctions, we strongly suggest dropping HQ a line.

Back issues for *DRAGON Magazine* installments and the yet-to-be-printed “lost” fifth issue are sadly not available. Here's what the stand-alone issues you're missing contain:

Issue 2: Exclusive city of Greyhawk poster map. Greyhawk map key. Gem of the Flanaess: The Artisan's Quarter. The Way of the Lake (Rhennee culture and prestige classes). Enchiridion of the Fiend-Sage (Animus, Bullywug Savant, Grigaur, Valley Elf). Dispatches.

Issue 3: Blood of Heroes (hero-deities of the Flanaess). Complete Gods of Oerth table. Enchiridion of the Fiend-Sage (Amedian Gutworm, Losel, Norker, Swordwraith). Dispatches. Official LIVING GREYHAWK Character Record Sheet.

Issue 4: Gem of the Flanaess: Clerkgburg (Part 1). The Silent Ones of Keoland (including new prestige class). Enchiridion of the Fiend-Sage (Dune Stalker, Necrophidius, Nyrrian Boatcrusher, Qullan).



Issue #2



Issue #3



Issue #4



Artifacts of Berth

Instruments of the Gods

By Allan Grohe and Erik Mona • Illustrations by Richard Pace

Pompous scholars declare Oerth the center of the multiverse, dismissing all other Material worlds as insignificant backwaters populated by dim rustics. Though perhaps somewhat overstated, the belief focuses upon an undeniable fact—Oerth is a planar nexus. The humble Material world supports the active interests of more than one hundred gods, and scores of demon princes and diabolical archdevils enjoy the adoration of Oerth's more depraved residents. Planar adventurers find their way to Oerth with some frequency, gaining access to the world through countless gates, conduits, and interconnected demiplanes.

What draws so much attention to Oerth? The answer might lie in its strong presence of magic, particularly as manifested by the numerous powerful artifacts situated throughout the world. The hundreds of divine, infernal, and neutral powers who intervene in the affairs of the Flanaess often bear with them personal items of power, and sometimes they send these objects into the world as proxies of their will. Other artifacts are mysterious even to Oerth's deities and antedate them by millennia.

Regardless of origin, artifacts have always shaped the history of Oerth. The Twin Cataclysms of the Invoked Devastation and the Rain of Colorless Fire almost certainly involved the employment of several items of power, while the Great Migrations that followed them spread legends of artifact usage far and wide across Oerik. More recently, Canon Hazen of Veluna employed the sacred *Crook of Rao* to seemingly expel most evil outsiders from the Flanaess.

But some artifacts play a more humble role in the day-to-day lives of the people of Oerth. Few indeed are little girls of the Flanaess who have not spent hours enchanted with tales of *Queen Ehliassa's Marvelous Nightingale*. Fewer still are those who have not, if even for a moment, entertained thoughts of leaving a hard day's work behind for a grand quest to reconstruct the fabled *Rod of Seven Parts*.

In a world in which magic and evil are both very real and very present, the value of a good artifact is incalculable (at least in gold pieces). Though few can claim the lofty goals and achievements of Canon Hazen, most who care to think on the matter know that owning an artifact can be an instant ticket to power. While some seek out such items (and such power) for altruistic reasons, far more seek some personal gain. Often, a great hero captures a powerful artifact, but an even greater hero prevents its capture by agents of evil.

ARTIFACTS IN LIVING GREYHAWK

Of course, it'll be a good long while before your LIVING GREYHAWK character comes upon an artifact or participates in the creation of one. By definition, major artifacts defy the basic rules of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game. They have no market price and cannot be created via the usual means of magical artifice. Unless your character comes across one in a sanctioned LIVING GREYHAWK adventure (something that's not likely to happen soon), he'll probably never even see one.

Despite this, however, artifacts play an important role in your character's life. Without the *Crook of Rao*, Iuz's armies to the north would still be bolstered by demonic troops. Without the *Hand and Eye of Vecna*, the history of the central Flanaess might be forever changed. The construction and use (and sometimes destruction) of major artifacts have important repercussions upon the campaign world—repercussions sure to be felt by your LIVING GREYHAWK character.

What is a Major Artifact?

Not all objects of power are created equal. To begin, artifacts are items of intense magical power crafted by humans, powerful monsters, or even the gods. They might grant known arcane or divine powers and abilities, or they might wield energies beyond the comprehension of mere mortals. The distinction between major and minor artifacts and powerful magical items is vague, and often one sage's steadfast classification of an item differs from those of any three of her associates. Generally, minor artifacts are powerful items within the realm of mortal magic for which the "recipe" has been lost. By contrast, several criteria exist for classification of an item as a major artifact:

- All major artifacts are unique. While *staves of the magi* are potent magic items, Boccob's *Staff of the Archmage* is a singular powerful major artifact.
- Substantial bodies of folklore and legends surround all major artifacts. While such histories are often contradictory, incomplete, and inaccurate, every major artifact fits within the context of Oerth's living history. A bandit lord wielding a *vorpai sword* might take a few heads, but he is unlikely to hold the key to the destruction of an ancient lich-king who became a god, as he would were he wielding the terrible *Sword of Kas*.



- Most of the artifacts catalogued in the libraries and magical guilds of the Flanaess possess some potentially harmful side effect that might vex the item's owner. Major artifacts stand as testaments to the universal truth that power cannot be achieved without a price. When Shattados, last ruler of the ancient Flannish Kingdom of Sulm, entreated his wicked gods for aid in the form of the *Scorpion Crown*, he knew he would become everlasting overlord of his people. He did not, however, anticipate his empire turning into a desert wasteland or his subjects mutating into hideous insectoid beasts. Shattados's example is a harsh one, but it makes an excellent lesson for those expecting no consequences in exchange for the invocation of awesome power.

- Major artifacts possess a durability unknown to most substances in the multiverse. The creation of an artifact is the supreme apex of magical artifice. Having struggled so hard for survival, such items do not pass easily. Most artifacts and relics are effectively invulnerable, save for certain, extremely specific conditions. The *Crystal of Ebon Flame* might appear brittle, but it can only be crushed beneath *Golbi*, the massive hammer of Fortubo, Suel god of stone, metals, and mountains (and *Golbi* itself is a powerful artifact).

Using Artifacts in a Greyhawk Campaign

Artifacts present DMs with a wealth of roleplaying possibilities. Many players will want to take part in heroic quests to rescue artifacts (or even portions of artifacts) from diabolical dungeons or exotic locales. Such campaigns can last for years, with the PCs working their way from obscure riddles to ancient maps to powerful enemies who also seek the same artifact for their own, malignant ends. An artifact should be used as a goal, a just-over-the-horizon reward that keeps heroes walking the trails of the Flanaess for seasons, or even years. DMs running high-fantasy campaigns might even allow the party to capture and use an artifact, no doubt drawing the attention and ire of powerful minions of evil, good, and neutrality.

Artifacts often change the world, and it is important to understand that the world of Oerth is filled with powerful NPCs who prefer that things continue to work exactly as they did yesterday. Artifact-wielding PCs have much to fear from such agents, be they well-intentioned paladins of Pelor hoping to convince the PCs to use their power wisely, scheming servants of luz looking for a trinket to add to the coffers of Dorakaa, or secret cabals of Hierophant druids that travel Oerth, always looking to quash would-be power mongers who thought a simple item, no matter how mighty, would be an easy route to lasting glory.

Even DMs running a low-level campaign can find a good use for artifacts. While the PCs might never come within leagues of a relic such as the *Talisman of Al-Akbar*, those passing through Baklunish lands will hear tales and chants about its rich history. Those who look like foolish foreigners might even find a friendly merchant willing to sell them the "genuine" article.

In short, artifacts have much to add to any campaign. They are an integral part of the GREYHAWK campaign, and whether used directly or to color background and history, their

presence can inspire lively play that will be remembered fondly for years to come.

Creating Artifacts

Certain secret locales present mortals with the raw materials needed to construct artifacts, and a journey to one such location might form the basis of an entire campaign. These places include:

- Beneath Castle Greyhawk, in its lowest and most inaccessible dungeon levels, lurk the *Oerth Stone* and the *Obelisk*. Each of these strange, quasi-sentient artifacts can tap vast magical energies, which are well-nigh unfathomable when used in tandem. However, few adventurers have survived the castle's dangers to discover the *Oerth Stone*, much less the *Obelisk* (which exists in a hidden demiplane of its own). The powerful objects can channel power into items or people, and that played an integral role in Zagig Yragerne's ascension to demigodhood. Although the mortal Zagig was able to chip a shard from the *Oerth Stone*, even he never knew with certainty that the *Obelisk* existed—he could only detect its presence through the subtle effect that it had on his perceptions and the enchantments of his castle. The secrets and powers of these stones have not been rediscovered since Zagig's ascension.

- The Causeway of Fiends lies just off of the north-easternmost point of North Kingdom, between the shore and the treacherous Isle of Lost Souls. The Cauldron of Night exists beneath Asperdi Isle's Tar Hill, a deep and cavernous blight in the lands of the Sea Barons. These places of dark might are sought by the most treacherous and vile of Oerth's villains, for from the sites can be harvested the components necessary to fashion such items as *Talismans of Ultimate Evil* and *Spheres of Annihilation*. The Great Kingdom's legendary *Malachite Throne* was born from the living darkness beneath Tar Hill, its evil emanations lending vicious strength to the Overkings who ruled from Rauxes for generations. Yugoloths, dark elemental spirits, and fouler aberrations are known to be attracted to these sites, and as they devour blackguards as swiftly as paladins, only the strongest of evil's champions dare to risk approaching these areas.

- *Oerthblood* seeps into The Endless Well from deep beneath the Fortress of Unknown Depths, the dwelling place of the archmage Tenser. His ancient keep was built by migrating Oeridians to guard and harvest this rich magical ore. Few know *Oerthblood* exists—Tenser has been studying the substance in seclusion for decades—and no one knows exactly what it is. Tenser recently reactivated his keep's mining operations (which had been shut down after his death during the Greyhawk Wars), and minor earthquakes and strange grinding vibrations occasionally rumble into the surrounding area from deep beneath the citadel, hinting at the immense golems currently at work harvesting the world's magical essence.



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A Selection of Major Artifacts

A complete overview of all artifacts in the Flanaess would be nearly impossible—there are simply too many to cover here. A handful of artifacts important to the Flanaess within the last century have been included; a future issue of the *LIVING GREYHAWK Journal* will contain a complete list of all known artifacts on Oerth.

The Chalice Everlasting: In the earliest days of conflict between the Suel and Baklunish empires, Suloise magi sought to turn the legendary Baklunish affection for the elements against them. To do this, they created four artifacts of surpassing power and infused these symbols of elemental magic with a portion of the spirits of powerful elemental princes. By all accounts, the experiments failed, resulting in flawed artifice bound (unwillingly) to potent elemental nobles. After their creation, the flawed items spread throughout Oerik. The item dedicated to water, the *Chalice Everlasting*, currently rests within the Flanaess.

The *Chalice Everlasting* appears as an ornate cup formed from constantly swirling water (though it is hard as metal). Small water droplets occasionally spray off of its surfaces and edges, and when holding the *Chalice*, the wielder feels the movement of small waves beneath her fingers. The fresh scent of ocean spray always surrounds the magical cup. The *Chalice* is extremely empathic: when its bearer is in foul spirits, the waters are agitated and stormy, sometimes appearing brackish and giving off faint traces of steam. Most of the time, however, the *Chalice* appears utterly clear and enchantingly beautiful.

The *Chalice Everlasting* can alter any liquid it contacts, including acids and the most harmful poisons. Once per day, its owner can transmogrify up to 20 cubic feet of liquid into pure, fresh water simply by touching the cup to the surface of the liquid and uttering a command word.

Unholy water, potions, or drinks of significance are spoiled by this effect, but the *Chalice* has no effect upon creatures of any type. Each use elicits a 10% chance that instead of purifying the liquid, the *Chalice* instead turns it into putrid swamp filth. Anyone drinking such liquid becomes nauseated.

When tipped on its side and a command word is spoken, the *Chalice* can double as a *decanter of endless water*.

Anyone wielding the *Chalice Everlasting* is wrapped in a shell of fresh air, making him immune to all gases and allowing him to breathe underwater or in a vacuum.

A final command word transforms the *Chalice* into a greater water elemental that serves the bearer for a period of up to three full days before the power falls dormant for a full week and it reforms into the artifact. Destruction or banishment of the elemental reverts the *Chalice* to its normal form, which remains dormant for one month.

Legends abound that the *Chalice* can be used to summon the powerful elemental prince of evil known as Olhydra, who rules a dark corner of the Elemental Plane of Water. The specifics of this summoning, however, have been lost to time.

The bearer of the *Chalice Everlasting* need not drink as long as the item remains in his possession. This magical nourishment is insidious, however. When the bearer and the *Chalice* are inevitably separated, the former bearer must make a Fortitude save (DC 30) or suffer crippling dehydration. Dehydrated characters are exhausted for as many days as they possessed the *Chalice*. They cannot recover through rest—only a *wish*, *miracle*, or similar magic restores them to full vigor.

After detecting the flaws in the elemental items, the Suel dispatched them to foreign lands as gifts of the emperor's gratitude. The *Oerthly Plates* were lost somewhere in the central Flanaess. The *Unquenchable Scepter* traveled north, to what would become Blackmoor (and rested in that land's fabled castle for centuries), and the *Tempest Horn* was sent to a distant empire in the Far West. All four of the items returned to the Flanaess within the past 50 years, and were employed by forces loyal to Iuz and Zuggtmoy, the Demon Queen of Fungi, to sanctify the four elemental nodes within the dungeons of the Temple of Elemental Evil. Since that action, the *Chalice* was lost on the Azure Sea and swallowed by an ancient whale. That creature's stomach acids were altered to pure water, and its corpse now lies on the ocean floor amid a wide stretch of fresh water fifty leagues southeast of Gryrax.

Suggested Means of Destruction: Feed the *Chalice* to the balor Ter-Soth; fill it with the gastric juices of six beautiful night hags; boil its composite water within the deepest cavern of Lake Udrukankar.

The Crook of Rao: Among the most revered relics in the history of Oerth, the *Crook of Rao* currently enjoys a reputation shared only by true messiahs and the gods.



In Coldeven of 586 CY, His Venerable Reverence, The Savior of Our Lands, Canon Hazen of Mitrik used the *Crook* to stunning effect, banishing thousands of demons, devils, yugoloths, and other outsiders from all parts of the Flanaess, and possibly from throughout the lands of all Oerth. Though a few sages suspected the item's potential for awesome power, none would have predicted such pervasive effectiveness. The assistance of nearly every priest of Rao in Mitrik as well as the aid (some say manipulation) of the archmage Bigby, certainly played an important role in the effort's success.

Hazen's victory allowed many goodly armies to gain advantage against the formerly fiend-stacked forces of Iuz and the former Great Kingdom, and Rao's popularity, even far from his clergy's base in Veluna, has never been stronger.

Prior to these events, the *Crook* played a relatively minor role in the affairs of the Flanaess. Many believe that the relic's existence predates that of humanity, and perhaps even that of Oerth itself. Raoan scripture claims that the *Crook* alone protected Oerth from the insurgence of evil outsiders prior to the discovery of magic by the world's denizens, though many rival faiths dispute such boasts.

To the average man of the modern era, the *Crook* existed only in scripture and hymn. In the mid-sixth century CY, however, the adventurers Tenser, Terik, Merlynd, and Robilar discovered the artifact in the depths of Castle Greyhawk, only to lose it again in a bizarre demiplane known as the Isle of the Ape. The artifact's subsequent rescue by a

group of adventurers led by the redoubtable Warnes Starcoat of Urnst is now a popular tale with bards throughout the Central Flanaess.

After its rescue, the *Crook* somehow fell into the hands of Drax the Invulnerable, the calculating animus lord of Rel Astra. In the closing days of the Greyhawk Wars, Drax and Hazen worked out a trade, and the *Crook* soon came to Mitrik, where it would become the most influential item in the modern history of the Flanaess.

The *Crook of Rao* is a crooked staff not unlike those used by shepherds, crafted from a lustrous auburn hornwood.

Round-cut jacinth, angled alexandrite, fiery sard, golden topaz, and other stones set it apart from its counterparts, however, as do the cold iron and silver that form its shaft and

headpiece. Despite the expensive materials that dress it, the *Crook* gives the impression of age; those in its presence feel as though they gaze upon a remnant from a bygone era.

Before the Flight of Fiends, few would have ascribed planetary banishment abilities to the *Crook of Rao*. Now, many see the staff as a relic of near limitless power—the infinite will of a god given form. The majority of the pilgrims now flocking to Veluna discount the fact that many fiends escaped banishment, and point to the gains in Nyron and Furyondy as evidence of Rao's influence on Oerth. Though the *Crook's* current resting place in Mitrik is known to all, rumors circulate that the banishment drained the *Crook* of all power, and that it exists now only as an icon of Rao's gift of mercy to the people of Oerth.

Regardless, the powers of the *Crook* prior to the Flight of Fiends are well chronicled. Any good-aligned mortal being grasping it and invoking the name of Rao may use the *Crook* to turn evil outsiders (demons, devils, yugoloths, and so on) as a 20th-level cleric of Rao turns undead. Turned outsiders are instead banished to their home plane for 100 years.

An evil outsider's summoning abilities do not function within a mile radius of the *Crook*. Further, the bearer of the *Crook of Rao* gains a +4 deflection bonus to AC against attacks made by evil creatures. In combat, the *Crook* serves as a +3 *quarterstaff*, with successful hits driving evil outsiders to their plane of origin unless they make a successful Will save (DC 25).

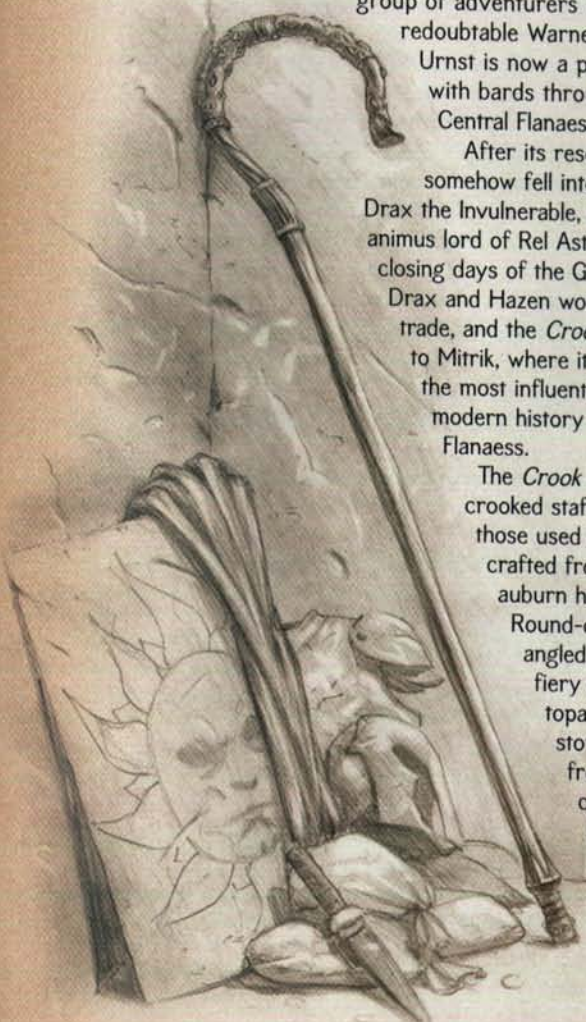
If new powers have manifested following the Flight of the Fiends, they have not yet been recorded by any save the Canon's closest advisors.

The use of the *Crook of Rao* does not seem to trigger a curse of any kind. Because of this, residents of the dark quarters of Veluna and further afield speculate wildly on what the use of the artifact might have "cost" Hazen of Rao, or even those assisting him. These rumors became something of a cottage industry within two weeks of the Flight of Fiends, when tales told as far as Ratik intimated that the pontiff might have vanished from the site of the ritual entirely, perhaps as a sacrifice to the *Crook's* power, or perhaps because Rao decided to bring him to his Sacred Realm in the Seven Heavens. Since Hazen remains in Mitrik, the tale has been discounted. However, a now-excommunicated underpriest by the name of Jander Semmisel, who can be found in various drinking establishments in Veluna City, claims that he took part in the ritual, and personally witnessed the Canon vanish completely for at least fifteen seconds at the culmination of the ceremony.

In light of any concrete evidence on the matter, most expect speculation to continue for years to come.

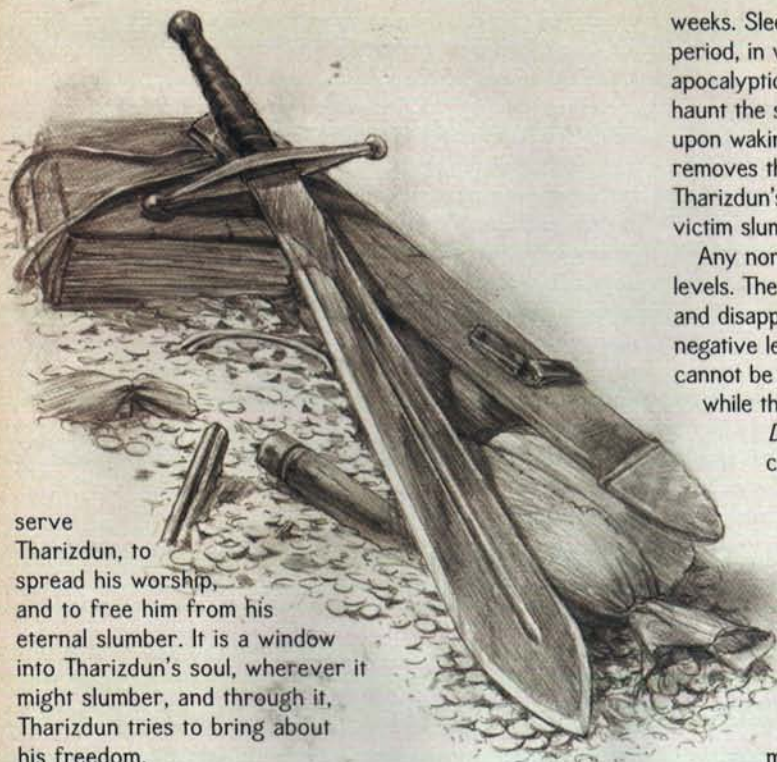
Suggested Means of Destruction: Invoking the power of the *Crook* on every layer of the Abyss within the same Oerth-day; cutting its supply of power by killing Rao, himself; assaulting the *Crook* with illogical and unreasonable riddles every day for 300 years (rumors tell that Tenser and company discovered the *Crook* in a chamber within Castle Greyhawk that featured mindless automatons speaking such nonsense from day to night).

Druniazth: *Druniazth* (DROON-ee-AH-zzth) is the *Claw of Tharizdun*, one of the more potent artifacts associated with that dread god of insanity and entropy. *Druniazth* exists to





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serve
Tharizdun, to
spread his worship,
and to free him from his
eternal slumber. It is a window
into Tharizdun's soul, wherever it
might slumber, and through it,
Tharizdun tries to bring about
his freedom.

The sword first appeared more than eight hundred years ago in the hands of Baron Lum (years before he discovered his infamous *Machine*). He wielded a blade in combat described in the same manner as *Druniazth* against Ur-Flan sorcerers near what's now the Bonewood, but he lost it during the fray. He spent his remaining years trying to recover the sword, and the search for it drove him slowly mad. *Druniazth* changed hands for centuries before it was cast into the Rift Canyon in the early 100s CY by an unnamed wielder who sought to end its influence in her life. It remained there for many decades until being discovered by a group of illithids, who traded it to drow merchants in 233 CY. Their caravan, however, was attacked and destroyed somewhere in the Underdark between the Rift Canyon and the Crystalmists, and the blade passed out of living memory.

This simple, plain bastard sword is forged from an unknown purplish-black metal. It is devoid of decoration, save for strange patterns that whorl and shift across the blade and guard. The blade is wider than that of most bastard swords, and it emanates cold at all times—in non-arctic conditions, wisps of fog drift from its surface, and it seems to drink light and heat (which dim in its presence). Rounded knobs about the size of a large thumbnail mark the ends of the sword's guard. Black, tanned leather wraps the tang, apparently some addition made by one of the weapon's mortal owners. The round pommel twists and locks into place on the bottom of the tang, hiding the tang nut.

Created by the doomdreamers of Tharizdun from a secret metallic alloy they call ruinite, *Druniazth* serves as a +5 frost bastard sword of wounding. Any nonevil creature struck by the blade must make a successful Will save (DC 33). Success results in searing chills that reduce Dexterity by 2 and impose a -4 penalty on attack rolls, skill checks, and ability checks for one hour. Those who fail fall into a catatonic slumber for 1d6

weeks. Sleeping characters cannot be awoken during this period, in which they suffer terrible nightmares and apocalyptic visions of the Dark One's return. Such visions haunt the sleeper for the rest of his life, leaving him fatigued upon waking up every morning until a *wish* or *miracle* removes the effect. As the blade's goal is to spread Tharizdun's influence, the wielder cannot attack or harm a victim slumbering under the weapon's influence.

Any nonevil being who wields *Druniazth* gains four negative levels. The negative levels persist as long as the sword is held and disappear when the weapon is no longer wielded. The negative levels never result in actual level loss, but they cannot be overcome in any way (including *restoration* spells) while the sword is held.

Druniazth perverts any non-evil user to Tharizdun's cause through subtle nightmares, empathic suggestions, and the slow poisoning of the soul.

Roughly 1d4 weeks after first coming into contact with it (the DM makes this roll in secret), the wielder's alignment changes to neutral evil (no saving throw). Alteration in alignment is mental as well as moral, and the individual changed by the magic thoroughly enjoys his new outlook.

Only a *wish* or *miracle* can restore the former alignment, and the affected individual does not make any attempt to return to the former alignment. If

a character of a class with an alignment requirement is affected, an *atonement* spell is needed as well if the curse is to be obliterated.

Druniazth was recovered from a buried temple of Tharizdun in the Jotens during the mid-570s CY. It passed from the party of adventurers who discovered it to various tribes of ogres and hill giants in that area for twenty years. In 591 CY, the blade resurfaced in Dyvers, in the hands of an assassin in service to Iuz. This assassin, Kerrab by name, was slain by the city watch, and the blade was set aside for investigation due to its strange appearance. Unfortunately, one of the guardsmen who handled *Druniazth* was converted to Tharizdun's service through the sword's influence. This guard, a cretinous half-elf named Nizar Drav'va, absconded with the sword and began an overland pilgrimage toward the Kron Hills, unsure of where he was going or what he sought. Neither Nizar nor *Druniazth* have been seen since.

Suggested Means of Destruction: Plunge the blade into the heart of the Demiplane of Imprisonment; expose it to a dream of pure happiness. Some loremasters among the Silent Ones believe that *Druniazth* cannot be destroyed so long as Tharizdun lives. They suggest submerging it deep in a rift of the Solnor Ocean, which will remove it from Oerth's troubles at least until its inevitable rediscovery.

Kuroth's Quill: *Kuroth's Quill* was made famous through its use by the Oeridian hero god of theft and treasure-finding for which it is named. His exploits are legendary throughout the Flanaess, and they include the daring theft of *Schandor's Gavel* while the Court of Essence (in the Overking's Palace in Rauxes) was in session; the surreptitious removal of a necklace of flawless, matched emeralds from the coffin of Vlad Tolentov (while the vampire slept); and similar perilous (and lucrative) exploits. Many attribute Kuroth's skill to his discovery of the ancient writing device.

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Kuroth's Quill is a large feather quill about 18 inches long, whose feather has worn thin and reedy over the years (the plume is approximately one and one-half inches across at the top). Some of the horizontal feather "spines" are missing, and the *Quill* appears to have seen better days. The spines are a variety of light colors, with blues and greens predominating. Ink stains the lower two to three inches of the *Quill's* shaft, and the spines begin to fan outward about six to seven inches up from the base of the shaft's tip. The spines are shorter closest to the tip, and they grow longer as they continue up the spine.

Kuroth's Quill can be commanded to detect the largest treasure within 100 miles, allowing its wielder to home in on the target's location through feelings of "closer" and "further" to indicate proximity. It can scan into other planes that intersect with Oerth (including the Ethereal, Astral, and Shadow planes, as well as demiplanes). The treasure detection ceases once the wielder is within a one-half mile radius of the loot, and she is on her own from that point onward. This power can be used once per month, and functions continuously to provide directional and distance guidance, so long as the user doesn't abandon the hunt. The owner can attempt to direct the *Quill* to ephemeral treasures (true love, the most handsome elf, and so on), but the *Quill* almost always tries to combine such activity with more profitable ventures (so that the wielder might end up finding the fairest maiden who happens to be wearing 25,000 gp worth of diamond jewelry, for example).

Once per day, *Kuroth's Quill* can scribe perfect dictation of any conversation within 120 feet, so long as the wielder can see those participating in the conversation. The *Quill* writes in the languages spoken during the conversation, and does not translate the conversation. It can scribe in any language that has a written form, and it can scribe upon any smooth surface



(from paper to sword blades to stone). The *Quill* does not require ink, and it can scribe on wet surfaces as easily as it can on dry ones. All transcriptions are written in the owner's handwriting.

Upon command, the *Quill* can draw an area map revealing the general lay of the land within a 50-foot radius of the wielder, providing a valuable dungeoneering service. This ability may be used once per week, for up to four hours. The *Quill* extends its mapping as its wielder moves beyond the edge of her original radius, so it can be used to map a landscape as the *Quill's* owner travels through it. The *Quill* does not draw pictures that are not maps (for instance, it will not create portraits or landscapes), and it draws from an overhead, omniscient point-of-view (as if looking down from above onto the area being mapped). The *Quill's* maps do not reveal traps or secret doors, but the item will add notes to its map if commanded to do so.

Once per day, the *Quill* can be used to cast *find the path* as a 20th-level cleric.

Its wielder is immune to the effects of the *maze* spell.

Twice per month, The *Quill* can create a perfect copy of any nonmagical written document's writing content, or of any map. The drawing style, penmanship quality, and signatures are exact forgeries. The *Quill* does not copy the paper itself on which the original was created, however, nor does it age the drawing medium of its duplicates to match that of the original.

Kuroth's Quill inspires great faith and self-assurance in its owners, who feel that they can overcome any challenge while wielding such a powerful artifact. Owners are likely to become braggarts and egoists, such that the wielder suffers a -4 circumstance penalty to all Diplomacy checks while she owns the *Quill*.

If the wielder does not employ the *Quill's* treasure hunting powers and follow-up on them with looting activity at least four times per year, the *Quill* drains a point of Wisdom, activates its detection powers, and encourages the character to seek out the largest treasure within its range. A Will save (DC 25) can resist this effect if the wielder is unwilling, with a cumulative penalty of -1 for each time the wielder has passed up a treasure revealed by the *Quill* (to a maximum of -4).

Kuroth generally keeps his *Quill* to himself, although from time-to-time he returns it to Oerth as a test to rogues throughout the world. Those who know of the bizarre etiquette of Kuroth's faithful sometimes steal an item of personal importance from one of his clerics (who are themselves notoriously difficult to find), returning it the next day as proof of their thievery abilities. According to custom, the thief may then request a boon of the cleric, which most often comes in the form of a hint about the *Quill's* location.

Suggested Means of Destruction: Using the *Quill* to transcribe the millions of texts in the great library of the demon prince Gresil; plunging the tip of the pen into the eye of Delleb, god of intellect and study, as the Scholar sleeps. ★