

# DARK DREAMS

BY DAVE B.

HARGRAVE



Arduin Grimoire V

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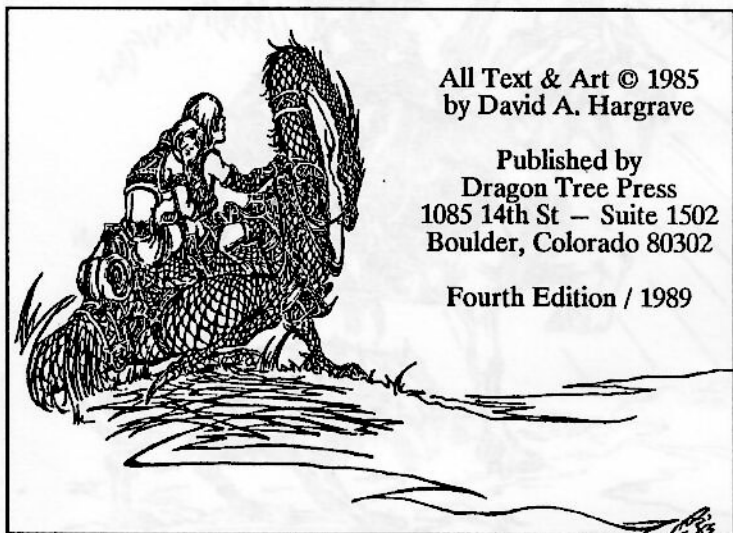
**DARK  
DREAMS**  
By *David A. Hargrave*

## DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to those who carry the light, the torch bearers and believers that hold back the night. Without them there would be no printed Arduinian word.

Thus to Grimoire Games, Dragon Tree Press and to those players who have ever kept the fire burning brightly within their hearts; this work is dedicated to you...

P.S. I can only call this work "DARK DREAMS, ARDUIN GRIMOIRE V", as it is just that...



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## Abbreviations

AC.....	Armour Class	GP.....	Gold Piece
AF.....	Attack Factor	GS.....	Gold Sovereign (1 oz)
AGIL.....	AGility	HP.....	Hit Points
BF*.....	Battle Factor	INT.....	Intelligence
CF.....	Coordination Factor	MRS.....	Magic Resistance % Save
CHAR.....	CHARisma	OP.....	Order of Power (Magik)
CON.....	CONstitution	RCH.....	Random Critical Hit
CP.....	Copper Penny (1 oz)	RF.....	Reasoning Factor
DEX.....	DEXterity (average of INT and wis)	SP.....	Silver Penny (1 oz)
DF.....	DEFense Factor	STR.....	STrength
EL.....	EXPerience Level	WIS.....	WISdom
FRP.....	FANTasy Role Play		
GM.....	GAME Master		

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This volume contains all material found in the original edition. Any changes in page numbering and/or appearance are due solely to new typesetting and spacing as this edition has been reprinted by arcane means (i.e. computer-assisted) superior to previous editions.

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GRIMOIRE GAMES

## DEATH IN ARDUIN

Death in Arduin is as *real* as it is in our world. Anyone can die, at any time, for any number of reasons. However, what happens after death in Arduin is quite different from what happens in our own world.

To begin with, one must remember that, even though resurrection is indeed possible, for the vast majority of people, it just isn't done. This is due to the simple fact that they, as "common folk", are not important enough for their own religion/church/cult/etc to go to all that trouble over. And, truth to tell, most would be horrified at even the thought of such a thing happening to them.

Be that as it may, one must also understand on a "gut level" as well as on an intellectual level that Arduinian gods *do* participate in the affairs of lesser beings, most specifically where death is concerned — it is their domain, so to speak.

Because of this, the souls of all newly dead hover in a sort of timeless limbo between this plane and the etherial plane (the final abode of the dead). For thirty Arduinian days (750 hours), these souls maintain a *direct link* or line to their dead flesh (bodies). At the end of this time, that link is fully dissipated, never to be reforged again without the direct intervention of the gods themselves and this is something the gods of Arduin seldom do, even for their most devout of followers.

This link is what allows such resurrecting rituals as "Death Breaker" (see earlier Arduin Grimoires) to function and why such functions deteriorate rapidly in effectiveness. As the link dissipates, so too do the chances for successful resurrection (-13% after the first day and cumulative -3% per day thereafter) although, even on the last (30th) day, there would still be a 1% chance of being able to perform such resurrection magiks. After all, *nothing* is absolute in Arduin — not even death.

Note also that the condition of the body has a great deal to do with this link and how fast it dissipates. In a hot, humid climate, a body would rot very fast, considerably lessening (by GM-adjudication) that thirty day time span. On the other hand, a well-preserved (*frozen*) body might add (again GM-adjudicated) to the percentage chances (i.e. *the slow deterioration of the link*).

You should further take into consideration the gods. The more devout and pious the deceased was, the more likely it is that his god would have "taken him over to the other side" *that much sooner* (GM decision). After all, it is the *devout* worshipper that the gods wish to *honor* by bringing them over to their side.

It is also pretty safe to say that once "taken" by their own god(s), people just won't want to come back and will *refuse* to return to their bodies. This is, of course, ignoring totally such other religious problems as:

- 1) Those who reincarnate as part of their life-death-rebirth cycle.
- 2) Those who are literally "eaten" by their god(s) and are forever gone from existence.
- 3) Those who have "sinned" against their god(s) and been "condemned" by same to some hell or some other lesser "purgatorial" punishment.
- 4) Those who do not cleave to any god or religious tenets.

This "yes but" list is practically infinite in its variations and problems and so too are the adjudications possible to an GM. It requires careful thought to be sure.

Finally, here is a little bit about how to feel when your favorite character dies and is permanently gone.

To begin with, I know that the loss of any carefully crafted character, one with dozens, hundreds (or even more) hours of thought, play time and feelings invested, is a truly painful experience. I know that one will be full of sorrow and anger at such a loss but, as I know these things to be true, I also know that there are several things you *must* think about these feelings. They are:

- 1) Was the death due to *your own mistake(s)*? If so, then is your anger directed at the right person (i.e. yourself, not the GM)? And, if it was *your* mistake, is *anger* the right reaction to what happened?
- 2) If the death was no-one's fault and, most likely, unavoidable, did your character "die well"? If not, why not?
- 3) Do you know what "dying well" really means? If you do and your character *did*, then shouldn't you be happy and not angry?
- 4) Did you learn anything from your character's death (about the character? About yourself?) A character's death *should* be a learning and growing experience for you.
- 5) If all of this has been a growing and learning experience for you (as it rightly should be), then shouldn't you be happy to have participated in such an event? After all, growth and learning experiences are what *life* is all about.

*The Arduin Grimoire V: Dark Dreams*

With these thoughts behind you/us, we will now address ourselves to just what constitutes a "good death" versus a "straw death". In short, a good death is one that has met *any one* of the following criteria:

- 1) If some purpose was served.
- 2) If a friend or companion's life was saved by your sacrifice.
- 3) If your character died as his race/culture/class indicated he should. For instance, a (barbarian) warrior, devout follower of Megalon the War God, surrounded by his foes, going down fighting (taking several with him). What a glorious way to go to his god! For *him*, at least.
- 4) If your character's death caused other characters to improve themselves in any way.

A "straw death" is one that has met *any* of these criteria:

- 1) If he was killed *without warning*, with no chance to react. For instance, a long-range sniper shoots him or a ten-ton stone block falls on him (both with *absolutely* no warning, etc).
- 2) If the GM simply kept increasing his monsters/attacks upon the character in an *obvious* "I'm gonna getcha" scenario.
- 3) If a fellow adventurer/character back-stabs him for little or no reason - and simple greed is no reason at all...
- 4) If a character dies in just the opposite way that his culture/class/race would *prefer*. For example, if that (barbarian) warrior worshipper of Megalon should die from food poisoning or super-herpes or whatever (but *not* in battle).

So, knowing the difference between the two alternatives, it is in our own best interest to try for the good death and to actively avoid the latter. In FRP gaming, as in life, this is all one can ever hope for and in knowing (and acting out of) this simple idea, we are much the better for it.

Let life triumph whenever and wherever it can but shirk not death in a good cause and in good company. That is the one true thing in all of FRP. Learn it and live it and you will grow from its power inside you.

## THE FOG OF WAR

### or WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON, CHARLIE?!?

As fantasy role playing games continue to evolve, they also continue to drift farther and farther from their original root stock: war games. Because of this evolution, most of the FRP systems now in use tend to gloss over several very important aspects of combat which, in the "old days" of wargaming, were (at least) adequately covered. These problem areas are:

- 1) Line of sight...
- 2) Pre-knowledge of battle situations...
- 3) Hearing or lack thereof...
- 4) Battle "momentum"...

Taking each of these in order, we will explore the reality of each problem in actual combat and see how it should apply in FRP gaming.

#### Line of Sight

This is really the simplest of the four problems and the easiest to work out in game situations. This is accomplished most easily by the use of a grid-marked battle board and miniature figurines to show each individual character and monster/opponent. But, even so, it is highly recommended that a clear (transparent) ruler or other straight edge be used to continually check to see who can actually see what is happening past obstacles (each other, corners, downed beasties, huge critters, etc).

This way, there can never be any question of whether an archer can or cannot shoot at a particular target without hitting something else. Note also that the varied heights of the obstacle and target must always be considered as well! For instance, an archer could shoot past a 6' tall companion at a target at least 20% taller (in this case 14+ inches taller). The greater the height difference, the easier the shot. Even so, a GM can, if he so chooses, adjudicate minuses if the target is moving, bobbing or weaving, etc. in a battle mode.

Another factor for line of sight is being able to see what's happening in a melee. In short, if your view of your shield companion is blocked (for any reason), then you can't see him get into trouble and thus need your help. This ties in closely with "pre-knowledge" and should be absolutely controlled by the GM. It's nice to help one's friends but, what you can't see, you don't know (and can't help)!

Finally, line of sight is also line of fire with missile weapons so, each time someone takes a chance on a "cluttered" firing line, the GM *must*



adjudicate each of the possible accidental strike points along it's entire length and roll dice accordingly.

### **Pre-knowledge of Battle Situations**

This is where every character seems to automatically know what's happening everywhere on a battle field and reacts accordingly. It is especially vexing to GMS in "dungeon" or other similar situations where much of the action is (or should be) hidden by intervening walls and such. The *player* can, of course, see the battle board in its entirety and often move their miniature figures (representing their characters) without regard to the simple fact that they (the characters) simply could not see many of the happenings they are reacting to.

The classic problem is where a group of adventurers are in a dungeon, some having just entered a room, while others remain outside in the corridor. A monster or group of "bad guys" attack not only those in the room but also those in the corridor simultaneously (usually from a secret entry into said corridor). Thus a wild melee develops in, essentially, two locations: inside and outside the room.

The players forget that the lines drawn on the battle board (to show the dungeon layout — at least, the parts which they have already explored) also block the lines of sight. Thus, for a character to abandon his battle, wherever it may be, in order to save another character in the nick of time, would require a *pre-knowledge* of that character's predicament.

After all, if you aren't aware of the problem, how then can you react to it?

The answer is that YOU CANT! The GM must always be exceedingly strict in adjudicating such matters lest the combats degenerate into those between omniscient "good guys" who are next to impossible to beat and fumble-butted "bad guys" who are perennially deaf, dumb and blind (i.e. easy knock-outs).

Once the players realize that they can't play as if they see all and know all, they'll begin playing much more carefully (and realistically): you can bet on it! So, be firm and adamant in making sure that no player is ever allowed to move from "omnipotent knowledge".

### **Hearing**

Another bug-a-boo is the hearing capability, or rather lack of it, most warriors in armour enjoy. Please remember that, under that helmet is, in all probability, a chain mail coif and quilted head cap (which covers the ears and neck too). Try hearing well through these three layers (two of which are metal) in a very noisy melee situation. I guarantee you that you'll do well just to hear yourself screaming and hollering!

Speaking of which, most battles *aren't* quiet! Far from it in fact! Monsters roar and bellow, men and other warrior-kind holler battle cries, encouragement to allies and scream in pain. Metal clangs and rings on metal, wood and stone (not to mention leather, cloth and, ultimately, flesh). The noise, especially in dungeons and caverns where sound echoes and re-echoes, is awesome (and, usually, quite frightening). So, be prepared to roll dice (GM-adjudicated) to see if your friend has, indeed, heard your warning shout.

I'd give a base 50% chance for the 5' radius around a fellow, less 5% per each 5' additional distance from said person... and that's being damn generous. At any rate, using this base formula, you can see that, at a 46-50' distance from a character, you only have a 5% chance he'll hear you. Tough luck there, boyo... and this can be further reduced by other ambient noises in the area (such as water falls, high winds, machinery, etc). Very rarely will a GM ever adjudicate the other way. And do note that such things as Elven hearing really don't help at all except to give a character a headache faster from all that noise. GMS must be pretty strict (*but not stupid*) with this rule.

### **Battle Momentum**

How many times have you seen a hero facing two or three opponents, kill one, wound the other, then suddenly abandon his still-battling, remaining foe and rush to attack another, usually unwounded, bad guy (*that's more often than not threatening some pal of his*)?

Well, I'm here to tell you that it ain't done that way in combat! You get a big nasty bozo, wounded though he may be, still full of fight, you don't turn your back on him just because it's the best thing to do (*see Preknowledge and Line of Sight, above*)! That's one hell of a good way to get yourself killed and most rules worth their salt will give a guy a free pop at anyone stupid enough to turn his back on an opponent, no matter how fast he is! And rightly so, too!

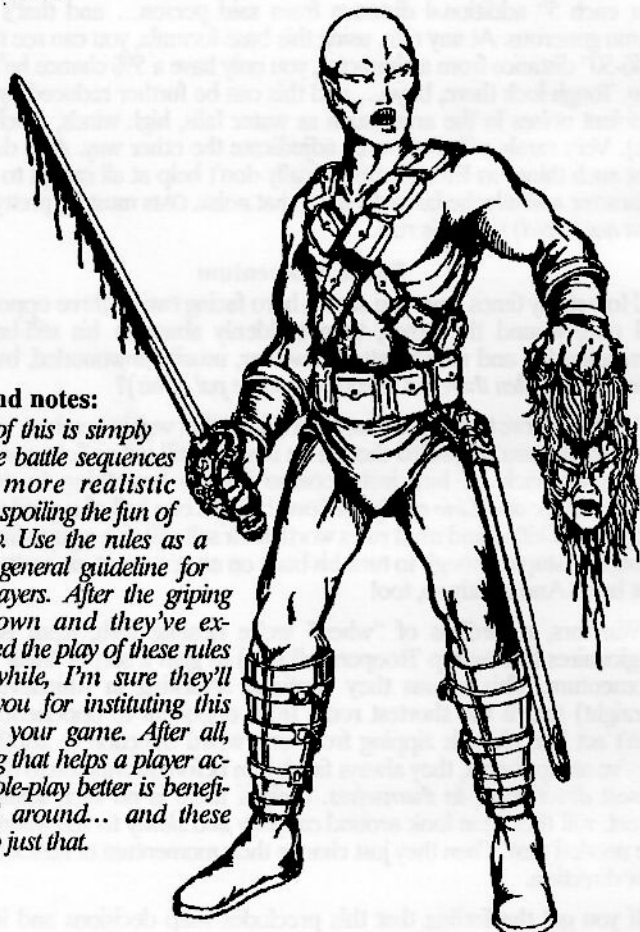
Warriors, regardless of "when" we're dealing with, from Roman Legionaires to Starship Troopers, all tend to gain a sort of *linear* battle momentum. This means they continue attacking in whichever line (straight) that is the shortest route from opponent to opponent. They don't act like pinballs zipping from one weird direction to another! If they've an opponent, they always finish him before moving on to the next closest *direct threat to themselves*. Only if there is no such immediate threat, will they then look around *carefully* and *slowly* to see where they are needed next. Then they just change their momentum of attack to that new direction.

If you get the feeling that this precludes snap decisions and instant reactions to what's happening, then you're right. Unless the danger is

imminent, they will take the time to make the best/right decision. There is no room for error in combat and a trained warrior knows this. Thus he will be doing what he's been trained to do: attack his enemies from the closest to the furthest in the best order or momentum possible in each give battle situation. GMs should remind players of this fact if they see them attempting to do something in combat which is out of character. Of course, some adjudication is possible here but not much and only according to each individual warrior and the situation they currently find themselves in.

**End notes:**

*All of this is simply to make battle sequences much more realistic without spoiling the fun of the play. Use the rules as a sort of general guideline for your players. After the griping dies down and they've experienced the play of these rules for a while, I'm sure they'll thank you for instituting this stuff in your game. After all, anything that helps a player actually role-play better is beneficial all around... and these rules do just that.*



## THE STREET GANGS OF ARDUIN

In every Arduinian town and city (and even in a few of the largest villages) there are one or more groups generally considered to be a "gang". Most of these are, if not wholly criminally oriented, at least peripherally involved in crime. Also, a majority of the youth-oriented groups are directly affiliated with the legal Thieves Guild as a sort of basic training group. There are far fewer adult criminal gangs due to the simple fact of efficient law enforcement. Those that do exist are usually *very large* mafia-like organizations (*the Black Lotus Society being the most infamous example of this type*).

Here, however, we are concerned with neither these nor the Thieves Guild-affiliated groups. What follows concerns those *few* juvenile criminal or semi-criminal gangs which operate in the "cracks between" that which is allowed in Arduinian society and what isn't. We will use one gang in particular as an example:

### THE BLACK RABBIT GANG

This particular gang "controls" an area about nine city blocks long by two to four blocks wide, along the worst section of Talismondè's waterfront. Talismondè is the capital and largest city in Arduin (sitting on the "coast" of the Misty Sea, a *very large* inland lake) with something near to (more or less) half a million population in an area about ten miles by six and a half miles.

The western boundary of the gang's territory is a twisty narrow alley tenanted mainly by fish-processing businesses, sail makers and sundry other small, marginal shops catering to "sailor's trade". This stinking alley-way is called "Fishgut Lane".

The eastern boundary is a dead-end street that runs about four blocks from an old abandoned (*and ramshackle*) warehouse and pier, right smack into the rear of a slaughterhouse that has seen better days. Called Old Blacklamp Way, there are several small shops (mostly of the "sea trade" variety) and a really seedy "house of pleasure" called Madame Syn's House of Seven Hundred Beauties. Madame Syn's is mostly visited by down-and-out sailors and other waterfront dregs who can't afford anything better.

The southern boundary is Blue Lantern Street (*nine blocks of it, anyway*) and has, along that section, a series of low rent apartments and three small eateries (*a noodle shop, a sausage and shish-ka-bob joint and one specializing in soups and stews*).

The northern boundary is wharfs and warehouses (*16 of them*) of dubious and marginal means. The vessels which dock here all tend to be rather small, old and open to "most any business" — if you get the drift.

The Black Rabbit Gang has 15 members ranging in age from seven to fifteen and most all of them are males (*11 boys, 4 girls*). They operate fairly openly and provide protection for *all* businesses within their home turf. They allow *no* crime within this area and raid outward from there to commit their own criminal activities. These usually comprise the "smash and grab" or petty theft and/or burglary variety. Occasionally, a well-to-do personage will be accosted and relieved of his money pouch. Please remember, though, that the street urchin (*guild-affiliated*) gangs and other such types vigorously resent and oppose such forays and make them very dangerous indeed. Thus they are few and far between.

Operating more often in the late afternoon and early evening (*before midnight*), these miniature rogues are the lords of their small kingdom but only for so long as the city watch ignores them and their more "legal" rivals resist the natural urge to eradicate them once and for all. A low profile and their marginally profitable area of operations helps keep them "safe".

There are only three "laws" within the gang that must be followed under pain of death or banishment. These are:

- 1) A Black Rabbit is loyal to his brothers and sisters and *will die* before "ratting" on them.
- 2) A Black Rabbit *voluntarily* shares half of his "take" into the common pot.
- 3) A Black Rabbit *cannot* be more than 16 years old. Once the 17th birthday is reached, the former group member *voluntarily* leaves to make his own way in the world — usually *outside* the old gang's home turf.

There are other *rules* that change from leader to leader but these do not have the weight of the three *laws* above. Most deal with stealing from a fellow gang member, keeping one's hands off another's "beloved" (*regardless of gender*) and other such problems.

Their headquarters and main hangout is in the basement of Madame Syn's but most of them have "flop spots" elsewhere (usually solo places). However, at least two of the gang will always be at Madame Syn's — part of the deal — so they can act as bouncers if needed.

Each member has a black ink rabbit's pawprint (tattoo) on his or her left bicep. Most wear black or other dark colors so as to blend into the night and all carry the weapons they are known for: 3-pronged "tiger's

claws" (bagh nakhs). Each carries four of these, one for each hand and foot and, as the Black Rabbit is their totem, they tend to kick first and use their hands last — sort of "street fight-fu" martial arts. As a matter of pride, they *don't* use any other sort of weapons.

Few there are who live in that section (or nearby) of Talismondè that do not dread the rallying cry of the feral children of the Black Rabbit Gang: "WAAA! WAAA! WABBITS!". Laugh if you like, as for myself, I'll just stick to the better lit ways and hope not to hear such... ever.

Finally, for those of you who want to use these little darlings in your own campaign, I've written a little about each one so you'll have an easier time of it — kind of "pocket biographies" as it were.

"SMILEY": The leader of the gang gets his name from the badly healed dagger scar that runs from the left ear to the left side of the upper lip. His mouth is ever twisted in a rictus that gives a horrid parody of a smile. At age 16, he is on his last few months before "going out" and knows it. Thus he has become steadily more moody and unpredictable, blowing up into blind (*and deadly*) rages at the slightest provocation. He's about 5'7" and, on a good day, perhaps 135 lbs but all wiry muscle and has a very fast 17 CF. The three steel talons on his left hand are coated in a 3D8 spider venom (*painstakingly collected from a series of pottery jars housing personally collected Black Widow spiders — how he "milks them" is a secret which he has never shared with anyone*). He carries more of the lethal liquid in a small (2 oz) ceramic vial hung on a thong about his neck. If not for his scar, this blonde-haired, grey-eyed young man would be passably handsome. He's been with the gang for twelve years.

"MOON": At 14, she is next in line to inherit the leadership of the gang after Smiley is gone. Having been "beloved" of one another for nearly all of the last two years, she will miss Smiley greatly but she is determined to take over and won't let anything distract her from that goal. She is 5'5" tall, built like a gymnast and weighs in at a *muscular* 105 lbs. With her short, curly red hair and hazel eyes, she could (*and frequently does*) pass for just about anyone's kid sister but don't let her looks fool you. She was outlawed from a regular street urchin gang at age 10 for *killing* a thirteen year old boy who tried to molest her. It wasn't the killing which got her outlawed, though — it was her taking "justice" into her own hands without letting the gang do it that did so. There is a standing 20 GS "price" on her whereabouts posted by the Stable Lane Street Urchins — payable upon *proof* of "residence". Since then, she has killed thrice more (*one a full grown man carrying a sword*), only once less than the current leader. Her fast 18 CF has helped in this. She's been with the gang for four years.

"SPOT": Also 14 years old but very small for his age, being only 5'1" tall and about 89 lbs. He gets his name from the fact that he is a master

at worming his small frame down chimneys to burglarize houses — i.e. he can “get in or out of any spot in Talismondè”. A nervous type, with a steady tic in the left eyebrow, he can't seem to sit still or even to sit for more than a minute or two. His bronze claws are especially adapted to help him climb, being shorter and with two extra (*one to either side*) prongs on them (*five instead of three*). Not ordinarily one who relishes a fight, he has been known to, literally, climb right up an adobe or brick wall to avoid one. Zip! and he's gone. Of course, having a 17 CF helps here. He has brown hair and eyes and almost never smiles. The hair, by the way, is unusual in that it's tied into one long braid down his back in the Amazon fashion. His only reply, when asked why, has been “me mum likes it that way”. As he has no known parents, the response is a mystery to his companions. He's been with the gang five years.

“BLINK” and “TALLEY”: Thirteen year-old twins, brother and sister respectively, these are brown haired and eyed youngsters that are virtually inseparable. Both are 5'4" tall and between 108 and 115 lbs. It's hard to say which is the stronger of the two (*probably Talley*) but it is certain that Blink is the faster. His CF is an awesome 20 (*to Talley's more mundane 16*) which is how he got his name. “He can get you, twice, before you can blink!” On the other hand, Talley is the *only* gang member who can read or write so she is the official “record keeper and treasurer”. They both joined the gang seven years ago after escaping from a forced apprenticeship to the cabinet-maker's guild (their parents died and their only relative, an uncle, simply decided it was easier to take some money in return for their apprenticeship instead of caring for them himself). Blink is the best “*snatch and run*” thief in the gang and almost always manages to bring home something every day. He's really good!

“KROUP”: Named for his persistent (*and near constant*) soft cough, this 13 year-old is slowly dying from tuberculosis. He has, perhaps, another two years until he becomes unable to function as a gang member — then, perhaps, another 8-12 months until he dies. He wears his black hair in a “Mohawk” cut and has three diagonal black tatoos (3"x1/2") on his right cheek. He calls them his “kill marks” and, indeed, he *has* killed three of his opponents — all in the past year! About 5'6" and 112 lbs, he is skinny (*in a hard sort of way*); slow-moving until he has to fight and has an over-large “aquiline” nose. His 15 CF is better than average and he “*sees quite well at night, thank you!*” He has been with the gang for eight years.

“WHISTLER”: As his name implies, this brown-haired, brown-eyed kid whistles nearly all the time — he's quite good too. With a sort of far away look in his eyes and a perpetually distracted air about him, he is truly alone even among his friends. He has a secret crush on Talley but is too shy to ever voice his feelings to her. About 5'3" tall and 98 lbs, he is

very agile and athletic (with a CF of 16). He is also known for his ability to tightrope walk like a circus performer. The right hand claws he uses are barbed and *detach* in a wound. He usually carries four "reloads" for same on his person. Now 13, he joined the gang only three and a half years ago. Many suspect that he left a travelling circus which passed through Talismondè about then but he's never said and, with the unwritten code of the gang being "none may talk about what's not freely told, the past is its own and none of ours". The real kicker for this kid is that he's capable of doing *Rogue Magic*, his *one* spell being "SLIDER".

"SOUP": This 12 year old gets his name from the gang's general feeling about him, "*If he isn't eating it, he's in it!*" The slightly built (4'11", 80 lb) brown haired, green eyed boy tends to smile and laugh a lot to cover his very real fears. Not really a coward, he nonetheless feels/thinks he is, regardless of how many "jobs" he's done or how many fights he's been in and most of the gang has been fooled by his self-deprecating jokes, save for, perhaps, Talley. As he's the best cook of the lot, he is the one most often given that job and, as soup is his favorite dish, it is what he most often makes. He does wonders in this respect with some very eclectic ingredients at times. He joined the gang five years ago but no one knows why or where he came from. His CF is a respectable 15.

"JENJEN": This eleven year old beauty is growing into a real "man-killer" and she knows it! From the top of her blonde pig-tailed head to the bottom of her tiny feet, this 4'6" blue-eyed vixen is every inch the coquette. A very slight 69 lbs, she is nonetheless showing all the signs of an impending early womanhood. Though not vicious, she is still a teaser and likes to "*keep the guys guessing*". She joined the gang eight years ago when one of the "ladies" at Madame Syn's figured she was old enough to fend for herself and booted her out into the street. Oh well, like mother, like daughter they say! Her 18 CF makes her quite good at her main avocation: pickpocketing.

"LOKT": Another 11 year-old, this 4'10", 89 lb youngster has strange steel-grey hair and red-pupiled eyes. His is extremely strong, unnaturally so, for his age and size (STR 16!) and has an awesomely fast 21 CF. He is clearly leadership material save for one small flaw — he seems not to have any emotions whatsoever. Thus everything he does is in a coldly calculating way. None of the other gang members like him except for Pup (*see following*) but, if he returns this affection, it isn't obvious. However, *all* respect him greatly and, point in fact, not a few members are even frightened by him. That he has inhuman blood of some sort in his genes is obvious but what kind and to what final end is anyone's guess (*see WEIRDLINGS in previous Arduin Grimoires*).



### *The Arduin Grinoire V: Dark Dreams*

He joined the gang at the age of three when some of the members sneaked aboard one of the more “dubious” vessels that docked in their area and freed him from a cage below decks. Feral and naked, all he had on him was a silver chain and sigel of the Iron Pantheon god, Loki, about his small neck. He still wears this. That he can talk is also true but the hard fact is that he will sometimes go several days without uttering a single word and, when he does speak, it’s usually in a three to five word clipped “sentence” which conveys the bare bones of what he wants said and no more. No one knows for sure how many kills he has (*he never reports them*) but at least seven have been witnessed by gang members. None of the fights lasted more than a minute either... His combat style is brutal, fast and uncompromising, usually resulting in the nearly complete severing of his opponent’s head from their body. Loki is not a “kid” to cross up.

“PUP”: Only 8 years old and a mere 4’11” tall, this 54 lb kid has brown hair and grey eyes. He’s called “Pup” because he follows Loki around just like one. Everywhere Loki goes, so goes Pup. Loki mostly ignores him but *will* take care of him as necessary so most of the gang members let him alone. He has a goofy grin and tends to talk fairly constantly to Loki or most anyone else who’ll listen (most don’t). Not very adept at stealing, burglary or any of the other “activities” of the gang, he is thus usually left with all the “crap” jobs and doesn’t seem to mind one bit. It’s the belonging that matters to him, not what he has to do to be a part of it all. He was found wandering all alone one night by Loki, at age two (*six years ago*) and has “belonged” every since. Some say — though not in Loki’s hearing — that Pup “ain’t got all his smarts”. Whether this is true or not, isn’t readily apparent. Still, he seems to be “slow” and not altogether there and *frequently* forgets to carry his claws!

“DUCK”: This 10 year old is called this because he keeps a pet duck named Won-Ton with him practically all the time (he “swiped” it from the noodle shop). He is 4’7” tall, weights in at 70 lbs and has auburn hair with hazel eyes. Apprenticed against his wishes (by a hateful stepfather) into the candle-makers’ guild when he was six, he immediately ran away, shortly thereafter joining the gang. His favorite trick is laying a thin rawhide line across an alleyway (anchored at one end) and then pulling it up and taut, tripping hapless victims and rendering them easier prey for his waiting companions (usually Jenjen and Jeddrow). He has a CF of 14 and is totally unexceptional in any way save for his attachment to his duck. He even sleeps with it!

“ONYX”: This ten year old girl is 4’11” tall and already 80 lbs. She has beautiful amber-colored eyes but is totally smooth skinned and bald with no hair whatsoever on *any* part of her body nor will she ever have as it appears to be a genetic mutation on her part. She also happens to be of

the negro race and has the ebon complexion unique to those of full blood, untainted by any foreign hegira. Highly athletic, she is a very good climber (seldom using rope and grapnel) but really excels in her running and leaping. At full tilt, there has never (yet) been any law man or citizen that could catch her! Over, under, around and sometimes through all obstacles, she races away after a successful "snatch and dash". She too is potential leadership material.

She joined the gang only two years ago after a previous 18-month stint with a guild affiliated street urchin gang over on White Quarry Road. She voluntarily left that group because of the inside politics and lack of action — "it was all talk and no do!" Needless to say, she is always agitating for the gang to "up and at 'em!" She has a CF of 16 but is improving, it seems, daily and just how fast and strong she will get is open to question.

"JEDDROW": At age nine and a mere 53 lbs on a 4'2" frame, this blonde and grey-eyed kid just doesn't seem like much of a threat. Guess again, dummy! He killed his *first* victim at age seven by dropping a large paving block off a roof top onto the head of a guy he wanted to rob! Oops! His *second* victim "bit it" just two short weeks ago during a burglary when the awakened sleeper made the mistake of grabbing him with one hand and brandishing a dirk with the other while threatening to "cut your thieving weasel-gizzard out!" The victim got his entire face shredded for his trouble and stumbled blindly out his second floor window, breaking his neck in the fall. Waa-Waa-Wabbits!

The lesson here is simple: don't *threaten* a Black Rabbit - either *do it or leave 'em alone*. Anything else you'll probably regret! Jeddrow joined the gang three years ago when a fire burned out his family's tailor shop (killing all but him). Rumor has it that a street urchin gang did it in retaliation for their not paying the proper "squeeze". He *hates* street urchin gangs and has daily, it seems, "run ins" with same. His CF is 14 but will probably improve with age and growth.

"BUTTON": At age six, he is the youngest, newest and the smallest member of the gang. Only 3'9" and 48 lbs, he's definitely undersized for his age. How big he'll get is anyone's guess. Too small and weak to fight effectively, he is one of the gang's chief lookouts and is very good at it (and getting better). His eyesight, night as well as day, is already better than just about everyone else's in the gang. He joined the gang only a year ago when he decided to run away and become a "famous bandit". Such a wish from such a cute little kid! Still, blue eyes and brown hair (dimples too!) notwithstanding, he appears to have a fine start on his life's ambition. He has a 14 CF but this is bound to improve with age and practice. Finally, his favorite pastime is "collecting" buttons of all things. Strange.

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There you have them — the “children” of the Black Rabbit gang. Cute “kids” all and nearly all capable of cutting your heart out! Intensely loyal and protective amongst themselves, they present a wary and defiant *united* front to the rest of the world. Within their own territory, they are the “lords of the turf” and *all* who live there acknowledge this. Adults or not, the people *know* that the Rabbits will “take care of business”. So, they not only tolerate them but they also have a sort of rough-edged affection for them. This is returned by the gang’s ensuring that *nothing* happens to “their people” without their say so. *Any* who trespass for nefarious reasons soon find that they have been backtracked by a band of vengeful harriers who will exact a bloody and, sometimes, fatal retribution! That is, if they weren’t ambushed going in! On the other hand, should you venture down their way on everyday business and with no criminal intent, well, you’d probably never even know they were around but, rest assured, they would have noted you! Coming *and* going.

Finally, just remember, if you’re a kid and have really bad problems, are running from someone or something, if you’re sick, hungry or tired, if you just need to belong somewhere and have companions you can rely on... well, head down their way some evening and stand there in the streets and whisper: “Waa-Waa-Wabbits!” Don’t be afraid — before you know it, you’ll be home\* ...

\* I do not advocate “running away from home” to the readers — in fact, I am *strongly against* such. However, within the context of *Arduin*, that last remark is, *for some*, the right way to go.

## CheckMate!

or

### How To Have Characters Game Among Themselves

Sometimes during a campaign, one or more of your characters will engage in some form of (semi-)friendly competition. Perhaps a game of dice — or darts — or cards — whatever. The following chart and formula will show you how to rapidly determine the winner(s) without having to actually play out each encounter.

To begin with you must determine just how competent each player is. This is done by adding together his RF (the average of his INtelligence and WISdom), skill and luck scores (and CF scores where applicable). This base number is added to on a one for four basis for each four ELs earned (so there is a +1 at EL 4, +2 at EL 8 and so on). The add is only at the full 4 ELs, not in between.

The skill score is a simple D6 roll done when your character is *first* created. It *never* changes thereafter.

The luck roll is a 1D6 roll done *just prior* to each series of adversarial encounters — thus it will be *different each time* as the player's luck waxes and wanes over a period of time.

These *combined* numbers will be the character's GAMing Ability (or GAMA score).

As an example: Boakaine Blue-Flame, a magician, has an RF of 17 and a skill of 3 for a base total of 20 (in situations requiring manual dexterity, as in a game of darts, his CF of 15 would also be added, bringing his base total to 35). But for this example he will be playing a game of chess, so the base 20 score is what he'll use. Being of EL 6 he only gets +1 to this base score for a total of 21. Just prior to his three scheduled games, he rolls his luck on a D6 and gets a 4. Added to his 21, this gives him a grand total (or GAMA) score of 25 *for these three games only*.

His adversary, Orgunda the Orange, a renowned lady sage, has an RF of 18, a skill of 5 and gets another 3 for being EL 15 for a total base score of 26. Her pre-match luck roll is 4, bringing her GAMA total to 30.

Thus the opponents are matched at a 25:30 ratio in their scores. To determine the winner you multiply each score by 2% (giving Boakaine a 50% score and Orgunda a 60% score). These percentages are what each player must roll to "stay in play" and/or to win. Simply explained, each player rolls percentile dice and if he rolls outside (over/higher) than his

GAMA score, he *loses*. Note further that any player with a *higher* number has the *difference* between his score and the lower (or adversarial) one as an "automatic win zone". If the higher numbered player rolls in this zone, he *automatically* wins (i.e. outplays) his opponent even if that opponent had successfully rolled within his allowed parameters.

As an example: on the first roll of game #1, Orgunda rolls a 48 and Boakaine rolls a 40. No winner is determined, so they roll again. This time Orgunda rolls a 53 and Boakaine rolls a 70 (outside his allowed numbers). Orgunda thus wins game #1. The first rolls for game #2 produce a 28 by Boakaine and a 32 by Orgunda. No winner, so they roll again. This time Boakaine rolls a 17 and Orgunda a 56. As the 56 is in the *automatic win zone* (of 10 points difference between the two scores: 51-60 in this case), Orgunda wins again – with a "remarkable move".

In the last game Orgunda and Boakaine *both* roll out of their allowed GAMA parameters and so they must roll again. This time Orgunda rolls a 95 and Boakaine a 20. Boakaine wins the last game and ends the match 1 for 3. You will note that the higher number has a distinct advantage, which is as it should be but the lower numbered (lesser skilled) player *can* win if *luck* is on his side.

Ties can be produced by both players rolling 01-05 *simultaneously* or when there are more than two players and two (or more) of them roll in their automatic win zones. Remember, a score of 60 has a 10 point auto-win zone over a score of 50 but a 20 point auto-win zone over a 40 score in the same game. Simultaneously, the 50 point score would have a 10 point zone over the 40 point score and so on. Thus in a three player game, one player could lose and the other two continue on until there was only one winner or one player win, defeating the other two.

In multi-player card games, assume that all players rolling outside of their GAMA scores had to drop due to bad hands and the order of who had the highest/winning hand(s) would be based on the numbers rolled *inside* their parameters and based lowest to highest.

For example: Five players are in a poker game with GAMA scores of 47, 50, 53, 59 and 61 respectively. The first deal results in rolls of 42, 58, 50, 65, and 48. You'll note the first player is OK with a 42, the second "went bust" with a 58, the third is OK with a 50, as is the fifth with a 48 but the fourth player also went bust with a 65. At any rate, the three survivors had 42, 50 and 48 which means the 50 score (player #3) has won the game, the 48 score had the next best hand and the 42 the worst.

Other such games can be extrapolated using the examples.

Please remember that this formula is a generality that covers all forms of *non-lethal* adversarial gaming competition. However, some of you may

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feel the need to further define this rule. If so, here are a couple of (optional) suggestions.

- 1) Break down the adversarial contests into more specific categories, assigning separate scores for each. These categories are:

Board-type games (chess, blackgammon, etc) –

Manual dexterity games (darts, horseshoes, etc) –

Card games (poker, Swords and Dragons\*, etc) –

All else not covered

- 2) When rolling the initial skill number, also roll to determine a character's "potential best". This will tell you how much they can *learn* over the years.

Die Roll	Potential	Maximum Number of Pluses (Adds) Allowed
01- 10	Abysmal	+1 per each 4 ELs gained to a best of +4 to skill
11- 25	Low Average	As above but to +8 maximum
26- 75	Average	As above but to +12 maximum
76- 89	High Average	+1 per each two ELs gained to +12 maximum
90- 98	Master	As above but to +16 maximum
99- 100	Grand Master	+1 per each EL gained to +20 maximum

\* "Swords and Dragons" is a card game peculiar to Arduin and resembles a poker game combined with "Go Fish", but played with a 108 card deck that is closer to a Tarot deck than those cards in use in our own world. And, if you think I'm gonna explain the rules to you, you're crazy! I'm still trying to figure out how that orc pulled out a "Double Lancer" on a nine card draw to beat my "Sleeping Dragon"!



## The Infamous Black Metals Of Arduin

There are five metals normally thought of in colors and hues other than ebon in Arduin but which have (usually though *mystik* means) been seen and known of in that way as well. These are:

**Black Iron**, which is also known as *Yaddrakk* (*Yaddrann* in steel form)

**Black Silver**, which is also known as *Silbony*

**Black Gold**, which is also known as *Aurebony*

**Black Mithril**, which is also known as *Ethril* or *Elaiddyn*

**Black Adamantium**, which is also known as *Adamony*

**Black Orichalcum**, also known as *Blachalcum* or *Ebonalcum*

Each of these has properties *unique to themselves* and which are as follows:

**YADDRACK:** This *naturally* occurring metal is 25% harder yet 15% lighter than "normal" grey iron. It and the black steel (called "Yaddrann") made from it *hold* arcane and *mystik* powers within it more strongly than any other known substance. Thus many of the magik weapons and armour of olden times were made from it. Sadly, however, the veins of this metal, deeply locked *miles* beneath the earth, were played out and no *new* quantities of this great metal have been seen nor source discovered in over 10,000 years. It's value now is, weight for weight, equal to Platinum but only a few of the dwarven kind still know the secrets necessary to the working of this wondrous iron/steel. If one is lucky enough to acquire weapons or armour of this metal, they should be considered as +1 (iron) and +2 (steel).

**SILBONY:** Said to be incredibly destructive to those things undead, it's merest touch is capable of disrupting *lesser* creatures of this type and of burning horrificly those considered "greater" undead. It *does* conduct magik, unlike it's normal silver counterpart (which doesn't), is as hard as carbon steel but as light as aluminum. All weaponry made from Silbony is said to be "+3" and capable of striking/affecting all creatures (from demons to demi-gods). A *creation* of the titan race who called it "Saerai", it is as valuable (ounce for ounce) as Mithril.

**AUREBONY:** This metal is about as strong as good bronze but retains its natural weight. It is known to have a deliterious effect upon dragon kind, its simple touch causing great pain to them. All weaponry and armour built from this *mystik* black metal is considered to be "+4" (but



is still damn heavy!) and totally immune to any flame or fire (though the wearer would not be!) regardless of potency or source.

**ETHRIL:** One of the rarest of the mythic, mystik ebon metals, Ethril is as light as willow wood and can float! It is also as strong as fine nickel steel and totally unaffected by any degree of cold (though its user certainly would not be!) This is without regard to the source or potency of the cold, of course. All weaponry and armour constructed of this metal would be "+5" and it is known to be *toxic* to Elves! Its *merest touch* causes nausea (etc) among Elves and a stab wound or cut caused by Ethril (on *any* Elf) causes 1D12+1 HP of toxic poisoning (each time)! Elves hate this metal and consider *all* who use it their enemy. On the other hand, it is a total, 100%, non-conductor and block against *all* psychic emanations, regardless of type, power or source. In the oldest Elven legends, it was called "Eliadolyn" or "Kiss of Death". Its value is approximately four times that of normal Mithril.

**ADAMONY:** This is, if possible, even harder and stronger than regular adamantium (generally considered to be the hardest/strongest metal known). It is so rare that only two items constructed of it have ever even been alluded to in legends: a ring of great power and a long altham'e cum dagger; both created and owned by the awesome magician Phandalume the Mighty. However, should armour or other weapons ever be forged from Adamony, it *should* be considered as "+7". Note that Adamony is indestructible by any known means (from H-bomb blast to magikal disintegration) though its wearer certainly *wouldn't* be. Its value is about ten (10!) times that of normal adamantium.

**BLACHALCUM:** This metal is thought by some to not only have "life" but "sentience" as well. It is rare beyond description, "+6" if made into armour or weaponry and is reputed to be the base metal the "Three Great Swords of Doom" were *grown* from. No one today knows the secret to the making of this magik resistant (+50% to MRS) metal or even if any still exists in today's world. In fact, little beyond legend is known of this arcane metal and even these mythic references are far and few between. One *fact*, however, can be relied on! It is worth incalculable amounts (GM-*adjudicated*)!

## OTHER MYTHIC METALS

**CADRIUM:** This dense, heavy, reddish-brown metal is usually buried so deeply underground (a mile or more) that it is almost never seen (much less mined) by anyone but dwarves. With 90% of the weight of gold and about as hard as pig iron, its one great asset is that it can withstand great amounts of heat *without transmitting the heat through itself*. For instance, a one inch thick piece could withstand a direct blowtorch flame for, literally, hours without the opposite side ever getting warm — rather like the heat shield tiles on the space shuttle! Anyway, the actual melting point of this dense metal is an astonishing 11,820°F! And, please note, that heat would only go all the way through to the far side of a 1" thick piece at about 10,000°F! For the last 1,820° before meltdown, the side away from that heat will only be about *one sixth as hot* as the far side taking the heat. For example, at 11,200° on one side, the other side will only be 200°! This goes on until the last 20° before meltdown at which time the metal reaches its "glow point" and becomes hot all the way through, equally. Then, as it melts at 11,820°, it begins to "superheat" (if the outside applied heat is *hotter* than this) and, at 13,000° it begins to boil. By 14,950°, it is commencing to vaporize and will lose 10% of its mass each second it is that hot (or hotter).

Seldom seen in amounts larger than an ounce or two at a time, such small pittances are, nonetheless, still sufficient to "leaf plate" an *entire* round shield's front because it is so malleable *at high temperatures* (9,000° or higher). Such protection would render said shield front effectively fire/heat proof (within the given parameters above). Figure it's value at approximately 6,850 ounces of gold for each single ounce of Cadrium! Now that's hot stuff!

**STELLAINE:** This silvery-blue metal weights about  $\frac{2}{3}$  that of fine steel but is very close to four times harder. It is also some 20% less brittle than said steel and about 25% more heat resistant. Its origins, composition (if, indeed, it is an alloy and not a pure metal) and manner of working are known *only* to those High Elves who live in the great Heaven Wall Mountains. Over the millenia since it was first worked, many weapons and a fair number of pieces of armour have been made from it. Almost all (98%) are still in *High Elven* hands. Those *few* items that are not are mostly pieces destroyed or similarly lost in situations of peril. Virtually none are in non-Elven hands by gifting or direct trade/sales. They value it too highly to disperse it to "lesser races".

This unique metal is one of the finest "non-magikal" kinds available in Arduin and is a much-coveted possession by non-Elves (especially) as

well as Elves. The fact that it *does* effect/strike all known things (undead to were-creature) may have a lot to do with this. Costwise, it is worth about 20 times fine steel (i.e. a 15 GS dagger would cost 300 GS in Stellaine). All items made from this metal are considered "+1" and of sharpness, just on general principles.

**ROSANTIUM:** This pale, rose-colored metal is so rare as to have been seen only eleven known times in the past 17,000 years. Note also that it has never been seen in any amount larger than a 7 bladed dagger either. It has approximately the same weight (99.875%) as aluminum but has most of the same tensile properties of titanium, heat resistance properties of the finest bronze and one "special" property: for each hour's exposure to direct sunlight, it will "glow" (at half sunlight brightness) for 20 minutes — sort of a metallic "sunstone". It is also 100% non-conductive to all forms of electrical energy regardless of source or potency. It has a value of some 40 times that of fine steel (i.e. twice that of Stellaine).

**SARABANDIUM:** This greyish-white metal burns hotter than magnesium (at about 9,850°F), weighs about 20% more and is ignited in *only* three ways: *natural* heat of 5,000°F+; arcane heat of a *minimum* 60 HP potency; *any* electrical shock/charge of a *minimum* 55 HP potency. Nothing else, it seems, will cause this very light but fairly strong (as strong as aluminum) metal to burn. Note also that, once alight, it will consume a 1' diameter rod of itself at the rate of 1' in length every 30 seconds. Such a burning rod would produce a 30" diameter area of 10 times full sunlight brightness and have a damage potential of 1D20 HP potency per second of *contact* with the "flame" or rod tip. The light decreases in intensity by one full daylight of brightness for each 5" in diameter more than the initial 30". For example, at 45" from the source, it would be 7 times brighter than full daylight; at 60", it would be 4 times and, at 75" only equal to daylight intensity. The heat damage also radiates outward about 18", each one inch from the burn point, subtract one HP from the 1D20 roll (1 HP minimum). Thus, just getting *near* it can burn you! It is too bright for most humanoid eyes to view directly.

While not rare, this material is not common either and is most often used in alchemical processes or (very rarely) by thieves to cut through metal vault doors and such. Oh, the thieves call their firecutters "Dragons' Tongues". Each 1' in diameter by 1" long slug is worth about 400 GS. It is most often found in the deep mines of the Dreaming Isles. Note that Sea Elves use it to light their way *underwater*.

**BROZAHRIUM:** This brass-colored metal is much prized by seafarers as a hull sheathing for their vessels. It absolutely *won't* rust, corrode or otherwise degrade itself due to water and weather usage. Also

note that 95% of all sea-going "hull garbage" such as barnacles and the like *will not* attach themselves or grow upon this metal. It is of about the same weight and strength as copper (100.725%) but is a 20% better electrical conductor. Neither rare nor common, it has a value *equal to* gold, weight for weight, and is most often worked by the infamous Blue Gnomes of the Carnellian mountains, who also use it as their main metal of coinage (in 3, 2, 1,  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{10}$  ounce denominations).

**VARTIUM:** This shiny blue-green metal is fairly rare and usually seen only in small (1-3 lb) amounts. Mined almost exclusively by the Var-Tanga clan of Great Orcs near the borders of the Green Hell, it has a value about seven times that of pure gold. Its one *major* property is that it has an inherent 60% magikal resistance (regardless of kind or potency). Otherwise, it closely resembles good nickel-steel in its tensile and heat resistance properties. There is some evidence to support old alchemical legends that, when alloyed with mithril (in an unknown percentile combination) the resulting "new" metal is close to adamantium in most ways. This legendary alloy has the name "Vartril" and, supposedly, comprised the metal content of the arms and armour of the Great Orc Lord Krangas World-Slayer, Orc-kind's most legendary hero (and its most mythic weaponry and armour) but, as this legendary gear has been lost for some 38,500 years or so, no-one can now say the truth or untruth of it. Still, the occasional old (and odd) coin of Vartium will show up in a treasure horde...

**KYRRAD:** This deep sapphire-blue metal is one of the forgotten things of the race of High Elven kind. Half a million years ago, it was laborously made in a process requiring 13 years from an amount enough for but *one single bastard-sized sword*. It is said, in the ancient legends, that the metal was an alloy of black mithril, orichalcum and a ruby-colored "metal" that had fallen from the sky "like a blazing sun". Once that translucent red "star metal" was all used up (and there was precious little of it to begin with), it could *no longer be made*. Be that as it may, the one fact that can be documented (at least as far as a half million year old legend can be) is that a weapon of awesome power was forged from it — such a weapon as the world has not seen since. So powerful it was that no mere name could be affixed to it, thus it was simply "The Sword". It was this Kyrrad weapon, this sapphire blue shard that "split asunder the adamantium armour of the Godling Ophondurax and slew him outright", all in one single blow struck by the Elven Hero Gynda Gonfalon during the mythic "heaven siege". Such is the legend, leastways...

Since that time, few items have ever been seen made truly of Kyrrad but those that were commanded fabulous prices and generated uncommon happenings whenever they turned up. The single long bow arrow, cast all in one piece of Kyrrad and called "Harbringer" is an example:

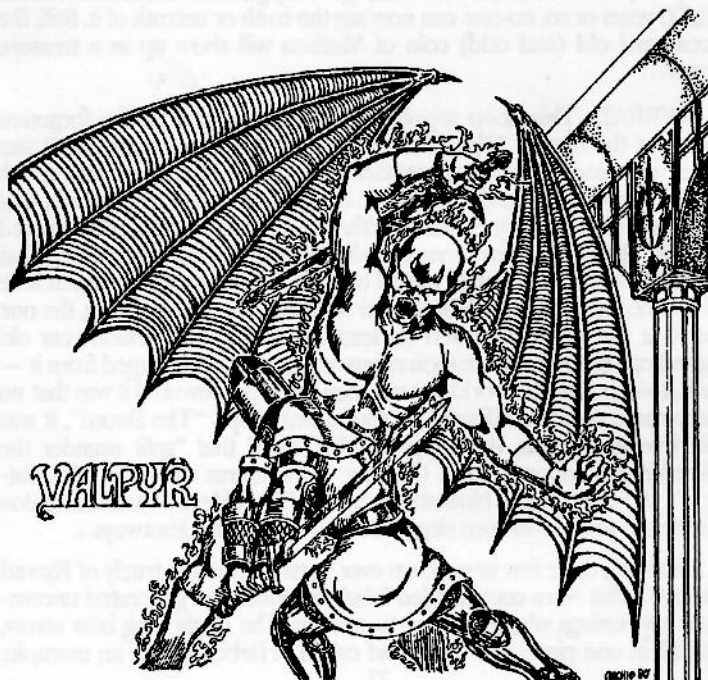
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300,000 years or so ago, or so the legends go, this arrow was *reforged* by arcane means from the broken third of a mythic sword of Kyrrad.\* It cost 80,000 GS just to recast it (more to “magik” it) into an arrow and was then “sold” to the famous Elven archer Eliad Dawnsong for the (now lost) fabulous “Twelve Rubies of Khondalahr” which were worth, at a rough estimate, some 250,000 GS all told! And we all know what that arrow was used for!° As for its value today, none can say, but it would take an emperor’s ransom for the least of the few artifacts ever made from this immensely magikal, strong and wondrous metal.

**Special Note:** *All* properties of the metal are *now* unknown (GM-adjudicated) so caution should be exercised in dealing with it. However, at a rough guess, I’d say that *anything* made of this stuff is *at least* “+7”. *At least*. Be warned!

\* It is not clear whether the shard was from “The Sword” or from another, nameless also, that had been forged in ages past from the same “Star Metal”.

° Come on! You remember the legend of “The Black Dragon of Barakalon”, now don’t you!?! Sure you do! It’s *that* arrow!



## THE SILK OF ARACHNID ORIGINS

Within the Arduinian multiverse, there are some very large species of arachnidae (spiders), most of which create "silk" to one degree or another. Webs, tunnel linings and so on are the natural uses for it in its "raw" form. However, when processed and otherwise alchemically treated, it becomes one of the most precious of all cloths known. Here then are the most usually found types, their special properties and a few notes about them. Enjoy!

**Grey Silk:** Standard grades from most common giant arachnids (usually of the "wolf" or tarantula types) make up this type. Color will range from light steel grey all the way to dark charcoal grey. All are equivalent to an AC 5 chain mail armour when woven into clothing. Water beads off it like a duck's feathers and a  $\frac{1}{8}$ " diameter rope can support up to 2,600 lbs. That rope, if 50" in length, could be rolled into a golfball-sized sphere quite easily and would weigh all of 6 ounces or so. This is the most common kind of spider silk, encountered 60% of the time.

**Black Silk:** This shiny ebon silk is derived from certain western breeds of cave spider and has all the properties of the grey except that it is slightly stronger (being able to support 3,000 lbs on a  $\frac{1}{8}$ " diameter rope) and is AC 4 in clothing form. Neither very common nor very rare, it is encountered 15% of the time. Do note that it is *highly* prized as "armour" by Arduinian Assassins.

**Emerald Silk:** A translucent emerald green silk derived from a particularly nasty and hard to kill jungle variety of tree-climbing wolf spider indigenous to the trackless southern jungles of Green Hell. This silk supports about 2,400 lbs on a  $\frac{1}{8}$ " thick strand and is 100% resistant to all acids of less than 300 HP potency. More powerful acids do 10% damage for all HP above 300, each 25 HP thus done being enough to destroy a 6" inch square of material. Otherwise, it is, in all ways, like grey silk. Fairly rare, it is encountered only 5% of the time.

**Blue Silk:** Derived from the rare and deadly "sea spiders", it is about half the weight of grey silk, is 99.9% air tight to 1,000" depths, capable of supporting 1,250 lbs on a  $\frac{1}{8}$ " strand (50" roll into the size of a large marble) and equivalent to AC 6 in clothing form. It is very, very rare and seen only 1% of the time. The color ranges from deep navy blue to light sky blue.

**Red Silk:** Ranging from bright scarlet through dark brick red to pale pinkish-red, this *exceedingly rare* silk comes from the dread Red Fangs

spider. In all ways, it is identical to grey spider silk save one: the silk is 100% fireproof vs all heat/fire of 500 HP potency or less. Greater heat does 5% damage for all HP greater with *each* 30 HP above this amount being enough to destroy a 6' square of the silk. It is so rare, it is encountered only 2% of the time and seldom in any amounts sufficient for clothing pieces larger than, say, a glove or two.

**White Silk:** Taken from the northern snow spiders, this rare silk (seen 3% of the time) will support 2,000 lbs on a 1/8' strand, is equivalent to AC 5 in clothing and is generally like grey silk otherwise. It also insulates against cold so well that up to 120 HP potency of same *would not penetrate* a single layer of the silk! 121-200 HP potency cold does 5% damage, 201-250 HP does 10%, 251-300 does 20%, 301-350 does 50% and 351-400 HP does 75% damage *beyond that layer*. These damages are for those HP *beyond 120 HP* and each "step" thereafter in their proper proportions. The extra cold *doesn't harm the silk*, just penetrates it! Color ranges from snow white to a sort of ivory cream color, however, it is "fluffier" than most spider silks, 50" of 1/8' rope would form a baseball-sized sphere.

**Spiga Silk:** Silk from the dread Spiga is *exceedingly rare* (1% chance) and almost never available in any significant amount (i.e. more than 6 square inches). It is AC 3 equivalent in cloth but *weights* about 50% more than ordinary grey silk. Thus 50" of 1/8' rope would weigh about 9-10 ounces and would roll into a sphere about twice the size of a golf ball. That 1/8' strand can support up to 4,000 lbs and the silk has several arcane properties:

- 1) Adds a 20% MRS to *any* wearer *fully body covered*. Less coverage means less MRS add by GM adjudication.
- 2) Cuts all fire damage (up to 100 HP) by  $\frac{3}{4}$ s and stronger potency heat does %of less damage. All fire of 250 HP potency and above does full damage point for point to the wearer and *each* 25 HP worth *more* than this (250 HP) will destroy 4 square inches of the silk.
- 3) Lightning to 120 HP does only half damage to a wearer but full damage beyond this. Also, *each* 50 HP above 500 HP (at one shot) will destroy 6 square inches of the silk.
- 4) It insulates vs cold so well that 20% of the same (damage-wise) is always negated for its wearer regardless of potency or origin.
- 5) It is 100% acid resistant *itself* but porous enough so that 1-5% will seep through in 1D10 melee rounds. By the same token, this silk is *not* entirely waterproof either.

- 6) There is a 20% chance that any and all arachnids "smelling" this silk (in any large amount) will *not* attack its wearer believing him to be a spiga! Of course, *all* spigas tend to go berserk smelling it and immediately attack the wearer (95% chance)!

This is the *only* spider silk that *does not float*. In fact, it sinks quite rapidly in water. It ranges in color from a "translucent honey" to solid amber and frequently retains a very strong odor reminiscent of mint leaves.

**PseudoSilk / HalfSilk:** This is not *true* spider silk but similar substances taken from other (usually large) insects that "weave" nests and such. Most often equivalent to AC 6 or 7 in clothing form, it is also about three times heavier than grey silk and not nearly as strong. A 50' long  $\frac{1}{8}$ ' diameter strand would support about 800-1000 lbs, roll up into a hard-ball sized sphere and weigh a bit over a pound (18-24 ounces). Some forms are water-tight, some not but *all* are usually a sort of yellow grey in color. This silk is common enough to be encountered about 12% of the time.





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To determine if your branch of the Multiversal Trading Company has any of the described silks for sale, do the following:

Roll percentile dice: A roll of 01-10 indicates that silk is available for sale on that particular day. If available, roll percentile dice *again* to see what type is available:

01-60% .....	grey silk	61-.75%.....	black silk
76-80% .....	emerald silk	81-.83%.....	white silk
84-85% .....	red silk	.86%.....	blue silk
87% .....	Spiga silk	88-.99%.....	pseudo/half silk

100% means more than one kind is available — roll 1D3 to see how many rolls you'll get on this chart (ignoring any more "100%" rolls). Finally, roll percentile dice again to see how much is available:

Finally, roll percentile dice again to see how much is available:

01-75% .....	a 12' square is all that's there
76-90% .....	enough for a pair of gloves is there
91-98% .....	enough for a short-sleeved tunic
99% .....	enough for a complete body suit available!
100% .....	roll 1D6 times on this chart (ignoring any 100% rolls) to see how much is available.

Once the amount and type is known (if any), you'll have to buy it! The following price list is provisional and indicated the usual cost. However, it frequently doubles, even triples (or more! — at GM-discretion), if none has been available for any length of time. Anyway, here's each type's cost as is current in Arduin today:

Grey or Common.....	300 GS per square foot (12' square)
Black.....	395 GS per square foot
Emerald.....	405 GS per square foot
Blue.....	665 GS per square foot
Red.....	700 GS per square foot
White.....	3,000 GS per square foot
Pseudo/Half.....	200-250 GS per square foot

As you can see, clothing made from this would be (is!) quite expensive!

Please note that having this stuff made into clothing is very costly (about 7-10 times normal seamstress/tailor fees) and takes 5-10 times as long to complete as regular articles of clothing.

Spider silk is highly prized by warriors for several (most very obvious) reasons. While light and cool (with the one exception), it is equal to high grade armour. Arrows and stabs don't cut the material, they just shove it into the wound (around the blade/arrowhead). Thus, by pulling outwards to either side of such a wound, an arrow, etc., can be "popped out" quite readily. *The damage was done* but no messy things have to be cut out of the wound (i.e. barbed arrow heads) and envenomed things *usually* don't poison the wearer as such toxic stuff is *most often* still on the silk and *not* in the person! Assassins and others who must move fast and light prize such silk body suits beyond measure and will frequently pay ten, even twenty (or more) times their intrinsic value in order to possess one — or, perhaps, kill for one.

Few are respected more in the Arduinian multiverse than those who set out to deliberately "harvest" the raw spider silk. Few get rich because so many die attempting to collect it. Still, a high paying job if you've a mind (and stout heart) for it!

Oh! One final note: the silk in its raw form is worth about *half* the previously listed prices. Processing (removing the adhesive and so on) and reweaving it into cloth, etc. adds very much to its cost.

Finally, please remember that this material should be rolled for (at Multiversal) no more than *once per game month* at most! Try to remember its rarity, high cost and general unavailability. To do otherwise is to court a rapid game imbalance, so be warned.

Further information on a variety of unusual spiders will be found in **The Delian Book Of The Dead** from DRAGON TREE PRESS.

## ALCHEMY AND GAME PLAY

With the resounding success of the *Lost Grimoire* (Arduin Grimoire IV) and reams of positive feedback about the alchemical goodies contained therein, I feel that enough interest exists for me to take the time to explain the role of alchemist in campaign style worlds.

To begin with, the class of player character represented by the Alchemist is, though a fun and viable one in play, better suited (for most games and most players) to "Non-Player Characters". As an NPC, they are the ones who will be the proprietors of each local alchemist's shop where the players can go to *purchase* some of the goodies listed in this volume (and others). Please remember that a small village probably *won't* have such a shop but a small town probably will. Cities most certainly will have at least one, probably more, but no shop (whether a small one-room affair or a huge multi-story building) will have everything listed.

The bigger the town or city, the bigger the shop(s) and the more complete their inventory. Following is a handy chart to give you an idea of what can be found and where.

Population of Town, etc	# of Shops	EL of Proprietor	Number of Assistants	Comments
500 or less	(note 1)			.....Almost never found in places this small
501-1,000	(note 1)			.....Most basic things only, perhaps 1-2 of the listed items
1,001-2,500	1	1st-3rd	(note 2)Basic stuff and 1-3 (occasionally more) of the listed special items	
2,501-5,000	1	2nd-4th	1-3	.....Basic+2-5 special items
5,001-10,000	1-2	3rd-6th	2-4	.....+3-7 special items
10,001-25,000	1-3	4th-8th	3-5	.....+4-10 special items
25,001-50,000	2-4	5th-10th	4-7	.....+7-12 special items
50,001-100,000	3-5	6th-12th	6-10	.....+11-20 special items
100,001+	4+	8th-20th	varies greatly	+11-30 special items

<sup>1</sup> 10% chance that some very young alchemist just starting out has set up shop or, perhaps, an old experienced one has retired there (i.e. he has no shop per se but still "keeps his hand in", working out of his residence, doing the odd job for the locals and the occasional traveller). GM-adjudication is definitely needed here.

<sup>2</sup> 25% chance for 1-3 assistants, all of a lower EL than the proprietor. Note that, in the case of an EL 1 shop owner, the assistants are apprentices still working toward "graduation" and so aren't ranked.

Please remember to roll to see *how many* specials are available (using the above chart), then roll randomly to see *which ones* are available (GM's choice as to how to determine the chances of each) and then roll to see *how much* of each is available. Rare stuff will have fewer doses/uses than more common ones and will *certainly cost much more*.

As to prices, again please remember that the prices listed with each special item is only the *production cost*. The actual "over the counter" cost to a player character will most certainly be much higher — perhaps two, three, even ten times as much as the listed production cost! Also remember that most adventurers simply cannot afford the prices for most of the goodies listed in this and other Arduin books so they'll more often than not buy such simple things as matches (so who'd you think makes them, anyway?!?), simple glues and acids or even the occasional smoke pot or such.

*Don't* let the alchemist's shop become all adventurers "one stop for everything". If you do, game balance will soon be lost to a proliferation of alchemical "answers to everything" but, for the *occasional* added "suprise", they're just the ticket!

Read on and enjoy!

## MORE ALCHEMICAL MAYHEM

### Pharanore's Phumble Gas (aka: Pharanore's Spasmodic Horror)

This opaque metallic orange gas is generally carried in softball-sized glass or ceramic globes weighing about 13 ounces. Each contains enough gas to cover approximately a 30' spherical area (in 1D20 seconds with a 3 second *minimum* spread time). It has a duration of about five minutes if there is *no* wind. This gas has the effect of causing *random* nerve impulses and loss of muscular control in all *living* creatures of 48 HP size or less. The effect remains as long as the gas is present and for an additional 1D100 melee rounds, less one melee round per each CON point (or each 10 HP, whichever is *greater*) of the victim.

This total loss of control results in complete dysfunction of the body in question. Everything that *can* move, *does* in jerky spasms. Eyes rotate, eyelids flutter rapidly, the tongue twists in a rapidly opening and closing mouth, fingers flex, fists clench and unclench while arms wave madly about, legs move back and forth, all bowels and bladders release messily and so on. In such a condition, most beings immediately fall over to lie

flopping on the ground like a fish out of water. For each melee round in "the condition", there is a cumulative 1% chance the victim will die due to massive body system failures.

Beings larger than 49 HP in size still suffer too, though not as badly. Figure them to be so shaky as to be at -50% to all attack and defense, less one per each 5 Hp over 48 (-1 minimum). All movement is halved, less 5% capability per 10 HP over 48 (-5% minimum). Also, the effects only last 1D20 melee rounds outside the gas's effects (1 melee round minimum).

Each dose requires 2,000 GS worth of materials (of moderate rarity) and 7 days time to prepare. Each must be *separately* made. These retain their potency up to 20 years if kept sealed air-tight in *non-metallic* containers.

### Chyp's Cataclysmic Cacaphony Crystals (aka: Boom Glass):

These beautiful crystals of rainbow-hued near transparency are actually "grown" by the alchemist over a 13 day period and *always* 13 crystals grow in each batch, each about 2-3' long by  $\frac{1}{8}$  -  $1\frac{1}{8}$ ' thick. Each crystal has the ability to absorb and store *all sound* it "hears" within a 90" radius. It can then release this sound in one single cataclysmic blast when broken! Voices, thunder, laughter, animal sounds, howls, dragon roars, explosions - nothing is too much for it to store and later release. *Lethal levels of sound* will issue if such have been heard. Note too that if it "hears" a conversation lasting several hours, it will release same over several hours (i.e. real time) as if it was just then being spoken!

Its one drawback is that it *records over* each old sound as each new one is heard. Each crystal seems to have a 13 minute "play time" and will go linearly along such to the end before "recording" over itself. However, stop anywhere along that 13 minute time span during its "hearing" and then restart, it begins at the beginning once again. And all (no known limit) it hears is never lost (until it is broken). Simply put, it has a 13 minute "memory loop" but an *endless* listening ability. Thus it just *add* over that 13 minute period all it hears - over and over!

Each batch of crystals takes 13,00 GS and 13 days to grow and *any moonlight* touching them during that process will instantly destroy them. If more than a dozen different voices were heard at a dozen different times, they'd all babble forth without regard for clarity or any other factor. A very old name for them is "Gossip Stones". Its hearing is stopped by closing it tightly in a *silver* box for one minute.

## Saint David's Dragon(s)

These black, tarry spheres, each about the size of a golf-ball and weighing approximately 48 ounces, *must be lit* to function properly (by at least a match or candle flame). 1D4 seconds after being set allame (and now afire all over), they erupt into a dense cloud of black foam-like substance that writhes, stretches and enlarges into the general size and shape of a dragon! It has glowing red eyes, red-rimmed black "scales" and billows of smoke pouring from its flaring, fang-rimmed maw! 30-50" long and 18-25" high, this apparition is no more than a super scarecrow! It still weighs only three pounds and will crumble to the touch like the *ash* it truly is.

Even a moderate wind will move these and a strong one will tear them apart. Still, they are quite effective harum-scarum devices (especially at night or in dark, windless places). Each "dragon's egg" needs 100 hours of constantly watched work and some 882 GS in materials to create. Once made, they will keep up to 13 years if kept sealed, air tight, inside copper closures (usually a hinged copper "egg"). They are quite popular in subterranean dwarf-holds as "protectors".

## Colibri's Fantastic Aerial Transport Spheres (aka: Air Eggs)

Each of these purple egg-shaped and sized objects weighs a hefty 50 ounces and has a sort of rubbery hardness. When kneaded vigorously between the hands for 1D6 seconds, they will *suddenly* inflate with great rapidity (1D3 seconds) to a translucent balloon some 15" high and 11" across the top! Tear-drop shaped, the "tail" hangs down some 9" into a 4x3' stirrup or handle of that same hard rubbery material. This balloon is capable of lifting some 400 lbs at the rate of about 1" per second to an altitude of 10,000' to 12,000' or so. Lesser weights rise proportionately faster but not much higher (14,000" maximum altitude).

The material in the balloon is tough enough to resist normal bird beaks and claws but certainly not arrows or other sharp objects wielded with any modicum of force. Each last 1D12 + 1 hours (1 hour guaranteed) and then begins to lose its lifting gas as the balloon skin deteriorates (GM-adjudication here). Each air egg takes seven days of work and 1,582 GS worth of materials to create. Once made, they have a shelf life of only 100 days but can be kept anywhere.

## Zorn's Instant Armor

These 1' grey metallic-looking cubes had a red "button" on one side. If that button is pushed with enough force (say a thumb), it will cause the

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alchemical cube to unfold (in 1D3 seconds) into a simple shield! It will be 20" on each of its square sides and have a simple single loop handgrip in the center. About 2" thick, it is as hard as seasoned oak but weighs only 15 ounces!

However, 1D100 + 100 minutes after it has been unfolded, it begins crumbling away (taking 1d100 seconds) like old stale bread. Each shield cube needs only 9 hours work and an expenditure of 48 GS in materials. Once done, they last indefinitely or until used. There are legends of *much larger* versions of this alchemical magik. The last one sold in Arduin went for 185 GS.

### Sigestamundo's Siver Screammers (aka: Banshee Stones)

About the size and weight of steel marbles, these silver-colored goodies go off (detonate) when sharply struck, thrown unto hard ground, etc. What these do is a whole passel of fun though! They "ignite" and take off in random and "crazy" flight patterns (totally berserk!) trailing sparks and grey metallic smoke, all the while "screaming and wailing" like a drowning dog! Hooowlll! They fly for 1D8 seconds at about the speed of a thrown rock (doing 1 HP of damage per impact) but, if they hit something, they just ricochet off in another direction! Pelt a group of baddies with these (then duck!) and watch the fun!

Each pellet is *individually* "set" over a 7-hour period *in its own mold*, however, batches containing as many as 100 can be mixed at one time (this takes two hours and costs 30 GS per pellet). Once set, these last indefinitely... if not hit too hard! By the by, the ingredients for these little goodies are *not common* so they are pretty rare little goodies and fairly expensive to boot. They're also sometimes called "rock-ettes".

### Master Yee's Magnificent Marbles of Deception (aka: Ghost Bringers)

These pale saffron-colored "marbles" will automatically imprint the *physical likeness* of whomever (any *living* critter will do if it meets the parameters) they touch first upon bare living flesh. Once imprinted, a *second* bare fleshed touch by the *same* person/being/etc will cause it to immediately commence its primary function: they become a quasi-gaseous *replicant* of the imprinted being! This takes 1D6 seconds and has a duration of 1D100 + 10 minutes (11 minute minimum).

This replicant or "ghost" of the imprinted being is an exact *outer* copy, clothes and all, and will *not* be blown about by any wind of less than 30 mph. Even close up, it *cannot* be told from the real person except by

*direct* handling (it only weighs 18 ounces). While it is *non-mobile* and will sit, stand or mimic (in a static way), whatever was imprinted (to include even the facial expression at that time), said position is *unchangable*. Each of these things needs 112 hours of closely watched work and some 2,928 GS worth of *very rare* materials to produce. Once made, they will keep for only 7 months and, even then, they must be kept in airtight gold containers or they will spoil. Remember! Only living flesh triggers the imprinting and only those things of 800 lbs weight or less will it *fully* copy.

### Black Brian's Brew (aka: Swamp Tea)

This inky black, sewer smelling (and tasting!) thick liquid must be drunk to be of any effect. Once imbibed, the stuff foams and roils in the stomach for about 1D20 minutes (with a 5% chance each minute, separately rolled for, of the hapless drinker throwing the mess all right back up again! Puke!) If he *doesn't* throw up, then, at the end of that time, the drinker is *100% immune* to all poisons and venoms for one hour per each CON point of the drinker. This is without regard to the toxicity or origin of the toxin. 1 HP potency or 1,000, it doesn't matter...

On the other hand, if he *does* throw up, he will then be *more* vulnerable, taking *double damage* from such toxins for 1D20 hours! Note that it can only be imbibed *once* each 25 hours by any single living person (more often and it acts as a deadly poison of 13D8 potency!) and it takes a *full* pint to effect each 200 lbs of personage! Yuck!

Each single pint needs 981 GS worth of materials, *mostly very rare* and 16 hours to produce. Any amount can be made at one time and, once done, it has a shelf life of 11-20 years if kept tightly sealed (no light!) in ceramic or glass crocks. *Any* light at all of more than 30 seconds duration causes the stuff to spoil and become 3D8 poison / per pint.

### Diana the Golden's Elixir of Inestimable Value

This viscous liquid looks like quicksilver, tastes like cinnamon-mint tea and has an aroma reminiscent of roses in full bloom. Each 10 ounce dose, once drunk, will render the imbibor totally (100%) immune from *all* forms of insanity and craziness. This is without regard to the source or power trying to drive said drinker insane. This protection lasts 51-100 (1D50 + 50) hours but is *instantly* negated if *any* alcohol of *any kind* gets into the drinker's system — even a *sip* of weak beer will do it.

It takes 1D20 minutes from the time imbibed until it is working fully but, in the interim, it gives lesser protection (GM-adjudicated saves). Note, however, that this alchemical potion is only a prophylactic (preven-



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tive) and absolutely *will not work after the fact*. This means it *won't* cure people already cuckoo.

It must be made in batches of no more and no less than seven doses (each dose needing 1,415 GS worth of materials, thus a 9,905 GS total cost). The process takes seven days of closely watched work and, once it has been completed, the potion has a shelf life of *exactly* seven years if kept tightly sealed (airtight!) in *brass* containers. It is fairly rare and very costly to obtain in most nations. Highly prized too...

### Trisha-la's Perfume of Perfect Defense

Due to the "personalized" nature of this alchemical essence, it requires *close cooperation* between the buyer and the creator to produce. Each dose costs 3,918 GS worth of *exceedingly* rare materials to manufacture and it will *not* work for anyone except the one who has provided a drop of his or her own blood, a drop of their sweat and a drop of their spittle. Thus the stuff is specifically *keyed to them and them alone!* The perfume is rubbed on the body (about one ounce worth) and within 1D3 minutes is in full operation. It will last until he bathes or for 13-24 hours, whichever comes first.

The effect? Simple! It gives the wearer an aura of armour class 3! It's as if armor was being worn, yet the wearer is absolutely free of any such iron-mongery/encumbrance. The skin is pliable and flexible as ever but just as resistant as armour! It can be made in any sized batch desired over a ten day period and, once concocted, it lasts indefinitely so long as it is kept tightly sealed in *iron* containers. Oh, if used more than three times in a row over a three day period, there is a chance that one's skin will become a permanent metallic iron-grey in color (30% + 10% per turn more than four, cumulative).

### Bhad-Bhyll's Mindfast Potion (aka: Thinkfast Wine)

This potion looks, smells, and tastes just like a good red wine but is extremely rare in the Arduinian multiverse. When a small glass full (about 6 oz) is drunk, the imbiber has his mental functions sped up ten fold. He can *think* ten times faster for 1D100 minutes less one minute per STR point (one minute minimum). Yeah, I know, it's nutty but, the *stronger* you are, the *less* time it works for you! Silly isn't it?

Consequently, the user has more time to make decisions in melee and other "fast" situations. Note however, that the drinker's physical speed and reflexes are *absolutely unchanged!* Note also that it takes a lot of practice to talk at a normal rate of speech while one's mind is whizzing

along so fast! *Lots* of practice! Also, if it is used more than five times in one day, there will be a 15% *cumulative* chance per each such use that the drinker will become helplessly insane permanently! Real giggle- farm material.

Each dose costs 500 GS (in very rare ingredients) to concoct though batches of any size desired can be made. Once brewed, they have a shelf life of about three years but must be kept in tightly sealed glass containers to keep from spoiling. The production process takes 30 hours but, once the actual mixing is finished (about an hour), it can be left to ferment on its own.

### Partamore's Little Violet Pills (aka: The Alchemist's Eyes)

These colorful, pea-sized pills give whomever swallows one, 1D12 hours of "True Seeing". These work only for living beings of 72 HP or less. Larger beings taking these pills just get a splitting headache! Akin to the True Seeing spoken magik, the effect needs 11-20 minutes, after swallowing, to come to full working power. No more than six of them may be taken in any given 30 day period. For each additional pill taken (in that time period), there is a *cumulative* 20% chance of *total and permanent* blindness resulting!

While as many as desired can be made in one batch, the cost per *each finished pill* is always 2,500 GS in rare materials. The making of these requires 1,000 hours of very closely supervised work. Very rare and exceedingly expensive are these little goodies!

### Thunder Dust

An alchemical equivalent to gun powder, each ounce of this granular powder *can* explode with 10 HP of force in a 3" radius. Each additional ounce only increases the blast radius by one foot but does still add 10 HP damage potency. For example, 13 ounces would explode in a 15" radius with a total blast force of 130 HP! The unique thing about the powder is that there are absolutely *no* fire or heat effects (as there are for normal black powder explosions). Note also that *nothing* will cause this to detonate save for arcane (mystik/magik) lightning (electricity) of 13 HP potency or greater. Nothing — not fire, impact or mundane electricity. You can pound on it, toss it in a campfire, zap it with a laser — and it will just sit there (or melt into a *useless* lead-grey puddle of slag)! So alchemically made, it needs specific magik to detonate, thus its usefulness is somewhat limited — safe but limited. The process to make it takes 13 days and allows for any amount to be made, however, *each ounce* costs 3,000 GS to produce! Expensive stuff that and the ingredients are very

rare to boot! As a final note, most worlds consider the mere possession of this to be a *major crime* (due to its great potential destructive power) so be fairly warned.

### Montasohree's Mystik Mind-Expander Potion

This pale purple liquid has the consistency of maple syrup, the aroma of dried oak leaves and a flavor reminiscent of lemonade. Each four (4) ounce dose will, once drunk, *add 1D20 Intelligence Points* to the imbiber's mind for 1D100 hours. However, it has two drawbacks: first, it effects only living beings of 50 HP size *or less*; second, it can only be used *once every 750 hours (30 days)*. Each time *more* than once it is used in that time span, there is a 15% *cumulative* chance that the drinker will fall into a cataleptic trance/sleep of 1D100 days duration!

Each dose costs 185 GS in moderately available materials and twelve hours of time to concoct. Batches of any size can be made and, once completed, have a 100 year shelf life if stored in *airtight* silver containers. This liquid is a favored tool of young magicians cramming for their "finals" and of others needing a *temporary* intelligence boost.

NOTE! It *does not* improve memory, give one "photographic" memory or otherwise make one know more than they did before drinking the potion. No! What it *does* do, however, is make people much *smarter* (i.e. more intelligent) so that they have a better chance of figuring out things for themselves.

## ORC ALCHEMY

It is rather well known that the several races of Orc-kind have managed to acquire not a little ability in the alchemical field, mostly in the way of medicinal or healing items though other things are occasionally encountered. The general specifics for all Orcish things of this type are only two: they are highly effective and they taste so bad that few races except for Orcs can ever manage to swallow them. Those things rubbed on/in and not taken internally have a stench so bad as to "gag a maggot" at 80 paces! Thus few outside their race ever use them. Still, for those souls brave enough to want to try, here then are a few such alchemical items:

### Tarzarhang's Tasty Potion of Efficacious Healing

This blue-black semi-liquid resembles crude oil very closely though it has a smell very much akin to that of putrescent fish mixed with burnt almonds. The taste, as reported by the *few* non-orcs ever to taste the stuff, is said to be like re-drinking one's own vomit! Pyuk! At any rate, each three ounce dose will heal any *non-critical* wound at the rate of 1 HP per second (6 per melee round) to a maximum of 12 HPs worth. It is highly effective, so far as known, for *any living creature*.

The closest guess as to cost to manufacture (orc-kind being a tight-lipped lot) is about 18 GS in materials per dose (no maximum number of doses in any batch) and with a "cooking" time of approximately two days. However, many of the ingredients are *unknown* to any but certain Orcish alchemists and medicine men, so this potion must be considered hard to find anywhere — unless, of course, you're an orc, living in an Orcish community. But then, if you're that, you probably can't afford it anyway, so there!

### Gumjukk's Potent Potion of Absolute Healing

Resembling something close to semi-congealed buffalo blood with lumps of rock salt in it, this thick and lumpy liquid is used to heal *critical* wounds only. It smells like rotted onions and old sweat socks (used, of course!) and reportedly tastes like soured milk mixed with boot polish — nasty. At any rate, this stuff must be taken internally but, once done, will heal all wounds of a critical nature, regardless of kind or severity.

It supposedly works for *all known living things*. Note that it *will not regenerate* lost tissue, replace ruined eyes and so on, but *will seal off*

severed arteries and reattach limbs (if pressed together) that have been severed. To do *that*, it has to knit bone as well. *Scarring is massive* but, at least, you'll still be alive!

It will heal thusly: at a rate of 3 HP per second (18 per melee round) to a maximum of 54 HP worth per each 5 ounce dose taken. This healing potion, like the lesser one preceeding it, has a shelf life of about 13 years once concocted — that is, so long as the potion is kept in sealed containers (of any kind) and not allowed to mix with *water* which will cause it to become ineffective. Each dose supposedly requires some 230 GS worth of hard to find (even for orcs) ingredients and about 8 days worth of work to concoct. It is also rumored that at least 13 doses must be made each time as a minimum or the batch won't coalesce properly... but only the orc alchemist knows for sure.

### Haggadarg's Ointment of Immaculate Immersion

This petroleum jellylike stuff has an odor reminiscent of mounds of rotten garbage and a color like that of muddy water mixed with maggots. The lumpy mess, when applied liberally to *every part of a body* renders said body absolutely waterproof! It also renders it acid proof versus acids up to 95 HP potency. Each *full* 10 HP of acid also removes 5% of the body covering jelly which would usually last 25 hours with normal "everyday" usage.

A 6" tall, 200 lb orc would need *at least* 12 ounces to cover himself entirely. As orc-kind generally dislikes water (acid even more so), this is one of the more commonly encountered orcish alchemical items. Each ounce needs but 3 GS worth of fairly common (to an orc) materials and about a day to concoct... or so orcs tell us. Any amount can be made at one time and, once done, it "keeps" indefinitely. Note however, that some versions (30%) of this goo are nearly as flammable as lantern oil! Now that's something I'd really be careful about putting on *my* body!

### Zuggasugg's Potion Of Preventive Curatives

This purple-green viscous liquid (about the same consistency as 30-weight motor oil) smells like burning camel dung mixed with wet dog hair and, reportedly, tastes *worse* than it smells! It is a *preventive* medicine that must be drunk *every 25 hours* (a full pint dose) in order to maintain its efficacy. It also needs a full 12 hours from first drinking a dose to become wholly effective. Anyway, what it does is keep the imbiber totally, 100% immune to all diseases and viruses of any normal, non-magikal nature — everything from malaria to the "Gruesome Rot Fever of Malangapan" (don't ask, you don't want to know about this loathsome sickness! Blech!!) is effectively prevented.

It is supposed to be a fairly easy and cheap item to make, somewhere around 11 SP per dose in materials and about 20 hours' "cooking" time. The materials are easily obtainable (by any Orc, that is!) and amounts of any size can be brewed up. Once done, though, it only has a shelf life of 2 years and even then only if kept sealed in air-tight containers. Note! Less than 30 minutes' exposure to air will cause it to lose its potency totally.

### Fafflefang's Fire Water

This iodine-orange liquid has a smell closely akin to that of a five-day-old elephant carcass stewing in fermented cat's intestines! Phew! However this stuff is one of the all-time favorites of Orcish medicine men (and alchemists) and they use it whenever they have even the *slightest* excuse. Simply put, it bursts into instant and intense flame upon *contact with water*. Being lighter than water, it quite naturally floats atop it and spreads quite rapidly wherever the water is. Each 1-oz dose will ignite into flame and cover an area approximately 3" diameter on land, three times that on water! The brilliant orange flames rise as high as 5-7" and do 1D8 potency damage each second they touch an object. The flames will burn for 3-8 seconds and are totally smokeless, though they do leave a dirty, soot-like residue of "skum" on the water's surface wherever it has burned.

This potent stuff is reported to cost about 75 GS per each dose to manufacture and this making required about 10 days' time per batch. Each batch must contain enough for at least 10 one-ounce doses, though it must *never* exceed 100 doses. One Orc medicine man tried to make a 500-dose batch and blew up his whole village! It looked like a napalm strike had hit there! Be warned! Once made, it will keep indefinitely so long as it is kept dry and water-tight. The materials are fairly rare, however, even for orc kind, so it is uncommon to run into it no matter how popular it may be. Oh, by the by, this stuff spreads across *water* at the rate of about 3" radius every  $\frac{1}{10}$ th of a second! And, brother, that's very, very fast.

### Ironeye Thunder-Fang's Fabulous Fog Dust

This is a pearlescent, glittery powder, very fine and almost talcum-like in its consistency. It has an odor somewhat reminiscent of rotted peaches mixed with limburger cheese. It, too, is a favorite of orcish medicine men and is used frequently. Each small pinch (about  $\frac{1}{10}$  of an ounce) of this powder will, when introduced into water, *immediately* commence to form a fog-like cloud of grey-green color. Visibility within the 9-14" diameter cloud will vary from 1-3", as long as the stuff lasts (which will be for 21-40 minutes unless blown away by wind or magik). Of course, the

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more of the powder that is used, the more fog is produced. Note, however, that for best effect, at least 10 gallons of water should be present per each pinch used. If less water is available, then the size and duration of the fog will be less (at the GM's discretion). The cloud/fog expands and covers areas at the rate of 3" radius from point of introduction into the water *per second*. This very fast-acting powder is *not* inexpensive to manufacture, requiring at least 100 GS worth of moderately rare materials and will keep indefinitely so long as it is kept dry in water-tight/proof containers but, even though popular, few non-orcs ever encounter it.



## Bandroog's Baleful Blasting Mixture

This stuff is essentially an orc-equivalent to black powder (gun powder) and will vary in its potency and reliability according to who made the stuff. As a *general* rule, figure it to be from 60-90% as potent and about 45-75% as reliable as normal black powder. The ingredients are very, very difficult to get ahold of, so this stuff is quite rare. However, it has one main advantage over black powder in that being wet won't affect it! It can even be used under water! The powder is a sort of metallic lavender in color and has a *very strong* odor of crushed violets (sickeningly sweet). Figure for game management that there is almost never enough ingredients available to make more than about a pound of this stuff every 10-15 months and don't forget to vary its effectiveness (etc) *each time*. The cost *per pound* will approach some 2,000 GS or so and it will require about 8 days of constantly supervised work to make that amount. It is a potent, though generally unreliable weapon in the alchemical arsenal of orc kind and should *never* be treated lightly. And remember that it is too valuable to orcs to be used frivolously. But, when it is (and it works), then look out!

That's it for Orc Alchemy, a little bit of a surprise I just thought I'd toss in for all those players of strange and wonderfully zany "other" character types. I hope this gives you many ideas and a strong urge to write up more of the same for your own game. Sure, a lot of the Orcish stuff will parallel or even mimic non-orc stuff pretty closely. But a lot *won't* and even the ones that do (see the preceding) will have a few quirks all their own. So enjoy!

### NON-ORC "SWALLOW" CHART\*

Die Roll .....	Effect
1-6 .....	Immediately puked it back up! Blech!
7-8 .....	Choaked it partway down, then threw up!
9 .....	Got it down but boy was it nasty!
10 .....	Swallowed with no problem! Liked it!

\* This chart can be amended by the GM to give *adds* (to, say, Dwarves due to their tough constitution) and *minuses* (say, to Elves which are antipathetic to all things Orcish!) It's just a start, have fun with it! I did!



## ROGUE MAGIK

The following section will discuss a highly controversial optional set of rules and ideas concerning how magik may be played: "Rogue Magik" to be exact.

We'll start with a simple explanation of just what Rogue Magik is: all it is, really, is magik that can be used by *anyone*, even non-magik users! Let me repeat that: Usable by *anyone*, even *non-magik users*!

More often than not, this Rogue Magik is of a very low power and does only the smallest kinds of things. Nonetheless, it is still real magik that *anyone* can do. A list of *all* the known Rogue Magiks follows this section. Each of these magiks uses a one to three word firing sequence and requires *only those words* be memorized in order to wield the magik in question. The actual spells *do not* have to be "learned", unlike "normal" magik and users of same. Why this is so, no one knows.

To determine how much "mana" a non-trained (i.e. non-magik user) type has, simply divide his CON score by 10. For example, a CON of 17 / 10 = 1.7 mana points. Not to worry about such a small amount, though, as most Rogue Magiks use only fractions of mana points anyway.

As a final admonition before the actual list of Rogue Magiks, I feel I must *strongly* recommend that this sort of magik be allowed in a game only under these conditions:

- 1) You, the GM, *approve beforehand* all characters who will be allowed to use it.
- 2) Only *newly* rolled up (EL 1) characters be allowed to start with this magik.
- 3) *No* (none! nada! zip! zero!) characters from "outside games/worlds" be allowed into your world/game with this magik.
- 4) All characters allowed (by the GM) to use Rogue Magik must have a good historical (personal) reason for having learned it. They may *not* teach others. *Never!*
- 5) Those who use Rogue Magik have only one such to use per each full five RF points (Reasoning Factor) *more than five* that they have (i.e. one Rogue Magik at RF 10, two at RF 15 and so on) and *no one* may ever know more than five Rogue Magiks, ever! No exceptions!
- 6) Users of this kind of magik *must* be secretive and not easily trust people to let them know they can do such. After all, in Arduin these guys would be illegal! "Non-sanctioned jobbing", remember?!?

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7) None of the Rogue Magik will ever work for a *trained* magik user, *ever*, even if by some wild chance he could ever discover how it works.

**OP 1 ROGUE MAGIK:**

**.5 MANA POINT MAGIKS**

**HOT SPOT:** a 13" range for an instantaneous 6' diameter *flat* circle of +500°F heat. Blisters flesh, etc, for 1D4 HP damage and is hot enough to ignite paper. Remember! This is a *flat* circle and *not* a spherical area!

**COLD SPOT:** The reverse of Hot Spot but only -150°F cold and 1D3 HP damage. Note that thick armour (even clothing) will *reduce* the damage done by this magik.

**SPARK:** A little mini-bolt of electricity some 13' long, with a 7" range. It does 1D4 HP damage and stuns living victims (of 45 HP or less) for 1D10 CF counts. The "spark" jumps from the right (only) index finger to the target.

**THUMPER:** An invisible "kinetic push" of 1D4 HP damage value and 7" range. Like a shove, it *CAN* push a min-sized opponent off balance if he's caught unawares. This force emanates from the *palm* of the right hand (only).

**SLIDER:** This one causes a 3" circular (flat) area up to 9" distant to briefly (one second only) become zero co-efficient (as in a Torozon's Slippy Field). It is of instant effect. Instant banana peel!

**.75 MANA POINT MAGIKS**

**HOPPER:** Causes the caster to immediately jump or "hop" one foot per each STR point he has *along a horizontal plane*. He will climb to a height equal to  $\frac{2}{3}$  the leap distance at midpoint along his aerial path. For example, a character with a STR of 18 would jump 18" away, *his feet* being 12" off the ground at his high/mid-point. Landings are up to the hopper as no special aid nor help is given to him by this spell. Note that the *full* distance is always covered and it can be so done from a standing start with legs unflexed. Boing!

**INK SPOT:** This one causes a 3" *globe* of air up to 13" distant to instantly become inky black and totally opaque to all normal (Human or elven) means of visual sight. Duration of this effect is 1D3 seconds (roll).

**OP 2 ROGUE MAGIK:**

**.5 MANA POINT MAGIKS**

**PUCKER:** This causes any man-sized target's mouth to become "as if alum had been applied liberally throughout". The net effect of this is that he *cannot* speak, only make "gargly-choking" sounds for the 1D3 second duration if its effect. Then all returns to normal. Instantly. This magik affects only those of a size generally associated with men (or smaller). Range for this instant effect magik is up to 20".

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**BRIGHT LIGHT:** Immediately causes a 7" diameter area up to 13" distant to light up for 1D4 seconds with a whitish-yellow glow of 150% full daylight intensity. It is *not* a "flash", but a fast-increasing "pulse" that flares to its full intensity then fades, all over a natural time curve, brief though it may be.

**EARS:** This one allows the caster to hear any single (one) source of sound he has "targeted", up to 20" distant. All extraneous noise is blocked/filtered out so that, for instance, a single person's conversation in a noisy and crowded inn would be heard clearly for 11-30 seconds. It is instant acting too, of course.

**OP 3 ROGUE MAGIK:**

**.5 MANA POINT COST MAGIKS**

**BLINK:** This causes the spell caster to instantly become invisible to all forms of normal sight for 1D3 seconds. He sort of blinks out and then back in sight. Nyaa! Nyaa! Ya missed me!

**.75 MANA POINT COST MAGIKS**

**SEAL IT:** This one is usable only on the spell caster himself and takes 1D3 seconds to fully complete its operation. What it does is immediately (see above) stop/seal off any severed artery or other such "bleeder" wound and then heals 1D3 HP of damage (i.e. knits that cut artery back together). That's it.

**OP 4 ROGUE MAGIK:**

**.9 MANA POINT COST MAGIKS**

**DAGGER:** This one instantly forms a knife blade-like energy shard in the caster's hand (his choice as to which one) with a 1D3 second duration. It attacks as a +1 magik dagger and will strike everything from undead to demon kind. The blazing blue 13" long energy shard is, by the way, very impressive to see, too.

**POP-LOCK:** Essentially a 3" range "Chain Break" spell with a 75% base success chance.

**1.25 MANA POINT COST MAGIK**

**SWORD:** A larger, longer (39") "energy shard" of more sword-like proportions. It attacks as a +1 magik sword and has a 1D4 second duration.

No other Rogue Magiks than the 15 preceding are known to exist. *None* of the magiks may be modified in any way! Finally, the existence of Rogue Magik is not a "known fact" in Arduin. Few people outside of the highest of magikal and religious councils have even heard of it as a rumor. Most dismiss it as pure myth of the worst sort (deliberate fakery). Most Rogue "Mages" would prefer to keep it just that way.

Most Rogue Mages "manifest" at puberty or thereabouts and have *full* powers well into *middle* age (that's 50-60 years old or more in Arduin).

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However in the LAST 20-30 years of life, it begins to atrophy until it is entirely gone (at about 5% loss of mana/potency per year or so). And that's about it on Rogue Magik... enjoy! But only in moderation.

\* Rogue Magik, unfortunately (or fortunately some believe), only manifests itself in pure blood human strains and in no others! Not even half breeds get it. It is also a case of "use it or lose it" in that, if it is not continually practiced as the "inner urges" push one to do, then over a period of about three years it atrophies to nothingness and, once thus lost, it is a power that can never again be regained. NEVER!



## MORE NEW MAGIK FROM ARDUIN

### Jasterman's Bolts Of Blue Bedevilment

This first OP spell is an instant "firing" magik that is quick and easy to learn by practically anyone practicing magik. What it does is this: for each half mana point used in the spell (pre-memorized and allocated), a 3x1' brilliant blue bolt of arcane energy will zip from the spell caster's outstretched index finger.

Note, however, that each bolt will fire at  $\frac{1}{5}$  of a second (one CF count) intervals like bullets from a gun (and not all at once). Each bolt has 120" range, does 1 HP of kinetic damage and *stings* like the dickens! The "shock" they deliver is enough to jolt anyone into immediate attention! So, 10 mana points means 20 bolts; one every CF count for 20 counts! Once begun, the magik spell will continue firing until all bolts have been expended.

Finally, once a magician rises in EL, the number of bolts increases for each mana point expended. First through third EL it is one per each half mana point. At EL's 4 through 7 it is 2 bolts per each half mana point expended. At EL's 8 through 11 it is 5 per each single mana point used. Thereafter it is 13 per each 2 mana points or 6 per each single mana point used.

It is a handy low entropy "attention getter" kind of magik that is a favorite with many mages in Arduin. It takes but 7 hours of study and some 35 GS in materials to learn. Remember also that each single bolt does 1 HP of damage.

### Karpethan's Spell Of Weapons Enchantment

This OP 1 spell is an instant acting enchantment that takes 3 seconds (half a melee round) to enact. Once done upon any true weapon, said weapon becomes "magik" and +1 to strike for 1D20 minutes plus 1 minute per EL of caster. Thus a normal weapon can strike undead, demons, were-creatures and others not ordinarily possible to hit. The spell works by *touch* and costs 1 mana point. However each additional 2 mana points expended in the *initial* casting increases the duration by 1D20 minutes OR the "plus" by one, at the caster's choice. This handy magik takes only 85 GS in materials and 10 hours of study to learn.

## Moshaera's Conjunction Of Quiet Calmness

This OP 1 conjunction requires 1 full melee round (6 seconds) and 3 mana points to complete. Once done the magician has created an area (or "aura") *about himself* that is 18' in radius for each CON point he has. This area is one of "utter calm and quiet" that lasts 13-24 minutes plus 1D12 minutes for each additional 1 mana point used during the conjunction. Its area of effect is *not* increasable.

Note that the quietness is such that a dragon's roar from without is but a puppy's growl within, yet all spoken words are *clearly* heard. Thus, no matter how loud or noisy it is outside the aura, it is as if it were only quietly spoken tones and everyday noise levels within. The "calmness" refers to a vallium-like aura that calms all *living things*, up to 75 HP in size, which enter its area of influence. Within these parameters, it has a 90% chance of bringing a berserker out of his killing fury, of making an attacking bear stop and mildly walk away and so on.

Outside the area of effect, this calming effect lasts but 1 melee round per EL of caster. Normal saves apply, however, and outside the aura anything goes. This useful conjunction needs two days of study and the spending of 150 GS to learn.

## Voorhyng's Varmint Killer Spell

This instant firing OP 1 spell is odd in that no one in the more than 2,000 years it's been around has *ever* been able to figure out how to "up-gun" it (i.e. increase its effectiveness). The consensus is now that it just *can't* be done.

At any rate the spell works thusly: for a 4 mana point cost the mage can gesture with the index finger of his *left* hand (only) at any *living* thing up to 20' away. That living thing will then, instantly, die if it is 20 HP in size or less! Normal saves apply and for some reason Elven kind get a 25% "plus" added to their MRS versus this spell. Plants wither to dry husks, birds drop out of the sky, snakes curl up and die and so forth! A real mini-killer!

It can also be used versus more than one target if the gesture is one where all four fingers and the thumb are outstretched towards potential victims. In this way groups of, say, rats, hordes of small insects and the like may be done away with by a simple gesture (20 HP total, though)! Remember, this spell *cannot be increased* in any way! It needs 5 days of fairly difficult study and an expenditure of 350 GS to learn correctly.

## Shymark's Spell Of The Hidden Torrents (aka: The Super Spit Spell)

This OP 1 druidical magik is actually a combined ritual and spell. The ritual has a base duration of one minute and the spell casting is a single word that fires the magik instantly.

Here's what the whole thing is about. After the one minute ritual, the magician begins drinking water and for each mana point he has expended, he can *safely* swallow one hundred gallons! He'll only feel like he's drunk a glass of water but it's in there, tucked away like gold in a bag of infinite holding! And, when he says the firing word, it *all* spews out of his mouth at the rate of one gallon every  $\frac{1}{5}$ th of a second (i.e. each CF count) or at 300 gallons per minute. The stream, once started, *cannot* be stopped until *all* water is gone!

The stream of water will be 1D10' long per each 100 gallons he's swallowed to a 40' maximum range! You figure it out. Up rushes the giant spider all set to eat our friendly druid and he turns the equivalent of a fire hose on the little bugger!

The only limit known to this odd but useful magik is that once the ritual is done and the water drunk, it will only "hold safely" for one day per each EL of the magician. If he waits too long, he suddenly *bursts* from all that water suddenly "inside" himself! Also, only an amount of water may be swallowed equal to the magician's own CON score times 100 gallons (i.e. a CON of 10 = 1,000 gallons). This magik needs two days of study and an expenditure of 155 GS to learn.

Remember! If the time limit for safely holding the water *has been exceeded*, the water suddenly appears *inside the magician's stomach* with predictable disasterous results! POOM!

## Stafford's Swing

This OP 2 conjuration takes 3 mana points and one full melee round to complete. Once so done, the magik user has created a rope of mystik energy or substance up to 60' long. This "rope" will be anchored immovably at the spot indicated by the conjurer during the casting and will end in his outstretched hands! This arcane line will anchor *anywhere*: on a wall, in the air or water, etc and has a duration of 1D100 melee rounds plus 1 melee round per each EL of the caster.

Its length and duration *cannot* be increased by any known means and the rope is utterly indestructible to all purely *physical* forces. However, even one point of arcane force (of *any* kind) will cut it instantly. It will support *any* weight put upon it (it has never seen a limit yet — as much

as 128 tons having been held up by it in the past!). Remember, though, that it must have a *pre-determined* anchor point and, once conjured up, can *never* be pulled off said point. It can be swung on, used to tie something up (briefly), climbed, etc. This really fantastic low-entrophy magik needs ten days of hard study and 500 GS of materials in order to master.

### Styx's Spell Of Lasting Light

This OP 2 spell is obviously a variant of the OP 1 "Wizard Light" and the priestly "Glory GLow". What it does is imbue any *single non-living* object (by touch) with a *steady*, yellow-orange colored light equivalent to a standard torch in brightness. The duration is three hours per each two mana points expended plus one hour per each EL of the caster above the EL at which this magik was learned. The magik in this instant-acting spell needs 20 hours of study and the spending of 65 GS to properly learn.

### Harbag's Spell Of Instant Odors

This OP 2 magik costs but a single mana point to use and acts instantly. It causes a very strong odor to emanate *from the mage* at the rate of 1" radius of area per second for 11-30 seconds. Duration thereafter is up to the winds and air currents (GM-adjudicated).

Note, however, that the odor must be one the spell caster has access to while he is memorizing this spell. If he wants the smell of roast coffee beans, he needs at least one fresh one at hand during memorization. If he wants the stench of "dragon doo", then he needs some of that stuff. Other than that, the only restriction is that only one spell per each EL of the caster may be used at any one time. But remember, each *separate* smell needs its *own* mana point to be used (i.e. five different smells means five mana cost). A stinky but occasionally handy magik. To learn it costs 99 GS and 60 hours of study.

### Punkhlun's Spell Of Urgent Necessity

This OP 2 spell needs but 2 mana points to use and is instant-acting once the firing word is uttered. It causes any single live target up to 60" distant (of 50 HP size or less) to instantly release his bladder(s) and bowels! Note that once thus "released", the victim will continue "emptying" until there's nothing left to empty! What a mess! Yuch! But it certainly is a much easier way to defuse a trouble prone situation (especially with sentient, civilized beings), than using harmful or lethal magiks! If the intended victim *successfully* resists (i.e. "saves") versus this magic, they are still immediately struck by an intense case of flatulence! Phew! Stinko! Not as messy but still pretty embarrassing as it will last for 11-20 *minutes*! The size of the target affected may be increased by 25 HP for



each additional mana point expended. However, the range is not increasable. This surprising little spell costs 105 GS and 30 hours of study to master.

### Orkhen's Conjunction Of Hideous Heat

Apparently a variant of the "Flash Point" spell, this OP 3 conjunction requires a full melee round (six seconds) to complete. Once done, an area not to exceed 3" in diameter by 10" in height, OR any single object (living or inanimate) not to exceed 500 lbs in weight, will commence heating up at the rate of 6°F per each 1/5th of a second (one CF count). This heat increase is, of course, cumulative, so that, over one melee round alone (6 seconds), the area/target in question will have reached 180°F. In one minute it will have reached 1,800°F, which is the maximum allowable with the base 4 mana point conjunction cost.

Each additional minute of heating up time requires *another* 6 mana points be expended during the initial casting. Note also that only as many minutes of heat increase may be conjured as the caster has EL's (i.e. EL 4 = 4 minutes, etc) and even then the *absolute maximum* is 13 minutes. Such an awesome display of mystik power would cost 76 mana points and create a temperature, by the end of 13 minutes, of some 23,400°F!

The dangers inherent in such a conjunction are patently obvious, thus the full power version has *never* been attempted. After all, no one wants a miniature sun only 60" away from him (the maximum and unincreasable casting range of this magik). For game purposes, figure that the first 180°F of heat does only 1 HP of damage but each successive 180°F adds another 1D4 worth of damage. Thus one melee round worth or 1,800°F would do 9D4 + 1 HP worth of damage. This is to *all* in the area and presupposes that *no* solid object was the target and is the damage done *every six seconds!*

However, should such be, then the first 180°F of heat causes 1D4 of damage *to the solid object* and each additional 180°F does another 1D6 HP worth to said object. So, in one melee round, the target would take 9D6 + 1D4 HP worth of damage. Please note, too, that, if the target object is such that it will not melt or burn up right away, it will probably be radiating large amounts of heat. The radius of this effect and its damage potential (if any) is GM adjudicated individually per each separate happening.

Finally, know that this terrible and potent magik has only recently come to the knowledge of Arduinian users of magik. Thus it is *virtually unknown* to 99% of these people. We strongly recommend you keep it that way. This conjunction needs 18,710 GS and 39 days of arduous study to learn. But only if you can find one of the *only three people* in all the

world who know this magik and which you can convince to teach you. Fat chance, says I.

### Sladamura's Ritual Of Golden Guardianship

This OP 3 ritual needs one minute of time and 3 mana points per each 10" diameter area the mage wishes to protect. As the ritual proceeds, a glowing circle of golden light is formed on the ground around the area in question. This circle has two functions. The first is to give warning if anything, be it live or dead, crosses the line. When such happens, the dim glow (equal to a night light) flares into  $\frac{2}{3}$  full daylight brightness for one second and the distinct tones of a silver trumpet, sounding alarm, is heard for three seconds. The second function is similar in that if anything magikal crosses the line, the same alarm sounds but in three separate "pulses" so as to differentiate it from the first.

The base time this warning ritual will last is one hour plus one additional hour per each EL of the caster above the EL at which it was learned. Though an effective warning system, it has a couple of drawbacks that have caused it to be used less and less over the years as newer things took its place. These are the fact that the lines glow enough to stand out at night, outlining the protected area/camp. Also, the fact that any magik of OP 5 or greater impinging upon it will utterly destroy it (after it gives warning). Also, any undead kind of at least wraith potency will also destroy it during their crossing of the line (again, after giving warning). Other things, however, don't bother it in that manner. This ritual needs 11 days of hard study and the spending of 885 GS to learn.

### Sarkhan's Secret Assassin

This OP 4 conjuration needs 9 mana points and 9 seconds of time to complete. What it does is create a small (9' long) coiled "mystik serpent" in the palm of the left hand. The conjurer then has only 9 melee rounds to use it *before it dissipates*. It may be sent (by voice command) against any single target. It moves through the air at a speed of 10" per second (600" per melee round) and is *totally* invulnerable to all physical attacks (non-magik weapons pass through its ebon body as if it was smoke. Magik ones only do their "plus" damage and not their base damage). It has an AC of 2+5 (to show how hard the dodgy little devil is to hit) and 13 HP. If all of the HP are done to it in damage, it dissipates *and* the conjurer suffers 13 HP of damage! But only if it is destroyed — sort of "all or nothing".

It always attacks as a 13 HD monster and does 1 HP bite damage plus 1D8 worth of venom per each EL of the sender (to 13D8 *maximum*). It may thus bite 13 times, *regardless of the caster's EL*. "Spell turning" *doesn't*

work against it and it saves versus dispell(!) as if it was OP 13 magik. Once "set" towards a kill, it will track and follow, undeterred by dark or weather, slipping under doors and through keyholes, if need be, in its relentless pursuit. This puissant magik is, in all likelihood, closely related to the better known "Serpents of Shardoom". Do note that those individuals *not* actually "evil" of soul *cannot* wield this magik! It needs an expenditure of 40 days' study and 8,998 GS in order to learn. Expensive.

### Kyler's Revenge: (aka: The Death Compass Spell)

This OP 4 combined ritual and spell needs 7 mana point to use but with its single word firing trigger, it is virtually instantaneous in effect. Once memorized during a 13 minute ritual (up to 13 hours before) it is automatically set to fire whenever any of three things happen to the magician: if he is rendered unconscious; if he is rendered unable to speak (in any way, from silence fields to tongue torn out); or if he is ambushed, or surprised with no time to think, it *automatically* fires.

Killing the mage, however, negates this magik utterly. Oh! You want to know just what this spell does do for you?! Well, all it does is zap off four mystik darts, one in each cardinal direction (i.e. north, south, east and west) from the magician! Of course, one must *already know* that OP 1 spell (Mystik Darts) or this one *won't* work. Just think of it, four simultaneous mystik darts zooming off in four different directions! Kinda dangerous to friend and foe alike, don't you think?!? At any rate, expenditure of 660 GS and 14 days of relatively easy study are needed to master this magik.

## NEW PRIESTLY MAGIK

### Diana Of The Sacraments' Conjunction Of The Flames Of Fear

This OP 1 conjunction has a base mana cost of 3 and a time to completion of 8 seconds. (1%ot melee rounds). Once done, the priest will have created a 13x7' wall of deep purple fire some 18' thick. It may be thus conjured up to 18" distant from the priest and has a base duration of 13 melee rounds. Each additional 3 melee rounds costs 1 extra mana point but this *must* be expended during the initial conjunction. This purple flame only does 1 HP of damage per each second of contact but it also causes a priestly equivalent to the arcane spell called "Mage Fear" (by

touch only). Six days of difficult study and the spending of 113 GS are needed to learn this magik.

### Gorfolh's Ritual Of "Armoured" Feet (aka: "Happy Feet Magik")

This extremely simple OP 1 ritual needs only one minute to complete and has a mana cost of 1 for each 4 hours of protection desired. It renders *any* living creature's feet (any *two*) totally immune to the normal blisters, cuts and abrasions of walking (barefoot or not). It also keeps them from getting as tired as they normally would and, strangely, enough, keeps all normal road dirt and grime off them. Clean feet! This minor but useful ritual only needs 6 hours of study and an expenditure of a mere 6 GS in materials to learn.

### Noolcoomb's Conjunction Of Milk And Honey

For each single mana point expended and ten seconds of conjuration, any priest can conjure forth one pint each of golden honey and cow's milk. Thus for a 10 mana point cost over a 100 second long conjuration, some 10 pints of honey and ten pints of milk will be conjured. This *totally edible* stuff will appear up to 7' distant in one mass or in two separate locations up to 3' apart (laterally) if so desired. The only limit to the amounts that can be conjured by this OP 2 magik are that of mana (how much the conjurer has available). The stuff sort of "pours out of the air" at the rate of one pint (each simultaneously) per 10 seconds. This minor but delicious(!) magik needs 3 days of study and the spending of 35 GS to properly learn.

### La-Deaus' Spell Of The Warning Vision

This OP 3 spell works the instant it's single firing word is spoken (at a mana cost of 5) and has a duration effect of 3 seconds. It gives the priest an "advance look into the future"! This "look" comes in the form of a "vision" (see duration of effect above) and only covers a period of time from a 3 second spot during the *very next* 60 seconds. What part of that 60 seconds (the first 3 seconds, somewhere in the middle, etc) is *totally at random*. This spell is unchangeable in any way and the visions thus granted are only 75% accurate or true (GM adjudication is needed here!) With a potential of awesome proportions, this mega-magik needs 13 days of time and 7,000 GS in materials to learn.

### Gharnor's Mighty Leap Spell

This OP 4 magik has a mana cost of 5 and works the instant the single firing word is spoken. Once spoken, the priest automatically leaps a distance equal to 1 mile per STR point that he has! For example, a priest with a STR score of 15 would automatically leap the *full 15 mile* distance! Gone! Note that in order to land *safely*, the leaper must manage (on his own) to *land on his feet*. Anything else and he'll splatter himself all over the countryside! Also note that for every three miles of *lateral* distance leaped, the leaper will *rise* one mile in height! Thus that 15 mile jump would carry the priest to a 5 mile altitude at its apex! And you know, there's definitely not much air at that height! It's cold too! So leapers must be prepared for such hazards (as well as the hazards of a *blind jump* into the gods only know what!). Dangerous certainly but a potential life saver. Remember! Only the *full* distance can be leaped, *no* partial distance jumps! This magik needs 8 days worth of study and has a cost of 475 GS to learn.

### Thyllson's Ritual Of Magikal Repair

This OP 5 druidical ritual allows one to actually repair back to full potency *any magik* that has been tattered, worn down by time or usage and so on. Thus mystik barriers, illusions and so on and so forth can be made as good as new again! This is even if the caster doesn't know anything at all about the magik being repaired! And, *no*, it *cannot* repair magik weaponry, armour, etc. The ritual requires one minute of time and one mana point expenditure per each OP of the magik being repaired. It also costs additional mana equal to half of the original mana cost of said magik being repaired (whatever that total comes to). Thus the repairer should have plenty of free mana, just in case. If insufficient mana is to be had, then the repair *fails* and *all mana expended* up to that item is *irrevocably* lost! *Remember*, however, it repairs *magik* but *not* magik items (like swords, armour, etc)! This risky but very useful ritual requires spending 11 days of study and 1,750 GS to master correctly.

### Brynton's Bright Ray Of Hope

This OP 7 magik is a combined 19 minute ritual and instant firing (one trigger word) spell. Once the ritual is done over a 15 minute period, using 13 mana points, the spell may be "kept ready" for 1D100 hours plus one hour per each CON point of the priest. When fired, the spell generates a brilliant white beam or ray of "holy light" from the caster's outstretched hand/palm. This ray is 50' long plus 3' for each EL of the caster. It is always 30' wide by 20' high. This light blazes forth for one full second plus one second for each three ELs of the caster.

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What the ray does is this: all those of the *same* religion of the caster, bathed in this light, have a "Heal Light Wounds" performed upon them; they are doubly "blessed" and are made "totally unafraid in heart and mind" regardless of their previous state, present foes or future happenings (for 1D20 melee rounds)! Those cowering in fear find the strength to go on; those not afraid find a new feeling of purpose and "will to win" and so on!

Anyone *friendly* to the caster but *not of the same religion* only receives the "Heal Light Wounds" and nothing else.

But all *not* friendly (i.e. enemies, foes, etc) suffer an immediate damage equivalent to "Heal Light Wounds", point for point. Sort of a "Cause Light Wounds" effect as it were. They also suffer the equivalent of a "Mage Fear" spell and are stunned into confused inactivity for 1D10 CF counts. Please note the fact that the ray affects *all hit* by its bright light *regardless of size and/or number!* It is because it is the "light of his god" and thus a "true power"!

This priestly ritual/spell needs 11 difficult months of near continuous study and an expenditure of 10,550 GS to master. Note that those whose souls *are* "evil" simply *cannot* get this awesome magik to work for them!



## ARDUIN PRISMATIC WALLS: ANOTHER LOOK

The original Arduin Grimoire contained some pretty basic information on a form of Rune Weaver magik sometimes referred to as 'Prismatic Walls'. Well, since that time (close to 50 years ago Arduin time), some new and more explicit information has come to light. This information is presented here in a format that is easy to understand and, hopefully, much more enlightening.

### POWERS BASIC TO ALL PRISMATIC WALLS

Due to the intensity of the light generated by *all* prismatic energy, it is virtually impossible to look *directly* at with the human eye without burning the cornea (75% chance of permanent blindness). Beings with eyes superior to humans, such as elves, dwarves, etc, fare even worse (90% blindness chance) in this respect. That light is simply too intense to bear, so be warned!

Once set, a prismatic wall or other such magik is usually *permanent until dispelled*. It draws its power directly from cosmic rays and is thus inexhaustible.

All walls must be 'set' with at least *one* anchoring solid object to hold onto (i.e. floor, wall, ceiling, etc) or it will collapse upon itself and disipate. There is **NO** exception to this fact.

Unless stated otherwise, *all* prismatic walls, etc, appear 13" away from the conjurer. Also, there is no known way to increase the sizes of the walls beyond what's listed and, believe me, people have tried for *thousands* of years with *no* luck.

A being who has "true seeing" that looks upon such prismatic magik has a percentile chance of *going insane* based upon 100% less one percent each RF and EGO point he has. *Permanency* for this insanity is a 50% base chance less the 1% per RF and EGO point as above. Duration for *temporary* insanity is 1D100 days (see note for insanity charts).

Beings who see either ethereal or astral will have the same insanity problems but only when looking upon such prismatic forces as pertain to those realms (see each type). Those undead kind of the non-corporeal/ethereal types really have problems (think about it).

There is *always* a base 1D6 HP of energy damage done to anyone or anything touching such magik and this is a "per second" cumulative type of defense (i.e. 3 seconds of touch equals 3D6 damage and so on) unless,

of course, it is specifically noted otherwise in the individual write-ups. Theoretically, it is possible to overload and collapse such a wall by flooding it with continuously destroyed matter. Theoretically...

Prismatic magik may be "dispelled" only by such a type of magik that is at least *twice* its own OP. Thus an OP 9 prismatic wall can only be "dispelled" by an OP 18 spell of that type. Otherwise it must be "unwoven" by a Rune Weaver. However, even for those worthies, it takes *double* the normal time (and thus mana) to do such. All in all, prismatic magik is incredibly difficult to get rid of. More than one wall can be linked together, *if of the same type*, to form larger defended areas.

Finally, the life cost (aging effect\*) of prismatic magik is always +50% more than is normal for the OP in question. (\*In Arduinian magik, the higher orders of magik physically age those who wield it!)

## PRISMATIC WALLS

**RED** (OP 6): This wall is 15x7' high and can be either straight, convex or concave in shape. The conjuration takes 9 melee rounds and 20 mana points to complete, the wall appearing another 1 minute later up to 33' distant from the caster. Any arcane cold of 180 HP potency in one shot or 24 HP potency (per melee round) over a 13 melee round duration will negate (totally) this prismatic wall. This wall is specific against all physical missiles, mundane or magikal — from bullets to rocks. None shall pass, regardless of size or power. None. Any creature attempting to pass through this wall receives 2D6 of kinetic (no save) damage *per second's* contact, as well as basic 1D6 energy hurt. One must spend 3,685 GS and 14 weeks in hard study to learn this magik.

**SCARLET** (OP 6): This wall is 18x9' and can be any shape from full circle to a straight line wall at the caster's pre-chosen decision. The conjuration requires 11 melee rounds and 22 mana points to finish and the wall appears 9 melee rounds later (20 total). The whole premise of this wall is to *utterly stop* all *living* flesh (physically) from passing through it. This it does without regard to size or power. Note, however, that demonic types and fleshly-type *undead* can freely pass this barrier with no hurt whatsoever.

Those aside, all other fleshly kind suffer 1D4 nerve shock damage (and 1D6 energy hurt) *every second* of contact. 150 HP of lightning/electricity in one round or 24 per melee round over 20 melee rounds will utterly negate this wall. However any such electrical attack of 20 HP potency or less will reflect straight back to its source! Gotcha!

**RUBY** (OP 7): This 13x7' (always a straight line) wall needs 13 melee rounds and 25 mana points to conjure and a further 13 melee rounds



afterwards to come to full power (26 total). However, once thus set it will keep *all* liquids (even acids and corrosives) from passing through. This is without regard as to size, kind or potency. All such trying to do so also suffer 1D12 HP (and 1D6 of energy hurt) of "drying out" damage per *each second* of contact! 200 HP (in one jolt) worth of any laser or concentrated *light-based energy* is what is required to utterly destroy this wall (all else fails save as noted in general information on prismatic magik). 4,500 GS and 20 weeks of study must be expended to learn this magik.

**VIOLET** (OP 7): This 9x7" wall can be of any shape from full circle to straight line and needs 15 melee rounds and 26 mana points to conjure. Even so, *another* 15 melee rounds (30 total) must pass before it reaches its definitive power. The purpose of this wall is to stop all magik of a religious nature (i.e. priestly). This it does, without regard to its kind origin or power! Religious magik simply *ceases* upon impact with this wall. Note also that, along with the standard 1D6 of energy damage done to those attempting to pass through, it also causes *living* flesh to turn to hard, grey (lifeless) stone at the rate of 1D30 HP *per second* of contact! However, any basic "disintegraion spell" will utterly destroy this wall, instantly. Finally, it takes 21 weeks of study and costs 5,000 GS to learn this magik.

**INDIGO** (OP 7): This "wall" can be *any* shape desired, from cone to globe to a simple wall so long as the area never exceeds a 10x10" equivalency. It takes a long 30 melee rounds to do if you want a hollow sphere or as little as 10 melee rounds for a straight line wall. It always needs 30 mana points, however. Any way you do it, though, it takes another 13 melee rounds (23 minimum to 43 maximum total) to come to full power after the conjuration is done. Once functioning, no arcane "detect", "seeing" or other form of mystik "looking into, through or beyond" can pass its magikal barrier. This is without regard to origin, kind or potency. In short, you can't see what's on the other side, visually or magikally!

Oddly enough, however, a simple "dimensional tunnel" or "passwall" magik will utterly negate this prismatic magik. Barring that, however, all attempting to penetrate it suffer the basic 1D6 HP of energy damage *per second* of contact and 1D12 HP *each* of electrical, cold, heat and kinetic (4D12) total damage *every other second* (i.e. it "surges", pauses a second, then surges again, over and over). There is also a form of "nerve poisoning" of 4D12 potency (*one shot only*) but this only affects those of the full blood *even* kind (half elves either do or do not suffer this effect on a 50/50 chance). This magik requires 30 long weeks of hard study and an expenditure of 7,945 GS to learn.

**ORANGE** (OP 7): This 20x13" straight line wall takes 11 melee rounds and 28 mana points to conjure up and then *another* 4 melee rounds thereafter (15 total) to come into full effect. It can appear up to 60" distant at the magician's choosing. This wall is specific versus all forms of "death" related magik (i.e. "life blasting/draining", "kill spells" keyed to specific types, "cause wounds" religious magik and the like). This is without regard to their origin, power or kind. Instead of 1D6 per second energy damage, this wall does 4D6 HP worth! Note though that a mere 64 HP of *arcane* electrical energy will instantly negate this barrier. *Mundane* electricity has *no effect* however. This magik conjuration needs 19 weeks of study and the expenditure of 4,965 GS in materials to properly learn.

**PURPLE** (OP 8): The conjuration of this 15x8" wall requires 20 melee rounds and 33 mana points to complete. A further 30 melee rounds are needed thereafter to come to full power (50 melee rounds total). It can be any straight line, square or rectangular shape (i.e. four sides with right angles) and is caused to appear up to 21" distant from the conjurer. This barrier *totally* prevents all forms of arcane energy (from mystik dart to "disintegrate") from passing through. This is without regard as to power or kind. Techno energy is *not* affected in any way. All things attempting to pass through this barrier suffer 1D100 HP of energy hurt *per second* (instead of 1D6) of contact with this barrier! Ouch! Flame and fire (not heat energy) of 64 HP potency or more will *instantly* negate this prismatic wall. An outlay of 6,898 GS and 22 weeks of arduous study are necessary to learn this magik.

**ROSE** (OP 8): An expenditure of 40 mana points and 30 melee rounds of conjuration time are needed to do this one. Even so, another 30 melee rounds pass before it reaches full power (60 total). This 20x15" barrier may be convex, concave, straight line wall or a hemispherical dome at the magician's decision. It can be created up to 60" distant but each 10" (or portion thereof) beyond 20" adds 5 melee rounds to the initial conjuration time. Once set, no "breath" can pass through: be it breath from dragon or demon or any other thing. From flame to acid to *whatever* else is breathed by such creatures, *it shall not pass!* This is without regard to potency origin, etc. All attempting to pass this barrier suffer the usual 1D6 HP of energy hurt *per second* of contact as well as a 6D10 HP of arcane acid-like damage every 3 seconds (or one touch). Even those normally acid resistant suffer 3D10 HP of this hurt each two seconds of contact! Mystik darts or other forms of arcane *kinetic* force can cause this form of barrier to be destroyed — but only if 196 HP (*minimum*) worth of such damage can be done in no more than six seconds. Nought else will, though. To learn this takes 8,950 GS worth of materials and 26 weeks of hard study.

**PINK** (OP 8): An expenditure of 36 mana points during a 25 melee round conjuration will cause this barrier to form up to 30' distant. It still takes another 13 melee rounds (49 total) for this 13x13" wall (only) barrier to appear. Once fully powered, no Lycanthrope, were-creature, shape-changer or metamorph of *any kind* may pass this barrier! (Please note that Vampyrs are, in their own way, "shape changers", so they too, are *unable* to pass this barrier!) This is without regard to their origins, power or type. Should they try, they will *instantly disintegrate* and/or disincorporate (to 300 HP in size, each). Zap! Only an "01" on a 1D100 saves and even if so done, they still suffer 1D100 HP of energy hurt *and* 1D3 Random Critical Hits! Those larger than 300 HP in size still suffer as if they were smaller but had "saved" successfully (see preceding).

All others attempting passage through these walls suffer the traditional 1D6 of energy damage per second of contact — unless, of course, they are pure strain human. In that case they suffer no hurt at all! If 1,000 pounds of pure silver is rammed or thrown through this wall, it will instantly negate the wall (and vaporize 1d100% of the silver!). This potent wall needs 40 weeks of hard study and the spending of 13,000 GS to learn correctly.

**BRONZE** (OP 8): This 13x13" prismatic straight line wall (only) takes 28 melee rounds and 40 mana points to conjure up. It then needs 13 *minutes more* to fully power itself up! Once "up", no spoken magik of OP 3 or less or any magik of any OP fired from a wand or *lesser device* will penetrate the barrier. They'll just "detonate" on contact, *none* of the effects passing the wall! The way to destroy the wall is to cause a "time slip" upon it, which nullifies it *instantly*. Any wand or lesser DEVICE entering the barrier *instantly detonates*, releasing *all* stored magik (outside the wall) and *self-destructing*. Everything else takes the usual 1D6 energy hurt per second of contact. It needs 9,990 GS and 30 weeks of study to learn this potent magik.

**CYAN** (OP 9): This 36 melee round conjuration requires 30 mana points to perform and once done, *another 7 minutes* to come to full power. However, this 13x7" straight-line wall (only) will *utterly stop* and bar passage to any and all undead kind regardless of type, size or potency. In fact, the mere *sight* of this wall acts as an EL 13 priest for "turn away" and as a 30th EL priest for "disincorporation" purposes (but only if the undead manage to touch it). No *living* creature is affected by this wall in any wise except the normal sight problems explained earlier in this text. There is *no* energy 1D6 hurt. None. The only known way to get rid of this wall (other than "dispell" or unweaving it) is by casting 100 gallons of still warm (i.e. not dead more than five minutes) *dragon's blood* upon it. That negates it totally and *instantly*. It requires 15 months of hard study and the

spending of 13,000 GS to master this potent mystik barrier's magikal workings!

**GREENISH-YELLOW** (OP 9) (aka: Green and Yellow): This two-color prismatic wall is very difficult to master, requiring 3 years of hard study and an expenditure of 17,980 GS to learn but only those of EL 8 or greater may *safely* attempt this learning. Once learned, the magician can conjure one up to 90' distant from himself by spending 50 mana points and 30 melee rounds of time. Afterwards, *another 8 minutes* is required for it to power up fully but once up, *nothing* that is of dragon-kind in origin, be it physical self, breath or their very magik, may pass this barrier! This wall (only) can be of *any rectangular shape* up to 20' *on a side* (or smaller if desired) that the magician wants. Any dragon attempting to penetrate, physically, this barrier will become *instantly* paralyzed for as long as body contact remains or for 1D100 hours. This is without regard to their type, size or power. Only an "01" on a 1D100 saves and a success *still stuns them* for 1D20 melee rounds. However, a simple "Trigger" spell (even done by said dragon kind) done against this wall will cause it to fail immediately. All others suffer the usual 1D6 HP per second's contact of energy damage from it.

**LAVENDER** (OP 9): This barrier requires an expenditure of 29 mana points and 21 melee rounds to complete. Once thus done, another 9 melee rounds are needed for it to reach full power. Once set, this 33x16" wall (which can be straight, concave or convex as required) will utterly negate, *instantly*, all "cold" either arcane or mundane (without regard to potency or origin). *Anything* trying to pass through suffers 4D12 of *kinetic* damage and the usual 1D6 HP of energy hurt every second of contact. Note, however, that any "wind" or "air" (mundane or arcane) of 175 HP potency or greater in *one single impact* or of a constant 35 HP per melee round over a 20 melee round duration, will negate this barrier utterly. Twenty weeks of study and a cost of 7,925 GS is needed to learn this conjuration.

**YELLOW** (OP 9): Over a 25 melee round period and at a cost of 27 mana points, this 18x12" straight line wall (only) may be conjured. After such is done, *another 16 melee rounds* are needed for it to power up fully. Once thus up it will stop ALL flame, fire, heat, etc, (mundane or arcane) with the *sole exception* of "dragon flame" which goes *right through* it unabated. This is without regard to type, potency or origins. The barrier does 5D10 energy damage (instead of the usual 1D6 HP) to all attempting penetration (per each second of contact!). Note, though, that 64 HP of intense cold in any one shot or 35 HP of same *per melee round* over a 40 melee round period will negate his barrier utterly. This is arcane or

mundane cold. To learn this, 5,552 GS in materials and 22 weeks of study are needed.

**AMBER (OP 9):** This conjuration needs 33 mana points over 33 melee rounds to complete. Once thus done *another 17 melee rounds* pass before the barrier is fully powered. Once set, this barrier (which can be of any shape from box to cone to simple wall so long as it doesn't exceed 13x13" in area) will *utterly stop* any and all forms of mystik "dispell", "negation" and such, regardless of potency or source! Thus it can only be destroyed by the long "unweaving" of a Rune Weaver and *in no other way!* ALL attempting to pass it suffer 1D6 HP *each* of cold, heat, energy and kinetic damage (4D6 total) per second's contact. This conjuration requires 17 months and an expenditure of some 25,000 GS in order to learn. Even so only those of EL 9 or better may safely do so! And if you "goof" while learning it, it is *usually instantly fatal!* The hapless goof simply melts into a puddle of stinking black goop! Paugh!

**BLACK AND GOLD (OP 9) (aka: Tiger Stripe):** Over a 31 melee round period and at a mana cost of 60, this 20x15" barrier (straight line wall only) may be conjured. Once thus done, *another 29 melee rounds* pass before the wall is fully functional but, once up, no golem android, robot or other "created and non-live being" may pass this barrier. For them, to touch it is to become *instantly deactivated*, turned off, etc! They only have to *barely brush* this wall's surface for this effect to take place. Note also that there is *no save* versus this effect and it is without regard to type origin or power. All others may pass through with *no hurt* (not even the usual 1D6) or hindrance of any kind. There is no known way to destroy this wall save by the long "unweaving" process or "dispell" method. None. To learn this puissant magik 18,500 GS and 20 months of study are needed. Androids of Arduin, watch out!

**RED AND BLUE (OP 9):** This "wall" can be of any shape from "egg" to spiral to trapezoid as desired as long as a 10x10" area is not exceeded. Twenty melee rounds and 20 mana points will conjure up this barrier but *another five melee rounds* are needed to fully empower it. What it does is *physically stop* all slimes, oozes and other similar creepie crawlies and *kill them* by drying them out\* at the rate of 51-100 HP per second! (Or solidifying, crystalizing or otherwise (whatever works!) immobilizing them!) This is without regard to kind or potency, too. Only an "01" on a D100 will save versus this "dry out" effect and, even *if* successful, the glop touching the wall still suffers *the same fate* but only at 11-30 HP worth per second of contact! All *sentient* beings suffer 3D6 of energy hurt per second of contact while all else just takes the usual 1D6 damage. This is another prismatic wall vulnerable *only* to unweaving or dispell. It takes 9,985 GS in materials and 22 weeks of study to learn this one.

**SILVER AND PURPLE** (OP 10) (aka: Holy Wall): This one takes 37 melee rounds and 50 mana points to completely conjure. But once done, it is done! NO waiting for it to "power up". This wall will physically stop all those creatures and things which, though not undead, are nonetheless non-corporeal or even ethereal. It will also stop all gaseous critters "with a purpose" (i.e. it would stop a cloud of "Red Death" but not a lethal cloud of chlorine gas from a leaky pipe). Those thus stopped suffer (instead of 1D6) 1D100 HP of arcane energy damage that *cannot* be defenced (i.e. saved) against. All other beings/things, however, can pass through this barrier unharmed and unhindered in any way. It needs 11,060 GS and 45 weeks of study to learn this one right.

**GREY** (OP 10): This 13x13" wall (only) takes 33 melee rounds and 45 mana points to be conjured up. Afterwards *another 13 melee rounds* are required for it to reach full power. Once set, it will utterly stop *all spoken magik*, regardless of type but *only* of OP 9 or less and all magik (of whatever OP) "fired" from *any* rod or other *intermediate or lesser device*. Such magik simply detonates upon impact with the wall, *none* of the effects passing through. Any rod or other intermediate or lesser type of device attempting to penetrate the barrier *instantly self-destructs*, releasing all stored magik *outside* the wall. All spoken magik of OP 10 or greater or that fired from staves or other "greater" devices has a 50% chance of penetrating the wall. If it does so, it will be at full potency. Anyone/thing else touching the wall receives 1D6 HP of energy hurt per each second of contact. Any "gate" or "portal" magik of the *greater* variety will *immediately nullify* this prismatic wall. It takes 13,000 GS and 36 weeks of time to study and learn this magik.

**"SKY" BLUE** (OP 10): This 25 mana point cost conjuration requires 20 melee rounds to complete and a further 10 melee rounds (30 total) to fully power up afterwards. The wall, which can be convex, concave or straight, will appear up to 75" from the conjurer (at his whim). Once up, it is a "general purpose" force field that *physically resists* all *solid*, physical objects/forces up to 75 HP potency (not size but impact!). Aside from doing 1 HP of energy damage per second (instead of 1D6), that's all it will do. A sufficiently strong dispell or the standard unweaving is all that's required to negate it. This magik takes 15 months of study and 10,000 GS in costs to learn.

**"ROYAL" BLUE** (OP 11): A "souped up" version of the Sky Blue conjuration, this one stops all physical force/impact up to 30 HP (regardless of size) and can only be destroyed by a simultaneous "disintegrate" and "dispell" of OP 13 or greater. Otherwise it is the same *except* that it instantly freezes solid *all humans* (only an "01" on a D100 saves and even

then 3D10 worth of intense cold is suffered) attempting to penetrate the barrier. Time and cost to learn are 18 months and 13,000 GS respectively.

**COPPER** (OP 12): 50 mana points over 50 melee rounds (plus 13 more to power up for a total of 63 melee rounds) are needed to conjure up this 13x13" straight line wall. Once set, it stops all staff and other *greater* artifact magik (of any OP) and spoken magik of OP 10 to OP 20. OP 21 spoken magik and "great artifacts" wielding powerful magik have a 50% chance of penetrating this wall at full potency. Negation is the same as for the others of this type in all respects save that it's a "Time Warp" that destroys this barrier. Cost to learn is 18,800 GS and 50 weeks of very difficult study.

**BLACK AND SILVER** (OP 13): This conjuration requires 44 melee rounds and 60 mana points to complete but, once so done, it is ready (no waiting!) and will *completely stop* all forms of psychic probes or force. *None* shall pass. This barrier may be in any shape or form desired by the conjurer (from sphere to box to plain flat wall), so long as it doesn't exceed 13x13" in area. This prismatic wall can be destroyed by any high intensity sound (thunderclap spell, sonic boom, etc) of at least 150 HP potency if done in a *single* shot or *continuous* intense sound of at least 33 HP per melee round over a 50 melee round period will also collapse this barrier.

Any sentient being attempting to penetrate this wall *must* save versus "psychic attack" or suffer utter and complete "Mind Wipe" that is truly (100%) irrevocable. This mind wipe *completely* sucks away all that is what makes a being (i.e. intelligence, ego, etc). Once done, all that remains is a living husk empty of all thought or ability to think. An animated golem of flesh as it were. Such a husk *can* be taught a few *simple* orders (1D10) over a period of time (1D6 months per order) but will *never* be more than, essentially, a "mobile doorstep" that would starve to death unless fed by someone!

Note that undead types *are also thus affected* but, if non-corporeal, they simply fade away forever as there is nothing left to hold their ethereal essence together! Gone! Finally, if a save versus psychic attack is successful, the hapless being is still psychically stunned (i.e. unable to function) for 1D100 melee rounds. This powerful prismatic wall needs 30 months of hard study and the spending of 25,000 GS in order to safely learn. *Anyone* learning it has a 13% chance (no save) of the mind wipe effect happening to himself!

**SILVER** (OP 13): This 20x20" wall (only) requires the expenditure of 50 mana points and 50 melee rounds of time to perform. After such, another 30 melee rounds (80 total) are needed to fully empower it. Once

set, it totally and completely blocks all *lesser* demons from *physically* passing, nor can their magiks, breaths or other attacks and processes pass this barrier. *All are totally blocked.* In fact, there is a 95% chance that, upon touching the wall, the lesser demon will be *immediately* sent back to the primary hell from whence it came.

If it beats those odds, it still suffers 1D100 HP of *non-regenerable* damage! This barrier has absolutely no effect upon anything other than lesser demon kind (not even the usual 1D6 of energy hurt) and is destroyed *only* by a dispell or unweaving technique. This barrier needs 28 months of difficult study and an expenditure of 33,750 GS in order to successfully learn but, for each EL less than 10 a learner is, there is a cumulative 15% failure chance in the learning process and, if you *fail*, you (the learner) are dimension-ported to a random hell! This is a toughie so, be veceery careful!

**GREEN AND GOLD (OP 14):** This prismatic wall needs 39 melee rounds of time and 70 mana points to complete. Even so, another 36 melee rounds (75 total) is needed to "power up" fully. Once set, this 10x10" straight line wall (only) is capable of utterly stopping and negating any *single* class of magik is *pre-keyed* for. For instance, any lightning (i.e. electrical) magik or perhaps any cold magik. Whatever. That *specific* class of magik would not work upon, through or against this barrier. Note that in cases where a particular magik is of more than one type (for instance Thunderball, which is a combination of sonics and fire), the one class the wall is keyed for would still be negated, plus the percentage of the overall magik which the negated part was, would equal the percent chance that the non-specifically defended against magik would fail as well.

Using the Thunderball as an example (both parts being half the power of the cast spell), if it was fired at a Green and Gold prismatic wall keyed specifically against sonics, then the sonic part of that spell would *automatically* fail and the fire part would have a 50% chance of failure as well. Simple.

Anything attempting to pass through this barrier suffers 6D10 HP of sonic damage (not the 1D6 normally done) per second of contact. This powerful barrier needs 13 months of hard study and the spending of 12,500 GS in order to learn. Remember though, what is learned is the *basic premise* and the magician can then key these barriers differently each time if he so desires but only if he knows (i.e. *has previously learned*) the class of magik he wants to defend against! A magician using this wall *could not* key this defense to negate any kind of magik he did not already know. If he can't do the magik himself, he *can't* defend against it! *Only*



dispell or unweaving techniques will destroy this wall once it is set in place.

**AMEYTHEST** (OP 14): This conjuration requires an expenditure of 72 melee rounds of time and 66 mana points to finish. Once done, another 28 melee rounds (100 melee rounds total) are needed for it to fully empower itself. This wall will stop *all magik from any artifact* regardless of type or potency and all spoken magik of OP 21 to OP 25. It is like a Copper wall in all other respects save that 25,000 GS and 13 months of study are required to learn it. That is if you can find a text to learn from (very rare!).

**MAGENTA** (OP 15): This 10x10' wall (only) needs 65 melee rounds of time and 75 mana points to conjure up. Once done, another 25 melee rounds (90 total) are required for it to power up fully. After it is set it will stop any temporal (time) class related magik regardless of its potency, kind or source. *None* passes the wall, the effects being 100% negated. However, a 64 HP (at least) potency *Thunderball* magik will cause this barrier to implode, self-destructing instantly. In worlds where *combined* sonic-electrical magik is not available, it will fall *only to simultaneous* bolts of sonic an electrical attack of 100 HP potency, *each* (200 total)! Also note that the energy hurt to anything attempting to pass through this wall is 6D6 potency per second's contact, *not* 1D6 as is usual. This prismatic barrier needs 29 months of hard study and an expenditure of 19,780 GS to learn.

**GOLD** (OP 16): As per the Silver prismatic wall in all respects save that it affects those "greater" demon-kind/demon-lords (lesser demons are utterly destroyed upon contact with this awesome barrier!). It needs 7 years of intensely difficult study to master and costs 50,000 GS to do so. Even so, the failure rate in learning is a cumulative 20% per each EL that the student is less than 20. Perhaps the hardest and most difficult of all prismatic magiks to learn.

**(PALE) GREEN** (OP 17): After spending 60 melee rounds of time and 80 mana points, the conjurer of this prismatic wall still has to wait *another 140 additional melee rounds* for it to come to full power! Once thus set, this wall will reflect back to its source *any and all* magik of any and all potency regardless of origin, kind or other circumstances. This is on a 51-100% basis. All not thus reflected back is simply negated without harm to the barrier. It is the most potent "anti-magik" shell/aura/defense one can obtain. This wall can be of any shape or size (from cone to cube, etc) so long as it does not exceed 10x10" in area.

Any *sentient* being attempting to pass this barrier has a 100% less 1% per RF and EGO points of becoming totally and irrevocably insane (see

note for insanity charts). If they do manage to save versus this effect, they becomes absolutely 100% berserk for 1D100 melee rounds! All non-sentient critters become berserk only on a 100% chance less 1% per each 10 HP in size. If they save successfully, they simply become disoriented (-8 attack/defense, etc) for 1D20 melee rounds. The one drawback to this powerful defense is that the lowly religious magik called "Glory Glow" (priestly light), if performed by an EL 13 or greater priest will instantly negate it! Zap! Gone! This prismatic magik needs 24 months of arduous study and the spending of 41,825 GS to learn correctly.

**BLACK (OP 18) (aka: Ebon):** This 13x13" barrier is nothing more than a permanently continuing "Time Warp" defense! It must always be a straight line wall but can subtract from one dimension to add to another dimension. For example: it can be 7" high and 19" long or 20" high and 6" wide. You get the idea. It takes 56 melee rounds and 100 mana points to create. Even so, an additional 44 melee rounds must pass (100 total) before it is fully powered up. However it has one seeming flaw in that *any demon kind* may safely pass through it unharmed and unhindered in any way. All others touching the wall, regardless of kind, size, number, etc, are immediately (*no save!*) "Time Warped" (i.e. stopped in time). This effect lasts as long as contact with the barrier does! Only the dispell or unweaving techniques will nullify this barrier. It needs four years of difficult study and the spending of 46,000 GS to learn.

**There are no known prismatic barriers for OP's 19 through 24.**

**WHITE (OP 25):** This prismatic barrier is the most awesome of all such magiks. One needs to study *uninterrupted* for 13 years and expend some 100,000 GS before it may be learned! Even so the failure rate is a cumulative 20% per each EL of the student less than EL 25! And those who "fail" (i.e. make a bad mistake while trying to learn its intricate conjuration processes) are utterly, irrevocably (100%) destroyed right down to the sub-atomic level! *Nothing* physical remains and their *soul* is *instantly* shunted off to a *random* deity for its disposition! Bye! This is a damn dangerous magik to try to learn. Be warned!

The conjuration itself takes 300 melee rounds (30 minutes) to do and has a mana cost of 150! Once completed, another 200 melee rounds (500 total) must pass before it comes to full power. The barrier can be any size or shape desired so long as it does not exceed 13x7" in area. This barrier is proof positive (100%) against all things that any "god" may do, either physical, magikal or otherwise without regard to the potency or kind of effect in question! This wall could, literally, survive the destruction of an entire world around it as a god attempts to pass/destroy it! It *doesn't* do

any harm to the god in question, just frustrates the bejonkers out of 'em! They *can't* harm the wall or pass through it! Nor can their magiks effect or alter it in any way!

Any lesser being attempting to pass this barrier suffers 1D100 HP of *whatever damage it takes to hurt them* each second they are in contact with it! It also stuns them physically for 1D100 melee rounds. Any second attempt to pass/touch it within a 13 minute period will then dimensionally transport (no save) the unlucky dope 10D100 miles distant (after doing the 1D100 HP damage again)! Bye!

This is the most potent of all known magiks and has been done only once, some 83,000 years ago, by the only magician ever to figure out how to do it — one S'Appolan the White. Trouble is he did it in a cube around himself and then couldn't get out! So if you travel to those bleak rocks near the south polar ice called "S'Appolan's Bones" you can see the dusty shards of his once mighty tower and that glowing white cube! You have been warned!

## END NOTES:

Prismatic magik is very ancient, very potent and almost totally unknown in this day and age. It is best suited for use by Rune Weavers and, paradoxically enough, Masters of Illusion. For others it is more often than not simply *too dangerous* to use. Beware! And what was/is its purpose you may wonder? Well, usually it is a barrier to keep specific "things" either *in* or *out* of someplace.

Please remember that *yes*, you *can* move through *some* of these arcane barriers. That is, if they aren't specifically designed to keep such as you out and you don't mind suffering the listed damage in doing so! Please note that to "save" versus any effect or damage that such a barrier does, where not specifically explained and listed, then *only* a die roll of *either* 01 or 100 on 1D100 saves! Gotcha! Note also that where "basic" damage is done, a *successful* save still does *half damage, etc., anyway*.

It is strongly recommended that GM's severely limit access to and use of, these magiks by *all* characters, PC and NPC alike, in their campaigns. Failure to do so may result in true high entropy setting into the game play! And that could spell the end of any campaign...

Finally, these "colors" are not hard and fast and can be changed to suit your own campaign. In many other multiverses, prismatic magiks of a totally different type exist. We suggest you *don't mix the two* but keep them separate and equal if you want to use both in play.

\* Insanity Charts can be found in THE HANDBOOK OF TRAPS AND TRICKS or in the forthcoming ARDUIN, BLOODY ARDUIN.



## GLADIATORS & GLADIATORIAL COMBAT IN ARDUIN

There are certain nations in the Arduin multiverse that actively participate, willingly or no, in what can be generally termed as "gladiatorial combat" or "blood sports". These nations tend to be highly civilized in most aspects and seem to be very well organized as far as governments go. It is very, very seldom that any of the "barbarian" nations have anything to do with such — at least in any large scale and organized manner.

Most of the time this kind of activity is presented in a "Great Games" format wherein there are *two* main types of basic participants: the *criminal*, sentenced to the games for specified time periods; and the free born *professional gladiatorial* types that *willingly* lay their lives on the line, *by choice*, in return for the loot and glory that goes with such spectacles.

More often than not, the main thrust (that's a pun there!) of this kind of game is the "one on one" combat or variations to that theme. These variations can include events as different as mass melees and man vs beast combats. It can also, occasionally, include such things as races (chariot or otherwise) and team sports where just about the only rule is that *there are no rules!*

Now it is the rare GM that has *never* run across a player who wants to bring such a gladiatorially-trained Player Character into his game but how does one go about adjudicating such a character? How would one compare to the more standard "warrior" classes? Or perhaps to a martial artist? The questions are numerous and, in general, quite vexing.

That is, until now. What follows will be a general guideline for the creation and play of a specific sub-class of the warrior: the gladiator.

### THE BASICS

Each professional gladiator must have the following **MINIMUM** character statistics in order to be used in play (i.e. if you roll up a character with *even one* of the required statistics below the minimum allowed, *then that character cannot become a gladiator!*):

- 1) The character's DEX and AGIL *must* total *at least* 30 (for example a DEX of 16 and an AGIL of 14, or a DEX and AGIL of 15 each and so on to a total 30). Thus a minimum CF score of 15 is required.
- 2) The STR score *must* be *at least* 14.

- 3) The CON *must* be at least 14.
- 4) The character's WIS and INT scores *must* total at least 20 (for example: a WIS score of 8 and an INT score of 12, etc). Thus a minimum RF score of 10 is required.
- 5) The HP score *must* total at least 35. This last may be waived under different HP rules systems but they shouldn't be "weak" in this area.

Of course the criminal who is *forced* into being a gladiator can have just about any kind of stats (and usually does). All the afore-mentioned *minimums* are for the *professional* gladiator only!

## PROFESSIONAL GLADIATORS

These people begin training at the age of 12 (no younger than that is *ever* allowed, nor any older than 14) and this *basic* training lasts for a period of 4 years. During this time they are *rigorously* trained in *all* the physical aspects of body conditioning in order to ensure that they grow into the maximum bodily perfection they are capable of: running, weight lifting, swimming, gymnastics, wrestling and so on.

They are also given the *basics* of such combat skills as each has shown an aptitude for during their first year of training. Once that first year is past, they are henceforth *forever set by Guild Law* into *one* particular form of combat. At the end of their four years of basic training, they are switched to a two year probationary period where they actually compete in *non-lethal* versions of combat in the arena. Most often these are the "warm up fights" that get the arena crowd in the mood for the real thing. Padded wooden weapons are used in these fights unless "beasts" are being faced — the beasts being too old, etc, for normal arena combat. All in all, good training for the young "apprentice gladiators".

After their two-year apprenticeship/probationary period, they become full fledged gladiators with all rights and responsibilities pertaining to same. But, remember, they have trained very hard for a total of 6 years and have earned it.

Rights? Responsibilities? What are these, you ask? Well, the majority of nations that have such games and gladiators also have strict laws and rules concerning their function and use. Here is a list of the *important* ones *usually* used by all:

- 1) No gladiator *must* fight if he is physically unable, due to wounds or illness. This is the only rule that waives Rule #2 below. Even so, the *minimums* must be made up once the gladiator is fit enough to fight.
- 2) All gladiators must participate in a minimum of 20 fights each year. In Arduin, with its 15 month year, this works out to somewhat more than

one contest a month. Note also that any gladiator may *elect* to participate in more than that number if he so desires. However, by law, he cannot participate in more than 2 fights per day or a total of 15 in any given 30-day (one month) period. I.e. no more than one fight every other day or so on the average.

- 3) All gladiators will be sponsored by one of the legal Houses and will abide by all the rules and receive all the benefits from such an association.
- 4) All gladiators will be paid at least the base minimum per each combat according to the ranking system in use in that nation.
- 5) A gladiator may retire anytime after a five year period or 100 combat (whichever comes first) payback to the House that sponsored his training. Typically during this 5-year/100 fight period in a gladiator's life, he must give about 40% of his earnings to his House. If he remains after that period, the "dues" drop to about 10% or even less for top-rated and popular gladiators (though 5% is the guild law minimum).
- 6) Each House must have a pension fund set aside for the support of crippled and aged gladiators. This fund must provide an average standard of living for the former House members and will go on until their deaths. This "standard" will vary according to each nation's culture, etc.
- 7) Whenever a gladiator is beaten in combat by another gladiator there will be no "death blow" unless the bout was advertised and agreed to beforehand by all concerned to be "combat to the death". Now the differing nations will all have variants on just what constitutes a "beaten" opponent. However, as a general rule, figure that if the person in question cannot continue the combat due to unconsciousness, wounds rendering him defenceless or the loss of weaponry, well, that's *beaten*. All death blows are through the eye into the brain. (Each gladiator carries a 13' long thin-bladed poignard called a "pall bearer". It is used exclusively for the death blow and *cannot* be used in normal combat. To do so is to *forfit* the match.
- 8) In beast-versus-gladiator combats, it is almost always to the death of one or the other of the combatants unless specifically designated as not so beforehand. In that case there will be archers (or even catapults if necessary) standing by to save the gladiator should he become unable to defend himself further. However, such rules are seldom invoked in actuality as most gladiators are too proud and arrogant to publicly admit that an animal, however fierce, could be better than they. Thus this kind of combat tends to have the highest mortality rates among gladiators. That's probably why they're the most popular, too.

- 9) The ranking system must take into account all variables pertaining to each individual combat in a gladiator's history. This means that unequal (two-to-one fights, etc), combat, mass melees and so on will have "heavier" values towards ranking. Now the GM will need some common sense here as there are far too many variables to be listed. Just use your head and note that one man versus one man, both similarly armed, constitutes the basic unit of judging ranking. And, generally speaking, once again, it is most often that each 20 wins in the arena is enough to rise one rank. Thus after an average first five years and, say, 120 combats, the very highest a gladiator would be ranked would be 6th... and *only* if he won every combat!

That is assuming, of course, that these were all basic scored/weighted (one on one) fights. Losses *do* not detract from a gladiator's rank, but *do* detract from how much pay he will be offered (as well as what kinds of bouts). Obviously a 4th-ranked fighter with 75 wins and only 5 losses would be considered a better bet than, say, a 6th-ranked gladiator that has a win/loss record of 65 and 55 respectively. The higher ranked gladiator having a lower win/loss ratio than the lower ranked one is considered a *less capable* fighter.

Note also that rank differences between combatants will have a bit to do with money paid and ranking points, "awarded points" being the system used to give more weight to a fight in order to show the difficulty of said combat. As an example, a 4th-ranked gladiator with a 55/25 win/loss record is in combat against a 6th-ranked fellow with a 100/20 record (very impressive, that). Thus if the 4th-ranked fellow managed to win against the obviously superior opponent, he would be awarded more than the base "one win per combat". Now, other matters such as how each were armed and so on would also come into this figuring, but in the above example, if both were identically armed, then the lower-ranked fellow would receive 2 wins ( $\frac{1}{2}$  extra for *each* ranking above his own). If the higher-ranked fellow won, he'd still get *one* win as that is the minimum ever given. Sure, sure, we can all see that an individual could abuse this rule by fighting only those opponents of a lesser rank and worse win/loss ratio than himself in order to build his own ranking — that is, if he could find any opponents, which would be highly doubtful.

You see, the fraternity among gladiators wouldn't allow such a bozo to do such a thing for very long before those fellows ranked better and higher than the offender commenced to "call him out" for one-on-one's until he was dead — or retired, if he was smart. No one likes a jerk, least of all gladiators! So abuses like this are few and far between.

- 10) No gladiator can ever be asked, much less allowed, to fight against blood kin or those he is married to. Oh, you didn't think women could



be gladiators? Guess again! Though they only make up about 20-25% of the ranks of these guilds, they are, perhaps, the most popular of all with the fans excepting the ones who battle beasts. They are usually a bit faster and more agile than their male opponents which seems to even out their lesser upper-body strength. All in all, no one thinks anything other than the fact that women make as good gladiators as do any men. And yes, there are the occasional husband/wife and brother/sister teams. Pretty popular, too.

As you can see, these few generalizations cover quite a lot of ground and every GM should feel free to expand and add to these as often and as copiously as he sees fit.

Professional gladiators are also known for their tight-knit sense of community and stand-offishness towards "civies" (civilians). They tend to hang out together and marry into families connected directly or indirectly with their chosen way of life.

When trying to adjudicate the differences between warriors and gladiators you must remember the following facts about both:

Warriors train with an entire "weapons class" (i.e. blade arms, long arms, pole arms, etc) whereas gladiators train with only that weapon or weapons (rarely more than three) which constitute their chosen type. The warrior would have certain benefits from this training and the gladiator also.

The gladiator receiving +5 (+15 to BF\*) with the primary weapon in his type; +3 (+9 to BF) with the secondary weapon of his type and +1 (+3 to BF) with the tertiary. There is a little room for variation here. For example, the three weapons of the Arduinian equivalent to the Roman *retarius* (net and trident man) are "trident", net (weighted) and long dagger. Each individual gladiator can emphasize whichever of these three he wishes as his primary mode of attack (and secondary and so on). One fellow might be better with the net, so he would concentrate his training that way. Another may be better with the trident and so on. So, in the arena, one would have nets as his *primary* (+5) while another would have the trident (+5). Makes for interesting problems (for their opponents) don't you see?

All gladiators have a better than average knowledge of wrestling and grappling techniques (+33%) whereas warriors do not.

Warriors have training with full armour (of various kinds) in most cases, whereas gladiators do not. The only gladiators that have any armour training at all only have it with very unique and usually partial, body armours. Ditto for shields.

Warriors have very specific tactical mass combat and "in ranks" battle training. Gladiators specialize in individual one-on-one combat. The kinds of melees that gladiators have tend to be a whole bunch of such individual combats. Few gladiators specialize in fighting more than one opponent at a time, whereas most warriors find such a regular part of their training.

Gladiators are not trained to last out long continuous battles, but are trained to get it over with quick, then go and sit down and rest. Warriors, on the other hand, expect (and train for) grueling hours-long battles where their stamina is taxed to the utmost. But don't make the mistake of thinking that Gladiators aren't fit and able! They are! Gladiators train in areas of physical fitness that warriors never do — in gymnastics, for instance.

Warriors are trained to carry everything they'll need on a campaign on their person (and/or horse) whereas gladiators are not. They carry only what they need for their (generally) short fight and don't worry about what they'll be eating or drinking later, as a warrior must.

Discipline is the forte of the trained warrior where combat with one's comrades is concerned. With gladiators, it is every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost!

Many warriors are trained for mounted combat of one type or another, but very, very few gladiators ever are and those are rare specialists that usually only battle certain types of large beasts with lance and secondary weapon.

Even more rare in the gladiatorial ranks are those trained with true missile weapons like the bow or sling. Sure, some use a short spear that is throwable (deadly at close range, too) or light javelins but the vast majority wouldn't think of such tactics. "Too cowardly!" The trained warrior, on the other hand, is just the opposite. Missile training is frequently secondary or even primary training for them, though *both* warriors and gladiators *do* get training on how to deal with missile attacks.

The warrior fights to win by any and all means available and the hell with any rules or "etiquette" in battle! The gladiator has a very stylized form of combat — ritualistic, some might even say. They "battle by the rules" as laid down by the guild and the laws of the land. Warriors do not.

And so on and so forth, ad infinitum.

## CRIMINAL GLADIATORS

By far the most popular of gladiators (next to the beast fighters) in many nations are those people sentenced to the arena for heinous crimes (usually murder or some equivalent). Such crimes ordinarily have a death penalty but, oft times, the convict can, for example, "avoid" such if he accepts "100 fights in 100 days"\* or some similar trade-off. They most often face the worst odds with the least ability to deal with same, so the "show" is much less stylized and usually much more "wild" and bloody. In fact, the mortality rate among this type is quite high, often running up to 90% in some locations. Here's why:

- 1) They only receive 6 weeks basic training, usually with some simple or "easy" to use weapon, like a mace (more likely, cudgel) or short spear.
- 2) Unless they have had prior training (they might have been a warrior), they almost never have armour or shields of any kind.
- 3) They are frequently given alchemical potions that make them, if not actually berserk, then at least reckless and fearless. Charge right in they does! Wahoo! Look out world, here they come!
- 4) They have nothing to lose, so tend to be more "risk taking" even without any alchemical help. Most, anyways... there are always a "comic" few who quiver in terror, throw down their weapons and run blindly about the arena to the amusement of the spectators.
- 5) They get only the most basic and generalized of medical care unlike the professionals who have only the best. The criminals either die from their wounds or not and no one seems to care over much.
- 6) They have few restrictions as to the number of times that they have to fight in a single day or month save that they are fit and able to do so. Thus they tend to be used three and four times in a single game and as often as 3 or 4 times a week (i.e. 9-16 battles a week!), most still suffering from previous wounds.
- 7) They always fight to the death and, *without* the "Pallbearer" poignard, the kills are almost always quite messy.

Other items of interest concerning this type of gladiator include the fact that they can transfer over into a true gladiatorial Guild House *after* their terms have been served (assuming they have survived in reasonably good physical shape). However, this is only if they have become really good (and you'd just about have to, considering... and if one of the

\* The "100 Fights in 100 Days" is a sentence peculiar to Ithalos, usually handed out for "insulting royalty"!

Houses has an opening. Even so, *few* are ever fully accepted by their "professional brothers". They just don't get along well together. So it's not often done.

In case you're wondering, here are a few more tid-bits about these types.

No, they don't have a "ranking" like their professional brethren, but they are "rated" by how many bouts they have survived. Sort of an unofficial win/survival record. What rank they actually receive is up to the House that eventually accepts them (GM adjudicated).

They are usually sentenced to 5 years or 500 combats, whichever comes first. This is the minimum sentencing for such crimes as murder and the like. Lesser terms (such as 1 year or 100 combats, etc) are sometimes seen for crimes like grand theft or for giving grave insult to nobles/royalty but it is not the usual rule — somebody has to have really been angered to pass sentence like that.

If a criminal survives the sentence, then he is totally absolved from it and is thereafter a free person. No blood-feud or were-guilt is lawful against them for the paid-for crimes.

Criminals are *not* paid a base wage per combat like professionals but *do* earn money for special combats where a particular House has challenged him to do battle with one of their named members. This sort of thing happens most often when a criminal type has managed to survive numerous battles and to get pretty good at staying alive. The professionals tend to frown upon such "infringement" by non-professionals into *their* domain, so they "call them out" in order to get rid of them. It usually works, too — but not always. The unwritten rule seems to be "ten call-outs — survive them and they figure you're okay".

Criminal gladiators get decent food and housing but are locked up at all times that they aren't training or in the arena. After all, they are still prisoners.

Criminals can be set against their own blood kin in the arena, though this is seldom done except as a specific punishment (i.e. for their first arena contest) because of particularly bad crime(s).

No, the criminal cannot marry while serving his sentence.

If he is maimed beyond the point where he cannot continue in the arena, then he finishes out his sentence under more normal penal servitude circumstances (in a dungeon cell someplace). He does get a prorated "time off" his sentence for battles fought and how crippled he is. A death sentence is only commuted to penal time if 50% or more of the

arena time has been served. If not, he is put to death as prescribed by law for his original death sentence.

## GENERAL GM NOTES

These final few notes should bring it all together for the GM and players as we discuss the last things necessary to play such new character types.

To begin with, there *cannot* be any "dual classes" among the *professional* gladiators. There is no exception to this rule. On the other hand, if a person sentenced to the arena already had a class (say thief, for instance) then he would, if he survived, be a dual class character. Note however that he'd get little or no chance to even practice his prior trade, much less advance in ELs in it. GM adjudication is definitely required here.

The majority (80+%) of all professional gladiators are of human stock. Another 10-15% are usually Amazon stock and the remainder a real mixture of things. Uruk Hai seem to be pretty good at it but, strangely enough, are not often seen. A very rare dwarf or two is occasionally encountered and of course there will be a lone deodanth from time to time. Aside from that, the other races are seldom (if ever) represented in any meaningful numbers as *professionals* of this type. In a very few nations one can encounter (in small numbers) Desert Saurigs. These swift and savage fighters make excellent gladiators but their larger swamp brethren do not. Being a gladiator just seems to be a human trait, I guess.

For clarity's sake, figure that the following races *never deliberately become gladiators for any reason*:

Any of the elven (or even half elven) cultures — they abhor "ritualized murder".

Hobbits of any kind — they think it "criminal and wasteful".

"Lesser" orc-kind of any type — it scares them!

Phraints, unless it is a lone "rogue" (and so rare as to only be seen once every 100 years or so!)

GMs of course may add to this list as they see fit and as will fit their own world campaigns. I would strongly suggest you don't subtract from this list though.

There is absolutely no difference between the *actual fighting* in a "non-lethal" bout and a "ja Mortaine" bout. Note also that even in "non-lethal" bouts, killing blows are routinely struck as each gladiator fights to win as best he or she knows how. There's no faking here. Though the civvies tend to keep unofficial score cards on their favorite players as it were.

Gladiatorial Guild Houses are like any other such in the Arduinian multiverse in that they provide everything their members may need. However, unlike the lesser-utilized guild houses, this room and board, clothing, weapons provided, medical aid and so forth is on a continuous live-in basis for the professional gladiator so, from sheer need, the physical structures are usually much larger than other guild houses. They must be able to house (etc) all their members simultaneously and continuously.

They must also provide small/mini-arenas for training and so on — thus (and to keep prying eyes of rival houses away) these edifices tend to be, for the most part, located outside (though close to) the larger cities, usually in country “estates” where the members can relax between training sessions away from the crowds (and temptations) of the teeming cities. Most of the surrounding farms, etc, also tend to be owned by retired gladiators from said houses.

The GM can easily figure out how a professional gladiator’s ranking relates to a warrior’s EL simply by converting every 25 wins and/or every 50 losses as one warrior EL equivalency. Thus a 6th-ranked gladiator with a win/loss record of 75/50 (pretty good) would equate to an EL 4 warrior. Note that their “learned attack benefits” are based on their ranking and not their EL.

They get a BF add (“plus” to strike) of 1 for their primary weapon for each and every rank they acquire. For each 2 ranks they acquire, add one to their secondary weapon and for each 3 ranks they earn, add one to their tertiary weapon, if any. This learning process is only during arena combat. In non-BF combat systems, the maximum allowable attack bonus is +7. This has *no* limit in the BF system.

If they leave the arena, then they revert to the warrior’s way of acquiring ELs and battle plusses/adds. As an example, that 6th-ranked fellow would be +6 BF with his primary, +3 with his secondary and +2 with his tertiary weapon (if he has one). As you can see, the intense usage of one’s selected weapons, in continual “life and death” situations makes for very definite battle smarts (which shows in the BF adds). When “converting” to warrior status, these earned battle adds are retained (not lost).

## GUILD LAW

Guild law for gladiators is very simple and to the point. There are only a few things that are considered capital crimes, punishable by death. These are:

- 1) Killing a *defenseless* gladiator in any non-lethal combat by deliberate action.
- 2) Deliberately maiming a *defenseless* gladiator for any reason.
- 3) Refusing to "finish" (i.e. kill) a defeated/downed opponent in any "to the death" match.
- 4) "Turning coward" in any combat, for any reason (i.e. running away, refusing to fight, throwing down one's weapons — deliberately).
- 5) Leaving one's Guild House without permission and compensation to same, prior to one's contractual obligations being fully and completely fulfilled. Or more simply put — running away from the arena and "the life" before the five years (etc) are up.

The punishment for any of these "outrageous crimes" (to *them*, anyway!) is always *death*. Not any simple death either. No, it must be as agonizing and as humiliating as possible. No deaths with weapon in hand, they lost their right to do that by their offense! No, most often it is something like being tied to a stake in the middle of the arena while caged with several hundred very hungry (and maddened) rats. Or something similar. Nothing pretty though and always very, very public.

Oh, and do remember that gladiators *never* fight each other outside the arena. If there is bad blood between a couple of those guys, then one usually calls out (i.e. challenges) the other to a formal one-on-one combat during the next regularly scheduled games. The winner lives. The loser doesn't.

**GLADIATOR PAY SCALE / SPECIAL NOTES**

Rank	Base Pay	Special Payments*	Notes, Etc
1-4	10 GS	2.5 GS	Nothing special
5-8	15 GS	5 GS	Nothing special
9-10	20 GS	7.5 GS	From this rank onward, the gladiator can reduce his required monthly combat appearances to as few as 4 so long as his 5 year/100 combat payback has been met..
11-15	25 GS	10 GS	
16-20	30 GS	15 GS	
21-25	40 GS	20 GS	
26-30	50 GS	25 GS	
31-40	55 GS	30 GS	From this rank, his combat requirement is reduced to a minimum of once per month.
41-50	60 GS	35 GS	
51-60	65 GS	40 GS	
61-75	75 GS	50 GS	
76-95	90 GS	60 GS	
96-99	100 GS	75 GS	At this rank, the gladiator is required only to fight as few as 4 times per year (15 months).
100+	125 GS	100 GS	

Please try to remember that the aforementioned Base Pay amounts are the minimums paid out of the "gate money" and, more often than not, side bets between the rival gladiatorial Guild Houses will up the ante for the individual to the tune of at least what is listed in the special bonus payments. Note also that many rich nobles and tradesmen have favorites among the ranks of these fighters and will often place bets with the odds makers in the individual gladiator's name! Sort of an "I believe in you" kind of thing. Gifts from admirers are also common.

On the other hand, if the gladiator wants to live better than the basic barracks and mess hall life-style that the House he belongs to provides, well, he must pay for any extras out of his own earnings/winnings. Most elect to do this, so manage to usually save less than a third of what they earn over the years.

\* These are minimum payments, usually much more is the rule. The more in demand a Gladiator is or the more difficult the bout, the more "Special Pay" offered.



Arduinian gladiators come in three basic generalized classifications: heavy, medium and light infantry types. (The non-foot fighter types are so rare as not to be worthy of mention in this text). Note that, within each general type, there are usually two or more sub-types.

**Heavy Types:** These fellows equate to the Roman Hopolomachus, Postulati or Samnite with cuirass and are considered the "big boys" by all concerned. They are heavily armoured with metal cuirasses, ornate full helmets, metal bracers and greaves and tower or "wall" type shields. Also any part of their body not covered by the previous is more often than not covered with iron scale mail. These are the *only* fully armoured gladiators. They use either a bastard-sized broadsword or heavy battle axe that has a war pick on its reverse side. They never use missile weapons but are frequently pitted against "lighter" missile-armed foes. Their Arduinian name is "Testructor", which translates rather loosely as "killer turtle"! Their motto is: "Slow but sure."

**Medium Types:** The closest Roman equivalent to these types would be Myrmillo, Secutor, Thracian and Samnite (without cuirass). They are armoured *partially* with differing forms of leather and/or brigantine style armours and carry a standard sized round or "heater" style shield. More often than not, their armour only covers one side of their body, the other needing protection by the shield. If they do use a bracer or greave, it is never of the solid metal type, though metal reinforced leather is common. As to armaments, well, these guys go for such things as broadswords, short swords, small hand axes (and yes, a very few do specialize in light throwing axes akin to the tomahawk) and the short spear which can be thrown. They are called "Baseaux" in Arduin, which translates out (roughly) to mean "Basic Man".

**Light Types:** These daring people equate out to the Roman velite more than anything else and strangely enough have practically the lowest casualty rates of all the gladiatorial types. The only armour they are ever allowed is a small targ about the size of a pizza pan (9-14' across). Their main weapon is the short throwing spear, light javelin (up to three), heavy javelin (one only) and short sword (always) and/or long dagger. Occasional variants will see one armed with martobarbuli (heavy throwing darts), these equating to the Roman gaetulians, or even hacra (steel war quoits), but these are fairly rare. Note also that about half of these types disdain the use of the targ (don't carry/use one). Their name, appropriately enough, is "Camarguin" in Arduinian, or as it translates out: "Wild Ones". Indeed they are.

**Special Types (medium):** This is the Arduinian equivalent to the Roman Retarius and, generally speaking, looks pretty much just like one.

However, there are a couple of subtle differences readily observable if you look. The primary one being the fact that it is not really a trident they use but a five-pronged item called a quin-peaux (translation: "five-tongued"). It has the three-side-by-side points like a trident and another pair, one above and one below the central point. These additional two points are only  $\frac{3}{4}$  the length of the main three. Another difference is that the 10' square weighted net has a series of sharp barbed "fish hooks" spaced evenly (about an inch apart) all along its outside edges. Thus a different handling and throwing style is obviously needed. Finally, these fellows wear a sort of studded leather (soft) armour. This armour is actually a 2' wide continuous leather strap on which iron or brass studs have been affixed. It is wrapped around one arm only from wrist to shoulder as well as interlaced across that same side's hand and palm — sort of like an extended cestus (what some Roman boxers or "pubiles" wore). These types are frequently specialists in battling beasts and their Arduinian name is "Quindelachi". This translates out to "Five Master" or "Masters of the Five".

As any student of the Roman gladiatorial system can quite plainly discern, I have refrained from exploring several other types used in antiquity. This is simply because no *analogs* currently exist for them within the Arduinian multiverse. At any rate, here are a couple I deliberately skipped, for those interested in putting them in *their* campaign.

**Roman Venators:** Were "hunter types" that literally hunted and shot down animals in the arena, usually with bows. They were mostly unarmoured and even occasionally practiced this "sport" while careening about in a two-man chariot (with a driver). Some fun... (that's sarcasm there, folks!)

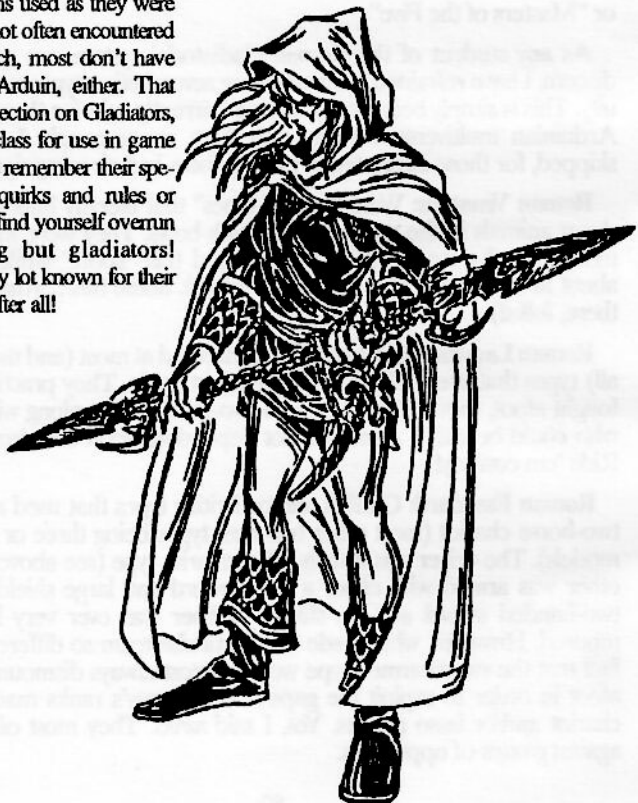
**Roman Laquearius:** Were lightly armoured at most (and usually not at all) types that used a long lariat (lasso) in battle. They practically never fought afoot, most often being in a two-man chariot along with a driver who could be either armed or not depending upon the circumstances. Ride 'em cowboy!

**Roman Essedarii:** Gaulish and/or British types that used a two-man, two-horse chariot (most other two-man types being three or four horse models). The driver was usually a Laquearius type (see above) while the other was armed with either a short sword and large shield or with a two-handed sword and no shield. Neither was ever very heavily armoured. However, what made this particular team so different was the fact that the sword-armed type would almost always dismount and fight afoot in order to exploit the gaps in the enemy's ranks made by their chariot and/or lasso attacks. Yes, I said *ranks*. They most often fought against *groups* of opponents.

**Roman Contra-Retarius:** Essentially a lightly-armoured type designed specifically to combat the retarius (net armed) fellows. His main way of doing so was a sort of conical forearm armour tipped with a short rod that had a crescent-shaped hook with which to entangle nets (and pull them out of the hands of his opponents). He also usually had a short sword or long dagger. The *metal* cone armour was also useful for parrying much like a targ or other very small shield and could (in dire straights) even be used as a weapon.

**Roman Cimachaeri, Dimachaeri** and the occasional **Postulati:** All fighters of various sorts that wielded a weapon in both hands simultaneously; most often swords (short or long) though huge mauls were popular from time to time.

I've refrained entirely from going into the really esoteric types that the Romans used as they were very rare and not often encountered ... besides which, most don't have analogues in Arduin, either. That wraps up this section on Gladiators, a whole new class for use in game play but please remember their special qualities, quirks and rules or you will soon find yourself overrun with nothing but gladiators! They're a hardy lot known for their survivability, after all!



## **MINI-DRACS: THE RARE BREED**

There is, within the Arduinian multiverse, a little known and rarely seen race of dragon kind known as Mini-Dracs. These highly intelligent creatures resemble normal dragons in every way save one: they are only about  $\frac{1}{10}$ th to  $\frac{1}{20}$ th the size of their brothers! These beauties average in size from about  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " in length to some 9" in length when full grown, depending upon type! Sort of the shetland ponies of dragon kind!

Supposedly there are analogues for each type (i.e. "color") of dragon normally seen. However, in reality, only certain of these types/colors have been seen and noted historically, so one can never be absolutely sure if there are, in fact, those other types as well — at least, in the Arduinian Mythos.

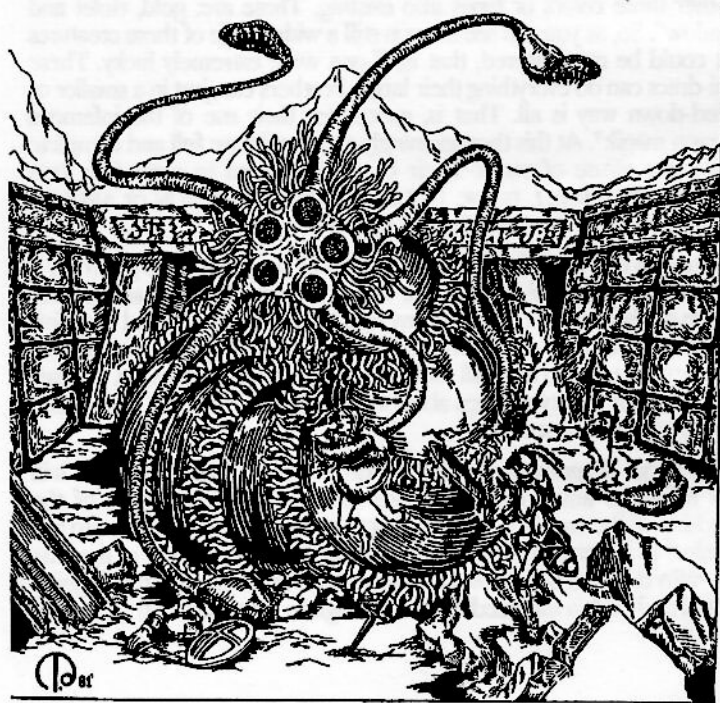
The five types/colors positively observed are: red, blue, green, yellow and silver. However, there is non-corroborated evidence that hints at another three colors or types also existing. These are: gold, violet and "shadow". So, as you can see there is still a wide range of these creatures that could be encountered, that is, if one were extremely lucky. These mini-dracs can do everything their larger brothers can, just in a smaller or scaled-down way is all. That is, except for their use of the infamous "dragon magik". At this they seemingly excel and have full and complete knowledge of/use of same. Their magik is second to none (see THE DRAGON TREE SPELL BOOK, HOUSE OF THE RISING SUN or ARDUIN, BLOODY ARDUIN for examples of Dragon Magiks).

Note also that these beings, dragon-kind or no, seem to be generally a whole lot less aggressive than their larger cousins. Perhaps as a consequence of their smaller size? At any rate they are very shy and reclusive and will seldom allow themselves to be seen by anyone and, even if they do, they tend to try to keep all such meetings as short as possible. At least this is what the scanty writings about meetings with them say. They don't like crowds much it seems...

The larger dragons do not like to discuss their "small kin" and will even refuse to admit their existence unless absolutely certain of the friendship of the one they are speaking to or his assured (and soon to be) "demise" as it were. In other words, they are overly protective of the little guys. Why this is so is unknown and there is no one I know of that is going to goad and push a full-sized dragon enough to try to find out! Leastwise not me!

Therefore it is highly recommended that all GMs do refrain from allowing these creatures to be used as player characters. **DONT DO IT!** Note also that only three times in 17,000 years has one of these little fellows ever agreed to accompany a hero or band of heroes on some heroic quest. Thus, in normal game play, they simply aren't going to be "pets" of player characters to be used at their whim! **NO!!!** If they are encountered — and that's a damn big IF — they will usually be alone and always extremely reluctant to do anything more than converse for a few minutes. That is unless, of course, they can't slip away unnoticed (which they will do if given half a chance!)

So why use them in game play at all, you ask? Well, all I can say is that if you've got to ask, then you don't need them anyway! Think a little...



## NEW MONSTERS

### ASHANG (aka: Unicats)

*Type:* Feline AC: 6 CF: 18-21 HP: 76-95

*Move:* 350' per melee round (535' per melee round at spring/charge). This charge lasts 11-30 melee rounds only. It can leap 31"-40" horizontally and clear 16"-20" vertical obstacles. It can also swim at 95' per melee round (if it has to).

*Size:* Roughly 20% larger than an earthly Siberian tiger in all ways (length, weight, etc) — i.e. about 10"-12" long and up to 800-1000 lbs.

*Color:* It most often runs from a jade-like grey-green to deep emerald green but can (in very rare cases) also be an aqua color or even a pale blue-grey. The eyes are, however, *always* a dark royal blue, while the fangs and talons are a translucent mother-of-pearl (iridescent) coloration.

*Description:* Although the same general size as the earthly tiger, it more closely resembles the North American puma in overall looks. However, two major differences are quite apparent to even the most casual observer. First, the ears are about four times the height (not width) normally associated with "big cats". Secondly, there is a long (10-13") curved unicorn-like (i.e. white, spiral and very sharp) *horn* in the middle of its forehead.

*Special Powers:* This great predator has several enhanced senses to aid in its nocturnal hunts. To begin with, its hearing is so acute that it can hear the difference between a male and a female (human, animal, whatever) breathing up to 120' distant (more depending upon the air currents). It has a 96% chance of hearing all (even elven and other "super quiet" footsteps) within a 30' radius of itself. This percentage is lessened by 3% per each additional 5' radius more than 30'. For instance, at a 90' radius it has a 60% chance of hearing *all* around itself. Its nostrils are so sensitive that they can directly locate an odor of only 7 parts in each million! This lets it follow a trail with 100% surety even up to 12 days old. Each additional day older than this that the trail is, there is a cumulative 10% less chance of it being followed. And, of course, they see in the dark better than any owl. Finally, their kind have a sort of "sixth sense" that allows them to nearly always know when danger of any kind threatens (90% chance). There have been instances when sleeping Ashang have leaped out of the way (at the last instant) of arrows fired at them from more than 100 yards distant (i.e. they could *not* have been aware of their firing).

### *The Arduin Grimoire V: Dark Dreams*

**Attacks:** Its main attack is its horn which does 2D8 to 2D10 HP of damage. This is *not* an impaling attack but a series of criss-cross slashes of immense force and rapidity. Its claws, which can strike stunning blows of 1D10 to 1D12 potency are, however, most often used to hold onto its prey while it slashes with its horn. The jaws, formidable enough to bite for 2D6 to 2D8 damage, are almost never (5% chance) used in battle.

**Special Notes:** These creatures are extremely intelligent, about equal to a human nine-year-old, and learn fast. They have a well-developed language (if somewhat limited in vocabulary) and are fully capable of understanding spoken words (in human or other languages) which they have been "acclimatized" to. They mate but once, for life, and usually only bear cubs twice (most often twins each time). They tend to not care for "civilized company" but have, upon *rare* occasions, been known to become loyal and life-long friends of a person of unusual and special qualities. They inhabit only a very few areas of the world, usually near glaciers or high up mountains close to the snowline. They are not indigenous to Arduin itself but to the wild lands outside its more civilized borders.

## **CURATTUS (aka: Rattakks)**

**Type:** Mutated mammal **AC:** 7 **CF:** 15-18 **HP:** 24-35

**Move:** 230-260" per melee round ( $\frac{1}{3}$  that in water).

**Size:** From 4"-5" long NOT including tail, which is another 3  $\frac{1}{2}$ " to 5" in length.

**Color:** Bright scarlet to dull ochre fur with blue-black to black hands, tail and muzzle (hairless). Eye color is usually a topaz yellow but an occasional orange is sometimes encountered.

**Description:** A semi-erect (2 legs, 2 hands) mutated rat of human-like intelligence (equivalent to 7-14 year old humans) and a cunning equalled by few in the Arduinian multiverse. Cruel, shrewd, sneaky, nasty, sadistic and greedy are all apt descriptions of these creatures. They wear *no* clothing save for multi-pouched baldrics hung with numerous detachable pouches/bags and inset with whatever wealth they possess: silver coins, bits of copper, gems, anything bright and shiny.

**Special Powers:** These foul things just happen to be competent "bush" alchemists! They make potent and lethal poisons, strong acids, efficacious medicines as well as good glues, paints and even a passable "bitter ale" but, what makes their alchemy especially nasty is, they have managed to discover several *human specific* poisons. This stuff dissolves human flesh at the rate of about 3 HP per second — 18 HP per melee round! It is in both liquid and gaseous form, both of which cause the very flesh to

literally melt! This toxic stuff affects only humans in this acid-like manner, being harmless to all other species.

*Special Powers:* They can squeeze through spaces only 10 1/2" in diameter, chew through concrete (takes a while, but they can do it!), tread water for up to 7 days, swim under water for as long as 20 minutes and have very acute senses. For instance, they hear everything (100%) within a 30" radius of themselves. This hearing decreases by 5% acuity per each extra 3" beyond this (i.e. at a 60" radius they only hear on a 50% success basis). Their nose is capable of detecting odors of only 300 parts per million, thus allowing them to follow trails up to three days old 100% accurately. This tracking ability decreases by 20% for each additional day more than that. They see in the dark "as well as any elf" and are incredibly resilient to disease (+50% save), wounds (heal at 3 HP per day), and temperature extremes (+180°F through -120°F). They are also very fearless if cornered and tend to go berserk in certain-death situations.

*Attacks:* Most often with weapons of their own make, but they can and do bite for 1D3 to 1D4 if need be. The weapons most used are these: a bronze balled triple-headed bolas (+30% to hit as a cultural add); a large double-edged knife of a "cranked" or bent shape (sort of like an over-large kukri) and a kind of four-bladed shirkin bent into a curious swastika-like shape (+25% to hit as a cultural add). A very few are occasionally seen to use a short (5'-6") halberd-like weapon with a curved naginata-like head at both ends.

*Special Notes:* These creatures live in underground warrens of a complexity that would give a Phraint fits. Their maze-like construction is also a defense as many of the passageways are heavily trapped blind alleys. These creatures are not known to exist anywhere outside of the desert areas of the ruined fifth continent. It is there that the great city-like warren called Ourahnkouria exists and the majority of these beings live. Know also that they seldom travel in groups of less than five and usually in packs of 21-30 or so (the more the merrier!). They hate being alone and are never found voluntarily in that condition. This is why they cannot be used as player characters. Most are slavers cum traders and find a ready market for their alchemical (and live) wares among the more barbaric desert tribes of that devastated land. If they are to be used as player characters, the cultural "group togetherness" mentality cannot be ignored. You just can't play 'em one at a time! No way!

## ELECTRO-HOUNDS

*Type:* Canine AC: 5 CF: 17-20 HP: 50-61

*Move:* 285" per melee round (375" per during 101-150 second charges); they can leap 15"-18" horizontally and 9"-12" vertically with ease.



### *The Arduin Grimoire V: Dark Dreams*

**Size:** about the size of an earthly African lion (8' or more long without tail and 500-800 lbs).

**Color:** A bright metallic electric blue overall save for brilliant yellow eyes that resemble flickering neon lights! They also have dull copper color teeth and claws.

**Description:** Essentially an overgrown mastiff in general configuration but with a 3-5' high ruff of straight hair (like a "mohawk" haircut) running from the top of head, down the spine, to the tip of its short, 6-10' tail.

**Special Powers:** These animals *continually* generate electricity within themselves and will give a 1D4 HP potency shock to all *living* things touching them. They can also deliver an electrical shock through their teeth as they bite of a potency equal in HP of damage to half their own HP in size. As an example, a 60 HP size critter could zap off a 30 HP potency electrical charge through his bite. They may do it once every three seconds for a number of times per hour equal to once for each full 10 HP in size that they are. Once this "charge" is used up, they will do only the 1D4 "touch-shock" as noted previously.

**Attacks:** Their only mode of direct attack is their bite for 1D8+3 to 1D12+4 damage (plus any electrical).

**Special Notes:** While of only the "usual" canine sensory abilities, their oddly glowing eyes can also see those things both ethereal and/or astral. These strange canines are rare and most often encountered in packs of 7-12 though as many as 20 in one group is not unknown. Their primary habitat is the eastern foothills of The Mountains of Madness.

## **HORRIDUS (aka: Sea Beast)**

**Type:** Amphibious reptile **AC:** 2+2 (top), 2 (belly) **CF:** 11-14 **HP:** 101-200

**Move:** 180" per melee round (land), 225" per melee round (water)

**Size:** 31-60" in length (about 3" per each 10 HP), though a rare few get a bit larger (69" 10 1/2' long is the record).

**Color:** Grey-green over all save for a yellow-white under-belly and dull red eyes (with vertical green pupil slits).

**Description:** A sort of giant-sized, eight (8) legged crocodile cum kronosaur. The legs are flippered in the central four and web-toed/clawed on the fore and aft four. The flippered ones lay flat along its sides on land, the clawed ones do so in water. The tail is more spatulate than a crocodile's and there is a double row of 4-7 high dorsal "fins" running from skull top to tail tip.

**Special Powers:** This awesome reptile has a sort of telepathic/psychic 6th sense/precognitive ability to "know" just where a potential meal/victim will be up to 30 minutes in advance. Thus, they usually wait in ambush for same to show up at the "known" location. Frequently as many as 10, 15, even 20 of the great beasts will show up if the potential food is of a large enough amount (something else they can sense). The range on this "detection" power is not known, but documented cases of these things travelling more than 3 miles to "eat" have been recorded.

**Attacks:** Their main attack is their terrible bite which does 11-30 to 21-50 HP of damage each time. Their tails can bash for 11-20 to 18-29 HP of damage and their claws, seldom used, do 1D8 to 1D12 worth of hurt.

**Special Notes:** These beasts haunt the estuaries and surrounding coastal waters of the great rivers that empty into the Savage Sea (after traversing the Jungles of Green Hell). The mouth (no pun intended) of "Thousand Tooth River" is especially known for harboring these great predators.

## **JARAKHALLA (aka: The Two Step Snake)**

**Type:** Serpent **AC:** 8 **CF:** 21-24 **HP:** 7-12

**Move:** 33" per melee round (ground), 45" per melee round (water)

**Size:** 18' long per each one HP (i.e. 10-18")

**Color:** Their base color is a lead-grey overall (somewhat lighter on the undersides) with startling blue-green eyes. See "Special Powers" for more information.

**Description:** A very thin, whip-like snake with a diamond-shaped head and a trifurcated tongue.

**Special Powers:** Chameleon-like, it can change its body colors and patterns to match the surrounding area. It can do so fully in 4-6 seconds and complicated patterns such as criss-cross lattices, swirls, piled leaves, etc, are no problem to this function. In fact, it blends so well as to be 96% undetectable by even the eyes of a wary woods elf!

**Attacks:** It only bites for 1D3 to 1D4 puncture damage plus a venom equal in eight-sided hit dice per each one hit point it has! For example, a 10 HP Jarakhalla would have a venom potency of 10D8! That is for the first bite only, each successive one is always 2D8 less than the first. When all is used up it needs one hour of rest per each HD in potency to recharge its venom sacs. As a nasty note to this serpent's venom, please be aware that it is a *nerve* poison of such potency that for each HD, any living victim (up to 100 HP in size) will become paralyzed in 1D6 seconds and remain so for 1D20 minutes! Thus that 10D8 stuff would paralyze a

character for 10D20 minutes! Note also that there is a 3% chance (non-cumulative) each minute a victim is paralyzed that his heart will stop and death ensue. All saves versus this venom are at a -5% efficacy.

*Special Notes:* This kind of serpent is not overly aggressive but seldom runs away from anything either. It will always strike if stepped directly on but, if stepped next to, it will almost never strike (5% chance), preferring instead to lie still and unnoticed with its natural camouflage. It is found only in the few remaining wild places on the Dreaming Isles and then only in very small numbers. The nickname, by the way, refers to how far one gets after being bitten. Two steps and you're dead!

### **KAZUL-KHAR (aka: Dune Wolves)**

*Type:* Lupine AC: 7 CF: 17-20 HP: 21-32

*Move:* 280" per melee round (335" per melee round at full charge for up to 3 minutes)

*Size:* About equal to normal earth wolves.

*Color:* Basically sand-colored.

*Description:* They generally resemble earthly wolves, but have larger feet and somewhat jackal-like ears as well as saber-tooth tiger-type (canine) fangs some 4-6' long! They mostly have black or brown eyes but the occasional blue-eyed one may also be found.

*Special Powers:* These wolves have all the normal senses of their lupine kind but also exhibit a psychic ability to create mirages or mirror images of themselves (i.e. multiple images) that are quite convincing. Each dune wolf can manifest from 1-5 of these optical doppelgangers to either (or both) sides of themselves. The images will mimic (or mirror) everything the real wolf does. The GM will have to adjudicate how these mirages will affect any melee combat as each individual situation requires.

*Attacks:* A bite for 1D6 to 1D8 potency is their sole attack.

*Special Notes:* Travelling in packs of 10-21 (or more), these wolves are the scourge of several near desert areas of the world. Relentless in their pursuit of a chosen prey, they have been known to follow their quarry for as long as six days! They also have a nose so keen and water-sensitive that it can track that life-giving liquid down as far as 2 miles away or as deep as 60' underground! Finally, a few have been raised from birth by desert nomads and have made good, if somewhat wild and contrary companions.

## MOONWASPS

*Type:* Insect *AC:* 5 *CF:* 21-26 *HP:* 3-5 *Size:* 13-18' long

*Move:* 1,000" per melee round (air) and 15" per melee round (ground)

*Color:* Pale "moon" white overall, to include eyes, wings, etc.

*Description:* A huge wasp with two pairs of wings in tandem and a long (3-4') sickle-curved stinger.

*Special Powers:* They are 95% magik resistant, regardless of its source, kind or potency! They can also freely move between the ethereal plane (their home) and our more mundane planes.

*Attacks:* Each wasp stings for 1 HP of puncture and injects a venom that has three primary effects upon living creatures. First: it causes instantaneous paralysis in its victim for 100 days less one day per each CON point the victim has. Second: it "erodes" the HP of the victim at one per each 10 hours of paralysis until the victim has only one HP left. Thereafter, he is in a coma. Lastly: it causes the victim's soul to separate from his still-living body and depart to the ethereal plane as soon as he only has one HP left. This nasty critter does this so that it can lay its eggs in the paralyzed victim! It lays the eggs after chewing an opening into the stomach/abdominal cavity. Forty-four days later, 10D100 of these little horrors hatch and then commence to chow down! Needless to say it's not a nice experience! It is also a given that little remains of the host body afterwards as even the bone is eaten!

*Special Notes:* Luckily they only have enough venom for one bite and, within one hour of laying their eggs, they die. Also luckily, they are only found in the ethereal plane in any numbers because they prefer the colder temperatures (40 to 0°F) there. Finally, ghouls find the larvae of these wasps a delicacy and so hunt them avidly. This tends to make for very few survivors (thank the gods!). Thus, they are almost always encountered singly.

## NONESUCH

*Type:* Unknown *AC:* 2+7 *CF:* 30 *HP:* 501-1,000(!)

*Move:* 1,200" per melee round (ground), 2,500" per melee round (air) and 300" per melee round (water).

*Size:* 101-200" long with a wing span 200% of its length (so a 100" Nonesuch has a 200" wingspan).

*Color:* Shifting rainbow hues over all, save for eyes of pupil-less dark onyx.

### *The Arduin Grimoire V: Dark Dreams*

*Description:* It constantly changes shape and form save for one single constant: it always has wings (though these also change from bat-like to angelic to dragon-like and so on). It can look like everything from a squid-headed dragon with bird's wings to a hundred-headed lion with bat wings, scorpion tail, whale-like flippers and elephantine tusks! In other words "there ain't no such critter!"

*Attacks:* As variable as its shape

*Special Notes:* There is only *one* creature of this type known to exist (and brother, that's one too many!). It is at times curious, voracious, friendly, berserk, timid, and, well, as changeable as its body is! Needless to say, no one really believes it exists and most of those who have seen it have not survived the encounter. So, to most, it is merely a legend. And me? I hope it stays that way to me — a legend!

## **ORKHONDUS (aka: Black Orcs)**

*Type:* Mystikly metamorphised orc *AC:* 2+5 *CF:* 15-17 *HP:* 121-150  
*Move:* 188-200" per melee round *Size:* 12-15" tall

*Color:* Dull matte black overall save for eyes of lambent green that glow in the dark like two fat candles.

*Description:* An orc with a bad case of gigantism.

*Attacks:* As an orc but add 4D6 to 6D6 for strength damage per blow.

*Special Notes:* Mercifully, the magikal knowledge needed to create these bozos is a well-guarded secret of just a small handful of wild orc shamans. Also, the process is a long and involved one, has a high failure rate and is damn costly to boot. So few are ever encountered. Those few have been rumoured to "heal/regenerate like a fripping troll". Not overly smart to begin with, this process leaves orcs even dimmer mentally, if that's possible. Still, under the right circumstances, they are formidable opponents and always hard to kill. We strongly advocate that these things *not* be allowed in play as player characters. They do quite well as boogie men. Leave 'em that way!

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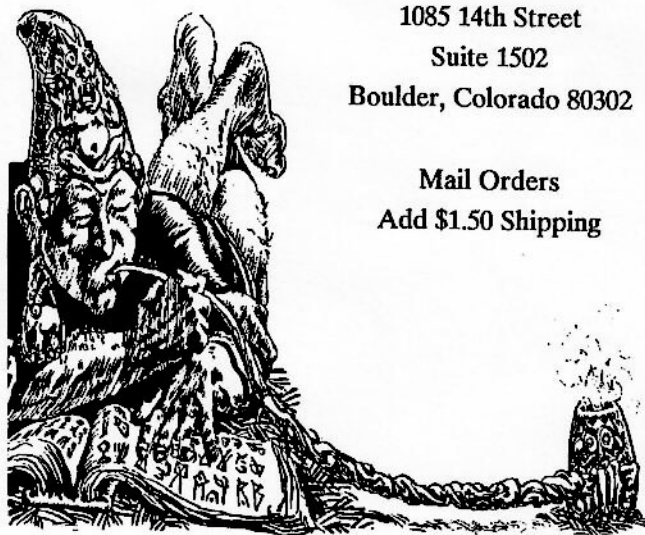
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