

BLACK SUN

Written by Brian Engard • Edited by John Adamus • Layout by Fred Hicks

MAGIC ITEMS

There are three different scales of magic items: minor, major, and legendary.

MINOR ITEMS

A **minor** magic item usually falls into one of three categories: utility items, entertainment items, and consumable items.

Utility items are things that make day-to-day life easier or more convenient. Blankets that heat themselves, brooms that sweep a room of their own accord, and other such items are utility items. Entertainment items are similar in terms of power, but are used to dazzle and delight rather than to complete menial tasks or make your life more comfortable. You might have a wand that shoots multicolored sparks from its tip, or a paper crane that can fly about.

Both utility and convenience items function identically within the rules: they are aspects. You can invoke a heated blanket to keep you warm on a cold night, or a flying paper crane to delight a crowd and maybe earn a little income. These aspects work like any other aspect; you invoke them with a fate point or by creating an advantage on them, and they provide the usual benefit.

Consumable items are a bit different in that they have specific mechanical effects. You usually have to use your action in order to activate a consumable item, and using the item expends the magic in it, either rendering it inert or literally consuming the physical item. In terms of power, a minor consumable item is equivalent to two shifts of effect, which is in turn equivalent to a single aspect invocation. A consumable item does not, however, cost a fate point to use.

EXAMPLES

Burdensome Belt (minor): When worn, this belt eases the wearer's physical burdens. Packs become lighter, difficult terrain less difficult, and so forth.

Cloak of Many Colors (minor): This fine cloak changes color upon a verbal command. It can also change its pattern and embroidery, making it the perfect accessory for any party!

Rejuvenating Balm (minor, consumable): When you spread this balm on a physical injury, it speeds healing considerably. When you use this balm, choose a physical consequence. Rename that consequence to denote the fact that it's now healing; you recover from it normally.

MAJOR ITEMS

Major items are a level of power greater than minor items. While a major item can also be a utility or entertainment item of greater potency, their primary form is that of a magic weapon, suit of armor, shield, fireball-shooting staff, and so forth. Major items are aspects, just like minor items, but they also carry a specific mechanical boon. In order to activate an item's boon, spend a fate point; once you do, you can use the item's boon for the rest of the scene. Major items' boons range in power from 2 to 4 shifts of effect.

There are also major consumable items. These work just like minor consumable items except that they require a fate point to use (in addition to the item being consumed), and the benefit is usually worth 4 shifts of effect.

EXAMPLES

Axe of Grievous Wounding (major): Any consequences you deal with this axe are one step greater.

Mirrored Shield (major): When you defend against a ranged attack with this shield and succeed with style, you reflect it back at the attacker, causing a 3-stress hit.

Potion of Healing (major, consumable): When you quaff this bluish-yellow mixture, you may clear out your stress track and reduce the severity of one physical consequence, renaming it in the process to denote healing. If you choose a minor consequence, erase it.

LEGENDARY ITEMS

Legendary items are rare, and define the characters who wield them. There are no consumable legendary items. When you find a legendary item, you must commit a part of your own personality and life force to it, bonding to it; doing this costs 1 refresh and forces you to change one of your aspects to reflect your bond to the item. Once you do this, you gain all of the benefits of the legendary item; to anyone else wielding the item, it has no special properties.

When you create a legendary item for one of your players, its mechanical effects should follow the fiction. Decide what the item does within the fiction, then try to model that in the rules. It's okay for legendary items to have passive benefits roughly equivalent to a stunt; after all, the PC wielding it has spent a refresh to bond with the item already. Similarly, because the PC has devoted an aspect to the legendary item, she can invoke that aspect (and you can compel it) like any other aspect.

It's also okay for legendary items to have multiple abilities. In general, if a legendary item has multiple abilities, they should not all be active at once. It might require a fate point to switch which ability is active, or the item might grant one ability that's always active, but other abilities might cost a fate point to activate each time the bearer wants to use them. You can also limit how often an ability can be used by allowing it to only be used once per scene or once per session, rather than costing a fate point; these options are good for more potent abilities. For truly potent abilities, limiting how often it can be used *and* requiring a fate point expenditure can be the way to go. Feel free to introduce other costs, like stress or even in-fiction costs, as you like.

EXAMPLE: SOUL-DRINKER

Soul-Drinker is an ancient broadsword with a malign intellect. Its blade is wicked and jagged, its pommel wrapped in what might very well be human skin, and it has a large gem that looks like an eye (and moves, looking at things around it) set into the cross-guard. When you bond with Soul-Drinker, you promise to feed it the souls of those you slay in exchange for power.

Example Aspects: BEARER OF THE CURSED SOUL-DRINKER, SOULS FOR POWER, "I CAN HEAR THE BLADE'S VOICE."

Heart-Seeking Blade: While you bear Soul-Drinker in battle, the blade gives you unparalleled skill in slaughter and death-dealing. When you attack with Soul-Drinker with the intent to kill, your Fight skill is Superb (+5). However, Soul-Drinker dislikes when you shrink from bloodshed. When you create an advantage or defend with mercy in your heart, your Fight skill is Mediocre (+0).

Drink Soul: When you slay a being that has a soul with Soul-Drinker, the sword drinks in that being's soul, turning its body to ash. You can prevent Soul-Drinker from drinking a soul, but doing so requires a Will roll at Good (+3), and it angers the sword.

Stolen Life: You can drain a soul from Soul-Drinker to heal yourself. To do so, spend a fate point and make a Will roll at Good (+3). On a success, Soul-Drinker sees that your survival is in its best interests, and allows you to consume a soul. Clear out your physical stress track and choose one consequence: reduce its severity by one level (erasing it if it's a minor consequence). If you fail the roll you may still heal as above, but Soul-Drinker revokes this ability until you perform some service for it; it will tell you what it wants.

LIMITING STORM-CALLING

In order to call upon the power of the storm, a storm-caller must first center himself and reach out to it. Doing so requires an action and either the expenditure of a fate point or the free invocation of an appropriate aspect created as an advantage. Once a caller meets these requirements, he can call upon his storm for the rest of the scene.

Example: Grodan is facing down a group of ravenous zombies, and he wants to burn them all with the power of the Inferno. He could spend an action and a fate point reaching out to the Inferno, but he's a little short on fate points just now. Instead he opts to create an advantage with Will: "I clear my mind, blocking out the presence of the foul undead creatures around me." He succeeds, creating the aspect CENTERED MIND, which he can invoke once for free. On his next turn, he'll be able to spend an action and invoke CENTERED MIND for free, allowing him to get in touch with the Inferno. Once he does this, Grodan can call upon the Inferno as much as he wants to during the scene. Those zombies are as good as toast!

RACES

You have three choices when it comes to portraying your race, depending on how important you want your race to be.

Unimportant: If you don't want your race to be much of a factor in the game, simply decide what race you want to be and write it somewhere on your character sheet. Don't devote any more thought to it; you're an elf, but being an elf doesn't define you in any way.

Important to the Story: If you want your race to be a recurring factor in the game's ongoing story, devote an aspect to it. Maybe you're an ELVEN LIGHT PEDDLER or a DWARF BODYGUARD. You can invoke your racial aspect whenever you think your race could help you (such as when having low-light vision from your dwarven heritage would factor in, or keen hearing for an elf). Similarly, the GM can compel your aspect whenever your race is a hindrance (like a dwarf trying to get a can off the top shelf, or an elf standing up to a strong punch to the gut).

Important to the Mechanics: If you want your race to be mechanically important to your character, devote a skill slot to your racial skill. For example, you might set Elf at Good (+3) to represent the fact that you're in touch with your heritage and that you rely on your natural advantages. If you choose this option, you get the benefits of doing so listed below; this tells you what you use your racial skill for. You can take additional racial options as if they were stunts. Also, there's nothing wrong with choosing both this option *and* the aspect option; doing so means that your race is much more important to you than to many others of your race, and this is reflected in both the story and the rules.

RACIAL SKILLS

ELF

Woodland Grace: You may use your skill to recognize useful flora and fauna, know your way through the woods, notice hidden dangers, hunt game, and forage for food in the woodlands. Choose one of the options below.

- *Perfection in Battle:* Choose Shoot or Fight. When you're using the traditional armaments of your people, you can use your Elf skill in place of the chosen skill.
- *Elven High Magic:* You can use Elf to cast minor spells relating to nature or growth, even if you have no other magical ability.

DWARF

Born of the Earth: You may use your skill to navigate underground, see in darkness, forage for food and water underground, and recognize the value of metals and gems. Choose one of the options below.

- *Dwarven Metalcrafting:* You may use Dwarf instead of Craft when crafting arms, armor, jewelry, or other things made of metal. If you create an advantage in this manner, you get an additional free invocation on it.
- *Strength of Stone:* You are stout and implacable. You can use Dwarf to resist any attempt to move you against your will or any attempt to use magic to subvert your will.

HUMAN

The Numerous People: You may use your skill instead of Contacts to make contact with another human when you first arrive in a human settlement. If you do so, that contact is always friendly. Choose one of the options below.

- *Trailblazer:* Whenever you're travelling somewhere you've never been before, you can use Human to find your way and spot hazards before they befall you.
- *Adaptable:* You may spend a fate point to use Human in place of *any other skill* for one roll.