

GURPS

Fourth Edition

DUNGEON FANTASY 6TM

40 ARTIFACTSTM



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The inheritance is the gift of eternal life. Contained within an ancient scroll. Concealed by the dullard Abbot and his cohorts. The scroll, which draws forth pale demon blood through my veins.

*– Vladimir Kaleta, **Tomb Raider: Chronicles***

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INTRODUCTION

Nearly every game world features gadgetry of some kind, ranging from primitive to futuristic . . . and often including things which are magical or just weird.

– *GURPS Basic Set*

Piles of money, heaps of character points, and powerful artifacts are the “holy trinity” of dungeon delving. Gems and precious metals are rarely easy to *get*, but they’re easy to handle – complete rules scarcely fill a page in *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 2: Dungeons*. Points require more thought, but *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 3: The Next Level* helps the GM award them and players spend them. Dreaming up interesting artifacts, however, is hard work.

You *could* use stock magic items manufactured according to the *GURPS Basic Set* or *GURPS Magic*. There’s nothing wrong with those – check out the cool gear in *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 1: Adventurers*. Still, standard enchantments require time and energy to activate, and high-powered adventurers will tire of them once it’s easier simply to cast the spell. They’re also priced in a way that reduces them from wonders to commodities. In short, they eventually get *boring*.

GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 6: 40 Artifacts describes 40 items of power that do things that spells can’t – at least, not easily. They just *do what they do*. None list specific spells or prices. And all hail from the author’s fantasy campaign, so they’ve been thoroughly playtested by alpha munchkins. That’s no guarantee that they aren’t too powerful, only that the abuses they enable are true to the spirit of old-school dungeon crawls!

How to Read Item Entries

In addition to a brief description – what the artifact looks like, a little background color, etc. – each item entry gives the following information.

Power Item

The number of FP for fueling spells (and *only* spells) the artifact can hold – *if* a caster selects it as his power item, takes it back to town, and gets it charged up. For details, see *Power Items (Dungeon Fantasy 1, p. 28)*. An “N/A” means that article can’t be a power item, typically because it’s a fragile, single-use resource.

This suggests a cost range for the underlying object sans special properties, but few entries offer dollar values for artifacts, with or without their remarkable capabilities. Such prices are negotiable. These things are meant as rare treasures for delvers to keep and use. If somebody wants to sell a one-of-a-kind relic, well, that’s its own adventure. See *The Problem of Price* (p. 20).

Suggested Origins

Any artifact here could have any explanation – wizardly accident, The Devil’s work, wreckage of a futuristic UFO that experienced warp-drive failure and crashed in Fantasy Land, *anything*. But each item comes with a short list of recommendations chosen from this list:

Alchemical: An elixir or a charm created through unorthodox alchemy. It’s magical, like any other alchemical preparation, but the recipe isn’t found in standard formularies.

Cosmic: A godly artifact, stolen by or (rarely) given to lousy mortals. Sanctity doesn’t affect it. Neither does mana! In fact, nothing affects it but *other* cosmic stuff.

Divine: An article “enchanted” by mortals through prayer or clerical magic. Sanctity (*Dungeon Fantasy 1, p. 19*) affects it exactly as mana affects ordinary magic items.

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Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata pages for all *GURPS* releases, including this book, are available on our website – see above.

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition*. Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.

Druidic: An object “enchanted” via druidic magic and affected by nature’s strength just like druidic spells and powers are (*Dungeon Fantasy 1*, p. 19).

Magical: A standard magic item created using nonstandard spells, or by accident. The GM should wax vague on the details: “Analyze Magic reveals an enchantment unknown to thaumatology.” Mana affects it as usual; see p. B235.

Materials: An item with extraordinary properties by dint of being made of something amazing: monster parts, weird glowing ore, etc. It resembles an artifact of another class described here (GM’s choice), but was physically crafted – like purely mundane goods – rather than enchanted or wished into being.

Racial: An item built by a race whose size, senses, profound grasp of metalworking, or whatever lets them turn out the equivalent of high-tech gear that’s “indistinguishable from magic.” The GM picks the race.

Spirit: The home of a bound spirit – angel, demon, elemental, totem, or anything else the GM likes. It’s affected by whatever affects the spirit. Nothing hinders genuinely cosmic spirits (so they’re *incredibly dangerous*), while mana level limits lowly magical ones. The GM may find spirits from *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 5: Allies* inspirational, although those are bound to people rather than to items.

Properties

Each item has a list of interesting capabilities and notes, covering everything from the mundane to the wildly supernatural. These come with relevant game rules – although for armor, shields, and weapons, you’ll need the tables on pp. B271-287 to find the baseline stats. Weight is an exception; because relics are often made from weird materials, this is always given.

The GM is invited to swap properties, remove them where he feels they’re excessive, and use them as building blocks for *new* creations. To facilitate this, they have names. These labels

don’t refer to specific advantages, spells, etc. It’s just that noting “Fateful Doom, as on Death’s Reaper (pp. 11-12)” is easier than repeating a lengthy rule!

Variations

Some notes on how to switch things up to fit the item into a campaign. These might be vague (players *will* read this supplement!), be precise but stats-free (“a spear instead of a shortsword” leaves nothing to the imagination, but you must still look up spear stats), or offer considerable game-mechanical detail. For more universally applicable variations, see *Less-Than-Ultimate* (p. 17).

Some artifacts just do what they do.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sean “Dr. Kromm” Punch set out to become a particle physicist in 1985, ended up the *GURPS* Line Editor in 1995, and has engineered rules for almost every *GURPS* product since. He developed, edited, or wrote dozens of *GURPS Third Edition* projects between 1995 and 2002. In 2004, he produced the *GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition* with David Pulver. Since then, he has created *GURPS Powers* (with Phil Masters), *GURPS Martial Arts* (with Peter Dell’Orto), and the *GURPS Action, GURPS Dungeon Fantasy*, and *GURPS Power-Ups* series . . . and the list keeps growing.

Sean has been a gamer since 1979. His non-gaming interests include cinema, cooking, and wine. He lives in Montréal, Québec with his wife, Bonnie. They have two cats, Banshee and Zephyra, and a noisy parrot, Circe.

What’s in a Name?

An artifact’s name might convey any number of meanings, or be intentionally obscure – or *silly*. The names given to the objects in this supplement are merely suggestions, chosen to exemplify several possibilities:

- *Appearance.* The Golden Helmet Crest is a big gold crest for a helmet. The Six-Sword Belt is a sword belt that can tote six swords. And so on. Delvers might overhear simple names like these when monsters brag about prized treasures.

- *Whimsy.* Labels that suggest function without giving much solid information – Crazy Legs, Lucky Seven Necklace, Spheres of Weirdness, etc. – also make good nicknames, better-suited to owners more poetic than goblins and ogres.

- *Function.* Some names describe capabilities fairly accurately. It isn’t hard to guess what the Arrow-Stopping Shirt and Conjuring Candle do! Town-based merchants and wizards may use such monikers at their shops. Knowledge spells might do no better when cast on items that don’t bear standard enchantments.

- *Portent.* A handle like Death’s Reaper, Nightwraith, or Visage of the God is *weighty*. It’s the sort of name that a sinister priest or a long-haired bard with a gravelly voice would use as code for a powerful relic. It comes in handy when the GM doesn’t feel like revealing whether the thing is cursed or beneficial.

- *Background.* Maaukepu, Necros, Ruinas, Sentchtemt, Su, Utshepit . . . who *are* these guys? Artifacts that borrow the proper name of a person (or *god*) or a place often appear in moldy tomes, or scribbled on rotting treasure maps. They might even suggest NPCs and adventures.

The GM is welcome to call an artifact whatever he likes. He’s also free to use *several* names – say, to tempt greedy munchkins into hunting for multiple items. A treasure might be called one thing in a map’s margin, quite another in a tavern rumor. A third name could arise in the evil boss’ soliloquy in the dungeon. And when the delvers return to town hauling loot, some priest or sage may tell them something else again (often “Don’t touch that! It’s Evil!”).

Variations

- An “ultimate weapon” for holy warriors, the Flashing Sunblade fairly shouts out to be a chivalric broadsword. Still, it could be a greatsword or just about any other military weapon – axe, halberd, mace, spear, etc.

- The Sunblade might be a little *too* ultimate for some campaigns, in which case it’s easy to remove special properties – or make them cost 1 FP per turn to activate. Perhaps safely picking up the sword requires a minimum level of Holiness, like the Sun Armor (pp. 9-10); if so, a desperate user may be able to try a Religious Ritual roll to pray and use its functions for one battle, with any failure resulting in him suffering 1d of direct injury *every second* until he drops the weapon!

- On the other hand, the Sunblade might not seem terribly impressive in a game where all the PCs have artifacts like Death’s Reaper (pp. 11-12). To make it more potent, elevate the damage bonus against demons and undead to +3, or even +1d, or add some of the powers of the Flaming Blade (p. 13) or the Spirit Knife (p. 15).

Nightwraith

Power Item: 14 FP

Suggested Origins: Cosmic or Magical.

Nightwraith – a.k.a. “Shadowblade” and “Nightfang” – appears to be a wire-wrapped sword hilt, sans blade, with a strange compartment in it. On mental command, a blade of remarkable black metal simply *appears*, giving the wielder a most excellent shortsword. This can be sent away just as easily.

Properties

- *Blade Quality:* Treat Nightwraith as a balanced (+1 to skill), fine (+1 to damage and -1 to breakage) shortsword. It *can* break – and loses all of its special properties if it does.

- *Materialization:* The blade materializes and vanishes with a thought. This usually takes a Ready maneuver but can be done instantly on a *Will*-based Fast-Draw (Sword) roll. While bladeless, Holdout is at -1 (“dagger”) instead of -3 (“shortsword”); see p. 12 of *Dungeon Fantasy 2* for combat benefits.

- *Poison Reservoir:* The hilt compartment holds five doses of any poison the user puts there. Materialization coats the blade with one dose, using it up as if it had been applied manually. The reservoir can instead hold the contents of *one* Alchemist’s Fire or Liquid Ice grenade. This gives the equivalent of Flaming Weapon or Icy Weapon for 1 minute instead of those grenades’ usual effects.

Weight: 2 lbs.

Variations

- Nightwraith is most fitting as a shortsword. Anything smaller is trivial to hide sans a fancy power, while anything larger offends most assassins’ sensibilities. Still, it could be any hilted blade, from a dagger to a greatsword.

Orichalcum Spring Gun

CROSSBOW (DX-4)

Weapon	Damage	Acc*	Range	Weight	RoF	Shots	ST	Bulk
Spring Gun	1d+3 imp	6	240/300	13/7	1	8(4)	12†	-4

* Acc *includes* +1 for a balanced weapon and +1 for a crossbow sight.

- There are persistent rumors of a similar sword with a glowing blade of red, green, or blue light. Maybe this works like a force sword (p. B272), converting cutting damage to burning damage and adding an armor divisor of (5).

Orichalcum Spring Gun

Power Item: 30 FP

Suggested Origins: Materials or Racial.

The Orichalcum Spring Gun – an invention of famed artificer Kaeso Curius Severus – is a “crossbow” that replaces the clumsy bow with orichalcum springs. Other innovations are a preloaded cylinder and a clever trigger, which greatly improve rate of fire.

Properties

Eight bolts (each 0.6 lb.) are rammed one at a time into eight tubes drilled around and parallel to the axis of the Gun’s removable cylinder. These compress the mighty springs and lock in place, ready to shoot. Next, the cylinder spring is wound, after which the combination ramming/winding tool is inserted to serve as an axle. These steps take 32 seconds total. The ready-to-use cylinder – with bolts and ramrod – weighs 7 lbs.

When the cocked-and-locked cylinder is ready, it’s snapped into the Gun’s body (this is 6 lbs. empty, 13 lbs. loaded), which contains trigger, gears, and arrow guide. Loading the cylinder into the body takes just four seconds. Thus, by swapping in ready cylinders, the shooter can attain an incredible reload time of half a second per shot.

Once the Gun is loaded, each pull of the trigger releases one spring, shooting its bolt. It also lets the cylinder revolve so that the *next* bolt is ready to shoot. This enables the operator to launch an amazing eight bolts in eight seconds! Use the Crossbow skill to hit.

Variations

- Much of the Spring Gun’s effectiveness depends on how many cylinders are found with it. If it’s just one, the user gets eight shots and must then switch weapons. Even two is enough to lay down a withering barrage for a lengthy battle.

- The ST of the *springs* determines range, damage, and the ST needed to reload the Gun. This is ST 12 for the model described here, but the GM could choose another value and assess damage and range as for a crossbow of that ST. Regardless, the 13-lb. loaded weapon requires at least ST 12 to handle properly, because it’s relatively heavy (although well-made and not at all bulky).

Rapier of Ruinas

Power Item: 11 FP

Suggested Origins: Magical or Spirit.

Sages agree that this well-made rapier wasn’t the *creation* of “Ruinas” – that’s just the name of the delver who stole it. After he was punted off a tower, the rapier was found stashed in his

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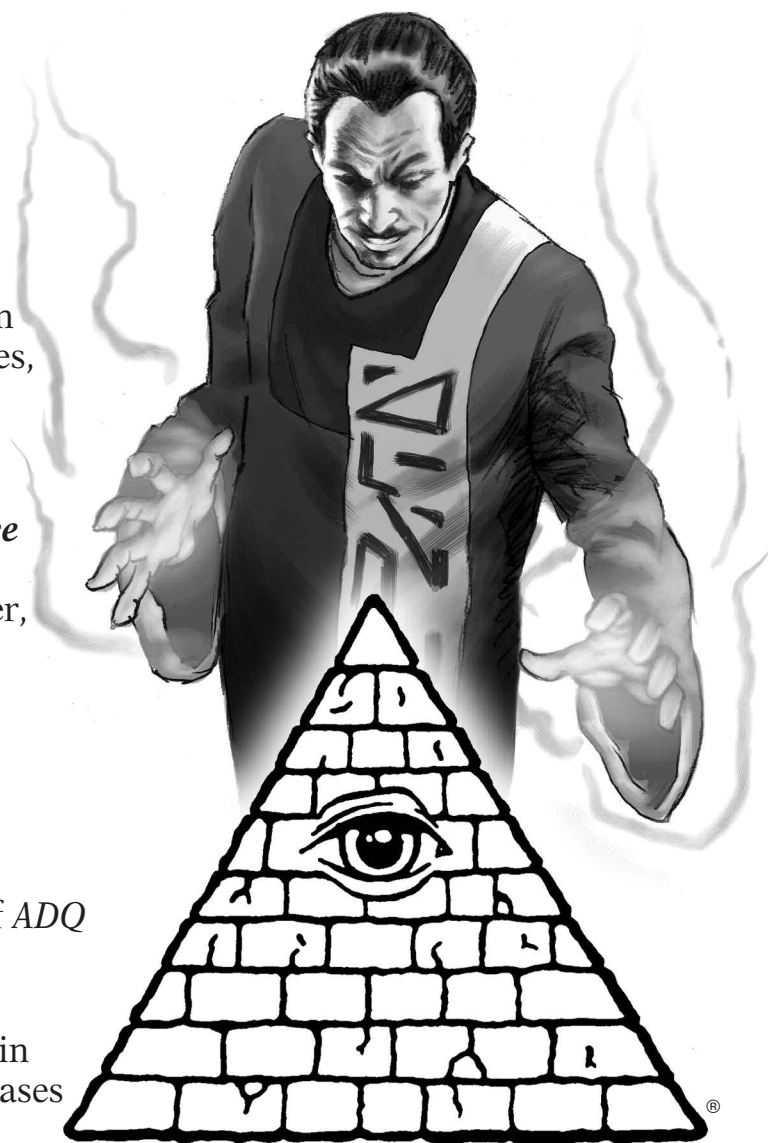
We must remain here and guard the artifact. Dark things will come to claim it, and you must be strong to keep it from them. Without your sacrifice, the world will fall into eternal darkness!

– Chandra, Eternal Darkness: Sanity's Requiem

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