

PLAYER'S GUIDE TO KRONUS



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Riftworld Kronus

Everything you ever wanted to know about Kronus, in brief...

GEOGRAPHY

Kronus is a Riftworld – a self-contained, protected sphere, floating free amid the primal chaos of Riftspace. Within the sphere, it is laid out as a flat disk, covered by water, approximately five hundred miles in diameter. It has several large landmasses with numerous smaller islands. The great city of Minas Romulai occupies the center of the largest island called Iatlos (eye-AT-los).

On Kronus, the sun rises in the east, transits a beautiful blue sky (usually), and sets in the west. It has the typical seasons and is generally pretty green throughout. Not all Riftworlds are so lucky – some are nothing more than deserts or a jumble of lifeless rocks.

Most people in Kronus have a vague notion of the cosmos beyond their Riftworld, but not in any concrete sense. While some might believe that the heavens lie beyond the clouds, and perhaps even that there are other worlds out there, most folks believe only in Kronus and Hades, and think mention of other worlds is at best ridiculous, and at worse, blasphemy. Only a small subset of the well-educated have any real understanding of the various Riftworlds, the transits of the spheres, and the ability to cross between them.

PEOPLE

While there is a broad cross-section of races and peoples on Kronus, and PCs can be of any race desired, there are some general demographic patterns. Minans make up about 80% of the population of Kronus. Thus, Minan culture dominates the landscape in almost all facets, including architecture, government, religion, art, music, interpersonal behavior, and so on. Minan is the common language, and no other languages are technically legal, although there are cases where others are used without overt penalty.

Think of the Minan culture as that of ancient Rome.

RELIGION

The Minans have developed a polytheistic system of worship, centered around the Sirius, god of the East, Ionus, god of the Sun, and Jorus, god of the West. These three all-powerful gods are concerned with celestial obligations and are not seen to interact with, or care about, mortals. However, all three have spawned the Pantheon of lesser deities who represent various aspects of daily life. It is the lesser deities who are thought to walk the land in person, and generally it is to them that most prayers are given. The Pantheon are seen as temperamental and narcissistic, even the "good" gods, and care less about their followers adhering to strict moral standards and far more about being offered tribute, both in sacrifices, as well as in follower actions.

The Triumvirate have their own temples and priesthood, but it is generally accepted that mortals are not able to influence their course of action. The Pantheon, however, are frequently in opposition to each other, and act through their followers. Thus, servitude and sacrifices to the Pantheon are seen as mortals' way of influencing the divine.



GOVERNMENT

Kronus is ruled by the Imperial regime of Minas Romulai, whose current sovereign is the young Nascius Octavian Taurus. He took the throne at 10, and at 13 is almost an adult (Minans mature faster than humans). His reign of three years makes him the longest lived of the seven sons and one daughter of Tarucius Primus Taurus, arguably one of the most accomplished Minan emperors in history. Octavian is the last of Primus' children, and perhaps the one deemed least worthy, but his brothers and sister all died fighting each other, and none of the other four who ruled before him (three did not live to take the throne) lasted more than two years.

The Romulai Senate is an eviscerated body of aging Minan legislators who are generally in charge of domestic policies, while the emperor sees to the enforcement of laws, governance outside the boundaries of Minas Romulai, and the defense of Kronus in general. Although communication with other worlds isn't common, people do transit back and forth from time to time, and any person who finds themselves in Kronus is subject to imperial rule.

The emperor is also responsible for protecting Kronus against incursions from both other Riftworlds, as well as the underworld of Kronus itself, known as Hades.

HADES

While the name Kronus refers alternately to the whole Riftworld, and the "top" of the disk, there is another part entirely – the underworld – called Hades. Hades is a ruined landscape -- dark and haunted. Few ever return from that forsaken realm to talk about it, and those who do are either permanently traumatized, or are members of secret cabals who aren't likely to share their knowledge regardless, so the nature of Hades remains a mystery spoken of by the common folk only in whispers.



AETHER AND ELIXIR

Aether is a form of energy that originates from Riftspace itself. It is like wild elemental power, and in Riftspace lore, forms the basis of all magic.

The flow of Aether is limited in most Riftworlds, since most creatures, upon being exposed directly to anything other than minute amounts, would be burned out of existence by its sheer power. This is not particular to Kronus; all Riftworlds have this concept.

One thing that is different on Kronus is Elixir. Because Aether is at once extremely dangerous and extremely valuable, various manifestations, more manageable than pure Aether, have evolved over the eons in different worlds. On Riftworld Tanth, for example, Aether has a physical form called Dust. It is like an extremely fine powder made up of near microscopic crystals of solid Aether. On Kronus, there is a similar concept, but it is a liquid called Elixir.

Unlike Dust, however, Elixir cannot be found "in the wild." It is created by a practitioner of magic sacrificing their power via different means – sometimes voluntary and sometimes not – and then purifying it into a liquid form. That liquid can then be consumed directly, or in various spells and incantations, to empower magic. Sadly, Elixir also includes the purified life force of the "donor". Only when all the life force is used up and the donor dies can the most powerful Elixir be made.

Being fully drained in this way will cause a person's body to become Voidborn, while their spirit descends to Hades (see Voidborn under Riftspace Race Guide for more info).

Elixir has many uses. If consumed by a spellcaster, it will restore a single used spell slot (if the caster has not used any of them, it will do nothing). The slot restored has to do with the strength of the Elixir; more powerful magical

beings and spellcasters when drained will create a more powerful Elixir, and, of course, if the victim dies during the draining, the Elixir is even more potent still.

Note that daily use of Elixir becomes addictive very quickly, and Elixir withdrawal is absolutely debilitating.

See *Appendix 1: New Magical Items, Sanguine Void Harness* for more information.

Minas Romulai

Minas Romulai is the center of Kronus, geographically, culturally, and in just about every other way.



Guilds and Factions

Life in Kronus, and especially Minas Romulai, is often dictated by the interplay between the various factions. In Kronus, factions control a significant amount of power. While the Emperor rules with absolute authority, the empire cannot function without some kind of feudal system in place. Rather than having a collection of barons, dukes, etc., the empire has guilds and factions. Each is loyal to the crown to various degrees (some not very), and each wields power within Kronus, from the mundane, like consortiums of tradesmen, to the mystical, like priesthoods and secret societies. The empire condones the struggles they wage against each other, often going so far as to pit them against one another, to benefit from their power while letting them keep each other in check.

The following is only a tiny fraction of the guilds and factions that exist in Kronus.

ADYTIS IMMORTALIS

"Mors ante Animam" (Death Before Life)

The Adytis Immortalis ("Death Undying") is one of the most prominent Necromancy Guilds in Minas Romulai, rivaled perhaps only by one or two others (although there are several). Despite its nature, the Adytis is officially sanctioned, and the emperor is not only aware of its existence, but approves, although perhaps he prefers that they "remain in the shadows, where they belong".



The Adytis is ruled by a tiered structure, led at the top by the Primary, a mysterious reanimator of legendary ability. Little is known about her; her true name, her origins, even her appearance are as secretive as the guild she leads. Each level, from the handful of Secundaries to the numerous Quaternaries, have absolute authority over those below them, and only limited exposure to their direct supervisor. Not all members of the guild are actually necromancers; it employs warriors, tradesmen, and laymen for different low-level purposes, and they even have a handful of clerics, wizards, and a warlock.

Although naturally opposed to other Necromancy guilds within Kronus, Adytis' greatest rival happens to be Celaties Occuls, a guild dedicated to infernal magics and worship of the god Vecna. So intense were their disputes that the emperor himself commanded that they reach an accord. Their truce has held for a decade, in part

because they were forced to trade their greatest treasures, the Codex of the Ninth Doom and the Amber Cauldron, in something akin to an exchange of wards.

The Adytis sanctum is tucked away on the backside of Collis Avernus, underground, buried into the hillside.

CELATIES OCCULS

"Celaties Aenigmas Occuls Aeternum" (Eternally Hidden Mysteries of the Eyes)

Celaties Occuls ("Hidden Eyes") is a very old faction, dating back almost to the founding of modern day Minas Romulai. They have existed as a widespread shadowy cult, a recognized religious order, and now, an

acknowledged guild operating legally within Minas Romulai. Their primary purpose is the worship and devotion to the God of Dark Secrets himself, Vecna.

Within their ranks exist all forms of practitioners of dark magic, particularly warlocks. Their erstwhile leader, Zaramex Ethesian, a minan warlock of great power, disappeared some months ago under mysterious circumstances, and no replacement has been officially named, which has led to rumors of a power vacuum and intrigue among the ranks.

Their greatest treasure, the artifact known as the Codex of the Ninth Doom, has been "on loan" to their former rivals, the Adytis Immortalis, while they are in possession of the Adytis' precious treasure, the Amber Cauldron. This swap has served to quell antagonism between the two – slightly – as it had gotten so bad as to spill out into the streets of everyday Minas Romulai.

They are thought to have multiple secretive headquarters throughout Kronus, guarded with heavy illusions and magical booby traps.

THE RED MASKS

"Erythro Larvus Protegium" (The Blood-Red Masks Protect)

Serving as a foil for all these guilds of dark magic are the Red Masks. Some see the Red Masks as a pseudo-law-enforcement agency, some see them as terrorists. They service the harsh demands and unbending laws of Cyrigal, the Watcher. Cyrigal's followers are dedicated to the eradication of all evil magic, and they see the term "evil" as being pretty broad.

Like many factions, the emperor grants the Red Masks tacit approval, and uses them in various ways to further his own goals and to prevent other factions from gaining too much power. The Red Masks themselves, however, greatly dislike the idea that they are pawns to be manipulated. They see their mandate in much more black & white terms – destroy dark magic wherever it is found.

The Red Masks are led by the Paladins, but don't confuse them for truly benevolent warriors. These Paladins would happily put a warlock on the rack and stretch him until he breaks, just for entertainment. Their enforcers wear crimson chainmail and masks that depict the burning eye of Cyrigal. There have been a few recent imperial crackdowns on the Red Masks' open warfare against magic in the streets, which has led them to be a little more discrete about their enforcement techniques. Make no mistake, however, if the numbers and circumstances are favorable, the Red Masks will not hesitate to enforce their draconian mandates on any they deem deserving.

They have numerous bases of operation within and outside of Minas Romulai, which are half-temple, and half-barracks.



Deities of Kronus

The deities of Kronus are a fascinating bunch. The Triumvirate, being the three greater gods, are thought to be very aloof and seen to focus on concerns beyond the kin of mortals. They are all-powerful, and held in great reverence, but otherwise quiet. Whereas the Pantheon of lesser gods, who are thought to walk in disguise among the people, are very influential in daily life, with priesthoods and temples that are constantly scheming.

It is thought that in times past, the Triumvirate have intervened to make "corrections" to the behavior of the lesser gods, even to the point of destroying some who were acting in a way deemed to be too dangerous.

In D&D terms, these deities are Kronan Avatars of gods whose purview extends across Riftspace. On many Riftworlds, the same deities have different names and appearances, but in general their spheres of influence will be identical or very similar.

It is not known if the Triumvirate are representations of greater gods or some other kind of unknown entity. They do not grant spells to their followers, and their actions are seen to be beyond the spheres of mortals, so their true nature remains a mystery. Some suspect that the Triumvirate represents the original Architects of the Riftworlds.

THE TRIUMVIRATE

The Triumvirate are the trio of all powerful gods who are seen to rule both Kronus and the greater cosmos beyond. Their priesthoods are austere and solemn. Each of the Triumvirate has their own temple, but do not have their own individual worshippers, as they are seen as parts of one whole. The same priests who pray at the temple of Sirius in the morning will travel to the temple of Ionus at noon, and Jorus at night.

At different points in Kronan history, the Triumvirate have been believed to be three faces of the *same* god, rather than separate entities. While it is unclear if this is true, it is certain that the three gods function as aspects of one entity. They are depicted as male, following the Minan tendency toward patriarchy.

Each of the three gods of the Triumvirate are believed to be never changing in appearance, gender, or behavior.

They do not grant clerical spells.

Sirius, God of the Morning, "Creating"

Sirius is depicted as the youngest of the Triumvirate, sometimes even as a child. He is seen as the god of creation, of birth and renewal. He is worshipped at dawn. Offerings made to him include old things and things that need renewal, which are burned in cleansing fires. He is believed to be responsible for "rescuing" the sun from the underworld, and starting the chariot that conveys the sun across the sky.

Ionus, God of the Sun, "Knowing"

Ionus is the middle aged version of the Triumvirate. He is seen riding across the sky in the great chariot, shepherding the sun from the east to the west. His position at the zenith of the daylight sky affords him knowledge and understanding of everything in the world. He is neither as energetic and naïve as Sirius, nor as lethargic and jaded as Jorus. Offerings to him include bits of knowledge, usually in the form of writing. It is not intended for such knowledge to be lost, only offered up for his approval, so Triumvirate priests insist that copies be made.

Jorus, God of the Evening, "Undoing"

Jorus is depicted as an old man, hunched, and tired. He is wise beyond mortal comprehension, but jaded, believing that youth is wasted on folly and that knowledge is gained only to be forgotten again. He is the immortal reminder that all things come to an end, and all beginnings have an ending. He shepherds the sun into Hades. Jorus is no more evil than Sirius is good; he is simply the embodiment of the end of things.

THE PANTHEON

The Pantheon are an eclectic group of lesser gods and demigods. Some can trace their origin directly to one of the Triumvirate, while others are demigods spawned from a god and a mortal, and some are even mortals who have ascended. The Pantheon have very specific temples, priesthoods, ceremonies, and agendas, which often conflict with each other. It is not uncommon at all for a given individual to make tributes and prayers to multiple gods, depending on what favors the person wishes (or sins they need to make up for), but they will rarely choose to worship two gods that are in direct conflict with each other, as that is generally seen to provoke divine wrath.

The gods are all known by their appellation and symbol. Almost all are thought to move freely about Kronus, if not many of the Riftworlds, and they do so generally in disguise, able to change appearances and genders freely. The appearance most gods choose is that of a Minan of some persuasion, but many will take on animal forms, or even that of other races if the need, or whim, arises.

While the below list is grouped into good, neutral, and evil, the Kronan Pantheon are all depicted as having mortal personalities and foibles. The good gods are not above squabbling with each other or the occasional bout of narcissistic behavior, and the evil gods are known to sometimes help those in need (although it is usually to further some scheme of their own). Most of all, despite their vast power, they are not even remotely all-knowing (even Zotham cannot see all futures) and are usually as famed for their mistakes as for their victories.

Abadosh, "The Moon Lord" (NG) *God of the moon, hunting, wisdom, protection, and healing*

Angra, "The North Star" (LG) *Goddess of wisdom, fair play, loyalty, and courage*

Cerene, "The Provider" (NG) *Goddess of agriculture, creation, birth, and mothers.*

Moradin, "The Master Craftsman" (LG) *God of honesty, fair play, and craftsmanship*

Chenadar, "The Laughing Star" (CG) *Goddess of luck, adventure, practical jokes, gambling, and thievery*

Brandobaris, "The Wayfarer" (CG) *God of minstrels, wanders, and explorers.*

Cyrigal, "The Watcher" (LN) *God of vigilance (against magic)*

Cyrigal, known as The Watcher, is the self-appointed guardian against the proliferation of evil magic, and takes his duties very seriously. His followers are known as the "Red Masks" and display his symbol of a burning eye. They see most magic (other than their own, of course) as "evil" regardless of what it is or how it is used. They see it as their duty to destroy such magic along with anyone who would dare to use it.

Marduk, "The Founder" (LN) *God of artifice, civilization, fire, and law*

Aphreia, "The Nymph" (CN) *Goddess of beauty, love, wild places, nature, and art*

Zotham, "The Comet" (LN) *God of knowledge, portents, the future, and dreams*

Mirwinannin, "The Tidehunter" (N) *God of the seas and sea creatures*

Namsheira, "The Stormrider" (CN) *Goddess of the sky, storms, thunder, and wind*

Baphomet, "The Warlord" (LE) *God of war, bloodlust, conquest, and destruction*

Poujoulla, "The Witch" (NE) *Goddess of sorcery, secrets, witchcraft, and curses*

Lloth, "The Spider" (CE) *Goddess of spiders, hate, vengeance, and seduction*

Vecna, "The Unblinking Eye" (NE) *God of secrets, evil, betrayals, and necromancy*

Torog, "The Jailor" (LE) *God of jailors, punishment, and torture*

Orcus, "Lord of Undeath" (CE) *God of evil and undeath*

Athanatiel (a-THAN-a-teel), "The Raven Queen" (N)

There is a final deity that does not fit into either the Triumvirate or the Pantheon – Athanatiel, "The Raven Queen", Goddess of Hades. She is not worshipped on Kronus, except by the most desperate, or twisted, of individuals. It is thought that she was once one of the Triumvirate and was exiled by the other three, or perhaps she was an abandoned or disliked goddess who was forced to dwell in the world below. Athanatiel dwells in the Tower of Ash in the dreaded Necropolis, where she judges the dead and the damned.

She has a strange relationship with the Pantheon and their followers, at once feared and yet admired in many ways. It is said that the Raven Queen learns everything a mortal knew upon their death, and as such she has a wealth of knowledge that would rival both Zotham and Vecna. The evil gods, particularly Vecna, always seem to be interested in leveraging her knowledge for their own ends, and the good gods are often seen as trying to keep this from happening.

She rules Hades without mercy or empathy for those who dwell there, and yet she is not above doing deals to get her what she wants. Mortals and some of the evil gods have been known to treat with her in this way, but the other gods are very loathe to do so, since her motives are absolutely inscrutable.



Appendix 1: New Rules & Mechanics

There are a couple of new rules and mechanics in place for this game, just for funsies. These are all taken from other sources or have already been implemented in other 5e games.

BOONS

A boon is a story-driven reward, generally in response to cooperative role playing or overcoming skill challenges. Boons take the form of a usable enhancement of some kind. Some boons can be "cashed in" only at certain times (for example, an NPC might grant a boon that can be used to purchase better gear at a shop) whereas others might be usable whenever the PC sees fit (like a magic token that can be used as a bonus action to grant temp hit points). Boons are not "loot" from slain monsters, but rather something that is built into the story.

At most, a PC may only carry one boon at any given time. If a PC is offered a boon while already possessing one, they must immediately use their existing boon, or be forced to choose between the two. Some boons have time limits (must use within 24 hours, etc.)

A Boon is not the same as Inspiration. The former is given for character actions, particularly non-combat, whereas Inspiration is given for player actions, like coming up with an idea to save the party or telling a hilarious joke.

INCANTATIONS

Incantations are a specific type of ritual spell that requires multiple practitioners, typically magnified significantly by devices or other complex material components. These spells are usually reserved for very powerful casters, and involve things like summoning mighty creatures, bending reality, creating potent magic items, and the like.

The number of practitioners and how they participate vary from incantation to incantation. Typically there is a lead caster who focuses the energy, directs the spell, and is under the heaviest burden, while the others simply provide additional magical energy in support. Sometimes the incantation requires two simultaneous spells to be woven together, which might require three practitioners, two to perform the spells, and the lead caster to combine them.

Incantations are addressed only briefly here for context, but the actual incantations, their requirements, and effects, are described elsewhere. On Kronus, guilds and secret magical societies are often the only ones who are capable of incantations. They are a particular favorite of Necromancers and Warlocks, as they may allow those casters to access magic that would be beyond the capability of any single one, regardless of skill.

Typical incantations require a skill challenge to be successful.

SKILL CHALLENGES

A skill challenge represents a very difficult task that either requires more than one person, or more than one person greatly increases the chances of success. Unlike the "help" option with normal skill checks, in which the person helped gains advantage on the die roll, skill checks require all persons involved to be working directly on it, and the help option is not available for rolls.

Skill challenges list the skill involved (sometimes can be one or the other, and the character gets to choose) and the DC involved for each roll. Then the successes/failures are listed, like 2/2 or 3/2, etc. The first number indicates the number of successful rolls needed to succeed at the challenge, and the number of failures needed before the challenge fails. Natural 20's are always considered 2 successful rolls, and the opposite is true for natural 1's.

In theory, as many people as desired can participate in a skill challenge, with limitations in the text. Perhaps there is a timer going, and there is only so much time to perform the tasks needed, or there is only so much room to fit people in.

Appendix 2: New Magic Items

Amber Cauldron, the	
Type	Artifact, Lesser
Aura	Necromancy
Frequency	Artifact
Activation/Use	See below
Cost	Not available for sale
Requirements	See below



The Amber Cauldron is an artifact of great renown. Like many items of similar power, it has a notable place in the histories of different people, and then seems to disappear from the written record, only to reappear decades later in the possession of someone else, or on a different Riftworld entirely.

The Cauldron radiates necrotic energy and is aligned neutral evil. It is sentient, with intelligence, wisdom, and charisma of 12 each. It is thought to have been originally created by Orcus, although other gods and entities have claimed credit as well. It understands common and infernal and can communicate telepathically at distances up to one mile but is loath to do so.

The Cauldron does not obey any single user and does not require attunement. Instead, it obeys a certain set of prescribed incantations intended to command it. To utilize it, three individuals must perform the incantations. There is no lead caster for the incantation; all three must perform the incantations identically. Aether is siphoned from each incanter into the cauldron, such that they lose 5 levels instantly, which are gained back at the rate of one level per week of rest. If an incanter loses all levels due to the incantation, it will fail, and all three individuals must make a DC 16 charisma save or die instantly.

If the incantation succeeds, each incanter will suffer the effects of one minor detrimental property (DMG pp 220) and enjoy two minor beneficial properties (DMG pp 219) for as long as they are recovering from the level loss. During that time, no other person can attempt the incantation – it will simply fail without effect (i.e. it can essentially be used once per five weeks).

For 24 hours following a successful incantation, the Amber Cauldron does the following:

- ❖ A single corpse can be placed within the cauldron. That corpse will emerge in three rounds as a skeleton, zombie, ghoul, or wight, depending on the CR that the creature had at the time of death. Only corpses that died since the completion of the incantation can be so raised. They are under the command of the three incanters.
- ❖ A single living entity may enter the cauldron. In one minute, the entity will emerge as a Revenant (MM pg 259) if they have at least 6 hit dice. The Revenant is completely free-willed (i.e. it does not have a vengeance quest), but otherwise has the same stat block. If the entity has less than 6 hit dice, it will instantly die (no save) and then be transformed as if a corpse above.
- ❖ All creatures raised by the Cauldron will persist for the 24 hour duration, after which they will revert either to a normal corpse, or, in the case of Revenants, back to the individual. In the latter case, the entity must make a DC 16 charisma save or suffer one *minor detrimental property* **permanently** thereafter.

Rumor has held for centuries that the Amber Cauldron could only be destroyed by a living, willing victim, voluntarily entering the cauldron, which would then shatter it. This is incorrect, of course, but close: the Cauldron

can only be shattered by a living, willing *celestial* climbing into it, which would destroy the celestial's soul, in addition to the artifact itself.

Other attempts to rein in the power of the Amber Cauldron have been made, since few, if any, celestials would ever be willing to allow their very soul to be annihilated. The most common approach to this is to hide or destroy the incantations needed to command the Cauldron. Despite this having been done numerous times, those incantations always turn up again, almost as if the Cauldron is able to dictate them to those willing to listen.

Crescents of Baphomet	
Type	Artifact, Greater
Aura	Abjuration, Transformation
Frequency	Artifact
Activation/Use	See below
Cost	Not available for sale
Requirements	See below



Of the many mighty weapons wielded by the gods, perhaps none is more feared than the chosen weapon of Baphomet. It is said that when he did battle with his violent, scheming twin Gizzach, Baphomet struck such a ringing blow that the two crescent axes they fought with merged into a single double-bladed one, which he then used to behead his brother.

Like many artifacts, the Crescents have appeared here and there throughout the history of the Riftworlds, always in the hands of a particularly violent warlord, whose victories were many, but short-lived. The weapon is sentient, with an intelligence of 12 and a wisdom and charisma of 8. It is aligned neutral evil. It can speak the common tongue, but rarely does so, except perhaps to urge its current wielder toward greater acts of bloodshed.

The Crescents is a +4 long handled battle-axe, with blades of icy white Argonite and a handle made of pure jet-black Volarium. It has the properties of a *vorpal*, *wounding* and *dancing* weapon. The blood of its thousands of victims continuously drips from the blade. It is extremely heavy; only creatures with a 20 strength can pick it up, and it requires 22 or higher to wield properly.

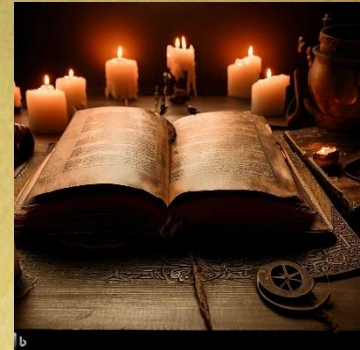
The weapon grants two minor and two major beneficial properties to its wielder, while inflicting them with one major detrimental property (DMG pp 219-223). Whenever the wielder is within sight of their enemies, the Crescents will urge them to enter combat, even if other tactics, such as diplomacy, are underway. A DC 18 wisdom save is required to resist this urge for 24 hours. If the enemies happen to be centaurs – the Crescent's sworn nemesis – the save is made at disadvantage.

If the weapon's blood thirst is not quenched on a regular – and frequent – basis, it will disappear of its own accord, only to turn up elsewhere, usually in the middle of a bloody conflict. Victories won with the Crescents in hand are short-lived, as peace can never be attained through such wanton violence, and the conquered will always rise up against their conqueror as soon as the axe has moved on.

Legend has it that the weapon was once stolen from Baphomet himself and carried into a village of centaurs, whose shamans meant to destroy it. It animated using its dancing weapon property and slaughtered almost all of

them. It is further rumored that the only way to destroy the weapon is to bathe it in the tears of the descendants of those few centaurs who escaped the massacre.

Codex of the Ninth Doom	
Type	Artifact, Lesser
Aura	Necromancy, Conjuraton
Frequency	Artifact
Activation/Use	See below
Cost	Not available for sale
Requirements	See below



There are many legendary tomes in Riftspace, but few are spoken of with such awe and trepidation as the Codex of the Ninth Doom. It is said that the witch Iggwilv, in her quest to avenge herself upon the demon lord Graz'zt, appealed to Poujoulla, asking her for the secret to impose her will upon the greatest of demons. In response, the goddess brought a terrifying nightmare upon her servant which lasted an entire year. Iggwilv may well have emerged with severe psychological damage, but in her sleep, she inscribed the Codex of the Ninth Doom.

The Codex's 99 pages each contain the secret incantation necessary to bring forth a specific, notable fiend (demon, devil, or other such creature) from beyond the Veil. The incantations only summon such creatures, however; they do not bind or compel. Therefore, extensive preparation is required by any incanters who expect to survive such an encounter. The Codex has been used over the eons to commune with fiends, request favors or spells, and even to bring them across the Veil into the Riftworlds. Each incantation requires an extensive ceremony, typically involving many incanters and often thousands of gold pieces worth of materials. Stories persist that the final page in the book contains the incantation specific to Graz'zt himself, and that it requires one hundred incanters – ninety nine of which will perish with the casting of the spell!

Each incantation can be attempted only once, regardless of success. Upon use, the page turns, and once a page is turned, it cannot be returned to. When all 99 pages have been turned, the Codex invariably disappears, only to turn up somewhere else at a later point in history back at page one.

Any person who touches one of the pages must make a DC 18 charisma save, or be compelled, as if under a powerful *Suggestion* effect, to perform the incantation written thereon (regardless of which fiend it summons). The person so affected will be the (temporary) Master of the Codex. They become obsessed with it and the incantation will occupy all their waking thoughts. They will still take all required steps (gathering materials, preparing the summoning space, bringing together other incanters, et al) but will have a tendency towards carelessness, such that there is a 50% chance that the summons will fail in some way and end in disaster. More than one fiend has been unleashed upon an unsuspecting Riftworld in this manner.

The Master of the Codex will suffer one minor and one major detrimental property (DMG pp 219-223) as well as enjoy two minor and one major beneficial property. There can be only one Master; as soon as someone else touches it, whether they make the above save or not, the current Master is no longer tied to the Codex. Most masters end their time by becoming victims of their own failed incantation. They rarely would allow another individual to look upon the Codex, let alone get close enough to touch it.

As with all artifacts, there exists a specific, prescribed method to destroy the Codex permanently. In this case, the book must be read aloud, *backward*, starting at the end and going to the beginning, even reversing the order of

the letters of each word. Unsurprisingly, no one has ever fathomed how to do this, given that the pages only seem to turn in one direction.

Elixir I through IX	
Type	Potion
Aura	Transmutation (Radiant)
Frequency	Uncommon to Very Rare
Activation/Use	1 action to consume, **
Cost	Elixir I 100gp, Elixir II 250gp, Elixir III 500gp. Generally not available for purchase at IV and above, and if so, would be exponentially more expensive.
Requirements	See below



Elixir is created through a process that drains both the Aether and life force out of a living creature – willing or not. The more powerful the creature, the greater the Elixir that is produced. A creature that is fully drained produces arguably the most potent Elixir.

The uses of Elixir are too many to list here – just about any kind of magical item creation or powerful incantation requires some of the precious substance. The specifics of these will describe how much is needed and what the effects are. The most common use of Elixir is to restore spell slots. A full dose of Elixir will restore a single spell slot of the level of the Elixir, or one spell slot of the highest level accessible to the drinker, if the Elixir is more powerful than they can use. I.e. an Elixir IV will restore a single 4th level spell slot for a 7th level sorcerer, but only a 3rd level one for a 5th level sorcerer.

In the case of spellcasters who always use slots at max level, such as warlocks and necromancers, the elixir must be high enough level to fill the max slot, or it is not effective. I.e. a vial of Elixir II would not be useful to a 5th level warlock who uses 3rd level spell slots.

Regardless of the spell slot restored, Elixir cannot be used more than once per long rest. Frequent use of Elixir is known to have fairly potent withdrawal effects.

Mirror of True Reflections	
Type	Wondrous Item
Aura	Divination
Frequency	Rare
Activation/Use	Action, see below
Cost	Not available for sale
Requirements	No attunement requirements



These mirrors come in all sizes and shapes. Some are heavily jeweled and made of expensive materials, while others have a humbler appearance. Although they will radiate divination magic, they otherwise function as a normal mirror, until the keyword is spoken. Once per day for ten minutes, when activated, the Mirror will allow any onlooker to see reflections that penetrate illusions up to the 4th spell level.

In addition, this mirror will always show reflections that penetrate cantrip-level illusions, such as the minor illusion spell.

Skyblinder Staff	
Type	Staff
Aura	Evocation
Frequency	Rare
Activation/Use	Reaction, see below
Cost	Not available for sale
Requirements	Attuned



This is a +1 quarterstaff, made of twisty wood with claw marks all over it. While holding it, you gain +1 bonus to spell attack rolls.

If a flying creature you can see within 30 feet of you makes an attack roll against you, you can use your reaction to hold the staff aloft and cause it to flare with light. The attacker has disadvantage on the attack roll, and it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be blinded until the start of its next turn. The staff has 3 charges for this, with 1-3 of them being restored each morning. If the last charge is spent, there is a 5% chance that the staff is permanently destroyed.

Spirit-Lock Ring	
Type	Ring
Aura	Abjuration
Frequency	Rare
Activation/Use	Passive
Cost	Not available for sale
Requirements	Attuned



A Spirit-Lock ring is a form of protection against attacks targeting a person's spirit, including once they are deceased. The user of the ring needs to be attuned to it, and thereafter, it conveys the following effects:

- ❖ The user is immune to attacks that attempt to capture the spirit, including spells like Magic Jar.
- ❖ The user's spirit immediately goes to its home plane after death, and its body immediately turns to ash. This prevents the user from being subject to spells that attempt to restore the spirit to the body, even temporarily, such as *revivify* and *speak with dead*.
- ❖ Powerful spells, such as reincarnation, resurrection, and wish will bypass the power of this ring.

Void Harness, Sanguine

Type	Wonderous Item
Aura	Necrotic
Frequency	Legendary
Activation/Use	See below
Cost	25,000 gp and up. Generally not found for sale.
Requirements	Attuned, See Below



The infamous Void Harness is one of the greatest, and most nefarious of inventions in any of the Riftworlds. There are a number of such devices scattered throughout Riftspace. The version that is most prevalent (although still very rare) in Kronus is called the Sanguine Void Harness.

In order to use a Void Harness, a character must be attuned to it. Some harnesses are very complex and require weeks of research in order to be used effectively, while others are much simpler, although all are terrible in their own way. A Sanguine Void Harness is one of the easier ones to use. It needs to be attached to a living creature who possesses innate magic power. On Kronus, any spell caster is considered to have innate magic, as even a wizard who must study and prepare spells from a book still has innate power – otherwise the complexity of the spells would simply be beyond their grasp.

Once the harness is attached to a victim, it can be activated, usually by some kind of physical switch, or perhaps a command word. Once this happens, the magic power and life force of the victim is drawn into the device by overwhelming necrotic force. Any creature subjected to this must make a charisma save of *at least* DC 15 (harnesses vary in power) each round. For every failure, they suffer the loss of one effective level, including hit points, spell slots, and all other associated attributes.

If the save is made, the level draining process is immediately arrested, and that harness will not work on the same victim again for 24 hours. If all a character's levels are drained, that character's body immediately becomes a common Voidborn, while their spirit is transported to Hades (as long as they are in Kronus). A character whose spirit is restored to their body (or resisted leaving by various means) becomes a Voidborn character (see new races, Voidborn Aetheric).

The drained levels do not regenerate with a short or long rest. Each *week* of rest will restore one lost level. A *Greater Restoration* spell will allow all the lost levels to be restored after one full day of rest.

The life and magic drained by a Void Harness is converted into Aether, although how that Aether is then utilized varies. Sanguine Void Harnesses can be used to transfer the Aether directly into another person or an incantation, but most often they are connected to an Elixir Condenser, which then will produce a single vial of Elixir, with one Elixir level for every two levels drained. For example, a 7th level sorcerer, drained of 6 levels, would produce a vial of Elixir III, while if that same victim was only drained of 5 levels, it would produce Elixir II. When a victim is fully drained and killed, the effective level of the Elixir goes up by 1, if applicable, so that poor level 7 sorcerer, fully drained, would produce a vial of Elixir IV.

Void Harnesses of any kind are illegal in many worlds, for obvious reasons.