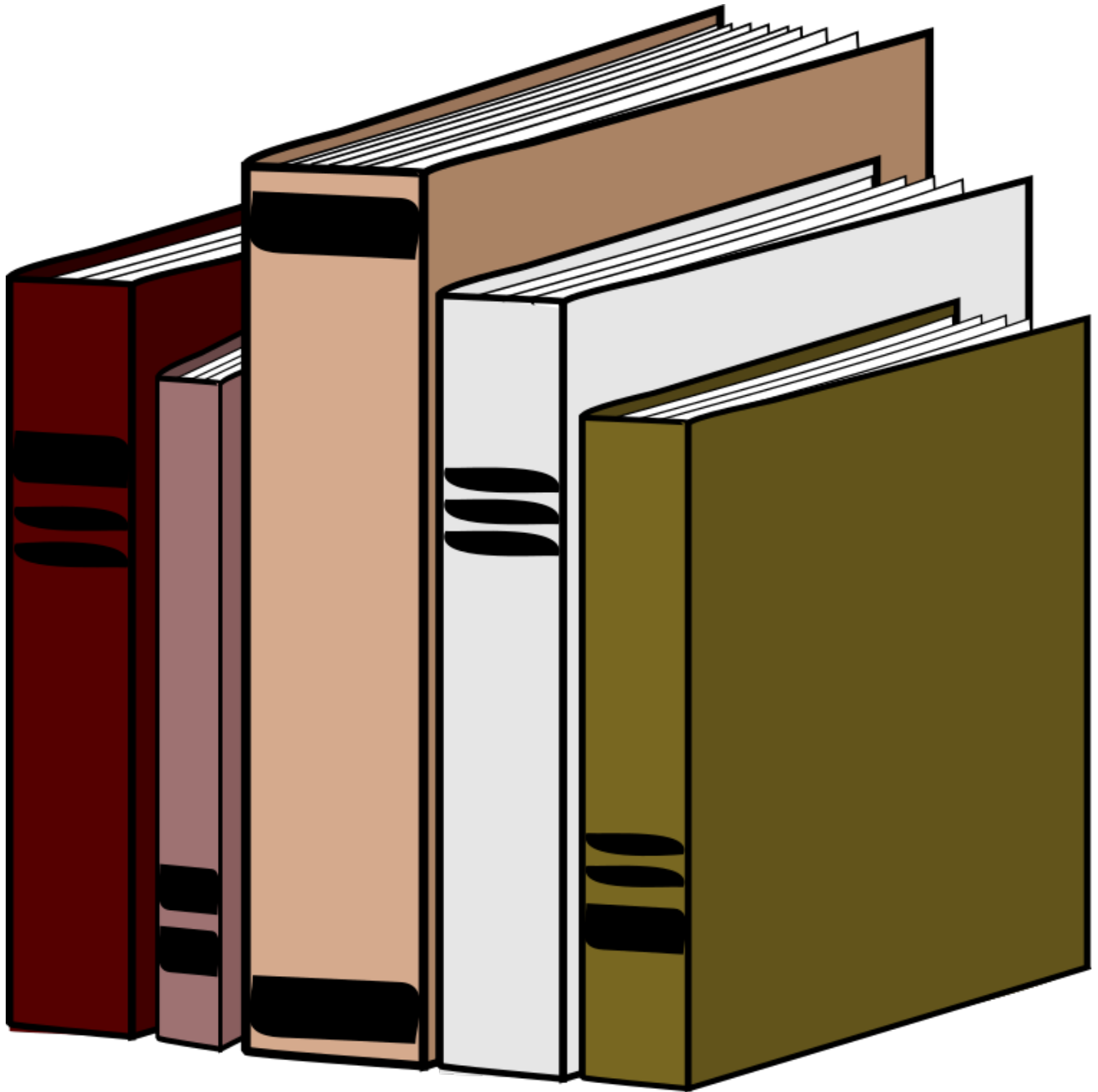


MOX'S MARVELOUS GUIDE TO MAGICAL BOOKS

Revised 2023-04-21



11 New Books to Inform and Assist Players Of Cypher System,
By Mox The Kobold Paladin, As Told To Aaron "Crash" Smith

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Greetings again, fellow adventurer! Once again, I, Mox the Kobold Paladin, am here to provide you, [insert name here], with valuable information that will aid you on your journeys!

You will likely not be surprised, based on my obvious literary prowess, to learn that I am very well read. I absolutely *adore* books! Even the ones without pictures! Why, I was halfway through the pamphlet *So You Want To Be A Paladin* before I realized it was for the correspondence course that made me the icon of paladinhood that you see illustrated before you today!



Now, you would think that as a user of divine magic I would not get a lot of use out of the books I and my adventuring party find during our travels. In regards to spell books you would be right. We hand those over to the wizard and they're quite happy to have them. But, and I cannot emphasize this enough, *not every magical book is a spell book!*

Also, not every book is a dusty, 5,000 page tome of esoteric knowledge. Some of them are actually good reads! Most of them, in fact!

And so I've sat down to pen this second of my educational works - a book about books! How meta is that?!

Now, fellow literary enthusiast, you might look upon some of the entries in this document and declare "That's not a book!" I can see that argument, I really can. Our barbarian makes it regularly, in part because some of these things are short enough to actually maintain their interest.

But do not all of these works have pages? Pages with writing on them? That can be read? In my mind, that makes them books, and so I've decided to share them with you here.

Hopefully, dear fellow adventurer, you find my writing as enjoyable as I found the fascinating and magical literary works I've covered on the following pages.

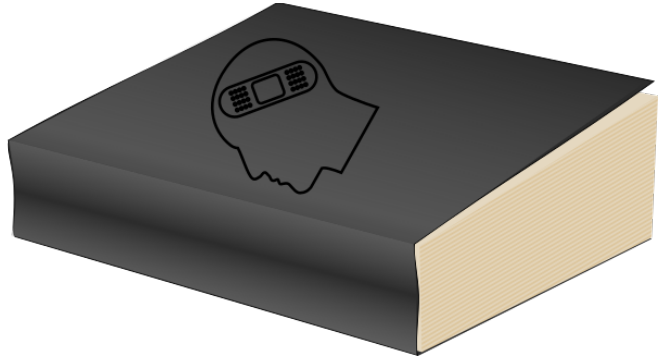
“The Book”

I know, I know, I spent significant word count in my introduction going on about how I love to read and how most books aren't thousands of pages long, and now here I am starting off with a book that should *not* be read and has more pages than I'd care to count.

But this book is still relevant! I mean, sure, it's filled with some kind of obscure legalese from a long-dead civilization that literally hurts to read, but that's what makes it useful! All of that brain-melting content is so intense that it's barely contained in the pages. Why, it's a risk just to decipher the name, which is why we just started calling it “The Book.”

So we gave it to the barbarian, as they were least likely to try to sneak a peek inside. In a pinch, it makes for a super powerful ranged weapon. If you throw it hard enough, all the pain and suffering of trying to comprehend the contents literally lifts out of the page and into the brain (or equivalent) of your target!

This is, by the way, our barbarian's favorite non-illustrated book of all time. At least we think it is. None of us are willing to flip through and check to see if there are any diagrams inside. I shudder to think what treatises they'd be meant to clarify.



Cypher, Level: 1d6

You may select a target and verbally declare a rule or regulation in which the target is in violation. If the GM agrees this rule or regulation is relevant in this case, throwing “The Book” at that target and making a successful Light Weapon attack roll does 2 Intellect damage per level. If the GM has decided that the rule or regulation cited by you was not relevant, the damage is reduced by half.

Regardless of the results, “The Book” is not sturdy enough to be thrown twice.

Book of Convoluted and often Contradictory Regulations

So there we were, in prison.

Well, by “we,” I mean “everyone in my party but me.”

Apparently they’d been arrested on some trumped up false charges, just because the rogue happened to be right next to the recently robbed bank with three sacks full of gems.

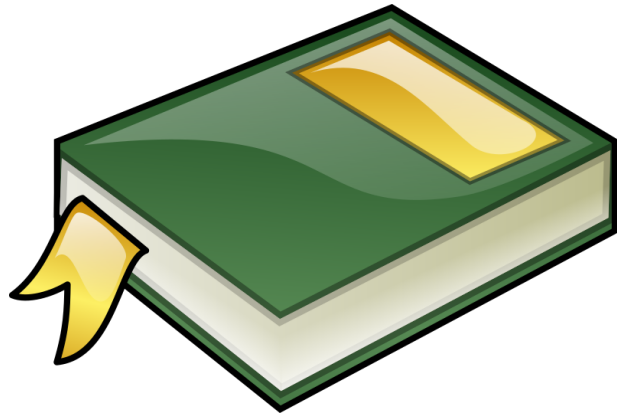
And the barbarian was trying to have a nice relaxing drink where the bar fight broke out.

And the warlock was next to that orphanage with a lit torch and...

Look, it’s best not to go into the rest of the details, but I know these people. They’re my frie- uh, I know these people. They probably didn’t do anything wrong.

So I slapped on a fake mustache made from hair from the ranger’s animal companion (it’ll grow back... I think...), adopted the moniker “Maximus Oratoriam, eXquire” (MOX, for short), and marched into the prison, demanding that my friends be released on their own recognizance while the prison’s bakery was brought up to code to match the strictest KOSHA (That’s Kobold OSHA, by the way...) regulations.

The bard said they’d never seen a more farcical display. I’m not sure what that meant but I’m sure it was high praise.



Cypher, Level: 1d6

This staple of lawyermancy can be used to confuse a being capable of understanding a language spoken by you into believing they need to comply with one simple demand of yours upon a successful Intellect check, eased by $\frac{1}{2}$ the cypher’s level (round up).

Targets immune to charm effects are immune to this item, targets being attacked by you or an ally have advantage on their save, and the effect ends early if the target is attacked by you or an ally before they have completed your demand. Demands that are too complicated or long term (GM’s discretion) or that require the target to harm anyone will not work.

The target will consider using the Book of Convoluted and often Contradictory Regulations to be a belligerent act from the beginning and will only begrudgingly acquiesce to the demands. The target may, if possible, undo or reverse whatever they were compelled to do as soon as you are out of sight.

Chroma's Abridged Guide to Ship Operations

Full disclosure, I have no idea who this "Chroma" person is. With that said, they seem to be a genius!

I mean, really, who could have imagined a situation where you were sailing a ship made to resemble a giant dragonfly painted candy apple red through the Luminiferous Ether when suddenly one of the flare rods goes out of skew on the treadle and the gophers that collectively form the armor that protects you from hard vacuum are all on strike until their weekly allotment of raisins is increased by 10%?

Chroma, that's who, and whomever they are, they seem to have written that situation like it's actually occurred.

I live for the exciting life of and adventurer, but maybe not one that's nearly as exciting as this Chroma person's.

Anyway, as situation specific as this manual happens to be, it also seems to provide some decent insight into piloting any insect-model spacecraft, maintaining paint jobs, avoiding vehicle related inquisitions, and, oddly enough, space faring rodent-based union disputes.

I'm sure it'll come in handy when we need to fix the axle on our old cart, too.



Cypher, Level: 1d6

This book contains a single, oddly specific how-to for repairing, maintaining, or operating a vehicle. You may use this book to ease by $\frac{1}{2}$ the cypher's level (round up) any task involving repairing, maintaining, or operating a non-organic vehicle of any complexity.

The specificity of this manual is so narrow that once Chroma's Abridged Guide to Ship Operations has been read, the exact situation for which it has been used will only be relevant for a number of days equal to the cypher's level.

Any similar situations afterwards will have just enough differences to prevent this book from being relevant again.

It is in fact possible for this book to be found after someone else has already used it, leaving it useless for anything beyond its literary merit. Most library copies will fit into this category.

Chroma's Out of Date Science Journal

You know how when you go to the dentist and they have like 50,000 magazines in there that have been donated that no one reads anywhere else?

Well, kobolds go through more teeth than the average sapient being (we're kind of like sharks, or rather, they're kind of like us), so I get to spend enough time there to actually finish them all!

Apparently my regular dentist got a lot of old science magazines donated a while back. Most of the mailing labels were cut off, of course, but quite a few still had this Chroma person's name on them.

Anyway, these things were pretty old, but so fascinating! And useful! Like, when the dentist told me I don't have insurance so I needed to pay for the 42 extractions out of pocket, I got to wave one of them around and say "No! In truth, extracted teeth are transmuted by a natural force into valuable coinage, as detailed in the Tooth Fairy Hypothesis!"

Naturally, the dentist wasn't hearing any of it, but their secretary took a look in the tray where my pile of former teeth was and managed to pull their boss aside for a little while. I scampered out of there while they were distracted so I don't know what was so important.

Anyway, I need a new dentist.



Cypher, Level: 1d6

You may use this journal to explain a scientific principle that will allow you or an ally to treat a failed task as a success. As the owner of the journal it is your responsibility to describe the "science" behind why this effect takes place, but your proposed theory can be 100% fictional and you are encouraged to make it as fanciful as possible.

For a number of hours equal to the level of the cypher, the laws of the universe conform to your outdated theory at least in regards to whomever made the "successful" task. After that, the Science Journal's publisher issues a retraction and this issue ceases to be effective.

This is not a book written by Chroma, famed moon-dwelling kobold adventurer and inventor, so much as it is a periodical to which Chroma was subscribed.

Daldain's Permit of Permissions

So you know that book of regulations I wrote about a few pages back? This is kind of like the opposite of that. In a way. Sort of.

The regulations book makes others have to follow your rules. This permit doesn't make them do anything except let you do things yourself.

There was this time when we got word that there was a cursed scroll mixed in with a shipment sent to a local magic shop. Now we're a rag-tag band of adventurers, so we knew no one would believe us, but our wizard was able to wave this permit around when they walked inside and said "I'm a scroll inspector, I need to check all of your scrolls for curses!"

And the shop keep just stood aside and let it happen! They even waited on a few other customers during the process.

Apparently there were quite a few cursed scrolls, based on the number of parchments the wizard had to store away in their pack to remove them from circulation.

You'd think the shop keep would be grateful for the service our wizard provided. Maybe they are, but the rest of the party has no interest in going back to that town to find out.

Come to think of it, I don't think we've ever been to the same town twice.

Well, except for the one my dentist was in, but I've a feeling we shouldn't visit there any time soon, either.



Cypher, Level: 1d6+4

You may present this permit while verbally declaring you have permission to engage in any activity that is neither violent nor harmful. (You can use it to say you may enter a heavily guarded throne room, but not to say you may assassinate the tyrant inside said throne room.) When doing so, make an Intellect task (eased by 2) to confuse anyone present who would normally try to stop you for a number of minutes equal to the cypher's level. They will complete their other responsibilities but otherwise not get in your way.

After the duration has expired those who were confused realize that they have been tricked. Failed Intellect tasks allow this to be realized instantly.

Beings immune or resistant to being charmed are immune or resistant (respectively) to this effect. Beings that are incapable of hearing or understanding the language you use when making your declaration are also not affected.

This permit is very delicate, and will be too dogeared after waving it around for it to look authentic again.

Gox's Illustrated Manual of Physical Exertions

I am sorry to say the barbarian and I don't really get along. We're not at each other's throats are anything, we just don't see eye to eye on a lot of things.

And not just because of the height difference, either.

They like yelling, smashing things, and tossing small lizard-like party members long distances as recreational activities. I can see the cathartic nature of the yelling, but I'm just not into the other two things and how I am personally asked to participate in them.

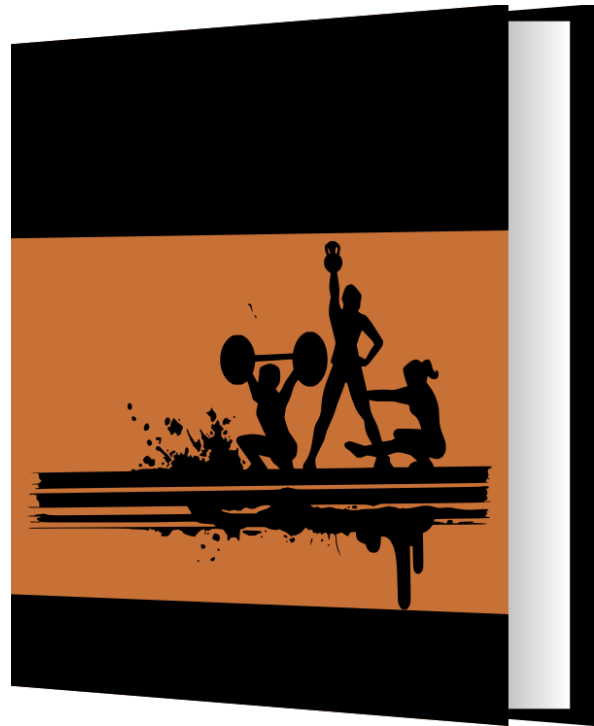
For my part, I love books, but most of them fall into the "things" portion of the "smashing things" category of recreation I just mentioned.

There are a few notable exceptions, and this book is one of them. I've seen our barbarian friend read on occasion, when they have to, but this book right here? They'll study it for *hours!*

OK, they're usually looking at the illustrations, but still, this book is full of insights!

Like, the last time I was flipping through it, I found a page that showed how someone of small stature might be able to contest being grappled by someone intending to throw them across a chasm to scout ahead of the party, and wouldn't you know it, I managed to avoid being thrown across the chasm!

... it was a very long climb back up to the top, though.



Cypher, Level: 1d6

After declaring a Might task, you may consult this book for 1 minute in order to ease that specific task by $\frac{1}{2}$ the level of the cypher (round up). The benefits of consulting this book are lost within 1 minute of consulting it, regardless of whether or not the Might roll is made.

The book is dog-eared with a scuffed cover and it smells strongly of bacon grease. The grease has gotten into the binding, causing it to fall apart after being consulted.

Guide to Scenic Vistas That Certainly Won't Kill You



Cypher, Level: 1d6

This booklet was published by a local tourist board and paints an image of the region in which it is found as seen through rose colored glasses.

For a number of days equal to the cypher's level, you may consult this guide to locate specific areas in the region. (After that the pulp pages begin to disintegrate.) Examples include a nearby blacksmith's shop, an inn, a cave system's entrance, a fortress' war room, and the nearest restroom that includes a diaper changing station. It is only useful in the geopolitical region in which it is found (boundaries determined by the GM).

It was supposed to be a vacation. We went to a town that had no evil overlords, no zombie outbreaks, no dragon attacks, and, and I stress this as a must for any tourist attraction, no cults dedicated to the unknowable things that reside in the dark spaces between the stars.

I mean, surely, the guide would have mentioned those things at least in passing, right?

It turns out that while the guide gave excellent directions to important landmarks like impenetrable fortresses with secret entrances, empty graveyards, caves filled with treasure, and shrines built before the dawn of history, it didn't mention any of the things from two paragraphs ago.

Not even once!

Worst. Vacation. Ever.

The book will make no mention of any threats or obstacles that must be avoided. It may provide concise directions to a treasury, but will neglect to point out the pit traps, door that is actually made of lava, or the 20 armed guards that are waiting just on the other side of the lava door.

It will, however, let you know that the intricate bas-relief carvings covering the walls on the way to the treasure room were installed 153 years ago by the wise, kind, and generous leader known as "Maximilian the Unnecessarily Cruel." Maximilian led his followers into a golden age of prosperity and the writers of this booklet are certain he only adopted his title to scare off the local bandits, which must have worked because there are no bandits in the region.

Any you may have encountered must surely have moved in after the publication of this guide.

Marwyse's Encyclopedia of Stuff I Totally Knew

I'm pretty sure this book is a joke. At the very least, it's not very helpful at all.

When I looked through it, all I found was stuff I already knew. Usual stuff, like my life story, my correspondence school transcript, and even the guide to magical potions that I wrote. (I should probably find the publisher and ask for some royalties...)

When the barbarian asked to take a look I was more than happy to share. After all, they usually don't take an interest in me beyond my ability to be thrown long distances.

Which is what they said the book said. On every page.

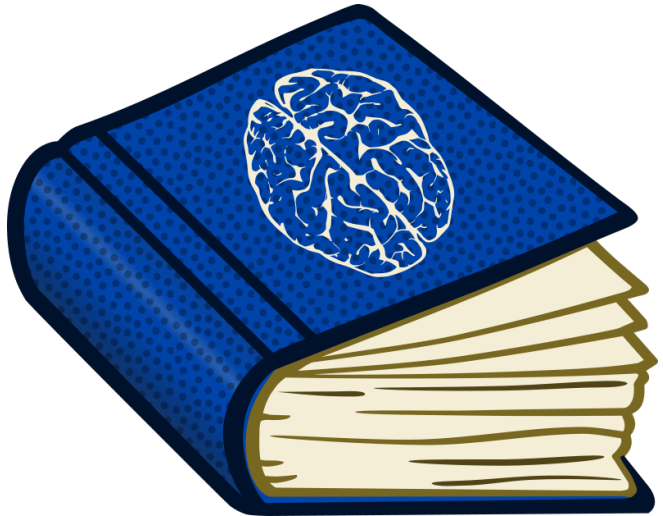
To be specific, they claimed the book said "It is strongly suggested that when a group contains both a barbarian and a kobold of any class (but preferably paladin), the kobold should be thrown as far and as often as possible."

I wasn't about to believe the barbarian, as they've been known to tell minor falsehoods in the past, but the bard took a look and saw the same thing.

And the wizard.

And the sorcerer.

And... well... let's just say it's a good thing I was reading *Gox's Illustrated Manual of Physical Exertions* at the time.



Cypher, Level: 1d6

You may use this book to ease any knowledge based tasks by 1.

This book radiates magic. Anyone flipping through the pages will find that it is filled with densely packed text that details factual information the character has already learned, whether through study, word of mouth, or personal experience. Misconceptions the character may have will be written in the book as if they are facts.

Other characters viewing the same pages who know the same things will see the same words, but if said information is not known by both characters, they will each see information unique to their knowledge sets.

Memories fade, however, and after a number of days equal to the cypher's level the words in this book will also have faded past the point of legibility.

Marwyse's Overdue Library Book



This is a little embarrassing, but I think our wizard may have possibly, accidentally, forgotten to return a non-zero number of books from the library we visited 12 towns back.

To be fair, we've been doing a lot since then, and we've been waiting for the locust swarm we accidentally summoned to die down (and maybe for people to have time to forget us a bit) before we go back for a visit.

In the meantime, these books are a treasure trove of information! Marwyse's library is the *absolute best* library I've ever been in!

Also the only one, but please don't let this minor detail detract from the importance of the institution.

The only down side is that, every time I have the need to consult one of the borrowed books, I'm overcome with an immense feeling of guilt. It's so intense, it actually gives me a headache!

At least the librarians have a way to retrieve the books magically upon use, which is why I tried to use as many of them as I could before I was literally (Do you see the pun? I'm proud of that one!) rendered unconscious for my effort.

Our wizard insists I've sent all the books back and won't let me check their pack to make sure.

I have my doubts.

Cypher, Level: 1d6

This tome has been borrowed from one of the many libraries established by the renowned kobold historian, Marwyse. Marwyse has always been happy to share the knowledge she's collected, but not every book that is checked out is returned. This is one of those lost collections of knowledge.

Upon discovery, roll 1d6 to determine the nature of the information contained within. You may roll a number of times equal to the cypher's level.

1. General Knowledge
2. Astronomy
3. History
4. Magic
5. Nature
6. Religion

After failing a task related to this book's content area, you may consult this book for one minute to achieve the equivalent of rolling a natural 20 on the previous attempt.

The staff in Marwyse's library then become aware that this overdue book has been located and will magically retrieve it, dealing 2 points of Intellect damage in the process.

You can attempt to hold onto the book for another day with a successful Intellect Task (Difficulty 7 to start, the difficulty increases by 1 for each day after the first). A failed roll imparts 4 points of Intellect damage.

If you are able to return the book to one of Marwyse's libraries on your own, the staff there are grateful and are happy to help you research a wide variety of topics.

Niwri's Survivalist's Handbook

There we were, alone in the uncharted jungle! No water, no food, and no ranger to make the journey be easy mode! (They cashed in some vacation time to visit their sick mother in that one city known for having more casinos than city employees, which I mention only to give you an idea of the locale.)

Fortunately, the great Niwri wrote a book on how to get through this near impenetrable sea of foliage! We avoided mosquitoes the size of kobolds, fish that swim into your ears and whisper forgotten languages into your brain, trench foot, lung rot, poison ivy, wasting disease, waist-ing disease (the opposite of wasting; you kind of ... get rounder), and more!

The only casualty, really, was the book itself. It's a shame, but not even a skilled book binder can fix a tome after it's been waterlogged from being inside of a three day old brontosaurus carcass.

And then partially eaten by word beetles.

And even then, there might have been a chance, but that ant colony with a hive mind decided to take what was left and make it into a papier-mâché mask which they then wore while asking us three riddles in return for letting us pass.

I could still make out a few sentences on the mask, but I only got as far as "Remember that ants that are skilled in papier-mâché tend to be resistant to-" before the sorcerer cast Fireball.

For those curious, we concluded after the fact that the sentence ended with "fire damage."



Cypher, Level: 1d6

This book may be used to eliminate the detrimental effects of terrain (reduced movement, dehydration, hypothermia, etc.) for a number of days equal to its level.

More active events like fending off native flora and fauna still require rolls, but anyone with access to this cypher may have related tasks eased by 1.

This book is damaged somehow, preferably in a comical manner, every day, starting on the day it is found. On the last day, the book is completely destroyed.

Zeeli's Guide to Responsible Pyromania

There comes a time in every spell caster's life when they acquire the means to do significant amounts of collateral damage in return for mildly inconveniencing the big bad thing that has been harassing their group for months.

Or so I've been told by more or less every spell caster in our party.

So it was with pride that our sorcerer decided to drop a fireball directly on top of us while the big bad's trusted lieutenant du jour sparred off against me in a duel to the death in the middle of Mo's Museum of Wax Figures, Oils From Around The World, & Oily Rags of Dubious Historical Significance (Inquire within for franchise opportunities!).

It truly is a shame about all the relics that were lost in the conflagration, but at least we learned a valuable lesson that day: Our sorcerer could really use a copy of *Zeeli's Guide to Responsible Pyromania!*

I'd loan them mine, but I kind of ... lost it in a previous fire-based incident in Mo's Magnificent Shop of Marked Down Alchemical Wonders of Highly Combustible Nature.

To be honest, I'm not sure this "Mo" person would be very happy to meet us any time soon.

Or maybe they would. I've heard the premiums for insuring against collateral damage from adventurers are quite high, but very worth it. Something tells me Mo's the kind of being that knows how to invest properly.



Cypher, Level: 1d6

While this book does not enable fire based attacks on its own, it does allow the wielder to take fire damage that would affect one creature and have it instead be applied to another creature.

Attacks that do damage to multiple targets (up to the number of the cypher's level) can still be affected by this book, but it still only moves the potential for damage to one new target. The area affected is not otherwise changed.

If a creature was already targeted or within the area of effect for the fire based attack, the damage cannot be transferred to them.

A new roll to hit or avoid being hit (whichever is applicable) must be made. If the new target cannot be damaged by fire (through immunity, a missed attack roll, or a successful defense roll), the damage is not transferred and the original target is still affected.

The book itself is highly flammable and is consumed in the process.

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