

Iridia

role-playing games and miniatures, old and new
by Christian Walker

On Point

I'm back from San Francisco and behind schedule in my writing duties. I got terribly distracted a few weeks ago by spending lots of time at the beach and going away for a week didn't help. Iridia isn't widely distributed, so I don't anticipate hordes of readers sending angry missives about late issues. Nevertheless, I hate playing catch up. This week I finally get to some review material that's been sitting on my desk for a while, as well as dusting off an article from my old Scrollworks zine that I really like.

Until next time, Christian

Tokens of Luck

modest magicks
by dan taylor

A Token of Luck appears to be a minted coin identical to the local currency of the territory in which it is found. The only exception is that it appears to have been minted with the "heads" icon on both sides and is generally found in pristine condition.

There are four different kinds of Tokens, each made of a different precious metal and each providing a different form of luck. The luck that each token provides is as follows:

Copper Piece: Provides +1 when needed to successfully make a skill check that has been missed by one.

Silver Piece: Provides +1 when needed to successfully make a saving throw that has been missed by one.

Gold Piece: Provides +1 when needed to successfully hit when an attack has been missed by one.

Platinum Piece: Provides the benefits of two of the three items listed above. Roll a d6 and consult the table at right to determine which tokens are simulated.

A Token's magic only works when the character nearly succeeds at one of the actions listed above. It does not provide +1 for skill checks, saving throws or attack rolls.

A Token of Luck is usually found amid normal, non-magical coins and does not radiate any sort of magic. Characters may have a Token in their possession and not even know it. A spot check (with a difficulty class outlined on the table below) is required to realize that the coin is printed with "heads" on both sides. It's entirely possible that a character may have a Token in their possession for some time, benefiting from its powers, only to unknowingly hand it over to an innkeeper while paying for lodging.

Tokens of Luck are not created by individuals with the Craft Wondrous Item feat, but instead seem to appear by mere chance. Tokens of Luck also have the uncanny tendency to lose their enchantment if they are purchased as a known Token of Luck for any amount greater than a mundane coin of its same type. For example, if someone were to

d6 Roll	Actions
1-2	As Copper and Silver
3-4	As Copper and Gold
5-6	As Silver and Gold

Number of Coins	DC
Less than 25 coins	15
25 to 50 coins	20
51 to 100 coins	30
More than 100 coins	45

purchase a silver piece Token of Luck for 50 gp, it would no longer provide the +1 bonus.

Christian says: When this item was first printed, a Scrollworks reader named Nathan Blaco wrote to suggest the following: *I would suggest that GMs might craft a little story about a god of luck or trade who enchanted the coins for everyone to use, and that's why they cannot be made or sold. Also, GMs might limit the tokens to only one use per day.*

When I read "Legends are Made, not Born," a module from Joseph Goodman Games (reviewed in Iridia 7), I noticed a goddess of luck on page 18. Her name is Myna and I think she'd be an ideal creator of the Tokens of Luck.



Illustration by Daniel Williams

On My Bookshelf

reviews of things you need

Behind the Spells - Dancing Lights by Bret Boyd is available as a \$1 pdf download from RPG Now (www.rpgnow.com). Published by Ronin Arts, Behind the Spells - Dancing Lights is the fifth in a series of supplements that closely examines spells common to the D&D game.

When I first started playing D&D, the only thing I liked about *Dancing Lights* was the illustration that accompanied it in the AD&D Players Handbook. Aside from that, I had no use for the spell. If I wanted my mage to distract an enemy, I was more likely to go with *Magic Missile*, because pain and the loss of hit points are as good of a distraction as any. Nevertheless, Bret Boyd expertly breathes new life into *Dancing Lights*.

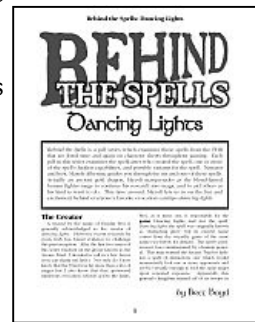
While *Dancing Lights* is designed to distract foes, there aren't any mechanics to govern this. Very surprising, given the fact that 3.5 has rules for darn near everything. Bret fills in the blanks by detailing two methods that either inflict a -2 circumstance penalty upon an enemy, or cause a foe to suffer the effects of being flanked. Both methods use *Dancing Lights* to trick an opponent into thinking they are being attacked by a spell.

Like other Behind the Spells series, an alternate version of the spell is presented. *Projectile Interceptors* is a nifty Bard 2, Sor/Wiz 1 spell that combines *Protection from Arrows*, *Shield* and *Dancing Lights*. The spell creates four, fist-sized balls of clear, gelatinous material. The orbs float around the caster and move to intercept inbound missile weapons. Each orb can absorb 5 hit points worth of damage, so there is a chance that a missile can pass through the orb to strike its intended target.

Finally, Bret presents a clever game using the *Dancing Lights* spell. It can be used as a training tool for young wizards, or it can provide rival wizards a way to duel one another in a non-lethal manner. In essence, the game is a version of musical chairs.

Each wizard uses *Dancing Lights* to create magical orbs, while empty jars float above their heads. The goal is for each wizard to move his lights into the jars before his rival. The rules for the game take about a page to explain, but they should play very easily during a session.

All in all, Behind the Spells - Dancing Lights presents balanced, creative uses for an often over-looked cantrip.



The *Dancing Lights* illustration from the AD&D Players Handbook.



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