

Iridia

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

On Point

The seasonal changes here in So. Cal. are subtle, but they do occur. I'm hopeful that the shorter days of Fall and Winter give me some extra time indoors to do lots of writing. There are plenty of topics that I want to cover; I just need the time to do so. In other news, I think I've improved the quality of the podcast recording, thanks to a filter between me and the mic. Basically, I hold up a wire mesh strainer so as to not overload the mic when I say words that have the "p" sound. Hooray for cheap fixes to nagging problems!

Until next time, Christian

Hildebrand's Tome

exploring the freelands of mirrym
by liz rich

Written by the mad wizard Hildebrand five years after the founding of the Freecity of Mirrym, Hildebrand's Tome has appeared several times in the decades since. Containing relatively low-powered spells, it is the rumor surrounding its creation that makes this book so fascinating.

It is bound with the brightly colored feathers of a rare bird which is said to cause madness with the spreading of its wings. Furthermore, the tome's pages were made from the fibers of the bird's feathers. Not only containing spells, there are several pages of intricate lattice work designs and three blank pages. At one time there were four, but a previous owner scribbled in a dubious recipe of arcane origin and unknown purpose.

It is thought by a few scholars who have studied the tome (and retained their composure) that the lattice work designs on the book are really maps to the lost library of Hildebrand the Mad, which vanished shortly before his death. Researchers would eagerly pay to possess this book, which was last seen in the hands of an infamous sorceress by the name of Madelyn. It disappeared shortly before she began her quest for the Hope Chest, and no one has managed to locate it again.



The feathers adorning the cover of the book are arranged in such a way that they retain a vestige of their former power to addle minds. When the book is viewed, a DC 10 Will check is required. If the check fails, roll a d4 and consult the results below.

1. Subject stares into space for d10 rounds, mesmerized. They will mumble to themselves and drool a bit.
2. Everything around the subject is gut-busting hilarious. The victim will laugh themselves sick for d6 rounds. (Great fun in a serious wizards' library.)
3. Inspired by the pretty feathers, the reader begins flapping their arms and running around the room in an attempt to take flight. This spectacle will go on for d6 rounds.
4. Convinced that everyone is "out to get them," the subject flees at their maximum move, then hides. This effect will last for d10 rounds.

Hildebrand's Tome will contain five 1st level spells, two 2nd level spells and one 3rd level spell.

Hidden Message

exploring the freelands of mirrym

Before leaving her master's tower for the last time, the self-serving Madelyn managed to steal a spellbook. Her mentor could have retrieved the book with little effort, but he thought it best to let the infraction pass. After all, the truly dangerous spells were safely hidden, so there was little harm his impudent apprentice could do. Besides, it was time one of his old tomes saw the light of day. Furthermore, the book would be one less thing his new apprentice would have to dust.

A few months after Madelyn's theft, a few spells from the stolen spellbook began to surface at the hidden bazaars and secret places where wizards trade arcane knowledge. The spell below is a sample from the book.

Hidden Message

Enchantment:

Level: Sor/Wiz 1; Bard 1

Components: V/S

Casting Time: 1 round

Range: Touch

Target: 1 living creature

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes

By means of this spell, a willing subject is able to carry a message in their mind that is unknown even to themselves. Before casting the spell, the information must be given to the messenger along with a trigger. For example, "When you meet Archbishop Loren, recite the following message: The Old Kingdom is planning to move against your charge, Lady Leandra."

In this example, it would be wise to give such instructions only to one thoroughly familiar with the Archbishop, since the trigger is based upon the perceptions of the messenger. Because of this, the spell cannot be used to detect, say, Doppelgangers. For example, if the messenger were taken in by a clever "Doppelganger Archbishop," the spell would still be triggered. A more prudent trigger might include the messenger to ask for a "secret word." After setting the trigger, the spell is cast, then the information is hidden deep within the subject's memory. The recipient will be aware that they are carrying a message and that a spell has been cast, they just don't remember what it was! Please note that the message can be no longer than 50 words.

No amount of torture can force the messenger to reveal the hidden message. However, the enchantment can be dispelled by the original caster, or through the use of *Dispel Magic*. Dispelling the enchantment will allow the messenger to recall the message, thus making him susceptible to "coercive" means of interrogation.

Furthermore, the spell has unlimited duration, which means that the message could be hidden away forever if the subject is unable to unlock it. Using the above example, if Archbishop Loren were to suddenly become a missing person, the message could not be unlocked because the subject was never able to stand before him.

The DM may choose to create a higher level version of the spell that hides both a message in the subject's mind, in addition to causing them to forget that they are carrying a message in the first place. Such a spell might lend itself to an adventure involving an NPC who is hunted down for the information he unwittingly carries.



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