



Scars of the Scourge

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Excerpt from the lectures of Professor Rinehart, Professor of Orgoth Studies, Corvis University

For over 800 years, the Orgoth terrorized and subjugated the people of western Immoren, enslaving nearly all of humanity and forcing them to construct great fortresses and temples in honor of their loathsome Orgoth overlords. In the final years of the Occupation, when the Immorese stood poised to drive their hated masters from our shores, the Orgoth initiated a plan to systematically destroy as many such structures as possible and to erase all traces of their mysterious culture. This act of spite, known as the Scourge, proved largely successful on both fronts, and even today we know extraordinarily little of our former masters. The Orgoth holdings were too numerous and deeply rooted to eliminate all evidence.

Many ancient ruins are still being discovered all across the continent, both in remote and abandoned locations and buried beneath modern towns and cities—the very foundations of some of which were built over ancient Orgoth fortresses, tombs, prisons, and temples. While the locations and natures of these ruins vary, many such sites are believed to hold Orgoth treasures abandoned

or overlooked during the Scourge. The greatest of these treasures are, in fact, powerful relics imbued by the Orgoth with dark and terrible powers. In the hands of the uneducated, they are both potent and dangerous forgotten treasures.

While tales of these artifacts are known throughout the Iron Kingdoms, many explorers and treasure hunters continue to delve into these sites in search of anything valuable to loot, while the more academic minded among us seek knowledge and clues about our history under those merciless tyrants. Whatever one's motivation, however, only the most foolhardy dare to enter these sites, for beyond anything else, an Orgoth ruin is known for its dangers and horrors. Legends speak of creatures and spirits left behind as guardians, imbued with terrible power and consumed by a malicious compulsion to punish anyone attempting to plunder their masters' hoard. Whether these stories are true or not, only the greediest or bravest individuals dare to traverse the passages of an Orgoth ruin, where fortune and death reside in equal measure. Their limited successes have helped fill in a few of the many blanks in a history some feel is best left forgotten.

TREASURES OF THE EMPIRE: A HISTORY OF ORGOTH RELICS

While many aspects of the Orgoth remain a mystery, it is known they were equally proud of their craftsmanship and their mastery of the occult. Not much is known of Orgoth mystical fabrication processes except that they almost certainly involved bloodletting and death. Whatever their methods, they possessed no shortage of strangely enchanted and accursed items. From weapons and armor to other more esoteric items, the greater the value an item had to an Orgoth lord, the greater the likelihood of it possessing magical power. This practice is believed to have been partially a symbol of status, though these items had practical applications as well.

It has been theorized by some that these enchantments may have been tuned to magically resonate to a specific owner and that the dark effects such relics have on their modern-day owners is a side effect of this process. That the vile nature of Orgoth magic is responsible for the terrible effects these artifacts have on their current wielders is clear, but what is not known is whether the Orgoth themselves were so afflicted by these maledictions. The prevailing theory is that Orgoth artifacts were cursed to prevent non-Orgoth from using the tyrants' powers against them, but a notable minority of scholars assert that the Orgoth were too confident in their domination over the Immorese people for this to be the case. Adherents of this theory believe these measures were enacted by the Orgoth to defend their treasured magical possessions from theft by rival Orgoth governors and lords. While the Orgoth were meticulous in preventing slaves and outsiders from learning even the general workings of their imperial politics, there have been some historical accounts of infighting and disputes among rival Orgoth leaders. Such reports lend some credence to this theory.

Despite the rarity of uncovered Orgoth ruins, scholars are nonetheless puzzled by the number of sites still containing artifacts and treasures, given the Orgoth's systematic approach to the Scourge. While most scholars believe all untouched Orgoth ruins are merely sites that escaped attention or that were simply too difficult to fully destroy as their owners retreated from rebellion forces, some researchers believe these sites may have been left intact deliberately. Perhaps the Orgoth left some of their grisly traps and inhuman horrors behind in tombs and vaults as a punishment to us—their former slaves—the treasures of the Orgoth acting as an irresistible lure.

Scholarly conjecture aside, no one can deny that traversing an Orgoth ruin is among the single most dangerous acts an explorer can undertake. Few accredited academies and universities fund such expeditions, and those that will do so only with the understanding that students and faculty are operating of their own volition, with the institution claiming no responsibility for any resulting fatalities or madness. Currently, the foremost group undertaking such organized expeditions is the Greylords Covenant. Even with the backing of the Khadoran military, these expeditions have proven dangerous, with casualties a common occurrence. The sacrifices of the Greylords have, on occasion, borne fruit, and this group's knowledge of Orgoth arcane lore and accumulation of powerful relics is unmatched by their rivals.

ORGOTH RELIC CREATION

Presented here are rules for Game Master-created Orgoth Artifacts. The three components of any artifact are the base object, beneficial effects of the item called **Boons**, and detrimental effects called **Curses**. Starting objects aren't limited to just weapons and armor; though these are the most common, other expertly crafted objects of value have also been imbued with mystical power. Once the base object is selected, the GM chooses what magical Boons and Curses the object will have. Boons and Curses each have an associated point cost. Different effects have varying costs.

A single item may have multiple Boon effects, but no item may have more than a total of 5 points worth of Boons. (Though particularly potent relics with greater limits are rumored to exist.) For every Boon point spent on an item, the object must have at least an equivalent number of Curse points. An item may not have more Boon points than Curse points, but it may have more Curse points than Boon points. Some items may not have any Boons at all; many Orgoth relics are just plain *bad*. In some cases this may also represent degradation over the centuries, where beneficial powers—if they ever existed—have been lost.

A relic must be based on an item that was available during the time of the Orgoth Occupation.

Boons and Curses

Boons and Curses have the following attributes that define how they function in the game. Unless otherwise stated, each Boon and Curse can only be taken once. Weapons with Boons or Curses become Magical Weapons.

Name: This is the name of the specific Boon or Curse.

Boon/Curse points: This is the numerical value of the magical effect. The total Boon point value on a relic must be matched by an equal or greater number of Curse points.

Special Rules: This describes the positive or negative effects the ability contributes to an item.

BOONS

BLACK FIRE

Boon Points: 1

Special Rules: This boon must be applied to a weapon. The weapon gains +1 POW and critical Fire.

BLACK TONGUE

Boon Points: 1

Special Rules: The character's Deception rolls are boosted.

BLOOD FEAST

Boon Points: 2

Special Rules: The character gains +1 STR and ARM for each living character he destroys. The effect of this boon lasts for one round.

DARK SIGHT

Boon Points: 1

Special Rules: When a character wielding this relic forfeits his movement to aim, he ignores Stealth that turn. Additionally, the character treats all darkness, natural or supernatural, as bright light.

DEATHDEALER

Boon Points: 4

Special Rules: This Boon must be applied to a weapon.

A character wielding this weapon gains boosted damage rolls against targets that are not at full vitality.

IMPERVIOUS

Boon Points: 4

Special Rules: A character wielding this relic suffers one die fewer on all non-magic melee or ranged attack damage rolls so long as he is aware of the incoming attack.

LONG LIVED

Boon Points: 5

Special Rules: Characters wielding this relic gain a surge of vitality and health. The character's natural lifespan increases dramatically beyond normal for his race, by sixty years or more. Additionally, the character gains boosted rolls to resist disease and poison and can roll twice on the injury table when incapacitated and choose which long-term injury actually results.



ORGOTH
CAPTAIN'S
SHIELD

PHANTOM SHIFT

Boon Points: 3

Special Rules: A character wielding this relic in one hand can forfeit his attack to shift into a spectral form. The character gains the Ghostly ability for one round. (A Ghostly character can advance through terrain and obstacles without penalty and can advance through obstructions if he has enough movement to move completely past them. The character cannot be targeted by free strikes.) A character cannot become Ghostly if he was Ghostly on his previous turn.

SPELL REACH

Boon Points: 4

Special Rules: Spells cast by a character wielding this relic gain +5 RNG.

SPELL WARD

Boon Points: 3

Special Rules: A character wielding the artifact cannot be targeted by spells.

STORMWEAVER

Boon Points: 3

Special Rules: A character wielding this relic can manipulate the weather, creating or stopping storms, raging winds, or typhoons. While wielding this object, the character is considered to have 1 point of training in the Stormsmithing skill (see *Kings, Nations, and Gods*, p. 90) and this item serves in lieu of the mechanical items required to use that skill. A character cannot use this item to increase his Stormsmithing skill above his current skill level limit. This item only functions while at sea or on the coast if within 100 yards of the ocean.

THIRSTY BLADE

Boon Points: 3

Special Rules: This Boon must be placed on a bladed weapon.

A character wielding this weapon can designate a living target. When the character damages that target with this weapon, the blade absorbs the target's blood. All subsequent melee attacks made with this weapon against the target gain boosted attack rolls.

UNWAVERING COMMANDER

Boon Points: 2

Special Rules: This Boon grants immunity to fear and +2 to Command rolls and to command range. If a character wielding this relic is affected by any spell or effect that would take control of him, his roll to contest this control is boosted.

CURSES

AIR OF DEATH

Curse Points: 1

Special Rules: A character carrying this relic seems touched by death and decay. The character's skin takes on a waxy corpse-like pallor, and he emanates a mild but noticeable odor of rot and decay. Such a character suffers a -2 penalty on all non-Intimidation social rolls except those the Game Master deems would be unaffected.

APPETITE

Curse Points: 2

Special Rules: A character wielding this relic suffers insatiable hunger, needing to eat tremendous amounts of food to satiate his cravings. A character suffering from this curse must eat half his body weight in food each day or suffer -2 to his Willpower. When a character's Willpower reaches 0, he becomes ravenous, eating anything to stop the hunger, including human flesh. A character regains lost Willpower at the rate of 1 point per day if eating a sufficient quantity of food or after no longer possessing the cursed item.

ARCANE OBSTRUCTION

Curse Points: 3

Special Rules: Spellcasters wielding this relic pay double the fatigue/focus cost when casting spells.

BLINDNESS

Curse Points: 1

Special Rules: A character who has handled this relic must make a PHY roll against a target number of 13 the following morning. If the roll succeeds, nothing happens. If the roll fails, the character is struck blind for the day. A blind character cannot make ranged or magic attacks, suffers -4 MAT and DEF, cannot run or charge, and automatically fails all Perception rolls related to sight.

BLOOD HUNGRY

Curse Points: 1

Special Rules: While wielding this item, the character suffers 1 damage point at the end of each of his Control Phases if he did not cause damage to a living character. Outside of combat the character suffers 1 damage point every five minutes while wielding the item.

DOOM

Curse Points: 1

Special Rules: This cannot be the only Curse on an item.

A character who uses this item suffers the effects of its curses even after disposing of the item. Only an eight-hour ritual of holy consecration conducted on holy ground by a priest or shaman can stop these detrimental effects.

HAUNTED

Curse Points: 3

Special Rules: When a character wielding this relic uses this relic's Boons, he must make a Willpower roll against a target of 15. If the roll fails, the character is plagued with visions of dead and tormented spirits, particularly of those who died at the character's own hands or those killed with the cursed object. The character treats all other characters, friend or foe, as if they cause Terror [20]. This effect lasts for d3+1 hours.



FELLBLADE

HOMeward BOUND

Curse Points: 5

Special Rules: A character wielding this relic must make a Willpower roll against a target number of 18 once per day or feel an overwhelming compulsion to return the relic to the Orgoth homeland. If the roll succeeds, the character is not compelled by the item that day. If the roll fails, he spends the day in pursuit of his goal. The character will spend any expense and go through any danger or difficulty to procure a ship and sail west, past the Meredius, where he will surely perish. While attempting to complete this task, the character is wild and irrational.

A character may spend 1 feat point to regain control of himself for a limited time. If a character spends a feat point, he is no longer compelled to return the item for d3+1 hours. At the end of this time, he may make another Willpower roll to resist the effects of the item.

MISFORTUNE

Curse Points: 3

Special Rules: A character wielding the item experiences supernaturally bad luck. The character rolls an additional die on all non-attack skill rolls and discards the highest die.

NIGHT WALKER

Curse Points: 2

Special Rules: A character wielding the item cannot stand in direct sunlight. If the character ends his turn in bright light, he suffers 1 point of damage.

PRECIOUS

Curse Points: 4

Special Rules: After a character wielding this item receives the benefits of a boon, the character will not want to surrender the item for any reason. If the item is small enough, the character will keep it on his person at all times. If that is impractical because the item is too large or immobile, the character must feel confident he still owns the item and personally checks to see if it is secure at least every eight hours. If the item is taken or missing, the character becomes irrational and will seek to recover it by any means. He may try non-violent solutions first but will resort to violence if those fail. He will be unable to focus on any activity except recovering the item and defending himself.

The effect of this curse can be removed by an eight-hour ritual on holy ground conducted by a priest or shaman. The affected character will not cooperate and must be subdued or unconscious. This does not remove the curse from the item—it will affect the next person receiving the benefits of a boon.

VITALITY LEECH

Curse Points: 2

Special Rules: A character actively wielding this item drains the life force of his allies and loved ones. A friendly living character within thirty feet (5") of the character suffers 1 point of damage during the character's Maintenance Phase each round (or every full minute outside of combat). What constitutes actively wielding the item is left to the Game Master, but for a sword this might mean whenever it is drawn and in hand.

SAMPLE RELICS

GOLTHANA'S MASTHEAD

Description: Golthana's Masthead is an ancient ship's grotesque masthead of Orgoth design. Fashioned from an unknown dark wood, it depicts an Orgoth slave, arms chained and spread apart and back, as if shackled to the front of the ship. Captains foolish enough to attach the masthead to their ship soon find themselves imbued with an unyielding boldness and a tremendously commanding aura. The masthead also grants its captain the power to control storms, ensuring safe journeys for the ship or devastating ones for its rivals. These powers continue to embolden the masthead's owner, and eventually any ship carrying Golthana's Masthead will attempt a journey no Immorese has ever achieved: sailing for the Orgoth homeland. The lucky few crewmen who gather the strength to jump off the ship might make it ashore before the vessel inevitably shipwrecks, pieces eventually washing up ashore, while the masthead inevitable remains intact.

History: Originally discovered a few miles south of Ohk nearly 400 years ago, Golthana's Masthead is thought to have belonged to a notorious Orgoth warlord. It has been rediscovered several times throughout the centuries in various shipwrecks along the western coast of Immoren. Its most recent owner was a Llaeese noble who kept it in his private collection until the Khadoran invasion forced him to flee. The current location of Golthana's Masthead is unknown.

BOONS

Stormweaver **Boon Points:** 3
Unwavering Commander **Boon Points:** 2
Boon Point Total: 5

CURSES

Homeward Bound **Curse Points:** 5
Doom. **Curse Points:** 1
Curse Point Total: 6



FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE: DISCOVERING AND RESEARCHING ORGOOTH ARTIFACTS

Though several alleged experts exist, relatively little is known about Orgoth culture in even the most respected universities of the Iron Kingdoms. This makes the act of researching newly discovered Orgoth relics a unique challenge. The Scourge left little for those who wished to piece together information about Orgoth society, and much of what is known by the researchers of western Immoren is built on as much theory and conjecture as solid fact.

This modified Research target number table approximates the difficulty of learning information on the history and potential abilities of an Orgoth artifact. Additionally, while the Detection skill target number table in the *Iron Kingdoms Full Metal Fantasy Core Rules* may be appropriate for locating a potential artifact in the field, verifying the authenticity of a potentially counterfeit Orgoth relic (which are sometimes found on the black market) is made more difficult by the scarcity of information on Orgoth culture. Thus, it is recommended that the target numbers against forgeries on the Detection Target Number table in the *Iron Kingdoms Full Metal Fantasy Core Rules* be increased by a minimum of +2.

RESEARCH (INTELLECT) ORGOOTH RELICS

ROLL RESULT	INFORMATION DISCOVERED
12 or Less	The character verifies the relic is Orgoth in origin.
13–15	The character can provide a general timeframe for the age of the relic, a general region where the relic may have originated, and one additional piece of information, such as the identity and reputation of its original owner.
16–18	The character is familiar with any legends pertaining to the item or similar items, its approximate date of creation, and general knowledge of a single boon and a single curse the relic is purported to possess.
19+	The character is familiar with the name of the relic or of one similar to it, any known information regarding its original owner, and understands all of the boons and curses of the relic.

ENTOMBED

What I find most distressing about the entombed is that they volunteered for such a horrific eternal duty.

—PROFESSOR VIKTOR PENDRAKE, MONSTERNOMICON

PHYSIQUE	PHY	9
SPEED	SPD	5
STRENGTH	STR	9
AGILITY	AGL	3
PROWESS	PRW	5
POISE	POI	3
INTELLECT	INT	3
ARCANE	ARC	—
PERCEPTION	PER	5

	SENTRY'S WEAPON		
	MAT	POW	P+S
	7	6	15

Abilities: This is a magical weapon and has Reach.

INITIATIVE	INIT	15
DEFENSE	DEF	13
ARMOR	ARM	14
	(Natural Armor + 9)	
WILLPOWER	WILL	12
VITALITY: 15		
COMMAND RANGE: 3		
BASE SIZE: SMALL		
ENCOUNTER POINTS: 19		

monstrosities has been lost to time, but today those who have survived an encounter with these creatures refer to them as the entombed.

Originally an Orgoth warrior, a volunteer selected for the privilege of rebirth as an entombed was ceremonially drowned and his soul placed in a special soul cage. The cage was then set inside the remains of the dead warrior, whose body was laid to rest alongside his master bearing the armor he wore in life. The warrior's body and its captured soul were set to rest in the burial chamber of the Orgoth lord with weapons in hand, driven by an undying directive to protect its master and all the treasures of his grave. The armament of these entombed warriors varies depending on the favored weapons of the warrior who underwent the process of transformation.

The entombed is bound to the vault in which its body lies. Though it has the freedom to pass anywhere within the tomb's many vaults and chambers, it cannot pass beyond the threshold of the tomb. Those who flee from a pursuing entombed find that the spirit's pursuit ends at a perimeter of black stones that defines the tomb's borders. With each trespasser it slays, the entombed becomes even deadlier, turning one kill into a long, unbroken chain of slaughter.

An entombed lies dormant until trespassers enter the protected vault, then the soul cage within its body releases the spirit of the warrior. Emerging from its body, the entombed stalks those who defile the stillness of its lord's grave, cutting down trespassers without hesitation

Those who enter the tombs of the Orgoth in search of ancient treasure seldom realize the true horror awaiting them. Orgoth lords were often interred with hoards of riches and powerful artifacts, and they demanded that powerful servants be crafted to protect their vaults. Through their twisted and cruel mastery of magic, the Orgoth created a perfect weapon to punish those foolish enough to defile their final rest and attempt to plunder what is not theirs. What original name the Orgoth bestowed upon these terrible

or mercy. Those few warriors skilled enough to defeat an entombed in combat find their victories short-lived; when the spirit is driven off, it returns to its body to recuperate, emerging again in moments at full strength, ready to fight anew. The only way to permanently destroy an entombed is to find and destroy its soul cage, driving the specter from Caen. Most who fight an entombed do not realize this in time and so are slaughtered to the last, their bodies dragged to the depths of the very vault they attempted to plunder and set up as trophies to the glory of the dead lord.

Combat

An entombed has a single directive: to protect the tomb of its lord and destroy all who would trespass against it. The entombed is not mindless, and it targets isolated explorers who are separated from the group first, waiting for them to enter a side chamber or vault before passing through the walls to cut them down. Its primary goal is to preserve the burial chamber of the interred Orgoth lord, and an entombed does everything in its power to prevent such an intrusion, even to the point of allowing an intruder to make off with stolen treasure from other chambers. It will only allow such intruders to escape if it does not feel capable of slaying them without endangering its main goal.

Once a threat to its lord's resting place is dealt with, the entombed relentlessly pursues any who attempt to flee the tomb, passing through walls to cut off escape routes and corral its enemies.

Lore

A character can make an INT + Lore (Orgoth or undead) skill roll to determine what he knows about this creature. He learns all the information up to the result of the roll. The higher the roll, the more he learns.

12: Some Orgoth ruins are watched over by powerful spectral guardians that look like large, armored warriors.

14: These creatures, called entombed by the Immorese, were warriors who sacrificed themselves to be buried alongside powerful Orgoth lords. An entombed jealously protects the body of its lord and will break off pursuing a thief to defend its lord's remains.

16: An entombed is bound to the burial site of its lord and its physical body. An entombed cannot pass beyond the walls of the tomb, even if those walls have long since crumbled away.

18: The only way to truly destroy an entombed is to locate its corpse and obliterate it. The Orgoth would leave the bodies of the entombed in large burial chambers along with the bodies of other warriors, or in vaults watched over by creatures like the dread, to ensure none would be able to find and eliminate their eternal guardians.

ABILITIES:

This character rolls an additional die on Initiative rolls. Discard the lowest die of each roll.

Body Count – The character gains 1 soul token each time it destroys a living character. It can have up to 3 soul tokens at a time. During its turn, the creature can spend soul tokens to boost attack or damage rolls at one token per boost.

Bound – The character is bound to an Orgoth tomb. It cannot pass beyond the borders of the tomb for any reason. If the tomb is destroyed or purified in some manner, this character is destroyed as well.

Ghost Shield – The character gains +1 ARM for each soul token he currently has.

Ghostly – This character can advance through terrain and obstacles without penalty and can advance through obstructions if it has enough movement to move completely past them. This character cannot be targeted by free strikes.

Restless Soul – When this character is incapacitated, it becomes dormant for d3+1 minutes. After this period the character begins to regain strength,

starting with 1 vitality point and gaining an additional d3 vitality points every round. The character regains strength at the site of its physical body. If the character's soul cage is destroyed, the character is permanently destroyed.

Spell Ward – This character cannot be targeted by spells.

Terror [14] – This character causes terror.

Undead – This character is not a living character and never flees.

CREATURE TEMPLATES:

None.

SKILLS:

NAME	STAT	RANK	STAT + RANK
Detection	PER	2	7
Great Weapon	PRW	2	7
Intimidation	SOC	3	*

