

Gilgad's Survival Guide for Wary Wilderness Travelers

Various serviceable magical objects & capabilities related
to prospering in the Dying Earth's Great Outdoors

As with the previous month's article ("The Magic of the Wild"), this piece also brings material into the public domain that was originally prepared for the late and lamented Dying Earth Bestiary.)

A Supporting Article for DERPG

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Cover Page Illustration - Dover Books

(If possible please print in Duplex mode to save paper)



Enchanted Articles

Atman's Bracelets of Competitive Advantage

(12 pts, Permanent)

Summary: Bracelets that improve your performance when riding a racing animal.

Description: Wide gold bracelets with silver inlaid runes; these permit an empathic link between rider and beast during a racing situation. (This allows a boon of 1 to all Ride rolls.)

Purported Location: Shote the Dhjetar trainer (KPG, p152) has a pair of 'lucky' bracelets that he has his top riders wear on Cup Day. Since the adjudicators are able to detect for magical assistance, surely they cannot be bracelets of this type?

Baukskin Armor

(10 pts, Permanent - for a jerkin, trows and skullcap)

Summary: Tough and flexible armor made from the skin of the bull bauk.

Description: A magical process cures the tough hide of the bauk (see "All's Fair At Azenomei") turning it into flexible, relatively lightweight, armor. Whilst wearing a full suit, combatants roll their Health at a boon of 1 against damage from non-magical weapons. (Kindly GMs may allow loss of the skullcap to go unnoticed.) Conversely, Athletics rolls that require agile or swift movement are at a levy of 1. Note that this kind of armor can be concealed beneath bulky clothing. However, persons seen wearing such armor will attract the notice of thieves (who presume the owner must possess wealth), bravos and bully-boys (who want it for themselves), and those whose duty it is to keep the peace (who presume the owner to be a potential troublemaker).

Purported Location: The extremely wealthy may have baukskin armor produced by one of a handful of specialist armorers based in or around Kaspara Vitatus.

Crystal of Locational Reinstatement

(6 pts, single use)

Summary: A crystal enchanted to transport you back to a predetermined point.

Description: These crystals are the size of a child's fist, and are enchanted so that when crushed they transport the one doing the crushing and their personal goods to a point to which the crystal has previously been attuned. Also included in the effect are up to six companions – who need each have a hand on the caster, or be touching them some other way. The crystal is initially attuned by means of a potent cantrap in a brief ritual that must take place at the point to which those conveyed will be returned. These crystals require a good solid push against a hard surface to be crushed, so are usually carried in small sturdy padded boxes to avoid accidental breakage – which ruins the crystal without activating the effect. When a crystal is activated, if the point of return is currently insufficiently large to take the whole party (either due to miscalculation or because it is fully occupied when the crystal is activated), roll one dice:

1 – the party is transported to another plane; **2** – the party appears many miles away in an inhospitable environment such as the ocean, a deep forest, or the Prince's dungeons; **3** – the party reappears some miles away in some awkward environment such as an island in the ocean, an area of dangerous ruins, or the Prince's parkland; **4** – as '3' but relatively close at hand to where they were supposed to be; **5** - the party reappears close to the point intended, but possibly folded into tight spaces, on rooftops, in rainbarrels etc; **6** – the party appears standing in the nearest open area to the original point.

Purported Location: Crystals such as these were once commonplace, and can still sometimes be purchased from any large curio store or major marketplace. Some of these are even genuine. The art of making them is believed to have been lost.

Note: Since this object is one use, many might think it is not worth spending the Improvement Points on. Since retaining this object can mean the difference between returning to your point of origin or being stranded in some distance inhospitable land, we urge such folk to think again.

Collopnor's Amulet of Steady Respiration

(10 points, Charged)

Summary: Allows one to breathe underwater.

Description: One can breathe water as if it were air. Each charge lasts for 12 hours, and during that time can be 'turned on or off' by removing and redonning the amulet. (Though this does not extend the time from its first moment of activation.)

Purported Location: The worshippers of Yob the Fish God (see "Deities of the Dying Earth" – also available on the "Violet Cusps" page), who live on the eastern shore of the Songan Sea possess one of these items, and revere it as a holy relic.

The Entaspic Flute

(7 pts, Charged)

Summary: Controls tasps.

Description: A metal flute, decorated with ancient sigils. When played, this device calms all tasps within earshot, making them calm and relaxed, and most importantly of all – causing them to forget their hunger. Each charge lasts as long as the player can keep going. (Its use also requires that the wielder have at least some rudimentary ability in its use.)

Purported Location: Fianosther (SVG, p54) had one at his stall the last time he visited Azenomei.

Falgunto's Boots of Freedom

(12 pts, Charged)

Summary: Boots that allow one to perambulate along any surface as if one were walking in the open air.

Description: These boots allow one to walk beneath the water as if the water were not present. They do not allow one to swim better (or indeed at all, until the boots are removed), nor to walk up angles that would be impossible if they were on dry land. Charges last as with the Amulet of Steady Respiration.

Purported Location: Master Twango of Flutic (TT p133, & "Strangers in Saskervoy" scenario) recently acquired a pair of these boots, for the better investigation of the ancient mire at the bottom of his garden.

The Golden Ram

(10 pts, Charged)

Summary: A magical riding animal.

Description: This small golden statuette of a ram is light enough to carry in one's pocket. On uttering the activation cantrap it turns into a large and robust male sheep, with the manner of a diligent retainer. Unless you are of unusually large size this animal can be ridden easily (even if you carry a full pack). For the duration of its charge (three hours) it rides and leaps tirelessly, and its main disadvantage is ridicule from literally every person who sees you.

Purported Location: Fianosther of Azenomei also has one of these for sale, but is asking a ridiculously high price.

Hobsprain's Deodand

(12 pts, Charged)

Summary: A statuette that gives you control of a single deodand.

Description: This small black statuette of a deodand is light enough to carry in one's pack. On uttering the activation cantrap whilst staring at a deodand that is within 100yds of your person, you are able to attack its Wherewithal with your Magic rating. If successful, it becomes your loyal servant for 12 hours.

Purported Location: Iucounu the Laughing Magician (DERPG p157, & "All's Fair at Azenomei" scenario) has one of these in his storeroom, but has not yet spent the time to work out what it does.

Jadwile's Cloak

(15 pts, Charged)

Summary: A cloak that allows you to pretend to be an erb

Description: A huge and wondrous cloak of the finest erb fur. When the activation cantrap is spoken, the wearer appears in all ways (visual and olfactory) to be an erb. Each charge has a duration of three hours, during which time the effect can be turned on and off by undoing a clasp. (This clasp is not visible from the outside, but can be easily found by the wearer within the erb's chest hair.)

Purported Location: Prince Kandive of Kaiin (DERPG, p157) owns one of these devices, and has on occasion used it to amuse his concubines.

Klune's Wand of Civility

(16 pts, Charged)

Summary: Imposes civilized behavior on half-men.

Description: This solid wand of black wood is inscribed with faint silver runes. When touched to the body of any half-man, and the activation phrase uttered, it immediately gives them a civilized personality – effectively transforming them into an obsequious butler. The effect ends instantly if the creature is physically harmed or treated in any way violently out of accord with how one would treat a household steward. Otherwise its duration is precisely one hour.

Purported Location: Demi-Inferator Grashpotel (KPG, p111) himself owns one of these wands, and occasionally uses it to the great amusement of his students.

Lorgan's Elemental Rod

(14 pts, Charged)

Summary: A magical metal rod that commands the services of elementals.

Description: Usually a silver rod as long as the forearm, and inscribed with sorcerous sigils. Providing one knows the activation cantrap for the kind of elemental required, one can summon said elemental and order it to perform minor services. For instance, one might ask a water elemental to retrieve an object dropped in the ocean, or an air elemental to fetch something caught high in a tree (or report back the words being spoken in a nearby room). Fire elementals can obviously set things aflame, though more importantly they can do so at a prearranged time. (So long as that is within one hour of the activation of the rod.) Earth elementals can dig small safe tunnels for 20 yards or so, or make a temporary opening in a solid wall. Each elemental can perform one discrete task per activation, and otherwise remains in abeyance for such a request for a maximum of one hour.

Purported Location: Pasfane the Witch of Kaiin (DDE, p102) owns one of these rods, which assists her nefarious activities.

Mawp's Bestial Lure

(9 pts, Charged)

Summary: A lure that draws the attention of any named non-sentient.

Description: This strangely decorated metal pyramid is easily portable, and is operated by placing it upon the ground and using the activation cantrap. For the next three hours, it will send out inaudible impulses that draw to it a member of any one animal species that is named during the activation (and of which some segment or body part is held against the pyramid at that time). The impulses will travel for several miles, though some creatures cannot travel fast enough to reach it from such distances before the effect expires.

Purported Location: The 'Waiting Ghost' Curio Shop (KPG, p121) in the Scholasticarium District has one of these in stock, though wants an exorbitant fee in exchange.

Nymphic Icons

(18 pts each, Charged)

Summary: Small statuettes of nubile young women, which transform into lithe nymphs upon command

Description: These icons traditionally come in batches of three, and can be wooden or dark metal. When the activation cantrap is whispered into the ear of such a statuette, an elfinesque female of surpassing beauty and eager playfulness appears in its stead. (See DE Compendium for further details.) These beings are not overtly lewd, but are certainly sensual, and full of fun. They do not talk, but imitate the characteristics of pompous people behind their backs. Each charge lasts for a full six hours, during which time they cannot be returned to their iconic form except by a deactivation cantrap that is no longer known.

Purported Location: Nobody has ever admitted to owning such objects, though reports have come from Kaspara Vitatus of sightings of such magical items in operation there.

Pungko Paste

(2 pts per application)

Summary: A paste that assists you to overlook terrors.

Description: When applied to glass lenses that are worn over the eyes, these lenses enhance the brain against visions of terror; by making these visions appear comely or commonplace. The act of placing such lenses over one's eyes activates the effect, which then lasts for around four hours. As the effect begins to end, those things that are seen differently begin to flicker and show unpleasant aspect. This alerts the experienced user that a new application of the paste is required. Only the appearance of beings that cause supernatural terror is altered; other surroundings and beings remain the same.

Purported Location: Pungko paste usually comes in a small jar containing sufficient amounts for 9-12 applications. These jars are irregularly available for purchase in the marketplaces of Kaiin, Azenomei and Val Ombrio, though commanding a very high price.

Ring of the Solar Emosynaries

(15 pts, Charged)

Summary: A ring that gives forth the pure rays of the sun.

Description: This silver ring is etched with runic sigils, and on speaking the activation cantrap (and hopefully shielding one's eyes) it bursts forth with a powerful illuminative radiance, that lasts for 3-6 rounds. (Roll one die: 1-2 = 1rd, etc.) This light will sear any creature within 10 yards that contains a proportion of demonic plasm greater than a twentieth of its make-up. The exact effect is the loss of 2 points from the victim's Health pool per round of exposure. This equates to an equal amount of time after the exposure – spent rolling in agonies upon the ground. (If the loss of Health points is greater than a third of their total, the target also takes an injury.) Normal creatures may be blinded for several rounds.

Purported Location: The current Nolde of Gundar keeps one of these rings in his possession, but is unsure as to its exact purpose.

The Skinner's Knife

(9 pts, Permanent)

Summary: A knife that magically skins half-men.

Description: Apparently a large and clumsily balanced knife, this item comes into its own should you utter the activation cantrap when within three yards of a fresh half-man corpse. If you then wield it steadily against the flesh of the half-man, the knife guides itself to magically skin the beast with flawless precision. (It is not widely known that it also works on humans.)

Purported Location: Mirejater, the Blood and Bone Buyer at Kaiin's Tracks (KPG, p156) owns one of these, but has not made this known.

The Sylph Locket

(12 pts, Permanent)

Summary: An amulet containing a bound sylph.

Description: A dainty silver locket with the picture of a beautiful otherworldly maiden inside. Once per day a sylph can be conjured forth and required to undertake Stewardship duties for the duration of one and a half hours.

Purported Location: Saper, the head of Kaiin Scholasticarium's Student Sodality apparently owns such a thing.

Woodel's Dissuasive Overjerkin

(15 pts, Charged)

Summary: A long jacket that sprouts metal spines.

Description: This leather great-coat is bulky, but not ridiculously so, and is enchanted to be sturdy and durable in all conditions. Its main strength is that on uttering the activation cantrip it sprouts dozens of foot-long razor-pointed metal spines from its every surface. These spines magically bend away from the caster, who can leap and run – and even fall - with relative ease (except in confined quarters – where the spines may catch on nearby restrictions). Although it is difficult to climb or pass through narrow spaces when the magic is in effect. When the coat is active, it is impossible for any creature to bite or claw the wearer without being injured. (If rapiers are used against the wearer, the wearer takes a bonus of 1 to their Defense roll. Longer weapons reduce this to a boon of 1.)

Purported Location: A certain heroic bandit in the group that runs under the leadership of Angar Glams of Kaiin has such a jacket.

Cunning Capacities (Tweaks)

Persuasion (any)

Convincing to Half-Men

Situation: You wish to engage a half-man in conversation in spite of the fact that it is clearly about to attack and is in no mood for discourse.

Description: In desperation you attempt to appeal to its baser desires.

Benefit: Normally such a creature would have bonuses on its Rebuff, but due to your skill at communicating at a level these creatures understand it is taken in. Note that the player must suggest some line of discussion that would be of reasonable interest to such a creature.

Attack (any)

Adept with the Erb Spear

Situation: Facing an attacking erb.

Description: Having previous experience in its use, the character wields the spear to best effect.

Benefit: The GM applies no penalties for unfamiliarity with this weapon.

Attack (Strength)

Anthropophage Wrestler

Situation: You are unarmed, and face an attacking anthropophage armed only with natural weaponry.

Description: The character knows how to turn the creature's combat habits to his advantage. (Perhaps they once performed such deeds at a carnival or in some kind of gladiatorial contests?)

Benefit: No penalty is applied for engaging in unarmed combat. Cost is 1 Attack pool point to activate this tweak.

Attack (Speed, Finesse, Cunning or Ferocity)

Adept with a Flaming Brand

Situation: A creature (or creatures) approaches your camp at night; the campfire is still reasonably well lit; your weapon is at hand.

Description: The character grasps up a flaming brand and uses it effectively as a shield/weapon – alongside their regular weapon. The combination of weapon/brand affects all natural animals and half-men – who all instinctively fear fire.

Benefit: The game benefit is either: the character faces no Defense levy (see 'Ganging Up' - DERPG, p34) when facing two or three creatures alone, OR the character gains a bonus of 1 to their Attack. Cost is 1 point from the Wherewithal (not Athletics) pool per contest.

Health

Resistant to Animal Toxins

Situation: The bite or sting of a creature has poisoned the character.

Description: Your superior constitution fights off this affliction.

Benefit: Character makes Health rolls in such a situation at a boon of 1.

Resistant to Plant Toxins

Situation: A plant or herbal toxin has poisoned the character.

Description: Your superior constitution fights off this affliction.

Benefit: Character makes Health rolls in such a situation at a boon of 1.

Athletics

Remarkable Rock-Climber

Situation: The character attempts to climb across rocks or up a small cliff.

Description: Due to much rock-climbing undertaken as a youth, or perhaps in some previous employment, the character climbs with incredible agility.

Benefit: The character expends a point from their Athletics pool. On any normal rock climb they are excused from making any rolls (unless something highly hazardous occurs, in which case they still gain a +1 bonus). When attempting a difficult rock climb, no penalties affect them (or penalties are reduced one degree).

Superior Swimmer

Situation: The character attempts to swim across a natural body of water.

Description: Due to much swimming undertaken as a youth, the character swims with incredible vigor.

Benefit: The character expends a point from their Athletics pool. On any normal swim they are excused from making any rolls (unless something highly hazardous occurs, in which case they still gain a +1 bonus). When attempting a difficult swim, no penalties affect them (or penalties are reduced one degree).

Talented Tree Climber

Situation: The character attempts to climb a sturdy living tree.

Description: Due to much tree climbing undertaken as a youth, or perhaps in some previous employment, the character climbs with incredible agility.

Benefit: The character expends a point from their Athletics pool. On any normal tree climb they are excused from making any rolls (unless something highly hazardous occurs, in which case they still gain a +1 bonus). When attempting a difficult tree climb, no penalties affect them (or penalties are reduced one degree).

Wilderness Runner

Situation: You are required to travel at speed across vegetated or rocky terrain or the like.

Description: The character used to run across country for exercise and excitement in former years, and can still do so with great skill.

Benefit: Character takes no penalties for running in natural uneven terrain. OR if the PC is engaged in pursuit of or from a wild creature, the creature gains no bonus for its natural affinity with the terrain.

Concealment

Invisible in Nature

Situation: The character is in a natural environment in which reasonable cover is present, and wishes to conceal themselves from pursuers who are not natural inhabitants of this type of terrain.

Description: This person knows the ways of the wild, and can use natural cover to make themselves less easy to detect. This may involve using branches, or covering oneself in mud, or some other artifice.

Benefit: Providing the character has sufficient time (GM decides) to conceal themselves, the pursuers suffer a Penalty of 2 to Perception and Tracking rolls. This costs 3 points from the characters Concealment or Living Rough pool. (Player decides.)

Craftsmanship

Bowyer

Situation: A bow needs repairing or creating.

Description: You can use your Craftsmanship without penalty to attempt this task, and are assumed (unless such a thing would be incredible) to have small tools for the job, and a spare bowstring or two. (If you are creating a bow from scratch, a source of suitable wood must also be nearby.)

Benefit: GM cannot apply penalties for engaging in this exotic task.

The Poacher's Tricks

Situation: You wish to set snares or construct a pit trap for a creature you hope will pass this way.

Description: The character is familiar with techniques of this kind.

Benefit: The GM cannot levy penalties for these actions, and Craftsmanship is used as normal. (Presuming adequate time, tools, and possibly assistance, is available.)

Experienced Spear Maker

Situation: You need to make a spear. (Probably because you have no other weapons.) An adequate source of decent wood, and a sharp knife – or other hard-edged implement/surface - are at hand.

Description: Using natural materials, you find it the work only of moments to locate and sharpen a length of wood to make a serviceable spear.

Benefit: The character spends 1 point from their Craftsmanship pool per spear made, and takes 10-15 minutes per spear. Each spear so made is judged to be totally serviceable, and the GM is banned from making rolls to see if it snaps during use, at least for the next few combats. (GM decides how long it takes to find a sturdy enough piece of wood, dependent on their assessment of the terrain.)

Gambling

“Wait; Here is Something that May Interest You”

Situation: A sentient creature native to this world wishes to make a meal of you. (It has a rating in Gambling.)

Description: Quickly displaying cards or dice (or similar gaming pieces), you explain that greater gains are to be had through the risk and excitement of gambling.

Benefit: For the cost of 4 points from your Persuasion pool (not Gambling pool) you automatically convince the creature to enter into a contest with you, at least for a few rounds.

Imposture

The Call of the Wild

Situation: You wish to emulate the vocal sounds of a specific creature.

Description: The character can imitate this creature’s voice with uncanny skill and reasonable volume.

Benefit: Character must specify the creature when purchasing the Tweak. Cost for a short series of calls is 1 point from the Imposture pool. (Once the pool is empty the call lacks a certain authenticity.)

Living Rough

Animal Skinner

Situation: Character is in the vicinity of a fairly fresh animal corpse with a salvageable pelt. Sufficient time and a sharp knife are available.

Description: Character skins the animal with skill.

Benefit: The character spends 1 point from their pool and makes an unadjusted roll. DF/QF – poor job [worth only .5 standard price]; EF/HBS is an adequate job [standard price], PS is a job very well done [worth 1.5 x price], and IS is masterful [2x price]. (Note that this seems tough, but anyone else without this tweak does a poor job with an HBS and fails totally on anything less.)

At Home in the Wilderness

(See ‘Wherewithal’ Tweaks)

Erb Hunter & Tracking Through Ruins

(See ‘Tracking’ Tweaks)

“Our Objective Lies Hence”

Situation: You are in the wilds with companions, and are unclear which direction you should be going to reach your objective.

Description: Striding boldly forth, the character leads the party on.

Benefit: GM makes a secret Living Rough roll for the player at a bonus of 1. IS – the character heads in exactly the right way; PS – Character heads in more or less the right way but veering slightly left or right (50/50 which); HBS – the character heads roughly the right way, but veering significantly left; EF – the character heads roughly the right way, but veering significantly right; QF – the character heads in roughly the opposite direction. Each roll for this tweak costs 2 points from the Living Rough pool.

Pedantry

Animal Assessor & Familiar with Animal Calls

(See ‘Perception’ Tweaks below, for both)

Herbalist

(See ‘Physician’ Tweaks)

Perception

Alert in Nature

Situation: One examines one’s surroundings in a natural setting.

Description: The character is used to the ways of the woods and wilds, and can distinguish the rustle of mice and birds from the stealthy footsteps and breath of predators and prey.

Benefit: Character gains a bonus of 1 to such rolls, or a boon of 1 in a contest. OR simply ignores penalties that the GM applies to others.

Animal Assessor

Situation: You wish to evaluate the health and temperament of a domestic beast.

Description: You spend a few minutes poking and prodding the creature, and perhaps questioning it – if it is sentient.

Benefit: Others would attract levies or penalties, but not you. Using this costs 1 point from your Pedantry or Perception pool. (Player’s choice.)

Familiar with Animal Calls

Situation: You have heard an animal call and wonder what creature it is.

Description: Character attempts to recall if they have heard this sound before.

Benefit: On EF/HBS the character knows vague type of creature; on a PS the specific species, on an IS the specific subspecies (if applicable). The GM and/or player notes any calls the PC has heard before. Once a creature is heard more than 3x a bonus of 1 is applied to the first roll.

Physician

Herbalist

Situation: You are out in nature and need to assist someone who is injured or poisoned.

Description: You know how to find healing herbs and make poultices and broths.

Benefit: DF/QF – No useful herbs can be found; EF - The patient makes next Health roll at a boon of 1; HBS – The patient makes next two Health rolls at a boon of 1; PS - The patient makes next three Health rolls at a boon of 1, IS - The patient makes next two Health rolls at a boon of 1. Using this tweak costs 1 point from your Pedantry or Physician pool. (Player's choice.)

Riding

Experienced Rider

Situation: You are riding a domestic animal and the going has just become difficult.

Description: Your previous experience as a rider comes into play.

Benefit: You ignore a penalty or levy applied by the GM for riding in difficult circumstances. This costs 1 point from your Riding or Wherewithal pool (Player's choice) the first time the circumstance is encountered.

Seamanship

“Oh, for the life of a Worminger”

Situation: You are required to evidence knowledge of, or utilitarian aptitude for, the profession of Worminger.

Description: You have served at least once as an under-worminger aboard ship on a journey that lasted at least two weeks. Thus you have basic knowledge of both theoretical and practical aspects of the art of ‘Worming’. (That is to say, tending the giant worms – Nardryke, as the call them in some parts of Saskervoy – that are used to haul vessels about the northern oceans.)

Benefit: You can use your Seamanship ability at a levy of 1 to attempt mental and physical tasks related to ‘Worming’. (Regular possessors of Seamanship without this tweak cannot use this ability to work with worms.) You are also immune to GM applied levies or penalties to Athletics rolls during the course of your professional activities. (Those without this tweak suffer such penalties due to unfamiliarity with clambering about worm and sponson – especially whilst the vessel is underway.)

Stealth

Silent in Nature

Situation: Character must move noiselessly in some natural setting.

Description: Twigs remain unbroken, leaves unrustled, and loose stones unskittered.

Benefit: Character takes no penalties for sneaking about in the wild (where their companions would be snapping twigs and turning their ankles on tussocks of grass). OR, character gains a bonus of 1 to such rolls to illustrate this advantage.

Tracking

Erb Hunter

Situation: You realize that you are on the trail of erb.

Description: Your previous experience hunting erb gives you an edge.

Benefit: Character gains a bonus of 1 to any tracking roll when following this particular erb or group of erbs. Using this tweak costs 1 point from your Tracking or Living Rough pool. (Player's choice.)

Tracking through Ruins

Situation: You are trailing your quarry across an area of ancient streets and ruined buildings.

Description: You have done such things before, and know how to discern the slight marks and hints that indicate your quarry passed this way.

Benefit: GM cannot impose any penalties for this terrain. Using this costs 1 point from your Tracking or Living Rough pool. (Player's choice.)

Wherewithal

At Home in the Wilderness

Situation: You face some manner of terror whilst abroad in the wilds.

Description: Unlike most others in these latter days, you are strangely comforted by natural locations.

Benefit: The character gains a boon of 1 to their Wherewithal when they are in nature, OR is unaffected by any extra penalties the GM may apply to city-folk facing natural hazards. OR, if the effect is a minor one, such as an unexpectedly leaping or howling beast, the character with this tweak need not make a Wherewithal roll (providing they pay 1 point from their pool for the privilege). Using this tweak costs 1 point from your Wherewithal or Living Rough pool. (Player's choice.)

Bonus Appendix: Tantalizing Tag-Lines

Most are originals by Ian Thomson. A few are from other Bestiary contributors, and a few are taken or adapted from Jack Vance's Dying Earth stories.

- "Alas, the leucomorph simply melted away; moments after I drove my sword into its noxious bulk."
- "Bar the door, pray to your gods, draw your rapiers! Doom is upon us!"
- "Boots of this quality were never designed for tracking through such indeterminable mire."
- "Bring up the cadaver wagon, another of these doltish creatures approaches."
- "By the beard of Kraan, the beast is a full fifteen ells in height!"
- "By the horns of Divine Wiulio; what was that baneful cry?"
- "Cease your frantic wailing; else the creature might be inspired to return."
- "Cease your whimpering, or I shall again apply stringent persuasives."
- "Come hither, for my blade has not tasted the blood of beasts for more than an hour."
- "Curb your appetite, beast. There are plump pilgrims a mile down the road."
- "Defiance is all very well, but a whole skin is better."
- "Do not listen to its foul lies; it seeks only to gain its freedom at our expense."
- "Do you suppose my entire arm would fit in your mouth? How about that of my more strapping associate?"
- "Enough of your slops and filth! Pay over a thousand terces at once, or vacate the premises!"
- "Four directions and then one; alive must I be brought to... ah, err, wait a minute; I had the name here a moment ago."
- "Go, before I speak a spell to burn you with fire."
- "He may have slain the beast, but unsightly entrails now decorate his overjerkin."
- "Help me and I kill you at once, otherwise you shall rise high to where the pelgrane fly."
- "Here comes the beast! Ready your arrow-guns and fire at my command!"
- "Hold fast; is that a thin layer of diambroid I have observed there beneath the rim?"
- "I admire his agility; as I for one thought the beast would have slain him much sooner."
- "I am a conglomerate of diseased spores, and to devour me invites certain doom. I mention this only as a professional courtesy."
- "I am a person of noble breeding, unused to wading knee-deep in squalid mire."
- "I am familiar with the ways of the wild, and you can safely trust me with your lives."
- "I am surely not the only one to have perceived that sinister shuffling?"
- "I am unsure whether such dentition leaves it capable of speech, even were it to be sufficiently cognizant."
- "I believe his mistake was to have neglected to properly ground the erb-spear before application."
- "I believe that well-roasted it will make us a fine repast."
- "I come seeking, half-man. Answer my questions and I shall feed you much flesh."
- "I fear the cruel sparkle of its eyes, and am in especial dread of the glinting fangs."
- "I find my current location adequately comfortable, and shall return to the ground only when my nerves are settled."
- "I have no time to wrestle with base creatures. Do you prefer death by Prismatic Spray or Galvanic Thrust?"
- "I must warn you that my father was Drozynt the Erb-Slayer!"
- "I remain suspicious of all creatures that exude such quantities of repulsive salivation."
- "I shall allow you to depart, only because I would not waste my spells on such a pathetic specimen."
- "I shall remain here for the time being; as I am not entirely convinced that it has expired."
- "I wager that you could not eat my companion in seven bites."
- "In all candor, I do not care to do so: on account of extreme fear."
- "It amuses me that you believe yourself to be the aggressor."
- "It is clearly a hybrid of demon, lank-lizard and arboreal erb."
- "It is not I who deserves your wrath, for my companion is the one who has sworn to end your life!"
- "It is still engrossed in its meal; let us depart with haste."
- "It stands yonder in the shadows, and I doubt it lurks with benevolent intent."
- "Its talk of both virgins and wealth is illusory; I doubt if it knows the meaning of either term."

“Let us see as to this tentacle. Perhaps we can pry it loose.”

“I believe the deluded creature imagines it will be immune to our death magics!”

“Measured against this creature, mere deodands appear as paragons of virtue!”

“My immediate notion is that we speedily conceal ourselves and hope that we are beneath its notice.”

“No amount of terces will persuade me to go one step further.”

“Nonsense, such beasts are entirely herbivorous!”

“Nonsense, such creatures live only amidst the barren furze of the Saponid Tundra.”

“Nonsense, though formidable in appearance I have it on good authority that such creatures flee when threatened.”

“Not wishing to be discourteous, but such plans are the fever dreams of dunderheads.”

“In better days a man could rest at ease in such dappled glades. Now we must examine every trunk for hidden predators.”

“Once you have slain it, I shall stack its sorry corpse with all of the others.”

“One step further and your skin will soon decorate my chamber wall – even if somewhat charred and soiled.”

“Pass me the larger of the Firesticks, I suspect that pathetic creature intends a futile attack upon our persons.”

“Perhaps I erred in my evaluation of its propensity to threaten our safety.”

“Perhaps I was mistaken. I shall return at once to Kaiin to consult my copy of Dibarcas.”

“Perhaps we can take another route; this way is blocked by slaving beasts.”

“Perhaps when it is securely bound we can return with it to town and sell it for a mutual profit?”

“Prime the vats, our raw ingredients are at hand!”

“Quickly, run it through before it strikes again!”

“Quiet, vixen; lest I lose patience and stun you!”

“Save your breath, as you may need it when the drogger begins to flag.”

“Sleeping or dead, it matters not. Now may be our only chance of escape!”

“Such an environment does not daunt me in the slightest.”

“That fine pelt will be worth much, if we can procure it intact.”

“Whilst the creature seems highly agile, you are a person of no great athleticism.”

“The sheer dimension of this footprint instills in me more than moderate caution.”

“These traces of exudition are suspiciously fresh.”

“These tracks say to me that the beast headed east. Let us follow expediency and move swiftly to the west.”

“Though fearsome in appearance, its jaws are congenitally weak, and its claws typically fragile at the base.”

“Though it pains me to do so, let us imagine for a moment that the creature is still nearby.”

“Though my presence may seem nugatory, the first being to harm me will be inflicted with deadly curses.”

“To a dung-beetle, a pile of brontotaubus droppings is a matter of prime significance.”

“Unless I am much mistaken, it is of a subspecies as yet uncatalogued.”

“We are not the nincompoops that you take us for.”

“We can certainly cross this short distance at speed before it can strike again.”

“Why need we resort to weaponry when you can surely step out and slice it down with your razor-sharp wit?”

“We wish pack-animals, docile and frugal of habit, rather than freaks and curiosities, no matter how edifying.”

“What is the current rate for quantities of its flesh at the town market?”

“With an ounce or two of explosive diambroid I could create a suitably fatal distraction.”

“With ordure of such virulent propensity, I care not to view the creature itself.”

“You have already devoured one of my associates; I shall not add to this foul tally!”

“You have already maimed me. What further security do you need?”

“Your impudence offends me! Do you take me for a common seller of corpses?”

“When all is said and done I wager your pelt will make me a fine jerkin.”

“Your performance was admirable. My graceful completion of the task will be largely superfluous.”

“Your theories are sound, but are you certain without hesitancy that the bonds are secure?”