The Herbal

1, Daceae the Alchemist, being now in my One Hundred and Second year am taking on the daunting task of writing down the results of my life-times work. It is unfortunate that 1 have no-one to pass this information to, near at hand, who has the ability to read and write on my behalf; 1 must make what haste 1 can despite the pain in holding my quill and pray that the words appearing before me as in the depths of a mist are crystal clear to those who follow after me. For 1 believe a time may come when mankind will need this knowledge to survive.



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THE FOUR MYSTIC REALMS

Known as Attack, Defence, Metamorph and Equipment a select group of herbs can be used to change the very laws of nature within these realms.

Controlled use, in combination releases mystic powers, warping nature and thus creating spells.

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THE MYSTIC REALM OF ATTACK

The herbs used in this sphere of magic are naturally dangerous; each possessing powers and poisons capable of releasing destructive forces.

The six mystical attack herbs are, in order of power:



Asaltine (Tangle Weed) :

Well known for its stunted spiky stems, this tough little plant survives and can be found almost anywhere. Infamous for its ability to tangle into the clothing and hair of passers-by, it has an amazing habit of managing to sprout up again wherever it dropped off. Being a mildly poisonous plant it is advised that you attempt to brush it off yourself with care, should this be necessary,

as a nasty rash results from skin contact. Although obviously totally inedible Asaltine is useful as an ingredient in attack spells, though not powerful.



Bovora (Stinkberry) :

A small rare plant which is difficult for the novice to identify except upon the eve of a new moon, upon which event, the Bovora bears a single yellow berry which gives off such an unholy stench it cannot be mistaken for any other plant. This disgusting smell is 1 believe created by the plant to warn of the high concentration of acid within the fruit thus protecting the berry from being eaten by

any creature with any sense of smell. Despite the acidity making it totally inedible, even to those lacking nostrils, it is none-the-less an important ingredient with valuable properties which can unlock the powers of other herbs.



HE MISTIC REALM OF ATTACK



Corro Lutea (Sweet Death) :

A compact growing very attractive bush which is usually to be found in sheltered, sunny positions. In springtime it is generally covered in a profusion of pale pink flowers that look almost to be made of wax, in summer the bush displays an equal profusion of the most mouthwateringly tempting purple berries. These berries have been said to be "the most deliciously sweet fruit 1 have ever tasted..."

by all who have ever tried them, having said which all have instantly died albeit with an expression of extreme pleasure upon their countenance. The strong poison contained within these berries can be tamed with other herbs to produce several different types of attack potion.



Durnip Harpagophyum (Devil's Turnip) :

An explosive root vegetable when fully ripe, which propagates by exploding when pressure is applied or if stepped upon. On exploding the Durnip seeds and the thing which stepped upon it are spread about the surrounding area and the seeds receive all the nourishment they require to grow to maturity from the rotting pieces of the corpse. Almost edible in its unripened state, (though

ripeness is sometimes difficult to assess and can vary with size of the Durnip), it is most useful as an explosive ingredient in a potion.



Endama Larvicum (Ash Weed) :

Very rare plant which can only be found growing near recent volcanic eruptions where it thrives on the heat and volcanic gases. The entire plant, including the roots, is highly toxic, causing severe internal blistering if eaten. The plant bears precious red berries which are used as a main ingredient in higher attack spells.



Fucus Officinalis (Gugdar's Pod) :

Extremely rare plant which can grow in any habitat under the most severe conditions, but is seldom if ever found. Its leaves are smooth and shiny on the upper surface with the underside slightly grey and furry in texture. The plant produces a red pod which is the source for only the highest levels of attack spells. Ensure that you use this herb with respect as the resulting spells will be devastating.

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THE MYSTIC REALM OF DEFENCE

Defensive herbs naturally absorb forces directed against them. This property in the defence potions can be used against all forms of attack and also in evading enemies.

The six mystical defence herbs are:



Belgia Crispus (Wild Cabbage) :

The Wild Cabbage is very common growing in mainly grasslands, but can be found virtually anywhere apart from tropical climates. A basic ingredient in most defence spells, it is also edible and a fairly good source of basic nutrients. The cabbage can also be used for its mild healing properties, either as a poultice for skin complaints and small wounds, or chewed thoroughly for common

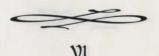
digestive disorders, though when eaten it saps some personal magic power.



Populus Arscidia (Wood Balm) :

A fairly common shrub or small tree found in woodland which bears edible red berries which are very sweet and have restorative properties. Use of these berries will absorb some personal magic power but as they are able to be used in most defence spells as well as having some healing properties they are most useful. May I particularly recommend their use, mashed, as a compound for

haemorrhoids, and 1 found that after only two applications it sorted out my constipation problem as well where all other remedies had failed.





Myristica Fragrans (Lovelost) :

This pretty purple flower can be found growing on mountain slopes and is hardy enough to survive at high altitudes. Its common name seems to derive from the fact that it actually can thrive even in the extreme cold well above the snow-line and possibly could also be due to the large purple flowers being nonaromatic. Occasionally the flowers can be a deep blue colour but this is rare.

The petals of the flower are of use in making some defence spells. They lack any taste but are edible, have a mild healing quality and, as with all herbs in this group, absorb magic.

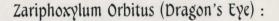


Trifoliata Plumbago (Ground Plum) :

Easily mistaken for the False Unicorn Root as both plants have the same leaf formation of three broad leathery leaves above ground and do not flower. Only on lifting the bulbous root can the difference be seen; as the common name suggests the root of the Ground Plum is red in colour. Usually growing in forests the Ground Plum is useful as a defence spell ingredient and can be

eaten raw - though is best lightly boiled to bring out its full healing properties.







Ground hugging perennial herb with profusion of small yellow flowers which have a very pungent scent. Generally found growing on stoney barren soil as they require little moisture to thrive. The tiny flowers are used in higher defence spells, have healing abilities and are edible but taste like they smell; like mouldy cheese or old socks.



Expitorium Vulgaris (Rot Wort) :

Rot Wort is a small herb that when in flower is easily identified by any passer-by within a range of six metres. The smell is unbelievably disgusting! Holding your nostrils tightly closed will enable you to get close enough to see the red carnivorous flower, which enjoys a damp habitat. The digestive juices of the flower are required as an ingredient of the highest of defence spells; an airtight

container will ensure that you can carry this ingredient without offending friends. The healing properties of this herb are mild and it is not poisonous to eat, though 1 confess that 1 could not bring myself to try it, so have no idea of its flavour!

My hand grows tired and aches from all this writing. 1 must just close my weary eyes and sleep a while and finish this work tomorrow . . .

THE MYSTIC REALM OF METAMORPHOSIS

The magic of this realm changes the states of minds and bodies. The herbs used in the metamorph realm of magic are all edible, though calorific values are extremely low. All six herbs have good healing properties and are therefore most useful to keep a selection of. Personal magic power is not affected by the use of these herbs, which makes them even more enjoyable to experiment with.

The six mystical metamorph herbs are, in order of power:



Caneatum Glycyrrhiza (Liquorice Fern) :

Commonly found growing in woods and forests the Liquorice Fern is easily identified (it grows to a height of two metres the tallest of the ferns). It is a primitive, spore-bearing, nonflowering plant, with leaves that are fibrous and feel dry to the touch. Though of little food value, if you are truly starving, a small piece of this plant will be found to give many hours of pleasure; very

chewable, the flavour lasts and lasts, at least giving the impression that you are eating something while you seek out a more substantial food source. This plant is not, 1 hasten to add, to be considered a never-ending supply of liquorice flavoured delight; the common name actually describing the colour that the tongue becomes for at least a week after eating Liquorice Fern.



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Hedera Graveoli (Royalty) :



A variety of vine found growing upon trees and therefore most commonly found in woods and dense forest. The fruit of the vine hangs in clusters of three; one red, one gold and one purple in each of these clusters. These fruits are edible and despite their difference in colour are identical in their slightly bitter taste. Legend has it that a king was once pursued by a sorcerer intent upon killing

him; the reason lost in time. The king finally sought refuge in a dark forest and, exhausted, sat down and rested against a tree, eventually falling asleep. Unaware of snapping twigs, of small creatures and birds, suddenly disturbed, scuttling and flying away from the approaching danger, the king slept on. He never woke from his slumber, even as the glinting edge of the sword fell swiftly down decapitating him in one deft stroke his eyes did not open. The vine, it is said, came forth from the head of the dead king, clinging for support to the tree where he had rested his weary body. The red fruits of Royalty represent the blood of the king; the purple, his robes; and the gold, his crown (which was never found). The bitter taste - Death.



Chamaelirium Haluceum (False Unicorn Root) :

For a description of this plant see under my entry on the Trifoliata Plumbago or Ground Plum. You will find that the False Unicorn Root is much rarer than the Ground Plum. More likely to be found in scrubland habitat, the bulbous root is blue in colour and is edible, though 1 suspect some hallucinogenic side-effects may be experienced for a short while after eating. Chamaelirium

Haluceum is most important as an ingredient in the higher metamorph spells.





Belchiflorum (Purple Burper) :

Described by many as 'disagreeable', 'offensive', and 'disgusting' the Purple Burper is a variety of pitcher plant. Fairly commonly found in jungle regions, the flower head itself is large and blue/purple in colour. The centre of the flower is funnel shaped and contains sweet nectar which combines with rainwater to result in the drink known as 'Ambrosia' fit for the gods themselves to

partake of. (They would of course have filtered out any remains of those unfortunates - mainly small mammals and insects- contained within the liquid, before supping). The disgustingly loud belching noises are generated from the green bulbous section at the base of the plant immediately above the brown root balls. The plant digests food by sucking it down through the nectar into this bulbous section where it is processed. Any nectar drawn down into the bulb is returned to the pitcher along with any useless remains, such as indigestible parts like wings and claws. Noxious gases, a by-product of this digestive process, are used to propel the unwanted matter back upwards to the pitcher, the offensive gases escaping into the atmosphere as a loud belch. Occasionally, the plant may attempt to digest larger carrion - you may suspect this if the plant appears to belch almost continuously. Should this be the case, do not attempt to approach and stand well back!



THE EQUIPMENT REALM OF MAGIC

Glosplendensa (Fireglow) :



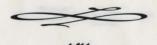
Though rare this plant is easy to identify. It grows only near fresh running water, is compact in habit and grows to no more than one metre in height. Its leaves grow out at ground level with the rest of the bush a mass of bright red flowers which are produced all year round. With water running beside it reflecting sunlight upon these flowers the entire bush

appears as if on fire. The petals in particular have good healing properties and this plant - if you can find it - is excellent as a metamorph spell component.



Magisuperiatum (None) :

This herb is extremely rare, so much so that it has no common name. Most likely to be found in forest clearings it is very small with minute yellow sticky buds above green fleshy stems. For the highest metamorph spells you will certainly need this herb. Good luck in finding it!



This Mystic Realm relates to solid object manipulation. You will find that all the herbs within this realm are useful in many ways. All are edible, in fact are good food sources; all have mild healing properties and use of them will add a small amount to your personal magic power.

The six mystical equipment herbs are, in order of power:



Tridraco (Dragon Tooth Herb) :

Commonly found in desert regions the Dragon Tooth Herb has three succulent leaves which are very tough and spiky on the outside. Easily identifiable by these spiky leaves it also has a spider-like root system above ground which allows the herb to travel along the ground in search of water and nutrient sources. This ability to literally uproot itself means that this sun-loving herb can

survive and flourish in vast numbers where other plants do not exist.



Wildii Metallica (Bog Berry) :

Wildii Metallica is in fact a small tree which is common and enjoys damp habitats such as are provided around marshes and lake shores. The leaves are a lush glossy green on the smooth upper surface with the underside having the appearance of grey metal. The tree flowers gloriously in early spring with huge golden blooms whose petals reflect the sun glinting from their surfaces. The

fruits are large, bright red berries, deliciously sweet and juicy. A beautiful tree which is very well known. It is the fruit, the Bog Berries themselves that are useful in most equipment spells.





THE EQUIPMENT REALM OF MAGIC



Rubus Communis (Corn Weed) :

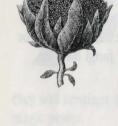
This common weed can be found growing in any but the most extreme conditions. It has tough woody roots which make it difficult to pull out of the ground. However, it is the purple flower that is valuable for alchemy purposes leaves and roots are not necessary for the spells which require Corn Weed as an ingredient - so either cut the roots at ground level or just pinch off the flower head.



Radii Calvegis (Rock Potato) :

This gnarled root vegetable is quite rare and found only in plains. Only a small tuft of grass-like foliage about five centimetres high is visible above ground making it difficult to find. The gnarled root which looks much like a small rock smells strangely similar to garlic; it is possible therefore, when searching for Rock Potatoes to sniff them out as a slight smell can be detected just above ground. On find-

ing an area of low growing grass-type plants; drop to the knees and, placing your hands before you, nose to ground, proceed over the area breathing deeply through the nose. I found two Radii Calvegis's using this method before finding something rather nasty attached to my nose. Proceed with caution!



Idaeus Randriae (Collywobble) :

This large herb can be found in swamps. Its green foliage and enormous head of tiny red flowers with yellow centres tending to wobble about above the marsh on a stem barely capable of bearing such weight. Very rare even in this habitat, it is worth trying to find some as for the higher equipment spells you will need it.



Rotunda Vulgare (Peeweed) :

The very highest spells in this mystic realm require the use of this extremely rare plant. The difficulty in obtaining specimens is further hampered by this parasitic carnivorous plants habit of growing high in the canopies of ancient trees attached to the bark from which it draws the nutrients it requires. The Peeweed is green and spherical with one small purple petalled flower that

appears for just two days each year. Once dead, the flower drops from the sphere revealing the orifice from whence comes forth the strong odour of rotting corpses.



MAGIC POWER

The herbs 1 have described have been given in groups of mystic realms, these provide the direction for the power of spells and potions. The magical powers themselves derive from special power fungi. These provide varying strengths of magic power, known as Emerald, Sapphire, Ruby, Silver and Gold. All power fungi are edible, though providing very little energy, they are excellent food for magic power adding much to personal magic abilities. Power fungi have no healing properties.

The six power fungi that I have identified are:



The Bell Cap :

Bell shaped cap with red gills. Very commonly found growing in meadows. Use of this mushroom will give Emerald magic power.



Brown Flat Cap :

Flat shaped cap above a tall stem, the gills are dark brown releasing black spores in circles around the parent plant. The Flat Cap is fairly common in woodland and use of this mushroom gives Sapphire magic power.





Swamp Lantern :

Small conical toadstool which enjoys the damp environment of swamps, growing upon anything living or dead which can provide the nutrients that it requires. As they are quite rare, and by day they appear to be unremarkable small, brown fungi, seek them by night when they glow brightly with a yellow/orange light as though a candle-flame is lit within each cap. Even when picked

they will continue to glow until sunrise and when used in spells give Ruby magic power.



Sporb :

A puff-ball which grows in open countryside, it can grow to as much as two metres in diameter. The mature fungi snap from their short stems and roll about the countryside until hitting an object with enough force causes it to explode spreading its red spores over hundreds of metres. The Sporb is becoming rare these days; due to the amount of damage they can cause in the power of their

explosions, most are crushed whilst small and harmless by farmers fearful for their lives and livestock. For purposes of alchemy the small Sporbs should be used, since the remains from an explosion will have little if no power left within. The magic power level derived from a Sporb is Silver.







MAGIC POWER

Skull Cap :

A large mushroom with rounded smooth cap over a tall stem. The gills are black with a look of velvet about them. To be found only in caves or similar cool, dark, damp places they are extremely rare. The most delicious fried breakfast 1 ever had! But must remember, keep some for Gold magic power spells 1 named it myself you know . . . `Skull Cap' . . . 1'm wearing it now . . . doesn't taste so good . . . then what was it last for power?

Black Inky Caps :

Tall and thin, drip, drip, black sticky fluid down, down down and spores in the black sticky mess very rare and can't recall where to find . . . magic power Gc



XVIII



