



WAREHOUSE 23

The Sorcerer's Toolbox

for *GURPS*

by James L. Cambias

Most people are familiar with the basic tools of a fantasy magician: the wand, the staff, the pentagram, the enchanted dagger, and so forth. But any magician worth his pointy hat will have some better equipment in the toolbox. Here are some magical apparatus likely to be found in the laboratory of a practicing magician. Some are ancient, others are high-tech fusions of science and sorcery. They are based on real-world occult books, legends, and crackpot theories.

Blasting Rod

This is a very old type of magical weapon, described in many old books. It is a rod or wand enchanted with a spell which can blast and torment spirits. Magicians typically use them to threaten and control summoned spirits, and as a way to deal with supernatural beings sent against them by rivals.

A Blasting Rod is enchanted with the Spirit Lightning spell -- a variant of the spell Lightning (see page 196 of *GURPS Magic*), tuned to affect spirits only. The spell does 1d-1 damage to spirits only (even intangible ones) per energy point expended by the caster. Blasting Rods are seldom self-powered. Rods are typically enchanted to skill level 20. They cost \$27,000 in a fantasy setting, \$50,000 or more in a world where magic is not commonly known.

Crookes Disruptor

Invented by the English physicist Sir William Crookes, working in partnership with the medium Daniel Douglas Home in 1870, the Crookes Disruptor is a proton emitter tuned specifically to affect immaterial spirits. (Essentially a Disruptor is a technological equivalent of a Blasting Rod.) Early versions were large, power-hungry, and extremely malfunction-prone. Today, a century of improvement has made Crookes Disruptors portable, reliable, and quite effective. All Disruptors emit particle beams which can damage spirits, but are harmless to material beings. They are entirely legal in societies where magic is unknown, because in such places the authorities view Disruptors as harmless crackpot tech. In a magical setting they are likely LC 3.

TL5⁺ Crookes Disruptor

This is the original design. It is a large vacuum tube surrounded by focusing coils, which emits a

100-kilojoule charged particle beam. The device is large, bulky, and fragile: it has a malfunction number of 16. There is a tripod so that the user doesn't have to wrestle with it. It requires a 100 kilowatt power supply (usually in the form of a cable to a dedicated generator or a power main).

TL8^ Crookes Disruptor

This is the result of considerable refinement by later engineers making use of considerably better technology. Output is 90 kilojoules but damage is greater. The weapon is quite light, only 1 lb. without batteries, but the 3600-kilojoule energy pack increases the weight to 4 lbs.

TL	Weapon	Damage	Acc	Range	Weight	RoF	Shots	ST	Bulk	Rcl	Cost	LC Notes
5^	Crookes Tube	3d	6	40/80	45	1/2	--	16T -9	--	\$1,000	4	1,2
8^	Disruptor	4d	8	40/80	4/3	2	20	6 -4	1	\$24,000	4	1

1 Damage only affects immaterial spirits.

2 Requires tripod and external power source.

Faerie Drops

These eyedrops have been used for centuries by the Faerie to give changeling children and occasional favored mortals the ability to see into the spirit world. The secret was stolen in the early 19th Century by an Irish physician called in to attend at a Faerie woman's difficult childbirth. He stole a sample and analyzed it, and was able to mail his findings to a colleague before being harried to death by the Wild Hunt. Alchemists working together with Faerie specialists and magicians were able to duplicate and improve the formula. The drops give the See Invisible (Faerie Glamour) advantage for up to 1 hour per dose. Cost is \$1,000 for a bottle of 5 doses. (Since it doesn't require a magician to produce, the cost is the same in mundane and magical settings.)

Scrying Mirror

Mirrors as tools for scrying and divination date back to the ancient Etruscans. Beginning in Renaissance-era Venice, mages and alchemists have tried to improve the qualities of scrying mirrors, by using mystically vsignificant materials, unusual curvature of the reflecting surface, and other techniques. The best-quality mirrors were those made during the 1860s by the Italian-Armenian mystic Cuilna Vilmara. A mystic scrying mirror can give the magus a skill bonus of +1 to +3 when performing Divination by Crystal-Gazing. A +1 mirror costs about \$8,000; +2 is \$33,000; and a +3 mirror costs \$165,000. (Double the price in a low-magic or secret magic campaign.) If you are using the Hermetic modifiers from *GURPS Cabal*, a enchanted mirror also gives its skill bonus for any spell associated with the Moon or the decan Iudal.

Spirit Lenses

Spirit lenses are made of specially alchemically-doped crystal, polarized and tinted to allow anyone looking through the lens to see spirits. Essentially a spirit lens gives the user the Detect (Spirits) advantage with the Precise enhancement. They are very useful but hard to make. Spirit

lenses first became available in the 18th century, and do not get any benefit from improved technology. A spirit lens 1 inch across (suitable for use as a monocle or in a camera attachment) costs \$1,000 in modern money. A matched pair of lenses (for use in goggles or glasses -- it is impossible to have one ordinary glass and one spirit lens in a pair of glasses) cost \$2,500. Spirit contact lenses are extremely expensive and must be custom-fitted to the wearer, costing \$5,000. They cannot be combined with ordinary corrective optics. Cost is unchanged by the campaign magic level.

Spirit Trap

Although designs for electrical spirit traps go back to the 1850s, they only became practical with the discovery of superconductors in the 1960s. Spirit traps use flows of electrical current along carefully-aligned channels to create a cone of force which attracts and then imprisons spirit beings. The effect is that of the spell *Entrap Spirit*. Note that a spirit trap must have a constant supply of power to maintain its containment field. Even a split-second flicker is enough to let the occupants get free. Constructing a spirit trap requires both Gadgeteering and Magery.

Tesla Spirit Trap (TL5^)

This is a box about the size of a telephone booth, surrounded by coils and magnets. When operating, its surface is covered with arcing bolts of electricity, and it is surrounded by a corona of blue plasma discharge. It can hold spirits with a combined ST and IQ of up to 20. It weighs 200 lbs. and requires a 2-kilowatt power supply (typically from a dedicated generator or a bank of batteries). Cost is \$10,000 in 1927.

ECU-13 (TL8^)

This model is a folding plastic and aluminum framework creating a cube 2 yards on a side. It is powered by house current, drawing 400 watts, and can hold spirits with a total ST and IQ of 40. Weight is 50 lbs. Cost is \$25,000. Multiple ECUs can be connected to hold physically bulky spirits, or to create a space which spirits cannot enter.

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