

Cacophonix

A sapient sword (Intelligence 9) that communicates telepathically with its wielder and believes it can sing aloud. It is an impressive-looking +1 long sword in an ostentatiously decorated and bejewelled scabbard.

On a natural — or adjusted — to-hit roll of exactly 20 Cacophonix will utter an ear-splitting shriek, screeching horribly across the Black Notes of the Pentagramic Scale. In addition to normal (and critical, if applicable) damage, the sword's Asmelodeus tones can inflict each of the following effects once per day:

- 1) Sleep;
- 2) Confusion;
- 3) Feeblemind;
- 4) Power Word: Stun; and
- 5) Maze.

The effect radius of these powers is one foot per point of damage inflicted centred on the target struck. All but the sword's wielder can be affected. Saving throws apply as normal.

But Cacophonix requires constant reassurance about its musical ability. It believes the reason targets are shocked and dismayed by its tones is that its music is so sonorous and uplifting that most people are simply unable to perceive the fullness — or hold the beauty — of the notes in their tiny limited minds. It wants all the time to be agreed with on this score.

If not encouraged and affirmed by its wielder for at least one hour a day Cacophonix will go into a sulk. It will start to withhold its powers and abilities in the following order, one each day it is neglected over the course of a week:

- 1) It stops granting Maze;
- 2) It stops granting Power Word: Stun;
- 3) It stops granting Feeblemind;
- 4) It stops granting Confusion;
- 5) It stops granting Sleep;

- 6) Its +1 ceases to function; and finally
- 7) It stops communicating telepathically with its wielder.

If a wielder allows it to sink as low as number 7 above, Cacophonix begins spitefully to sing constantly. It hopes to teach its bearer a lesson, ideally by attracting so much unwanted attention that he will be killed. In any event, while the sword is wailing in this petulant fashion, no rest is possible in its presence, no spells can be memorized, etc.

A wielder can with praise bring Cacophonix out of its funk any day before the seventh. Two hours per day will coax back each of the withheld powers listed above in turn. Then one hour a day as normal will keep them available and Cacophonix will be happy. Well, as happy as it can be.