

The Sap of the Yew

The Sap of the Yew is a lore that teaches three venoms: Nightspear, which brings death nigh. Bloodspear, which takes strength. Stonespear, which robs movement and leaves your foe at your mercy for a short time.

Nightspear

This venom is a stone-gray oily paste, slick to the touch, with a vile taste.

The Druj call this Swamp Fever. It is made to be smeared on a weapon, and once applied must be used to strike swiftly. Armour offers little protection - even a splash against skin will get it into the blood.

This is a blade venom that taints the blood of the victim. It prepares them for death. While the venom is in their blood, they will succumb easily to their wounds. We have also found that it harms some of the creatures that come from the vallorn, burning them from within.

Brewing Nightspear needs two drams bladeroot, one dram each of true vervain, cerulean mazzarine, and marrowort.

Bloodspear

This venom is a salve, sticky to the touch, which is the colour of drying blood. We smear it on our spears. It steals the strength from your enemy, leaving champions and sorcerers unable to wield their power.

A cunning warrior can make good use of bloodspear, which the Druj call mudhoney. A precise strike at a key moment will neutralise a significant enemy, allowing them to be overrun.

Brewing Bloodspear needs two drams of Roseweald, one dram each of true vervain, mothbloom, and marrowort.

Stonespear

This venom is a salve, yellow-green in colour. It has many names, different for each Druj tribe, each of whom claim they created it. We call it Stonespear, for it makes the body of your enemy like stone.

The venom overwhelms your foe and renders them unable to move. It is

short-lived, but for the moments it lasts it makes your enemy profoundly vulnerable, easily dispatched or captured.

It is more difficult to brew than Nightspear or Bloodspear. It requires many herbs, and so it must be used carefully. Yet once it is brewed, as long as you can strike your foe cleanly, and then take advantage of the moments of vulnerability it creates.

The recipe requires three drams of bladeroot, two drams each of true vervain and marrowort, and one dram of cerulean mazzarine.

The Two-Bladed Knife

This lore is known as “The Endless Struggle” by the Druj, who wield it without concern for the lives it shortens. Each grants a warrior the strength to sustain life even in the face of otherwise lethal wounds. These potions are like the double-bladed knife that strikes at the hand that wields it. When you must cut, you must also be cut. Sometimes your blood is the price for the victory you require.

Warspice

A deep crimson potion, with spicy flavour and taste, warm to the touch.

It warms the belly, and then the warmth spreads through the entire body. It touches the fury that burns in the heart of all people. It urges bloodshed. For this alone it should be used cautiously.

It grants the power to endure truly vicious wounds, but it leaves the blood thin. When the reserve of strength it offers has been depleted, the Abyss yawns. There are further dangers – the potion interacts poorly with Roseweald, and with magic that purges venom. It may kill the one who drinks it if a well-meaning herbalist attempts to help the one who bears its power.

Brewing Warspice requires two drams each of marrowort, Roseweald, and true vervain; one dram of cerulean mazzarine.

Oakenshield

A blue salve, thick and oily to the touch, with a strong scent of fresh meat.

It is smeared on the skin of the face or the hands, and its use is pleasurable – dangerously so where the warrior's will is weak. It shields the one who wears it from pain, letting them sustain deadly wounds with ease, but there is a cost. The Druj call it "Corpseskin" for a reason.

The user loses their sense of self – they can still fight, but they cannot draw on the passion at the heart of the true warrior. They cannot wield magical tools. They cannot weave magic. This is the cost for the power to survive that the salve grants them.

Worse, and this is a thing that makes it favoured by the Druj who are tyrants, the poison in the salve creates an urge to submission. It damps the spirit, it humbles the skilled.

As with Warspice, it is dangerous for a herbalist to interfere with its progress once it is used. It may break the heart of the one who uses it, and sends the one who wears it tumbling into the Abyss.

Two drams each of marrowort, true vervain, and bladeroot; one dram of cerulean mazzarine.

The Dance of the Leaves

The Druj masters of herbalism call these potions "The Bonds of the Bridge." They hone the will of the warrior, and grant precious communion to the spirit of the orcs. They are not for humans – they sicken them rather than granting them prowess.

Without exception, a warrior who hears the ancestors more clearly fights more passionately.

Budding Leaf

A granular red powder, full of sharp fragments that draw blood if rubbed between finger and thumb.

Inhale the smoke of the powder as it burns. It burns the nostrils, and fills the warrior with the will to strike. The orc hears the voice of their ancestors, especially those who urge victory over the enemies of their tribe.

The ancestors guide the drinker, giving their aid, but for the most part it is important to choose warriors who understand that there is a moment to act, and to employ their boon to find and take command of that moment.

Brewing the budding leaf requires two drams of Roseweald, and one dram of true vervain.

Summer Bloom

Deep purple powder, crumbles between finger and thumb, smells familiar but unplaceable.

Boil it in water and breathe the steam, or burn it and inhale the smoke. The warrior who does so is aware of the web of connection that ties them to their people. They are strongly aware of the voices of their ancestors, especially those who bind the people together.

The strength this infusion provides grants strength of will, and the ability to wield the powers of those who fight with the ancestors at their side is greatly enhanced.

Brewing this infusion requires three drams of Roseweald, and one dram each of true vervain and marrowort.

Autumns Gall

A dark brown resin, gresy and hard to separate. It smells of cooked meat.

A powerful preparation. The gall of Autumn grants the power to resist the call of the Howling Abyss. The ancestors huddle close, watching and judging the actions of the orc who inhales its sweet smoke.

The orc who inhales this infusion draws on their inner strength to fan the flame of their life, even to the state that they can rise up from grievous wounds ready for one final blow against the foe that has discounted the fallen orc.

Brewing this infusion requires two drams each of marrowort and true vervain, and one dram of Roseweald.

Winter's Breath

This green resin is speckled with gold. It is easy to crumble, but it smells strongly of a predator's breath.

The one who breathes the steam, or inhales the smoke, is granted a moment of communion, touching for a moment the spirit of those who have gone before and, perhaps, those who will come after. The voices of the ancestors are heard most strongly, urging the warrior to rise and to take command. Be cautious - the weak warrior may be driven to become a tyrant.

The ancestors guide the hand of the one who breathes them in, wielding the weapons of war with great potence. It is most value to one who already has the fire within that lets them more closely hear the ancestors, but with the aid of this potion they may strike a foe down, maim them with a single strike, or smash their shield or their weapon through the exultant strength of the spirit of the people.

Brewing this transcendant infusion takes three drams of Roseweald, two drams each of true vervain and marrowort, and one dram each of cerulean mazzarine and bladeroot.

OOC NOTES

These scrolls book represent notes about herb lore prepared by the apothecaries of the Great Forest Orc. They detail the apothecary preparations that they learned among the Druj, but called by the names the Great Forest use.

There are three specific skills that can be learned from this book – one potion that can be learnt by anyone who already knows the Legacy of Thorns recipe, and two that can be learned by a character who takes the Extra Recipe skill.

Using the Scrolls

A character with the Legacy of Thorns skill who has this text in their hands can study the appropriate in-character section and learn to make the blade venom the Great Forest Orcs call "Stonespear" but is known to the Druj as "Serpent's Tooth". They can have this ability added to their character by taking the scroll to GOD.

Alternatively, a character can study the appropriate in-character sections of the book and spend an experience point to gain the Extra Recipe skill that covers one of the two sets of potions.

It is not possible for someone who has the skill to teach it to someone else – all new students must have access to these scrolls.

It is not possible to discover the precise mechanical effects of any of these potions without making and then in-character experimenting with them.

Spreading the Lore

The contents of this book may be entered into Imperial Lore. This requires a Senate motion and 25 Thrones to add the new blade venom and both new potion sets.

Once added to Imperial lore, the recipes would appear on the main wiki and any character would be able to select them without reference to this book.