

The Scarlet Poppy

“The scarlet poppy, *papaver alcelestia*, is at first glance an innocuous flower. To the unknowing eye, one might think it any other garden bloom. With its halted flat top and dark viney stem it would look at home gracing the windowsill of a continental cafe or pinned to the lapel of a homecoming deckhand. But do not let looks deceive. For the scarlet poppy, and the processes of its cultivation and decompounding, has perhaps shaped the modern world more than any other mortal work.”

-excerpt from “Scarlet Death”

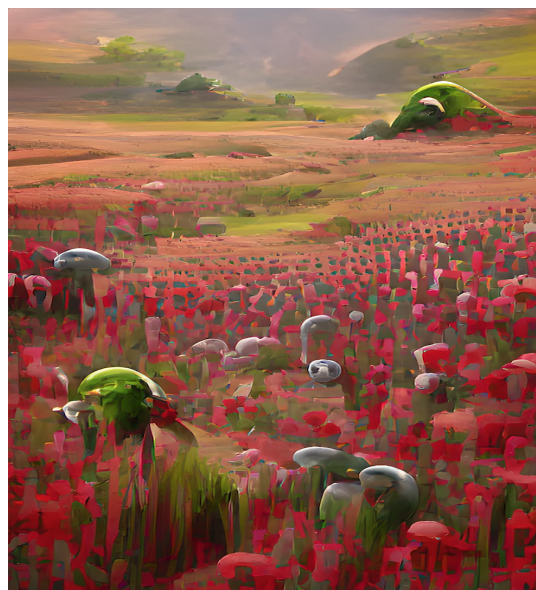
by Llewellyn Wallsup

Latent Magic Sponge

The scarlet poppy has a unique attribute. When it grows it draws in latent magical energy from the world and is imbued with that magic. No one knows quite how or why this process occurs. But they do know that with the proper procedures and tools that same magical energy can be harnessed from the poppies to make all types of wondrous creations.

One Part Medicine, One Part Poison

For generations poppy essence has been used in a wide variety of medicinal treatments and cures. Many potions and elixirs that cure disease, heal wounds, and ease pain use poppy essence as their base ingredient. However, like all medicines, what heals can harm. When taken in high doses poppy essence can be fatal, and long term usage of poppy essence can lead to an addictive dependence. Side effects of poppy usage vary based on the method of their consumption, but the most common side effects of long term usage across all methods are lethargy, nausea, hallucination, depression, and paranoia.



Bread and Poppies

The Great Empires of the Old World often employ poppy essence to pacify their dissidents, supplying people in areas of civil unrest with government subsidized essence infused tonics and cigarettes. In fact the largest social program in the Kaldish Empire and perhaps the world is the Poppy Dole. Which supplies hundreds of thousands of working class Kaldish citizens with free poppy rations everyday usually in the form of poppy loafs, little dark red pucks of bread.

Industry and Economy

The scarlet poppy is integral to the economies of the Old World Empires. It fuels the furnaces, pacifies the people, and keeps the warchests full. From Blackcliff to Aristinople many are keen to keep the poppies growing at any cost.

Colonial Plantations

The industrialized production of scarlet poppies has depleted much of the latent

magical energy of the Old World. Many areas which were once the most productive poppy growing regions in the world now only yield poppies with diminished or no imbued magics. To keep the wheels turning and furnace fires burning the Old Empires have looked to the New World, colonizing huge swaths of land there so that they may use them to grow poppies to feed the insatiable unsustainable demand.

Red Powder

Red powder is one of the many alchemical creations that can be made from scarlet poppies. When combined with certain oils, red powder can be applied in many layers to metal surfaces to “season” them. Exposing a seasoned piece of metal to a spark or flame causes one or two of these layers to combust. This interaction has formed the basis of firearms technology. By seasoning the inside of metal tubes (gun barrels) people have found a reliable way to launch projectiles at high speeds to inflict devastating injury. This has changed the landscape of warfare, partially closing the gap between non-magic and magic combatants. A properly seasoned musket can reliably fire around a dozen times before needing to be reseasoned, and a well trained soldier can reseason a gun in a matter of mere minutes. Mages are still integral on the battlefield but every year that firearms technology improves the scales tip slightly, as it is a lot cheaper to give a peasant a gun than to send a mage to school.



Red Powder Weapons

Red Powder weapons act like any other ranged weapon using the player’s dex modifier + proficiency to modify any attack rolls and just their dex modifier to damage rolls. Here are some examples of basic firearms:

Pistol- Reload 1; Misfire 1; Close Range

***Shot.** Ranged Attack: attack roll + dex mod, range 40/80, one target*

Hit: (2d8 + dex mod) piercing damage

***Pistol whip.** Melee Attack: attack roll + str mod, range 5ft, one target*

Hit: (1d4 + str mod) bludgeoning damage

Musket- Reload 1; Misfire 1; Two Handed

***Shot.** Ranged Attack: (attack roll + dex mod), range 80/120, one target*

Hit: (2d10 + dex mod) piercing damage.

***Buttstroke.** Melee Attack: (attack roll + str mod), range 5ft, one target*

Hit: (1d4 + str mod) bludgeoning damage.

***Bayonet.** Melee Attack: (attack roll + str mod), range 5ft, one target*

Hit: (1d6 + str mod) piercing damage.

Blunderbuss- Reload 1; Misfire 2; Close Range; Two Handed

***Scatter Shot.** Ranged Attack: area of effect 40ft cone.*

Target must make a DC13 dexterity saving throw taking (4d8 + dex mod) of piercing damage on a failed save or half as much on a successful one; for every 10ft of distance between target and the user take away 1d8 from the damage roll.

***Buttstroke.** Melee Attack: (attack roll + str mod), range 5ft, one target*

Hit: (1d4 + str mod) bludgeoning damage.

Swivel Gun- Artillery; Reload 2; Misfire 3; Two Handed

Round Shot. Ranged Attack: (attack roll + dex mod), range 100/200

Hit: (3d10 + dex mod) piercing damage; round shot will go through soft targets like flesh and thin cover

Grapeshot. Ranged Attack: area of effect 50ft cone.

Target must make a DC13 dexterity saving throw taking (5d8 + dex mod) of piercing damage on a failed save or half as much on a successful one; for every 10ft of distance between target and the user take away 1d8 from the damage roll.

Chain Shot. Ranged Attack: (attack roll + dex mod), range 100/200

Hit: (4d6 + dex mod) piercing damage; chain will go through soft targets like flesh and thin cover
chain shot deals double damage to sails and rigging

Red Powder Weapon

Attributes:

One Handed: This weapon requires only one hand to be effectively used.

Two Handed: This weapon requires two hands to be effectively used.

Artillery: Weapons with the artillery trait need to be mounted on a stable support structure in order to be effectively aimed and fired.

Close Range: Ranged weapons with the close range attribute ignore disadvantage imposed on attacks made against creatures who are engaged with the user.

Reload: Indicates that an action must be used to reload the weapon after it is used a number of times equal to its reload value. If you reload while engaged, creatures who you are engaged with may take an opportunity attack against you.

Misfire: When an attack roll is made with a weapon with this quality, if the unmodified roll is equal to the misfire rating then the weapon suffers a misfire. Roll 1d6 on the misfire table to determine the outcome of the misfire.

Misfire Table

6	Minor hiccup, the gun didn't fire, but doesn't require any additional actions to work again. If you have another action you may try to fire again.
5 - 4	There's a problem, you can clear the misfire by spending one 1 action.
3 - 2	Stripped seasoning, the weapon must be reseasoned before it can be fired again.
1	Catastrophic failure, the weapon must be repaired before it can be fired again.

Poppy Essence Consumables

Scarlet Snuff

Scarlet snuff is very popular amongst the well-to-do of the Old World. When snorted, it dulls pain, sharpens the senses, and induces a moderate feeling of lightheaded euphoria. It is

made by grinding up dried herbs into a fine powder and then fortifying that powder with a small amount of distilled poppy essence. Depending on the base herbs used, scarlet snuff comes in a wide variety of types all of which have slightly different effects, sometimes even elemental powders are mixed into these blends which impart users with temporary elemental abilities and/or resistances. Scarlet snuff is highly addictive. Signs of long term use are frequent nosebleeds and red stains on the nostrils, hands, and clothes. Common side effects include irritability, insomnia, and in extreme cases short term memory loss.

Dried Poppy Leaf

When correctly dried poppy leaves take on a rubbery consistency perfect for chewing. When chewed these leaves slowly release enzymes that numb the mouth and induce moderate feelings of euphoria and relaxation. Dried poppy leaves are a favorite among sailors because they are cheap and unlike pipes and cigarettes are not a fire hazard. Long term usage of dried poppy leaves will stain the teeth yellow, kill taste buds, and eventually lead to an addictive dependence. A common sign that someone has been chewing poppy leaves is slurred speech as the leaves numb the mouth making the fine motor movements needed for talking slightly difficult.

Poppy Cigarettes

Cigarettes are a relatively new but hugely popular invention of the Old World. These thin paper tubes filled with ground, poppy essence infused, smoking herbs are not only economical in terms of space but also coin, making them a popular choice amongst factory workers, day laborers, and other on the go working class people. Like many other poppy essence products they are highly addictive.

Poppy Tincture

Poppy tincture is a well known and widely used sour tasting disinfectant that is often used to treat wounds and clean water. It is made by soaking herbs, bark, berries, and poppy root in vinegar or alcohol. Depending on the potency and quality of the tincture, it may induce a slight feeling of relaxation when consumed or absorbed through the skin.

Seafaring Tools and Languages (optional rules)

*in my mind the player would choose a couple of these to be proficient in and then backgrounds and other things would give them further proficiencies (this is on top of all the other skills they would already have these are just extra)

Languages

- Signal Code
- Sailor's Cant
- Old Kaldish
- High Dracean
- Arbo
- Ancient Tazultal

Signal Code

Signal code is a language communicated with rhythmic taps, flashes of light, and waves of flags. It was devised as a way to communicate between ships.

Sailor's Cant

Is the slang of sailor's, understandable only to those who've spent years at sea or years around

sailor's. It is chalked full of enthusiasm, metaphor, and technical sailing terms.

Old Kaldish

Is the official language of the Kaldish Empire, but is seldom used outside of the natural borders of Kalland. There has been an effort by the Kaldish crown to make Old Kaldish more popular in the Empire's many colonies and holdings but so far these efforts have been met with much resistance.

High Dracean

Is the official language of the Dracean Empire but is mostly only used in formal religious sermons and official Imperial proceedings. Though there are still some common folk in the old country who speak it as their mother tongue, it is largely only known by Dracean nobility, members of the clergy, and university students.

Arbo

The Arbo language is the most prolific language of the indegnious sea nomads of the Gulf of Ghosts and Shattered Coast, and is known by many not even in the Arbo tribe. It is often lauded as one of the most beautiful sounding languages in the world, and lends itself to the poetic storytelling culture of the people who speak it.

Ancient Tazultal

Almost all the indegnious languages of mainland South Valmaria can trace their roots back to the script of the Ancient Tazultal Empire. This mighty empire once controlled the entirety of the continent, ruling the era of antiquity with an iron fist. The empire is gone but it's language persists carrying on its legacy.

Tools/Vehicle Proficiencies

- Working the Tops
- Working the Deck
- Fisher's Kit

- Whaler's Kit
- Purser's Kit
- Surgeon's Kit
- Game Cheat's Kit
- Gunsmith's Tools
- Cooper's Tools
- Argimancer's Almanac

Working the Tops

Working the topsails of a sailing ship, furling and unfurling the sheets, tying off lines, climbing on wet rickety rigging, and walking on slick swaying beams high above a hard wooden deck.

Working the Deck

Bailing water, hoisting the anchor, heaving and hauling, maneuvering around other sailors, repairing holes and snapped lines,

Fisher's Kit

Comes with a fishing rod, a small waterproof tin, a small collection of a different hooks and lures, 500 ft of fishing line, a small bell, and a pair of waterproof wading boots

Whaler's Kit

Comes with one harpoon, 100ft of knotted rope, a signal mirror, a straight razor, a compass, a whistle, a hammock, and a sea chest.

Purser's Kit

Comes with a ledger, a set of scales, an inkwell and quill, an unmarked wax seal stamp, a hooded oil lantern, and a small strongbox with a key on a chain.

Surgeon's Kit

Comes with a hacksaw, a wire saw, a scalpel, heavy elbow length leather gloves, an apron, bandages, and a vial of pure poppy essence

Game Cheat's Kit

Comes with either marked cards or unfair dice, a file, a coat with a tiny hidden pocket sewed into the collar, ten fake gold pieces, and a small box containing 1d4 trinkets

Argimancer's Instruments

Contains one trowel, a book on herbology and botany, a farmer's almanac, a set of test tubes and vials, one alchemist's candle, a sealed jar full of soil testing chemicals, and an inkwell and quill.

Gunsmith's Tools

Comes with everything that a gunsmith needs to maintain firearms and make simple repairs on them.

Cooper's Tools

Comes with everything a cooper needs to make simple repairs on barrels and build small barrels