

# Humanbane

It's a sword. Specifically, it's a carp's tongue broadsword; it has a wide blade that tapers down to a lengthened point. It's suitable for slicing, stabbing, and/or thrusting. Human's provenance is, based on various details, dated as being somewhere around the 12th century BC. Which is awkward, because the blade is made of something roughly equivalent to wootz steel.

Normally, something this anachronistic would be dismissed as a clumsy joke or forgery, but they pulled this sword out of a previously-undisturbed burial mound in northern France during an extremely well-documented expedition. There's no way that Humanbane could have been inserted into the dig somehow: the cameras were operating 24/7 throughout the entire operation. In some ways, it was a relief when the nice people from the -- well, they're from a pan-European agency, and had the right officials vouching for them, and that was enough -- came to collect Humanbane. And replace it with something that looked like it at first, but looked like something else entirely when cleaned.

Note that 'Humanbane' is a joke name given to the sword by various staffers. It's based partially on the fact that the blade is decorated with primitive doodles that show human figures being cut in two by a shorter, thinner human figure with prominent ears. But it's mostly based on the fact that, every time somebody's picked up Humanbane, it ended up almost cutting somebody else. Virtually everybody involved swears that the damned thing felt like it actually twisted in their hand during the barely-averted accidents; and there's a general consensus that the artifact just *feels* hostile. Which is ridiculous, but here we are.

One other weird thing: Humanbane is still *sharp*. And apparently immune to rust. And some people think that it has a weird... hum? Not everybody agrees with that last part, but a couple of researchers swear that the sword hums, variably. But those particular researchers are widely considered to be a bit off-puttingly strange in the head themselves, so it's probably nothing.

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