

Codex Papilionibus

Description: large vellum tome, 68 pages, bound in red calfskin, and clasped. Text is in Latin; calligraphy and illustrations appear northern Italian, circa 15th Century AD. The book is in excellent shape for its age, showing little signs of structural damage. If subjected to scrying spells, it faintly radiates magical energies. Author unknown. Ownership history unknown.

The *Codex Papilionibus* is in fact a book about butterflies; specifically, the major species found in the Mediterranean region. The text discusses their appearance, favored habitats, diet, suggestions for maintaining a successful breeding colony, and (most importantly) their usefulness in healing and protective alchemy. According to the book, butterflies are excellent raw materials for everything from healing potions to protective charms; about half of the *Codex Papilionibus* is dedicated to alchemical recipes.

How the *Codex Papilionibus* affects a campaign depends on the exact nature of magic in it:

- **In campaigns without magic**, the recipes work precisely as advertised. These recipes include five different healing potions, four charms against evil and treachery, an unguent that cures diseases of the

blood, one reliable sleep draught, and several other, likewise beneficial, charms. They can be prepared by anyone, as long as the instructions are followed, but are most potent when prepared by somebody with knowledge of actual Western European alchemy. The burning questions: *If these rituals work, then why did this book disappear? And why is it back now?*

- **In campaigns with magic**, the recipes *should* work, but do not. Those familiar with alchemy will find this subtly maddening; alchemists who are also mages will quickly conclude that some sort of magical interference is in effect here. There is still no history of the book's prior existence, but magical scans will confirm that it is six centuries old. The burning questions: *Who is keeping these rituals from working? And who made the book disappear?*

Either way, it's a reasonably interesting mystery, yes? And it's a perfectly safe mystery, too. After all, who would object to there being more healing magic in the world?

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