

Relikvii

Well, that's the Russian slang term for the stuff; God forbid that the old Soviet Union ever use such a superstition-drenched name to describe True Proper Soviet Proletarian Scien -- sorry. Old habits die hard, you know? *Relikvii* are your standard Unholy Artifacts, Demonology edition: they're a single-shot aid for summoning demons. You can imagine how Stalin-era internal propagandists had to come up with new and unique ways to talk their way around *that*.

Relikvii are easy enough to make, provided that you know how and lack a functional moral sense. You go and take a hunk of flesh off of your standard Commie True Believer -- the more fervent, the better. And the more *important*, the better; the gold standard, if you'll pardon the pun, is a slab of Marx or Engels themselves, but almost two hundred years of surreptitious political necromancy have probably whittled their corpses completely away by now. There's still a few bits of Lenin left to harvest, though, assuming that you can pay. If not, you'll just have to make do with somebody from the latest purge. Note that the chunk doesn't have to be from a *living* Commie, and don't let the Stalinists tell you otherwise.

So, once you have your chunk, you dry it out, pound it flat, and inscribe the names of recent victims of the aforementioned purges on it. Note: you can't reuse a name, once it's been used. Also note: the higher-ranked the True Believer you're writing on, the fewer names you need to write before it activates. Once you do that, you bake the entire thing in a bed of hot coals for the evening.

Assuming this all gets done, you have a *Relikvii*, which -- needless to say -- is consumed by being consumed, because the demon lord that set this entire thing up has a remarkably vicious sense of humor, even for a Hellspawn. Exact stats depend on the campaign world, of course: but using a *Relikvii* will always make summoning a demon much, much easier, or lowers the energy cost needed to do so, or whatever the limiting factor it is that keeps the campaign world from being inundated with demons. It's also an auto-damnation event to use one, in pretty much every religion that you can think of.

Relikvii are rare today, thankfully. Ironically, most of the sorcerous circles that knew how to make them perished in Stalin's Great Purge, which was also the time period when most *Relikvii* were made. Most of the unholy relics were later used up countering Nazi occult magic in World War II;

modern examples are generally only being created by sorcerers who barely understand the Infernal principles being manipulated. Those sorcerers are further hampered by a lack of official blessing for their serial killing and cannibalism; Hell, even the People's Republic of China secretly bans the making of *Relikvii* these days.

And the PRC sticks to it, out of sheer self-preservation. Apparently the barely-concealed occult payback that accompanied the liberation of Eastern Europe made a **lot** of people in power thoughtful. "Happy the town at night whose wizards are all ashes," and all that.

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