

The Edelweiss Grimoire

It usually bemuses beginning alchemists when they come to this 'textbook' in class: after all, it's simply a DVD with *The Sound of Music* on it. This bemusement typically lasts only until they sit down and actually **watch** it -- as in, with their esoteric ears on. The songs are the important thing; once you decipher and memorize the code keys found in "Do-Re-Me," you quickly realize that the words and music are actually clever formularies for various alchemical processes:

- "Maria' (note: *West Side Story* retains absolutely **none** of the conjuration magic that Shakespeare programmed into *Romeo & Juliet*) describes the process for isolating and collecting elemental Air; "Climb Every Mountain" does the same for Earth, with "Something Good" doing the same for Fire and "Sixteen Going on Seventeen" teaching Water.
- "My Favorite Things" is an extended analysis of the nature of the *prima materia*.
- "The Lonely Goatherd" reviews techniques for self-purification before approaching the *Magnum Opus*, and "So Long, Farewell" walks the alchemist

through the transformation of the *prima materia* into the Philosopher's Stone.

- "The Sound of Music" and "Edelweiss" both teach advanced alchemical techniques in the fields of transformation and herbalism, respectively: the former includes a formulary for using the Philosopher's Stone to spin rock into air and the latter details a reasonably effective invisibility potion.

Even the most advanced modern alchemists have no idea why a Rodgers and Hammerstein musical ended up being an effective textbook for teaching the basic details of scientific alchemy. And, honestly: not many of them care. The Edelweiss Grimoire *works*, and that's the important thing. It also helps make alchemy more fun, for a rather arcane definition of 'fun.' When your syllabus is normally made up of obscure texts written in bad Latin while under the influence of mercury fumes, you tend to be grateful for anything that's a bit more accessible to modern students.

One last note: the Edelweiss Grimoire is based off of the movie. The *movie*. The music of the *play* is reserved for more advanced students. Some of the stuff in the play is considerably more dangerous to mess around with.

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