

Thirst

Description: A narrow-bladed ten-inch long dagger, with no crosshilt or quillons. The blade looks like it's gold, but Thirst is far too sharp, and far too light, for that to be true. The hilt is wrapped in stinking, grimy strips of leather, sticky to the touch; the blade is utterly clean. A person can touch the flat of Thirst without taking too much harm, but mere bacteria and viruses instantly perish when they touch the blade.

The magical dagger called 'Thirst' eats lifeforce. It *enjoys* eating lifeforce, according to the few enchanters who can be trusted to be around it for five minutes without trying to cast it into the nearest furnace. Even decent, ordinary evil magicians are appalled by the existence of Thirst.

But then, that's natural: evil lifeforce is Thirst's favorite food. Sometimes magical artifacts don't turn out the way you expect, and in Thirst's case it was originally designed to be a more generic eater of souls. It was quite the shock to Thirst's enchanter when she became its first victim; her senior apprentice was the second. Her junior apprentice was the third, and the enchanter's head minion was the fourth, and so it went.

Eventually Thirst ended up being picked up by somebody *not* inherently Evil-aligned; and it's been alternately gleefully used, and fearfully hidden away, ever since. The problem is that Thirst is *great* at killing evil creatures, in a deliberately gruesome and degrading way that shows no respect for decency or mercy. It takes an act of will to make the blade kill cleanly, or quickly. Those who wear it have to constantly watch out for a sudden impulse to torment or even torture their foes.

Well, at least their *bad* foes. But aren't they always bad, anyway? -- And, after you have that kind of insidious, not quite audible commentary in your head for a while, it's pretty easy to start pushing the threshold of 'unacceptably evil.' If you're not careful, eventually you're happily letting Thirst carve up screaming victims. And guess what that makes *you*?

As was said above: either gleefully used, or fearfully hidden away. It'd probably be best to destroy the damned thing, except... Thirst really is perfectly adapted to killing the big-E Evil sorts. Sometimes you need that sort of edge. Whether you like it, or not.

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