

Agony of Forgiveness Made Real

Description: Agony of Forgiveness Made Real (usually shortened to 'Agony') takes the form of a hand sickle with a rusty, curved blade and a cracked wooden handle that feels pleasingly sticky to the touch. Agony itself smells pleasantly of old sweat and blood. Magical scans of the item will reveal that it radiates enough positive magical energy to spontaneously cure milder forms of cancer on the spot.

Agony of Forgiveness Made Real is a cursed magic item. No, really. Admittedly, it's a tempting magical item: its main power is its ability to slice through somebody's soul, shredding or even severing entire hunks of it. As you can imagine, that can have a horrible effect on the target, made worse by the fact that regular protective magic isn't particularly effective against Agony. The target can dodge, and certain magic spells and artifacts can block it temporarily, but just sitting there and taking it is not really an option. The item also has a powerful effect on the user; Agony can transform the soul-stuff it gathers, giving a portion of it to whoever wields the artifact. The usual benefits accrue: increased strength, vigor, health, alertness... attached to an absolutely addictive rush. Give this item to the right entity, and they'll be an implacable and dedicated hunter within two weeks. A month, tops.

The wrinkle? Agony only works on demons and other evil spirits. They're the only ones that can wield it, either. The artifact consumes evil, transforming its negative energy into positive -- somehow -- which simultaneously makes both the victim and the wielder morally *better*. Also weaker, because they *are* demons, but regular use of Agony can un-corrupt your average devil in a remarkably quick time. The long term prospects of the wielder can be summed up as *Redeem, or Die*; slightly more manage the former than the latter.

Obviously, the forces of Evil hate and fear this item. The forces of *Good*? ...Well, they're not really thrilled with Agony, either. Spurning Evil should be a *choice*, not a consequence for losing a fight with the wrong person. There are entire pantheons where the very idea of Agony of Forgiveness Made Real is rank heresy. Even those angels and other good-aligned spirits who can concede that sometimes you have to use the weapons that are hand will still look askance at Agony's unique depredations. The whole thing feels vaguely... insulting to them.

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