

Arcane Essence

Scholars and philosophers have spent countless hours and spilt much ink discussing what exactly arcane essence is and where it comes from; is it a remnant of Flax's creation, a gift from the Ohma who created life, or the manifestation from arcane energy that was not shaped when it entered the world? What is known is that arcane essence is one of the most sought after substances on Flax, extracted and refined by skilled alchemists, imbued by mages of the highest orders, consumed by those who can afford it, and empowering dependent mages.

Uses

Not all essence is created equal, the chaff of the refinement process along with essence that was poorly refined by initiate alchemists is generally consumed while higher end essence is imbued with power, storing it to be unleashed at a future time.

Consuming Essence

Mixed into backed goods or dissolved, or even distilled, in alcohol essence is consumed by members of most strains, providing they can afford it. Essence is acclaimed for its power to take away an individuals weariness, gift healthy, fertility, and longevity.

Game Effect: Consuming a dose of essence removes 2 fatigue from the character but inflicts 1d4(rolled in secret by the GM) + 3 fatigue when it wears off; essence wears off 4 hours after its consumption but this time is reset whenever an additional dose is taken. If the total amount of fatigue the essence would inflict when it wears off ever equals or exceeds the character's total stamina they become immune to its benefits for a 1d4 days per dose they took, this effect is known as being essence burnt or essence blind.

An individual who consumes essence regularly will find they suffer withdrawal symptoms if they are not able to consume more on, at least, a daily basis. The symptoms get worse before they get better inflicting general weakness for the first few days that steadily gets worse until the character is fully bedridden then, almost all at once, the effects break and the sufferer find themselves without further symptoms. Sufferers who continue to abstain from essence may periodically have a relapse of these symptoms but for only a few days not the weeks or months of the original withdrawal.

Game Effect: a character who consumes essence regularly (GM's determination) and is unable to take at least once dose per day for a number of days equal to their body stat -1d4 will begin suffering withdrawal. Each stage of withdrawal lasts 1d10 days and causes the

character to suffer penalty dice to all actions equal to the stage they are in, once the character's stage has progressed to the point where they are suffering at least as many penalty dice as their body attribute change the number of days each stage lasts to 1d4, if the stage lasts only one day the symptoms stop getting worse and penalty dice are removed at a rate of one per 6 hours of rest; if the character ever has twice as many penalty dice as their body stat and the stage lasts for four days they will die on the final day.

Some individuals have arcane potential that they find unlocked by the consumption of essence, these dependent mages regularly consume essence to maintain their power.

Game Effect: character's with the dependent mage trait may store a number of doses of essence within themselves equal to their body stat, they still gain the benefits described above as well as the penalties for when those benefits wear off but lose only one stored dose per day unless spent to reduce arcane dues. A dependent mage suffers three penalty dice to all arcane skill checks if they have no doses of essence stored within them.

Sources

Most essence is harvested from the Shardlands where it can be found in veins of rock and sand just as iron can be in Askelon or zinc in Proto. The corpses of Mablen as well as both bodies and eggs of Pure-Blooded Torlini and their Dragon kin are also known to be sources of very high end essence though their extraction requires a skill alchemist. All essence requires refinement, a delicate and time consuming process performed by alchemists.

Bound Essence

Well refined essence is good for more than fending off sleep; it can be imbued, with the assistance of an alchemist, by a spell caster with any effect they could otherwise muster themselves. Binding essence allows a mage to pay arcane dues now to gain their spell effects later, or allows a non-arcane user to utilize power as if they were.

Game Effect: refined essence may hold a specific number of successes worth of arcane effect based on its level of refinement, these successes must be cast into the essence by, or with the help of, an alchemist as a single action that takes one minute per success being bound into the essence. The essence must then be sealed away from the air and will release its spell effect when the seal is cracked and the bound essence exposed.

Essence imbued in such a way holds its bound effects for months or years depending on the skill of the alchemist, if not exposed; its potency can be checked upon by a mage utilizing the sense magic arcane power. Skilled alchemists can drain the power bound in a dose of essence making it possible to imbue it again, this is risky however as it is possible to set off

the bound effects if the alchemist is not careful, or skilled, enough destroying the essence in the process.

Essence Locks and Keys

Bound essence can have its imbued effects stripped from it and can be activated from afar by a wily alchemist causing all kinds of havoc, essence locks alleviate these concerns by securing the effect can not be triggered and the bound power not drained without a specific key. Keys can be as simple as a command word, spoken to activate the power, a type of material that the powder or oil containing the essence must come in contact with, or as complicated as an object with a specific enchantment striking the essence through a silk casing. The specifics of the lock and key are determined by the alchemist at the time the essence is imbued and the complexity of it are limited only by the alchemist's skill.

True Essence

The purest of essence has the ability to hold passive effects, such as an arcane signature or spell pattern, indefinitely or to store power to activate such enchantments and not be destroyed when the power is used.

Enchantments

True essence can be physically imbued into a material that is then enchanted with an arcane effect in a process not dissimilar to that of binding the same effect into lesser essence, though it requires far more time and skill. This bound effect can then be triggered by drawing power from essence capable of being imbued with the enchanted effect. This allows for the creation of truly powerful artifacts that continue to have great power long after the individual capable of casting it has passed from Flax as long as enough essence is supplied to it to continue functioning.

Rechargeable

Some true essence is used to create powerful enchantments while other true essence is used to power these enchantments. This essence has its power drained by an enchantments effect but rather than being destroyed in the process it is simply depleted and can be recharged by an alchemist or other mage using a simple enchantment to channel their power into the true essence. So powerful is true essence that it will passively charge, though very slowly, even when no alchemist or mage attends it.