The Keen Art of Vulcan Binding

A magical tradition that involves binding “Vulcans,” which are a smokey type of fire spirit, into the form of weapons, which are then usually used in further rituals. A somewhat obscure tradition, there are still at least a few practitioners in existence who can do most or all of the rituals enumerated below.

General Tradition Form

The ritualist must find a vulcan (a type of smokey fire spirit), determine it's true name, do special rituals of clearing the mind, touch the vulcan (often resulting in burns, especially if great precautions are not taken), speak the true name, and bind it into the form of a weapon. These weapons are used in further rituals designed to do any number of things invented by clever spiritualists working in conjunction with willing vulcans. Undoubtedly more rituals than just the ones listed below are possible, and could be invented if proper time and care were taken.

Often the ritual for which the bound vulcan is used will deplete it; but they are willing to have this happen in order to live out a destiny in the mortal world wreaking some sort of havok. In addition to the effects listed below, all such weapons created are pretty fearsome in battle, glowing red, and causing burns in addition to whatever impact a normal weapon of the sort would have.

Specific Known Rituals

The titles of these rituals as they're shown below are those used in an accumulation of the rites known as The Ashen Tome. They are often known by other names locally, from histories, or in other writings.

Accursed Illusion of the Benevolent Sea Serpents

Also known as the Zuzi Illusion. The ritualist creates a bound vulcan trident or fishing spear. When stabbed into the water, steam rises up and bends light, creating an image of a pack of Zuzi, known to most people as magnificent sea drakes that bestow wishes upon those who can catch a ride upon one. Those diving in after these images of serpents, however, will find themselves dragged under the waters by the steam, often to their deaths. Entire crowds on piers have been known to have been slain by this illusion (in at least one famous case).

Cruel Feaster's Ritual of Misfortune

A bound vulcan knife is given to somebody who is to be punished, and they are taught the ritual that involves eating a live songbird using the knife to cut it apart just so. Instead of the great fortune that the teacher usually promises, the ritualist instead is beset by energetic forms of misfortune, often in the form of flying objects striking them. This curse lasts until the ritualist repents by doing a pennance assigned by a spirit designated by the one who bound the vulcan knife at the time of it's binding.

Gods' Assault of Ice

In emulation of the mythical destruction of the Great Ice Barrier (an understanding of which makes the ritual much easier to accomplish), the ritualist creates a bound vulcan hammer, which can then be used to obliterate amazing amounts of ice. Such a weapon is also the bane of any being made of ice.

Flung Flame Barrier

A bound vulcan war chain is whirled overhead creating a red circle in the air, and then released. The chain flies to the ritualists intended location with the red circle following, and when the chain hits the ground, the circle bursts into flame, making passage injurious and painful at best.

Marshal Ether

The ritualist must first create a bound vulcan war fan. During the ritual, the fan is used to condense ether. Condensed ether generally has two uses, either as a battery for certain specific and very powerful rituals involving the dead (some of which might be considered necromantic by many cultures) or other spirits, or as part of other rituals used to create a portal to the etheric realms.

Muster a General's Presence

Not many generals can bind a vulcan, but many have this ritual done for them by a capable ritualist (often just before a battle, or negotiation). A vulcan is bound into some sort of impressive weapon, and then the holder does a simple chant for a bit, and keeps the effect going by slightly stamping one of their feet a bit. While doing this, the holder of the weapon will seem much more impressive than otherwise, and those observing the holder will feel strongly compelled to follow their lead.

Zudarth's Conjuration of Smokeshadow

Used famously by the drunken crusader Thrall Zudarth of Mestock to help his troop arise victorious at the Battle of Stosslawt, the ritual begins with the creation of a bound vulcan arrow (often several, as the spirits involved are minor, and determining their names is relatively easy). The arrow is fired under ritual circumstances, and when landing or hitting it's target, creates a dense cloud of smoke around the area through which only the ritualist can see. Though somewhat magical in nature, the smoke is affected considerably by winds and other air movement.

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Last update: **2020/01/09 21:36**