

## Horseshoes of Hades (cursed)

by Victor Selby

These four horseshoes will be found in a group and will appear to the eye as normal iron shoes. They will emanate a dim magic if magic is detected for.

When the first of the shoes is physically moved (by means of physical contact or a spell), that shoe will turn jet black in color and will thereafter appear to be made of some foreign, unknown material. (If all four shoes are moved simultaneously, the black shoe is determined randomly.) If a sage is consulted or a Legend lore or similar sort of spell is cast upon the single shoe, there is a slim chance of it being identified as an object native to a middle-lower plane, specifically Hades. The black horseshoe will emit a strong aura of magic and a dim aura of evil if those qualities are detected for, but the other three shoes remain as before.

When all four of these shoes are attached to the hooves of a normal horse of any type (war horse, riding horse, draft horse, etc. but not a mule or donkey), the horse is magically transformed into a Nightmare (see Monster Manual) with 33 hit points. This creature will surprise on a 1-5 (d6) and in combat will attack all material life within a 3" radius. If it slays all material life within that space it will disappear into the astral plane, horseshoes and all, presumably to return the horseshoes to Hades. If it is slain, the corpse will assume the form of the original horse, which will be wearing three normal horseshoes, and the black one will have disappeared.

If a character is sitting on the horse's back when the final shoe is attached to a hoof, he/she will be thrown by the nightmare immediately after the transformation and will suffer 3-18 points of damage from the fall. When the nightmare first appears, it will breathe smoke, with effects as outlined in the Monster Manual, before attempting to attack with fangs and hooves.

XP Value: 1,500

GP Value: 3,000