



Bazaar of the Bizarre:

Thingamajigs of the Barrier Peaks

By Dave Chalker

Illustration by Mark Winters and Drew Baker

Surely you have heard the tales of the strange creatures that plagued the Grand Duchy. No? Well, allow me, your humble shopkeeper, to enlighten you today. These stories tell of how predatory creatures emerged from a gated cave at random intervals. The area defied all attempts at exploration until recently, when one expedition to the Barrier Peaks explored the caves to attempt to stem the tide of strange invaders. During their efforts, they found some unusual items and brought them back. Lucky for you, I have these very items on sale here. Let me tell you about them.

THE LEGEND OF THE BARRIER PEAKS

The group of adventurers was successful, after a fashion, though at great cost. Only one survivor named Kzunt made it out of the Barrier Peaks alive to tell the tale of what happened. His stories included details of strange devices that operated under a kind of magic that the wizards of his group could not decipher. Other descriptive tidbits of the location include colored doors accessed only by flat keys of matching colors, metal rooms, guardian golems possessed of unique intelligence, sinister plant creatures unlike any ever encountered before, a creeping brown toxic mold, and enormous frogs. Even stranger, the structure seemed to have arrived there from far away and crashed into the mountains, and Kzunt theorized that it had originally been inhabited by another race that was now absent.

Even for the stories of adventurers, Kzunt's tales of the Barrier Peaks seemed too unusual to be true. Descriptions of metal vessels, tentacled ambush

bunnies, and strange devices have no place in the lands of the Duchy. The stories were judged to be the product of whatever horrors Kzunt witnessed within the Barrier Peaks, or possibly the result of the strange disease that he had contracted within the caves, which had caused his skin to become scaly, like that of a dragonborn. Though he was thanked for his service to the Grand Duchy and rewarded appropriately, Kzunt was dismissed from the service of the land.

That is when I encountered Kzunt. It seemed that the adventurer had left out an important detail: He had recovered a number of the devices from within the Barrier Peaks. These unreliable yet powerful devices were all that Kzunt had left.

I listened to all of Kzunt's tales, especially those that involved these devices, with great interest. We worked out an arrangement where I would pay him for these devices and also would fund whatever healing magic he needed to recover from the strange disease that afflicted him. The clerics, unfortunately for him, could not help Kzunt recover. The disease progressed such that he grew extra arms, turned purple, and lost the ability to speak.

I hired the best wizards and servants to help finish cataloguing these devices, or "thingamajigs," as Kzunt liked to refer to them. These items of strange magic work like nothing we have encountered before. My research staff has done its best to discern their functions and operations, and I am happy to train you in their use if you seek to use them in your grand quests. You must first promise always to remember the stories of those who journeyed to the Barrier Peaks to recover these devices, and to always operate the devices in the manner in which they were intended.

FOR THE DM: WHEN THINGAMAJIGS GO BAD

To set these items that have science fiction themes apart from more traditional magic items, consider using these rules to simulate the unreliability of long-abandoned technological marvels. Be mindful of the consequences of using these rules; a player whose character is built around the use of *powered armor* won't be happy if the armor ceases to function.

Each item in this article has a stability rating.

Item	Stability	Item	Stability
<i>blaster rifle</i>	-3	<i>laser sword</i>	+0
<i>blue communicator</i>	+3	<i>needler pistol</i>	+0
<i>chainsaw sword</i>	+0	<i>powered armor</i>	-4
<i>confusion ray</i>	-4	<i>singularity grenade</i>	-4
<i>gray security card</i>	+3	<i>sleep grenade</i>	-4
<i>jet pack</i>	-2	<i>wheely sled</i>	+1

The first time each turn that a character uses an item's power, roll a d20 and add the item's stability rating, then find the result on the list below. When the text mentions a malfunction, refer to the "Malfunction" entry in the item's stat block. The item malfunctions as specified in its statistics block even though the stated triggering condition was not met.

Stability Check Results

1 or Lower: The item malfunctions and then detonates, dealing fire damage to you and each creature adjacent to you. The damage equals 1d8 for every five levels of the item (level 1-5, 1d8; 6-10, 2d8; 11-15, 3d8; and so on). The item is destroyed.

2-3: The item malfunctions and then detonates, dealing 1d6 thunder damage to you for every five levels of the item. The item is destroyed.

4-5: The item malfunctions and then is rendered permanently useless.

6-7: The item malfunctions.

8-9: The item does nothing.

10: The item operates normally and then malfunctions.

11-15: The item operates normally.

16-17: The item operates normally. The next time you activate the item, you do not need to make a stability check to operate it.

18 or Higher: The item operates normally. If you are using the item to make an attack that hits, the attack is automatically a critical hit.

Keeping Items Operational: Although the devices presented here are likely significantly different from those that adventurers are used to dealing with, a DM might rule that a character with arcane skills can help to keep devices working. Once per day, a character who has training in Arcana can make an Arcana check at a hard DC of the item's level to try to keep an item operational. If the check is successful, the item's stability rating increases by 2 for 24 hours.

ITEM DESCRIPTIONS

Twelve of the technological marvels that Kzunt salvaged from the Barrier Peaks are spotlighted below, along with information a concerned buyer will want to know.

Powered Armor

Do not be alarmed: This is not a creature of metal that we have captured. In fact, it has more in common with the armor your paladin friend over there is wearing. It provides ample protection in battle, and it grants its wearer the ability to see invisible foes and even to fly as if completely weightless. If you decide to purchase the item, make sure that I properly instruct you on how to release the helmet. That was quite embarrassing the first time, let me tell you!

Powered Armor

Level 10+ Rare

The armor appears to have been worked to create the illusion of a heavily muscled humanoid.

Lvl 10	+2	5,000 gp	Lvl 25	+5	625,000 gp
Lvl 15	+3	25,000 gp	Lvl 30	+6	3,125,000 gp
Lvl 20	+4	125,000 gp			

Armor: Plate

Enhancement Bonus: AC

Properties

- ◆ You can seal or unseal the armor as a minor action. While sealed, the armor provides 8 hours of breathable air. Once the air is used up, it replenishes after 6 hours.
- ◆ You gain blindsight and tremorsense, with a range equal to the armor's enhancement bonus.
- ◆ Your Strength score is considered 5 points higher for the purposes of determining encumbrance.
- ◆ **Malfunction:** When you roll a 1 on an attack roll, you are restrained and begin suffocating. You or an adjacent ally can use a standard action to make an Athletics check (hard DC of the item's level) to end this effect. You cannot seal or unseal the armor until this effect ends.

Utility Power ◆ Encounter (Minor Action)

Effect: You gain a fly speed equal to your speed until the end of your next turn.

Blaster Rifle

Kzunt's original group thought this was an advanced mirror that was able to fold out and enable you to see behind you. The group used it to look around corners before advancing into a new room, until the party's rogue insisted that the ranger extend the mirror all the way so he could get a close shave in the morning. Unfortunately for him, the rogue received a closer shave than he had asked for when a solid blast of flame projected from the "mirror." Further experimentation led to finding multiple settings for firing the mirror. Just to be sure, none of the companions shaved for the rest of the expedition.

Blaster Rifle

Level 9+ Rare

This item consists of jointed metal rods, a curved metal plate, a hardened leather band, and a pane of glass framed and mounted on the end of a rod.

Lvl 9	+2	4,200 gp	Lvl 24	+5	525,000 gp
Lvl 14	+3	21,000 gp	Lvl 29	+9	2,625,000 gp
Lvl 19	+4	105,000 gp			

Weapon: Bow

Enhancement Bonus: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d8 fire and necrotic damage per plus

Property

- ◆ This weapon requires no ammunition and cannot use ammunition.
- ◆ **Malfunction:** When you roll a 1 on an attack roll with this weapon, you take necrotic damage equal to twice the weapon's level, and you are dazed (save ends).

↗ **Attack Power** (Necrotic) ◆ **Daily** (Standard Action)

Attack: Ranged 20 (one creature); weapon's level + 3 vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d8 necrotic damage, and the target is stunned until the end of your next turn.

Level 14 or 19: 3d8 necrotic damage.

Level 24 or 29: 4d8 necrotic damage.

↖ **Attack Power** (Fire) ◆ **At-Will** (Standard Action)

Attack: Close blast 3 (creatures in the blast); weapon's level + 3 vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d8 fire damage.

Level 14 or 19: 3d8 fire damage.

Level 24 or 29: 4d8 fire damage.

Chainsaw Sword

Please be careful with that, especially the edges. This combination of blade and rotating, razor-sharp chain is dangerous to handle without proper training. You see, one of my assistants, a rough, charred-smelling fellow, improperly handled one and lost one of his hands. He didn't let the loss impede his burgeoning adventuring career, however. He attached a *chainsaw sword* to where his hand used to be and wielded another weapon in the other hand. I hear the dear boy has gone off to fight the undead. Of course, you could just choose to hold the device, and keep your hands, but I'm told that's not nearly as "groovy."

Chainsaw Sword

Level 4+ Rare

A series of rings and chains line the blade. These chains begin to move on their own after a few pulls of a loose string attached to the hilt.

Lvl 4	+1	840 gp	Lvl 19	+4	105,000 gp
Lvl 9	+2	4,200 gp	Lvl 24	+5	525,000 gp
Lvl 14	+3	21,000 gp	Lvl 29	+6	2,625,000 gp

Weapon: Heavy blade

Enhancement Bonus: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d6 damage per plus

Properties

- ◆ This weapon deals 1[W] extra damage to undead, and only half damage to constructs.
- ◆ **Malfunction:** When you roll a 1 on an attack roll with this weapon, you take ongoing 10 damage and a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends both).
Level 14 or 19: Ongoing 15 damage.
Level 24 or 29: Ongoing 20 damage.
- ↓ **Attack Power** ◆ **Encounter** (No Action)
Trigger: You hit a creature with a melee attack using this weapon.
Effect: The creature takes ongoing 5 damage (save ends).
Level 14 or 19: Ongoing 10 damage.
Level 24 or 29: Ongoing 15 damage.



USING OMEGA TECH

Many *Gamma World*™ Omega Tech items would work well as items recovered from the Barrier Peaks. If you'd like to include some as items in your game using the rules given in this article, here's a quick conversion guide:

- ◆ The stability bonus for items is +2 for common ones, +0 for uncommon ones, and -2 for rare ones. (Consult the rarity icon on the item's card.)
- ◆ The malfunction effect is the same as the miss effect (if any) but targeted at the user. Otherwise, the GM should invent an appropriate malfunction.

Laser Pistol

I can see you've spotted one of the common items recovered from the Barrier Peaks. Although it looks like a wristband, this device operates much like a crossbow. As you can see, however, it requires neither string nor bolt to use. In some ways, it is close to a common *wand of magic missiles*, only it features what one of my wizards called a "point and click in-their-face." You simply aim this device toward your opponent, click the trigger (just like a crossbow), and energy hits him or her in the face. Simple, no?

Laser Pistol

Level 5+ Rare

This item resembles a heavy wristband that sports two projections. One ends in a black leather grip, the other in a smooth, cone-shaped red jewel.

Lvl 5	+1	1,000 gp	Lvl 20	+4	125,000 gp
Lvl 10	+2	5,000 gp	Lvl 25	+5	625,000 gp
Lvl 15	+3	25,000 gp	Lvl 30	+6	3,125,000 gp

Weapon: Crossbow

Enhancement Bonus: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d6 damage per plus

Property

- ◆ This weapon requires no ammunition and cannot use ammunition.
- ◆ **Malfunction:** When you roll a 1 on an attack roll with this weapon, you instead attack a random target (including yourself) within 5 squares of you.

↘ **Attack Power** (Fire) ◆ **At-Will** (Standard Action)

Attack: Ranged 20 (one creature); weapon's level + 3 vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d8 fire damage.

Level 15 or 20: 3d8 fire damage.

Level 25 or 30: 4d8 fire damage.

Needler Pistol

I would not try to drink that if I were you, madam. Its shape might bring to mind a potion vial, but the last customer who attempted to drink from it was quite surprised to find a number of piercings in his head where he did not have them before, and he caused quite a bit of damage to my tent! I hear, however, that upon returning to his country, he kicked off quite a new fashion trend. Now all the nobles are trying to find appropriately sized metal needles to insert into their noses.

Needler Pistol

Level 7+ Rare

This odd device looks like a potion bottle or a flask that is strapped to a number of tubes.

Lvl 7	+2	2,600 gp	Lvl 22	+5	325,000 gp
Lvl 12	+3	13,000 gp	Lvl 27	+6	1,625,000 gp
Lvl 17	+4	65,000 gp			

Weapon: Hand crossbow

Enhancement Bonus: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d6 damage per plus

Property

- ◆ This weapon requires no ammunition and cannot use ammunition.
- ◆ **Malfunction:** When you roll a 1 on an attack roll with this weapon, you take damage equal to the weapon's level, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).
Level 12 or 17: Ongoing 10 damage.
Level 22 or 27: Ongoing 15 damage.

↙ **Attack Power** ◆ **At-Will** (Standard Action)

Attack: Close blast 3 (creatures in the blast); weapon's level +3 vs. AC

Hit: 2d8 damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).

Level 12 or 17: 3d8 damage, and ongoing 10 damage.

Level 22 or 27: 4d8 damage, and ongoing 15 damage.

Confusion Ray

Initially, the expedition to the Barrier Peaks assumed that this item, a spinning disk at the end of a pole, was a cutting implement of some kind. The group's elf attempted to use it on a foe. Moments after he flipped the switch on the device, he took off all his clothes, tried to use his bow as a hat, and recited a limerick about Corellon's feet.

Confusion Ray

Level 10+ Rare

A metal pole, about 1 foot long, ends in a spinning, multicolored disk. A switch on the end of the pole controls the spinning rate of the disk, and this switch is warm to the touch.

Lvl 10	+2	5,000 gp	Lvl 25	+5	625,000 gp
Lvl 15	+3	25,000 gp	Lvl 30	+6	3,125,000 gp
Lvl 20	+4	125,000 gp			

Implement: Wand

Enhancement Bonus: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d8 psychic damage per plus

Property

Malfunction: When you roll a 1 on an attack roll with this wand, you are dominated by the target of the attack against whom you rolled the 1 until the end of your next turn.

↘ **Attack Power** (Charm, Psychic) ◆ **At-Will** (Standard Action)

Attack: Ranged 5 (one creature); wand's level + 3 vs. Will
Hit: 2d6 psychic damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). Until this effect ends, you can use a free action at the start of each of your turns to slide the target up to 5 squares.

Level 15 or 20: 3d6 psychic damage.

Level 25 or 30: 4d6 psychic damage.

Blue Communicator

You might think that you should put this blue item in your mouth. Do not do so. We have discovered that you should place this piece in your ear. Through it, you can communicate over long distances with someone from your group. You merely have to command it, and it shall put you in touch. You just have to be careful that you're speaking to one of your fellow adventurers, and not accidentally giving something away to one of your foes.

And, seriously, I know it looks like it goes there, but do not stick it in your mouth.

Blue Communicator Level 2 Rare

This glowing blue device resembles a tooth. Do not place it in your mouth.

Head Slot 520 gp

Utility Power ♦ **At-Will** (Minor Action)

Effect: Speak the name of a willing creature within 20 squares of you. Roll a d20. On a result of 2-20, the creature can hear you speak as if you were adjacent to it. This effect lasts until you use this power again.

Malfunction: On a result of 1, you do not speak to the intended creature, but instead speak to a random creature within 20 squares of you.

Jet Pack

This is one of my favorite items. No longer is flame-powered flight the province of dragons alone. This item attaches like a backpack, and it projects flame underneath it to propel you directly upward—perfect for reaching the next slope. I assure you, the first time you try it, you'll squeal with delight as you ascend into the sky, and you won't even miss such things as steering or a way to land. Have I ever tried it? No, I leave that to brave adventurers such as you.

Jet Pack Level 7 Rare

A metallic pack clasps around one's middle, and it projects flame directly underneath the wearer.

Waist Slot 2,600 gp

Utility Power ♦ **At-Will** (Move Action)

Effect: You fly 2d10 squares upward, and then fall.

Malfunction: If you roll a 1 on each d10, you fly 1d10 squares in a random direction. You take 2d10 damage and stop moving if you collide with anything.

Gray Security Card

Kzunt has related many stories about the colored doors that separated the various chambers within the Barrier Peaks. Finding different-colored cards that magically opened the doors proved to be critical to exploring the various rooms. This ashen-gray card, recovered from one of the more violent guardian golems, allows access to any door, not simply the ones within the Barrier Peaks. Be careful with this miraculous key because, unlike the keys we are accustomed to, this one can unlock many unlikely things, including the belt you're wearing!

Gray Security Card Level 6 Rare

This gray rectangle resembles a heavy leaded pane of colored glass.

Wondrous Item 1,800 gp

Utility Power ♦ **Encounter** (Standard Action)

Effect: You make a Thievery check to unlock a door or other locked object. The check is made with a +20 power bonus instead of your normal check bonus.

Malfunction: If you roll a 1 on this check, all the clothing and armor that you are wearing falls off you.

Wheely Sled

This wheeled platform is activated by using levers on its sides, and these levers also control steering. Our attempts to use it as a new method of conveyance for cargo have not worked out to our satisfaction. For proper operation, one must lie down on the platform to steer it.

One of our enthusiastic dwarf testers attempted to use two at once, one on each foot, with rope attached to both levers to enable steering. After a series of successful rides, the tester decided to add a small ramp to see if the platforms could be used to travel over rivers and other obstacles. Although the jump from the ramp was successful, the tester discovered that such an action causes the steering to lock, and he was propelled him at top speed toward a nearby waterfall. At that point, he discovered that the safety ropes he had tied to himself did not have their intended effect.

Wheely Sled

Level 4 Rare

This sheet of solid metal sits on four wheels and is long enough for one person to lie down on it. A number of levers and switches are accessible from the sides.

Wondrous Item 840 gp

Utility Power ◆ **At-Will** (Move Action)

Requirement: You must be lying on the sled.

Effect: Roll a d20. On a result of 2–20, you move up to 10 squares over the ground, ignoring difficult terrain.

Malfunction: On a result of 1, you move 5 squares in a random direction and fall prone in a square adjacent to the sled.

Singularity Grenade

One of the wondrous objects unable to be recovered from the Barrier Peaks was a magic glass that was capable of scrying and answering questions. When the voice within the magic glass was asked to identify this object I now hold before you, the voice referred to the item as a “single larity.” We know not what a larity is, or why there is only a single larity and not multiple larities, but we assume that this device summons one to fight for you. We suspect that only one larity is enough to turn the tide of battle.

Singularity Grenade

Level 11 Rare

The size of a large fruit, this device is a polished white color, as if made of ivory. In the center is a hole made of pure blackness that seems to spin.

Consumable 350 gp

✦ **Attack Power** (Cold, Thunder) ◆ **Consumable** (Standard Action)

Attack: Area burst 2d3 - 1 within 10 (creatures in the burst); +14 vs. Fortitude

Malfunction: If you roll a 1 on one or more of the attack rolls, you teleport to the center of the burst, or the nearest unoccupied square, and the attack hits you.

Hit: Roll 1d4. Then roll that many d4s. Then roll that many d4s and total the result. Each target takes cold and thunder damage equal to the result.

Miss: Half damage.

Special: If you score a critical hit with this attack, no damage dice are maximized.

Sleep Grenade

At great expense, we hired a team of goblins to investigate a number of similarly shaped metallic-colored fruits. The first goblin showed us that, under no circumstances, should anyone attempt to eat one of them. The second goblin was instructed to depress a protrusion on the fruit’s exterior while holding onto it, and the creature promptly collapsed. The third goblin was ordered to toss the device a safe distance away from itself after activating it. The fourth through seventh determined that the “safe distance” was a much wider area than expected.

Sleep Grenade

Level 11 Rare

This device is about the size of a large apple, with indentations all around that are suitable for grasping.

Consumable 350 gp

✦ **Attack Power** (Charm) ◆ **Consumable** (Standard Action)

Attack: Area burst 2d3 - 1 within 10 (creatures in the burst); +14 vs. Will.

Malfunction: If you roll a 1 on an attack roll with this grenade, you fall unconscious (save ends).

Hit: The target is slowed (save ends).

First Failed Saving Throw: The target is instead unconscious (save ends).

About the Author

Dave Chalker is the editor-in-chief of Critical-Hits.com; a freelance game designer who has worked on “Rumble in the Valley” in *Dungeon* 193, “Class Acts: Secrets of the Ninja Assassin” in *Dragon* 404, and “Back Alley Dice Games” in *Dragon* 409, and has served as a developer on *Marvel Heroic Roleplaying* from Margaret Weis Productions. Dave would like to thank Gary Gygax for creating *Expedition to the Barrier Peaks*, and he is pretty sure that if he had played it with Gary, Dave’s character would have been killed while attempting to rescue the innocent-looking bunny.

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