



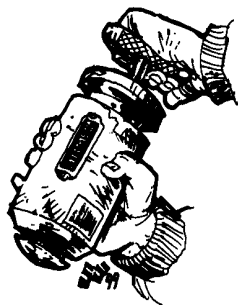
POLYHEDRON

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GAUSS GRENADE: A DEVICE FOR THE SHADOWRUN GAME

By Paul Gosselin of Death Warmed Over



Every piece of electronic equipment, including cyberware, is susceptible to electromagnetic pulses (EMP). We all know what happens to electronic devices when an Atomic Bomb is air-burst over a target city. Besides the obvious physical destruction involved, all electronic gear within close proximity of the detonation becomes unusable junk unless it was specifically shielded from the EM pulse.

The

Gauss Grenade™ was originally designed by the same lunatics that created the cranial bomb. Gauss Industries has perfected that technology and devised a non-nuclear method of generating an EM pulse and limiting the radius of the effect to a manageable size. There are several different sized (and priced) EM generators available. You can purchase the generator as a separate unit or (more commonly) as a fully usable system.

EMP generators are differentiated only by the radius of the effective pulse that is released. Each generator can only be used once. The effects of the EM pulse are quite devastating to any electronic devices caught within the radius of the pulse when the generator "activates." All electronic activity ceases completely for 2d6 days within the affected device(s). The effects are not permanent, but only time or slow recharging can reverse the effects of the EM pulse. Devices that have mini-fusion power sources may lose containment and experience radiation leakage. All other electronic devices simply stop functioning. This includes unshielded vehicles, drones, cyberware, headware, cyberdecks, computers, telephones, etc.

For game purposes all power is drained from the affected apparatus for the duration of the effect as described above. The EM pulse effects are felt through walls, including reinforced concrete and steel. The only possible defense from these nasty toys is to be shielded specifically from EMP.

Note: The Gauss Grenade and Bomb come with magnetic casings. They will attach themselves to any ferrous object (like a cyberlimb or metal door). They will even attach themselves to armored vests (with plates).

TACTOMORPHIC DIGITAL SHEATHING: A STRANGE DEVICE FOR THE MEN IN BLACK ROLEPLAYING GAME

By Mark Barnabo

Range: Personal

Body Points: 1



This substance was brought to us by the same aliens who brought us Silly Putty. It looks a lot like Silly Putty, but its ability to retain an extremely detailed shape makes it far more useful than the popular children's toy (although it isn't as much fun to play with). When the Tactomorphic substance is brought in contact with a warm item (human body heat or higher) it immediately spreads itself over

the item, copying every nuance of the object. Exposure to a sudden burst of cold causes the Tactomorphic material to set. It will never again permanently change shape, although it is very elastic. Once set, the substance can be stretched, but it always resists, attempting to remain in its set state.

These properties make it ideal for copying a person's fingerprints and/or palm prints. Usually, an agent will apply the Tactomorphic Digital Sheathing to the target's hand(s). A quick blast from good old-fashioned bubblegum remover (otherwise known as freon) sets the material. What the agent is left with is the size and consistency of a rubber glove. The glove, however, contains a perfect copy of the target's palm print and fingerprints. Just peel it off the target, and you can keep it for future use. It is important to note that a person must have the same-sized hand or smaller to wear the "glove" as it were. If the user's hand is larger, the print becomes distorted as it stretches to fit.



DECATHLON EVENT ENTRIES TO ADD TO YOUR FAVORITE SCI-FI ROLEPLAYING GAME

The uses for this technology are numerous, but it has traditionally been used to bypass palm- and fingerprint-based security systems. A clever agent once used the substance to coat a piece of paper warmed under a lamp. He set the substance with freon, and was able to walk away with a copy of the document. Yes, the substance can pick up the tactile difference between the ink and the paper – we told you it was sensitive. Masks made from this substance are exact duplicates, but the nasty tendency for the substance to spread evenly poses a problem. To put on enough of the stuff to make a mask, some of the substance will almost certainly travel up the target's sinuses and down their throat. I'm betting nobody is ever going to need a mask that has that much detail. I mean, just imagine trying to put a mask on that comes with its own sinus system and a complete replica of the target's digestive system. It makes me feel tingly all over just thinking about it. The substance is non-toxic and is semi-permeable; that is, gases pass through freely but liquids (and solids) do not. Therefore if a target or agent swallows it or gets a noseful of it, nothing bad will happen. Well, I should say that the victim won't suffocate, but they will feel bad because their digestive system will break it down, and we are told that this process causes the victim to become nauseous (yuck). ■

The Techie Toy Event in the 1999 Club Decathlon provided us with many interesting entries, and you may see one or two inserted into *POLYHEDRON* Magazine from time to time. Here we present two entries by Death Warmed Over. The event winner was Gauss Grenade, and the club also entertained us with the Tactomorphic Digital Sheathing. Enjoy.

GAUSS GRENADE SPECIFICATIONS

Generator	Pulse Radius	Possible Applications		Cost	St. Index	Legal	
EMP-G1	1 meter	Grenade		200 ¥	4	2-K	
EMP-G10	10 meters	Mortars, Missiles		14,000 ¥	6	1-K	
EMP-G500	500 meters	Rockets, Bombs, Terror		250,000 ¥	9	1-K	
Conceal	Damage	Blast	Wgt.	Avail.	Cost	St. Index	Legal
Gauss Grenade	(G1)	6	Special - 0.25 14 days		250 ¥	4	2-K
Gauss LAW Missile	(G3)	2	Special -0.50 30 days		2,750 ¥	5	2-K
Gauss Missile	(G10)	-	Special -2.25 45 days		27,500 ¥	6	1-K
Gauss Rocket	(G500)	-	Special -4.50 120 days		300,000 ¥	9	1-K

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>>>>>[Okay chummers, it's weirdness time! More and more mages and shamans have been finding new and unusual things in astral space, so it's time we opened a new file on them here in Shadowland. This is mostly a spellcaster's file, since they're the only ones who can project in the astral plane, but the rest of you runners better listen up as well. Some of these critters, things, or whatever we choose to call them, can pop up in this simple, mundane, sprawl plane that we call home, ready to spoil the day of any slag who doesn't know how to handle them. On top of that, even though mundane runners don't travel into astral space, most of them rely on mage or shaman chummers to do so in order to scope out the team's latest target. If you do, then you should learn about all the new things that can go wrong.]<<<<<

—Sysop Servant (05:37:10/05-20-55)

>>>>>[As if enough couldn't go wrong already.]<<<<<

—Infiltrator (11:28:11/05-20-55)

ASTRAL THREATS

FACING THE UNKNOWN:
NEW ASTRAL THREATS FOR
THE SHADOWRUN GAME
BY GREGORY DETWILER



FAB ROUNDS

>>>>>[Brace yourselves, chummers, the corps have finally done it. At least, some of them have. Reports of these things have come from mages and shamans who were astrally spying on Ares, Aztechnology, MTC, and Saeder-Krupp facilities. Yessir, fat airborne bacteria [FAB] rounds are a reality. The only saving grace is that the rounds are so fragging expensive that only the most sensitive areas are liable to have guards equipped with it. How did they do it? Basically, they give a relatively low-powered wagemage [the big boys don't need a bunch of high-tech toys] a rifle or shotgun of some sort with an ultra-sophisticated computerized range-finding and round-setting device—apparently the gun holds only one round at a time. Our magical grunt scans astral space in his area of responsibility, and when Joe Shadowmage pops up uninvited, he gets the poor schmoe in his sights, calculating the exact range to the target and fiddling with the gun's controls so that information is electronically fed into the round.

I know, I know, an astral target has no physical mass to present resistance to a bullet or slug, and a FAB-coated round would simply push him back. That's what the exact calculations are for. The round isn't covered with FAB; it's filled with it, and the fraggin' thing is set to explode when it's right in the middle of where the mage or shaman is. The FAB doesn't come

out until the round is enveloped by his astral form, so when the stuff spreads out, it pushes his astral form apart in all directions. Just as well astral forms don't bleed, or there's be one fraggin' hell of a mess.]<<<<<

—Sysop Servant (12:35:16/05-20-55)

>>>>>[FRAG! How can you defend against something like that?]<<<<<

—Mandy Mageboy (13:07:09/05-20-55)

>>>>>[If you see what's going down in time, dodge like fraggin' crazy to spoil the wagemage's aim. I did; that's why we know that Ares has this weapon.]<<<<<

—Malygris (16:55:33/05-20-55)

>>>>>[And you don't need a powerful mage to use it, just some no-account newbie?]<<<<<

—Mistaire (17:08:50/05-20-55)

>>>>>[That's right. It's not a fraggin' spell, after all; just good ol' high-tech weaponry of the type that corps like Ares design so well. All you need is a gunman who's just magical enough to assense astral space. That's it. I mentioned the corps who have this stuff now, but it's only a matter of time before everyone else who can afford it jumps on the bandwagon. Sorry.]<<<<<

—Sysop Servant (17:32:13/05-20-55)

>>>>>[How could any mage possibly agree to do such a thing to his fellows in exchange for money?]<<<<<

—Mistaire (17:47:32/05-20-55)

>>>>>[You chummers noticed the cost of fetishes, foci, and all other magical trinkets lately? Those jokers who claim that magic evens the odds between the rich and the poor don't know drek. The slag with a pile of fetishes, foci, spell locks, and whatnot is going to win every time, and the only way to get a lot of them in a hurry without draining yourself to death from personally enchanting them is to buy them, and that takes money. The corps have the money, and they'll even equip you for free if you work for them. I'm going places, and I'm not letting any fraggin' "we spellcasters are all brothers under the skin" drek get in my way. When I...BREAK]<<<<<

—The Corporation's Apprentice {18:00:00/05-20-55}

>>>>>[There, drekhead, now your corp'll have to buy you a new deck as well.]<<<<<

—Sysop Servant {18:00:28/05-20-55}

>>>>>[Getting back to the subject at hand, dodging FAB rounds might not be all that easy. Remember that you can't see through inanimate objects like walls and ceilings from astral space; you have to go through them to see what's on the other side. If our wagemage with the supergun is hidden behind them, he can get the drop on you the moment you pop up, and not even the luck of Coyote will be able to save you.]<<<<<

—Holy Howler {18:42:07/05-20-55}

>>>>>[It gets worse. So far, everyone's been assuming that our mage gunman (who brings new meaning to the term "astral sniper") is the only thing to worry about when you encounter him. But in a sensitive installation, he'll be only one part of a multifaceted defense system. Our boy with the FAB gun may not be worth drek magically, but if the target is important enough, you can bet his big brothers will be drifting around on the astral lookout; either that, or they'll have whistled up some elementals or spirits to do that job. When you're busy duking it out with an astral opponent just as tough and just as fast as you are, you might not think to look around you for that kid with the glorified scattergun. And places like the Aztechnology Pyramid have one fraggin' lot of accompanying spirits to watch out for.]<<<<<

—Malygris {18:56:28/05-20-55}

>>>>>[You've got one chance if you're caught between an astrally-patrolling mage and an apprentice with a FAR gun. Your worthy opponent will have his own distinct form in astral space so his associate can tell the difference between him and any intruders. The moment you see the guy, shape your aura to take his form, including insubstantial copies of any magical gear he's carrying. They won't be worth drek against him, of course, but they'll sure frag with the mind of our "astral sniper", especially once the two of you have been maneuvering awhile; he won't know who to shoot.]<<<<<

—Wu Jen {19:07:47/05-20-55}

ASTRAL BEINGS

>>>>>[I'm throwing the board open to everyone who has a war story to tell, starting with some of the chummers who convinced me to open this file to begin with. Sound off now, and try to be accurate so you don't get anybody killed.]<<<<<

—Sysop Servant {19:21:11/05-20-55}

>>>>>[I met the siren of astral space and lived to tell of it. Three "colleagues" of mine were with me at the time; never mind what we were doing there. As we were (literally) flying along, we heard what can only be described as music, but yet not music as the rest of you know it. It was, well, ethereal: the music of the spheres that ancient philosophers wrote about. The four of us were literally convulsed with joy upon hearing it, and instantly changed direction and headed for the source. I say "hear", but it was more like we were feeling it, with the sound seeming to run up and down the entire length of our bodies.

I don't know how long we flew before we encountered the singer. She was reclining on what looked like a typical black thundercloud, but with no rain or lightning coming out of it. As near as I can recall, she was human-sized, shaped like a beautiful long-haired woman, but made out of some kind of silvery mist or silver-hued energy field. We settled down on the cloud-island or whatever it was and relaxed completely, enjoying her song for what must have been hours.

After a while, I got to wondering how long we had been there, and how much time we had left before we had to get back to our meat bodies. I tried to mention this to my comrades, but they were so caught up in her song that they didn't even hear me. I tried dragging them away, but that didn't work, and in the end I had to abandon them to their doom. Oddly, I didn't even think about attacking the siren to free them; probably some leftover effect of her magic. I was down to my last bit of essence when I returned to my body. My friends were already cold and dead.

How do you avoid the effects of the song? I wish I knew. You can't take earplugs along on an astral jaunt, of course, and since there are no vehicles used in astral travel—not yet, at least—you sure as frag can't tie yourself to the mast. The only two things I can think of are either constantly using noise-making spells such as thunderclap or else crafting some fetishes or foci in the shape of earplugs before enchanting them; enchanted gear's the only physical stuff you can take with you "out there." It's taken me forever to learn the first and do the latter, but I've done both now, and as soon as I finish this file I'm going out there again to avenge my friends or die trying.]<<<<<

—Phoebus {19:29:53/05-20-55}

>>>>>[Phoebus told me beforehand about his second jaunt and the absolute maximum of time he can live in astral space, so I got a couple chummers of mine to stay with him and keep an eye on his meat bod. Stay tuned.]<<<<<

—Sysop Servant {19:41:16/05-20-55}

>>>>>[This fraggin' file's going to look like the Odyssey by the time we're done. First the Sirens, now Scylla or something like her. I was astrally snooping on the private residence of one of my brother's enemies as a favor to him. The slag didn't have any astral guards or other defenses, so I figured it'd be a walkover. Wrong! There was nothing in place as a regular defense, but the point in astral space next to where the slag's home was had a pretty nasty resident: a dark brown mass the size of a house, with two orange eyes and a dozen jointed arms ending in crab-like pincers. I tried dodging it, then zigged when I should have zagged and got caught by a claw. I activated a couple mana bolt fetishes and burned them up breaking free; planned walkover or

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not, you don't catch me jandering into astral space without my heaviest guns.

That's not the worst part of it, either. I said to hell with the favor and ducked back into my meat bod, and I'd barely started rising to my feet when one of those arms reached into my bedroom out of nowhere. It grabbed me and started to drag me back into astral space. I burned up every fetish and focus I had to make it let go, then fraggin' near drained myself to death casting regular spells, and I still don't know whether I geeked it or merely drove it off. In the end I spied on my brother's enemy by turning invisible and sneaking in physically; no way am I gonna astrally project there again.)<<<<<

—Marduk (19:53:43/05-20-55)

>>>>>(Marduk raises a valid point. There are all kinds of things in all parts of astral space, and sometimes they just happen to be right where you most want to go. So just because your intended target can't create or afford magical protection doesn't mean there's no chance of running into trouble when you assume the place from the astral plane.)<<<<<

—Pelias (20:45:03/05-20-55)

team. Don't know what they thought when they saw what was left of our chummers. I don't even know if that thing was a summoned spirit of some sort, or if it just happened to be roaming the neighborhood when Hezekiah showed up astrally.)<<<<<

—Trollkin (20:50:37/05-20-55)

>>>>>(My guess is another accidental encounter. If it had been a guardian spirit of some sort, the Shlawase guards would have hit you yourselves without bothering with Lone Star.)<<<<<

—Holy Howler (20:51:55/05-20-55)

>>>>>(I hate to interrupt, but Phoebus' time limit just ran out. What the frag happened?)<<<<<

—Sysop Servant (21:52:01/05-20-55)

>>>>>(Sorry, SS, Shaggy says he didn't make it.)<<<<<

—Decker in a Blue Dress (21:53:37/05-20-55)

>>>>>(Drek! Well, all you astrally-active chummers out there, now you know. Watch out.)<<<<<

—Sysop Servant (21:54:52/05-20-55)

CRITTERS

Critter	B	Q	S	C	I	W	R	R	Attacks
Allurer	3	3 X 4	-	12	1	7	7A	5	Special
Krabben	12/8	35	40	-	2/5	2	(6)A	7	12D+2Reach
Ant Lion	10	4 X 5	8	-	3/4	2	(8)A	6	10S+1Reach

>>>>>(And that's chip-truth. We lost our shaman when he was assensing a Shiawase facility that Mr. Johnson told us contained some drek-hot biotech weapon prototypes. The rest of us were hiding in a building across the street, standing guard over his meat bod, when all of a sudden Archie notices that our chummer's gone cold. Scratch one shadowrun, at least until we can hire another shaman or mage. We didn't know then that our troubles were only beginning.

Just as we were getting ready to pull out, this thing pops out of thin air and plops down among us, standing right over Hezekiah's body. All I saw at first was only the body and legs, which were those of a horse-sized giant ant, and the first thing I thought was that we had a fraggin' insect spirit on our hands. Then I heard Archie's scream get cut off by a loud crunch, and looked forward. Where the ant's head should be was the head and forepaws of a fraggin' lion, like the thing was some sort of ant/lion centaur. Slotter raised his Sandler TMP and sprayed a clip of bullets right in its face, but they didn't do drek. Then he brought the gun down hard on its head as it was spittin' out Archie; still nothing. The thing was even immune to melee attacks with mundane weapons. Then it grabbed him.






Fortunately, Hezekiah had left Danny and me a mageblade apiece for services rendered. We were also fraggin' lucky to be indoors instead of the wide open spaces; that thing was so big, and the room so small, that it couldn't turn to attack the chummers on either side of it. So while Slotter was dying, we hacked away at it, Danny on the left and me on the right, and finally killed it. The critter just vanished into thin air, the same way it appeared in the first place. By that time, the run was blown; all the fireworks had put the facility on full alert, and we got out of the fraggin' neighborhood one step ahead of a Lone Star SWAT

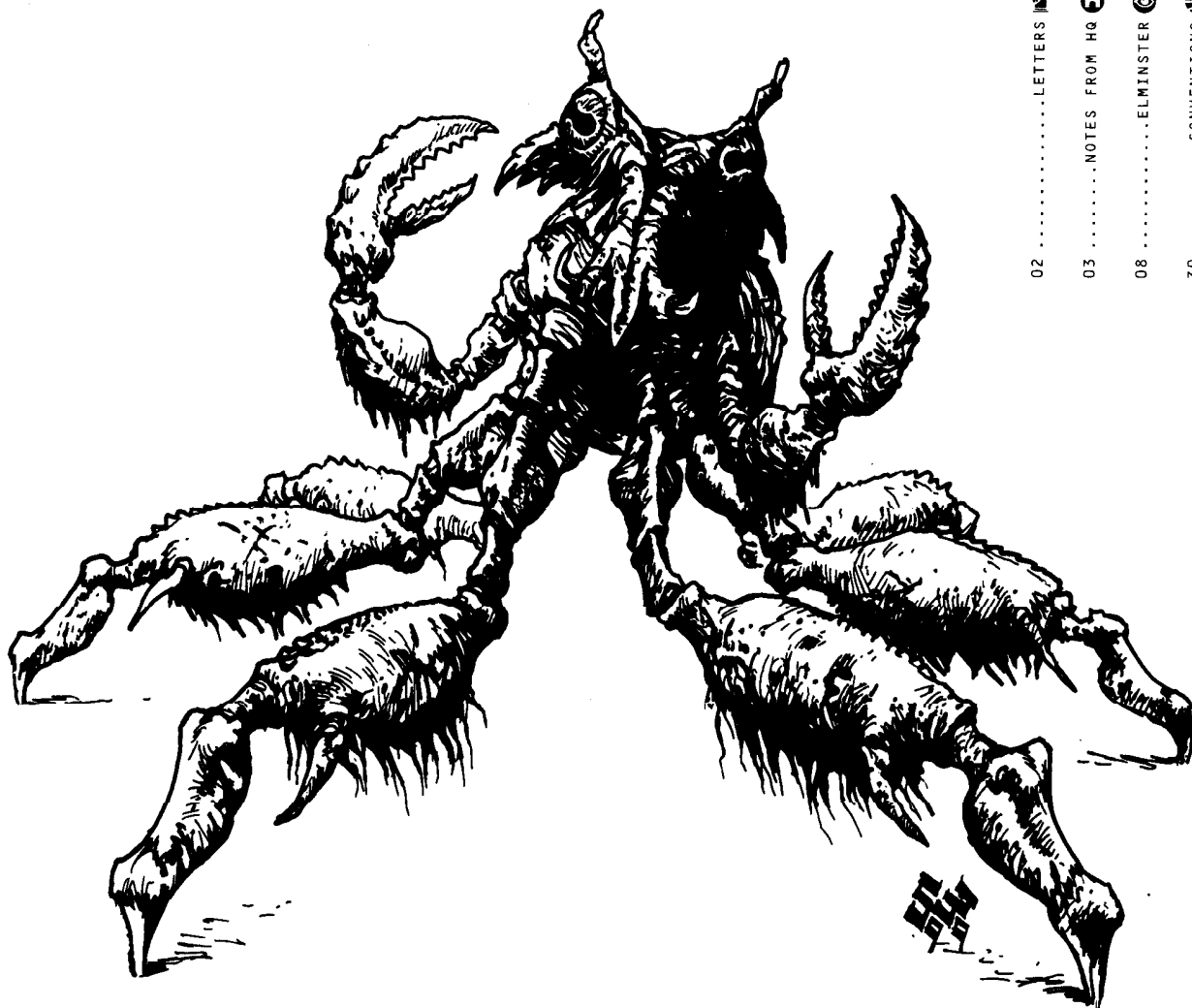


ALLURER

Powers: Compulsion (Song), Immunity (Age, Normal Weapons, Pathogens), Influence (only not to attack the allurer)

The allurer looks like a cloud of silvery mist or a silver energy field shaped somewhat like a human woman. It has no physical attacks, and no defenses other than its powers. Its sole attack is to compel astral travelers to its cloud island with its

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singing and keep them there until their essence runs out and they die. When the character first hears the song, he may resist it with a successful Willpower roll, and if he fails, this roll may be repeated once every hour until death. Ditto for the Influence attack.

KRABBEN

Powers: Hardened Armor, Immunity (Age, Normal Weapons, Poisons), Manifestation

In contrast to the lovely allurer, the krabben is a hideous hybrid of crab and octopus. Dark brown in color, it has a hard armor shell and armored, jointed arms in the place of tentacles, each of which ends in a crab-like pincer. This elephant-sized astral predator has only one method of propulsion: a form of flight (hence the lone number for Quickness). Unlike the allurer, it can and does manifest itself into the physical world, typically when pursuing an astral traveler who cuts and runs for his meat body.

ANT LION

Powers: Enhanced Physical Attributes (Quickness, Strength), Enhanced Senses, Hardened Armor, Immunity (Normal Weapons, Poisons), Manifestation

Although smaller, the ant lion possesses some of the qualities of the krabben, having an armored body (ant portions only) and the ability to manifest itself in the physical world,

again when pursuing prey. In addition, its lion brain gives it more curiosity than the krabben, so that even when it kills the mage or shaman in astral space, it uses its enhanced senses to trace a path back to his meat body, attacking

FAB GUN

The FAB gun has the following stats:

GUN	CONCEAL	AMMO	MODE	DAMAGE	WEIGHT	AVAIL	COST	STREET
FAB	2	1	SS	12S	4.5	NA	7,000*	NA

A FAB gun is a single-shot weapon that looks like an old single-barrelled shotgun with a computer range-finder on top of it. The weapon breaks open just ahead of the stock and trigger for reloading, and the FAB round (which costs 5000*) must be aligned perfectly in the chamber, so as to make connections with the computerized feed through which programming information must flow. Because of this, it takes an average of twenty seconds to load and fire the weapon. The computer determines the exact distance to the target, automatically feeding its information into the round and setting it to go off when the target's astral form is all around it. When the round explodes, the expanding FAB cloud tears the astral form apart in all directions. Only a character who can assense the astral plane can use this weapon as it was meant to be used.

anyone guarding it or simply rampaging about in the physical world. Its horse-sized body is that of an ant, with six ant legs as well, but in place of the ant's head are the head and clawed forepaws of a lion. The front part has typical tawny lion coloration, while the ant portions are a shiny black. ■