

(Author's Note: The poetic structure used was a villanelle, a structure defined more by its peculiar rhyme scheme and distinctive use of altered repetition. It is rigidly set into ten-syllable lines, arranged into five tercets and an ending quintet. The rhyme scheme is designed to follow or imitate that of the first stanza. The first ABA scheme repeats in each tercet. More distinctly, the first and third lines from the first tercet repeat alternately at the end of each following tercet, normally with some kind of variation. This style of poem was made famous by Dylan Thomas' "Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night".)

Item Label: Shaded Sceptre

Alchemical Designation: Force Talisman

Estimated Date of Construction: 22,000 BBY

Date of Re-Discovery: 36 ABY

Recovered within a shattered tomb on Korriban two years ago, this artifact has remained an item of paramount interest to Shadow Academy research personnel. Even its surface appearance holds a sinister cast. It is a stave about seven feet long, carved from a rock of the deepest black coloration. It has been cut and polished to a smooth, mirror finish, like blackened glass. Yet, the staff has no real shine or glossy reflection. Rather, it seems to simply absorb all of the light that strikes it, perplexing and confounding the eye, muddling outlines, pulling at the shadows around it.

The Scepter's unique qualities don't end there, however. In-depth study on the part of the academy has shown that the staff is a geometrically perfect cylinder, cut on each end with proton-teethed tools and refined to only bare microns of imperfection. It is perpetually chill to the touch, even when placed under direct heat for hours on end. Prolonged exposure to bare flesh can leave a bearer with frostbite, or worse. Kinetic force does not appear to impact it; even lightsabers only hiss against the surface. Researchers and Academy Alchemists have theorized that the dark energy that imbues it has transformed the staff into a sort of perfect heat-sink, absorbing any and all energy directed at it. The exact alchemical process required to recreate this is as of yet unknown, lost to time. Researchers believe that this particular enchantment could be incredibly valuable, and terribly powerful, creating fantastically durable heat sinks for blasters or bladed weapons capable of matching lightsabers.

One aspect that has not been fully explored or researched are the carvings that cover the whole of the stave's exterior. Tiny glyphs and pictographs of the ancient Sith tongue march down the length of the staff in perfectly straight rows. Originally, those assigned to study it were perplexed by these writings, until one bright student had the idea to create a charcoal rubbing of the exterior. Arranged in this format, researchers discovered that the runes created a twenty line hymn, an odd sort of incantation. It is recorded below for posterity's sake.

Photo of Artifact inscription:

Irsir midwan ir kjsi diyina.
Ti uyn. Ri in krau. Ri mur in nairi.
Dzit ri jin'. Ri hadzu kûrso ri qua.

Irsir ra ouha ir sosû, nita.
Asarji, kad niykada tadtî.
Ersir midwan ir kjsi diyina.

Ri zûta mikn, dias ani nayira.
Ir dzara ani, tsori, siuri,
Azit ri jin'. Ri hadzu kûrso ri qua.

Ri rokatsa ankûtus. Oi misina,
Sosû ri salsatsa in chita mi.
Orsir midwan ir kjsi diyina.

Zûtarsika nai, shromohta tu'diya
Na ri midwan an niykada zûi.
Ezit ri jin'. Ri hadzu kûrso ri qa.

J'us, udraitor ir tu raka, wardziasa,
Miniirtsî, tsosû kûts. Nasos ri chiti.
Irsir midwan ir kjsi diyina.
Dzit ri jin'. Ri hadzu kûrso ri qua.

Natura tuti zo tash. Irsir ros qyâsik.

In High Sith:

Irsir midwan ir kijski diyina.
Ti uyn. Ri iw krau. Ri mur iw nairi.
Dzit ri jin'. Ri hadzu kûrso ri qua.

Irsir ra ouha ir sosû, nita.
Asarji, kad niyikada tadtî'.
Ersir midwan ir kijski diyina.

Ri zûta mikn, dias ani nayira.
Ir dzara ani, tsori, siuri,
Azit ri jin'. Ri hadzu kûrso ri qua.

Ri rokatsa ankûtus. Oi misina,
Sosû ri salsatsa iw chita mi.
Orsir midwan ir kijski diyina.

Zûtarsika nai, shromohta tu'diya
Na ri midwan an niyikada zûi.
Ezit ri jin'. Ri hadzu kûrso ri qa.

J'us, udraitör ir tu raka, wardziasa,
Minirtsî, tsosû kûts. Nasos ri chiti.
Irsir midwan ir kijski diyina.
Dzit ri jin'. Ri hadzu kûrso ri qua.

Natura tuti zo tash. Irsir ros qyâsik.

Translated into Common:

*There is power in the last dying day.
Go forth. The drop of blood. The well of fear.
Embrace the dark. The shadow shows the way.*

*There is no joy in pondering, they say.
Waiting, but never comes the thrusting spear.
For there is power in the dying day.*

*The oldest men, as their breath thins, must obey.
In chains they go, coughing, crying, So hear,
Embrace the dark. The shadow frees the way.*

*The light begs worship. It pulls from the fray,
Provides the immortality of years.
But there is power in the dying day.*

*Scorn the petty dread of death, fill your days
With the power to never disappear.
Embrace the dark. The shadow shows the way.*

*You, with shaded scepter in your hand, flay,
Sway, find death. Carve your name into the years.
There is power in the last dying day.
Embrace the dark. The shadow shows the way.*

Life is a lie. There is only the Force.