

Soldev: The (sort of) Untold Story

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In *Ice Age* and *Alliances*, one of the subplots told by the flavor text is the ongoing argument between Arcum Dagsson, the **Soldevi Machinist**; and Sorine Relicbane, **Soldevi Heretic**. It's centuries after the Brothers' War between Urza and Mishra, and Dagsson is leading the charge to dig up the ancient artifacts and use them to create a better civilization.

Throughout *Ice Age*, Dagsson and Relicbane argue over the safety of using these powerful magic items that laid waste to the country many years earlier. Arcum Dagsson has more quotes, showing that he's generally winning the argument; alongside his argument with Relicbane (shown in *Staff of the Ages*, *Sunstone*, and *Pentagram of the Ages*), he's even creating new items, like Whalebone Glider and, of course, the various "Arcum's" items, such as the Sleigh.



Aegis of the Meek	"With this marvel, even the weak have a fighting chance!"
Arcum's Sleigh	"With the proper equipment and caution, one can travel anywhere."
Baton of Morale	"The Goblins would kill to get ahold of this one."
Icy Manipulator	"The scavengers who first found it called it the 'Bone Crank.' Not a bad name, I'd say."
Jester's Cap	"Know your foes' strengths as well as their weaknesses."
Pentagram of the Ages	"Take this item, for instance. How would it destroy us, Relicbane?"
Shield of the Ages	"This shield is a true rarity: an artifact whose purpose is obvious."
Soldevi Machinist	"Perhaps this time the power of the artificers shall be used wisely."
Staff of the Ages	"We found this staff useful on our visit to this very commission. Would Relicbane prefer we had been slain by Lim-Dûl's horrors?"
Stone Rain	"May the forces that took Argoth beneath the waves never come among us again."
Sunstone	"I dispute Relicbane's hysterical allegations, Commissioner, but it is true that these artifacts can be dangerous."
Vibrating Sphere	"Unearthly and invisible fibers emanate from this sphere, entangling all who draw near."
Walking Wall	"The fortress is not what it seems."
War Chariot	"I wouldn't advise using it with a Woolly Mammoth, but it's quite appropriate for many other beasts."
Whalebone Glider	"It's no Ornithopter, but then I'm no Urza."

Meanwhile, Relicbane grouches about the more dangerous items. Dagsson probably has a point about **Pentagram of the Ages** being relatively innocuous, but what about the **Skull Catapult** and the **Pit Trap**? Relicbane also appears on **Shatter** and **Disenchant**, since he represents the facet of Soldevi society that wishes the artifacts would stay buried.

Despotic Scepter	"We were not meant to have such terrible things. They should be left where we found them, if not destroyed!"
Disenchant	"I implore you not to forget the horrors of the past. You would have us start the Brothers' War anew!"
Pit Trap	"These traps are truly a symbol of great cruelty and sinister cunning."
Shatter	"Let the past be the past. Do not call up that which you cannot put down. Destroy that which

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	<i>destroyed us, so long ago."</i>
Skull Catapult	<i>"Let any who doubt the evil of using the ancient devices look at this infernal machine. What manner of fiend would design such a sadistic device?"</i>

In *Alliances*, the proportions shift: Relicbane now appears on more cards than Dagsson. While Dagsson's card (**Soldevi Machinist**) appeared in *Ice Age*, the **Soldevi Heretic** makes his appearance here. The debate between the two is so central that there are five cards with two versions so they can have flavor text by *both* (we've bolded those). **Soldevi Adnate** also has two versions, but both of them come with Relicbane quotes.

Here, Relicbane watches as the artifacts destroy Soldev, just as he'd predicted:

Phyrexian Boon	<i>"Dagsson should have paid attention to the lessons of Phyrexia before attempting to create a mechanical utopia."</i>
Phyrexian War Beast	<i>"Knowing its origins, how could they have thought they could control it?"</i>
Ritual of the Machine	<i>"Rumors persist of dark deeds performed in the depths of Soldev. When will Dagsson heed the danger therein?"</i>
Soldevi Adnate	<i>"People love to follow fools; they don't feel so alone then."</i>
Soldevi Adnate	<i>"An idiot cannot hear sense, even when a thousand people speak it."</i>
Soldevi Heretic	<i>"In the arms of tragedy, there is little comfort in being right."</i>
Soldevi Sage	<i>"To hide the truth is more than folly—it is fatal."</i>
Soldevi Sentry	<i>"A dreadful invention. What ease is there under the watchful eye of cold steel?"</i>
Soldevi Steam Beast	<i>"Dagsson saw the steam as life-giving—until his followers felt its scalding touch."</i>

Finally, Arcum Dagsson, the Soldevi Machinist comes to terms with the destructive power of the things he's helped bring back. This time, instead of sorting the cards alphabetically, we've put them in roughly chronological order, showing Dagsson's gradual realization that something has gone terribly wrong.

Aesthir Glider	<i>"A fine example of the rewards of artifice: a thoroughly obedient steed with wings of Soldevi steel."</i>
Soldevi Digger	<i>"This ceaseless device has helped uncover marvels unreachable by mere flesh."</i>
Soldevi Sage	<i>"Our underground archives grow daily, as you excavators and sages alike dig to uncover hidden wonders."</i>
Soldevi Sentry	<i>"Our newfound security enables us to turn more of our attentions to the wonders that lie deep within the soil."</i>
Phyrexian War Beast	<i>"Deal with the spawn of Phyrexia cautiously; only with time may we control them."</i>
Soldevi Steam Beast	<i>"Nothing has ever broken my heart so much as this—the betrayal of Soldev by my beloved machines!"</i>
Soldevi Heretic	<i>"It cannot be! Soldev crushed, and my machines to blame?"</i>

And the story ends, of course, on the Heretic's card.



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