



drilankha was the only city I'd ever been in where blacksmiths produced quantities of things like nails, screws, bolts, brackets, and other common items and just sold them in batches as needed, instead of needing you to go put in an order. There

were downsides to this: the screws and nails were never the size you really wanted, and you had to look through the selections and pick the best ones; but the big advantage was you didn't have to wait, and just then that was most important.

Oh, right. Screws are like nails, only you use them different, and they hold better for some things. A bolt is kind of a screw, only it's actually two pieces that fit together like, um, like that other building thing I can't remember the name of. You know, that clip thing you see everywhere but never notice. The difference is it doesn't use a cord or a band or sorcery to hold it together. Actually, I'm not sure that's the difference; it might be that screws are sharp on the end and bolts are dull. Or something like that. It was explained to me once, but I'm not sure I followed.

A few people in Adrilankha make screws and bolts, and I remember seeing one guy in Candletown advertise them. You don't use a hammer, you use a special kind of dull knife. Apparently, the concept is really old, and the only new thing is making them out of iron instead of wood, but I only heard of them in the last few years. I know that the special chair I used to have, with the swivels, couldn't have been made without screws and bolts. One guy I was talking to said that they were becoming common because of new iron deposits that had been found in the southwest, and new smelting techniques. He also said that they would change how everyone did everything, but he wasn't very specific as to how, and he was pretty drunk. I don't know. The more things change, the more different they are.

-- Steven Brust, PJF

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