

The Bats of Mercille



*Digital Reproduction of the
1989 Convention
Exclusive!*

by Mark Rein•Hagen

**Start to play your first
game of Ars Magica in
half an hour, using this
Jump Start kit!**

(after the Storyguide has read Ars Magica itself)

This Jump-Start Kit includes:

- a complete, easy-to-run adventure, one that explores the role-playing & adventure possibilities inherent in Ars Magica.
- eight characters, including two magi, with detailed personalities, histories and relationships .
- Four different one-page game briefings that quickly and simply introduce players to Ars Magica.

Credits

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A Note from the Publisher

A physical copy of *The Bats of Mercille* is probably the rarest and most collectible of **Ars Magica**[™] publications. Two editions exist, prior to this electronic reanimation: One was the original jump start kit; 100 copies were made and sold at the 1988 Gen Con/Origins (the conventions were combined that year) by Lion Rampant. The following year, another edition was released at Gen Con, featuring some editorial changes and updates to the newly released 2nd edition of the game. My recollection is that several hundred copies were made, and perhaps 100 were sold at the convention. I remember there being a box full of copies, with their bright yellow cover pages, left behind in Minnesota when Lion Rampant moved to Georgia in 1990. I presume those copies were at some point thrown away (probably by the new owners of the house where most of Lion Rampant's staff had lived). Thus there are perhaps 200 or 300 copies of both printed editions in circulation. And when I say "printed," I should perhaps clarify that they were photocopied at the college print shop and hand-collated at the last minute in order to be on sale at the convention.

This digital edition reproduces the 1989 version, complete with Darin "Woody" Eblom's hand-written entries on the character sheets. The adventure proper is an 8 page booklet that came stapled. The other pages were loose, and it was all sold together in a plastic baggie.

For the **Ars Magica** enthusiasts and completists who have long wanted to take a look at this adventure, or maybe even work it into their own sagas, it's our pleasure at Atlas Games to make it available to the world once more.

*John Nephew
Duluth, Minnesota
January 12, 2016*

Game Statistics

Notably absent in the 1989 version of *Bats* are the statistics and some descriptions for storyguide characters and monsters. The following information comes from the 1988 version, and so were made for first edition rules.

Special thanks to Lisa Stevens, who passed along the ancient text files from which they have been harvested.

Descriptions are in the order of appearance in the story.

Brother Devlon

Description: A heavy set, portly man in dirty, tattered brown robes. A Franciscan, T-shaped, iron cross hangs around his neck. The hanging jowls on his face shake whenever he gets excited.

Brother Devlon enjoys having authority and having people listen to him. Unlike most of the humble brothers who are in his order, he is arrogant and self-centered, and seeks the comforts in life. Before the terrors began, he was in town drinking with his cronies under the three oaks and building up to his traditional home-spun sermon later on in the night. The local priest always got upset about these impromptu sermons.

Brother Devlon is a bit of a con-man. He doesn't cheat people to gain their money or belongings; he cheats them to gain their trust, to gain their respect. Being a poverty stricken wandering friar is nothing to him as long as people listen to what he says. The worst thing you can do to Brother Devlon is to ignore him.

Role-playing tips: Fill up the stage with your personality. You command attention; and you secretly and fervently pray that you get it. Let desperation overcome you if you start to be ignored, or the people turn away from you.

Elder Yeoman in the Manor House

1st +4, Fat +5, Atk +9, Def +6, Dam +14, Soak +7

Trafalgo

Description: A rotund little man, of diminutive proportions, the only similarity he makes with others of his size who serve as court jesters is a little checkered hat without which he is never seen (save when he makes a bow in front of a lord or lady or in front of the altar at a church.) He has black coarse hair combined and gentle, clear, soft skin gives him. His general appearance is that of a mischievous rascal.

Though a midget, Trafalgo has a mightier heart than many of those he plays to in the stone halls of the most powerful lords. Having seen and faced many dangers in his lifetime, Trafalgo has never lost courage or the use of his wits, and his assorted talents have somehow always gotten him out his troubles. Though he usually travels alone, Trafalgo will travel with others whenever it becomes a possibility, for he loves engaging company. Trafalago is a noble hearted and sober man whose major love and interest is his music. He cares not a wit about his appearance, and certainly not other folks' ideas about who or what he is. He accepts ridicule with such a solemn and clean heart that often his tormenters become his friends. Trafalago has many friends from many different social classes, and would be very amenable to meeting wizards and getting to know them. The Bishop of Toulouse calls Trafalago the bravest man he knows.

Role-playing tips: Handle yourself with extreme dignity, and even if someone starts to "mishandle" you, maintain your composure. Look kindly upon those who tease and torment you: they are but children who have grown too large.

(If one of your players loses their character, you could have them play Trafalgo for a time.)

The Bats

When small bats attack, count a swarm as one attack, and then don't bother rolling attack at all -- the automatically hit and do +10 damage and give -4 to almost all actions performed by the person being

harassed. It is possible, though difficult, for the larger bats to attack at the same time.

Human & Herbivore bats

1st +2, Atk +6, Dam +10, Def +8

Body -3/Incap

Special Powers

- The squeaking of the bats brings on the "terror". This is a horrible fear of a life worst than death, of a disgusting, protracted torture before and after death. In short, the terror is visions of what horrible fate that might await a person. Have the characters make cowardly vs (any appropriate Personality trait -- players choice) roll when the bats first emerge from the cave. If the cowardly wins out they feel a strange fear slide into their perceptions, a feeling of dread -- and receive a -1 to all rolls. Whenever the high pitched screeches of the bats can be heard, another cowardly vs (any appropriate Personality trait) roll must be made. If the character is more cowardly than, for instance, reliable, they will run away into the night in terror. During this roll, if some character can make a leadership roll of over 8+, while trying to bolster the bravery of the others, then add their leadership score to everyone's opposed roll to the cowardly. For the purposes of breaking through Parma Magicas, give this Terror a +25 CrMe penetration roll.

- Any close relative or friend of a person who has turned into a bat may be faced with the "dreams". Spouses and close siblings are especially susceptible. While they sleep, they somehow touch the mind of the relative who is now a bat. This wakes them up and they usually scream in tormented anguish: most are also driven insane by the thought of living a life as a monster. Those who have had the "dreams", often believe that they are now living in hell, and that they themselves look like one of the monstrous bats. This fate might possibly affect some of the characters if one of their compatriots is turned into a bat by the serpent.

The wings of the bats are each worth 2 aurum vis.

Shlith-hrin

Size +4, Int +2, Per -2, Stm +8

1st +4, Atk +8 (normally +14), Dam +15 (norm. +19), Fat -2 (norm +6), Def +2 (norm +8), Soak +18 (+12 if struck in the belly, where her is stretched tautly) Use the Rein•Hagen special at least twice (p. 149, Ars Magica).

Body levels - 0/ 0/ -1/-1/ -3/-3/ -5/-5/ Incap

If severely endangered she will break away from combat, will dive to lowest part of the lower pool, and will stay there for up to five minutes. While she is down there she may use her aquam magics (see below) to harass or injure her attackers.

- Her special attack is her deadly gaze which can sap the will to live from almost any mortal. Each time she looks upon someone, if she catches their eyes, even if just for a second, she can drain their spiritual energy (she can do this once at the start of every round, and in combat can only do it to an enemy who is fighting at her front). Any character who is caught by her gaze will stiffen up and receive -2 to all their rolls that round, and then must make three fatigue rolls of 6+ or lose a fatigue level every time they fail. Those who actively avoid her gaze while battling her receive -3 to all rolls (except Soak).

- She also has great powers over water, so let her use any aquam magic of up to 25th level that affects water directly. It takes her a whole round to do something with magic, but costs negligible fatigue. Shlith-hrin has not been in combat for centuries however, and has forgotten many ways in which to use water to effective use in combat. When the characters come in the chamber and approach the pools, she may cause all the water to spray high up in the air like a fountain would. She will use this distraction to get closer to the intruders as to better attack them. This will be a beautiful sight so be sure to describe it.

The Bats of Mercille

Introduction

This is a Jump-Start Kit for *Ars Magica*™. In its original form it was the first Jump-Start kit; we made 100 copies and sold them all at the 1988 GEN CON/Ori-gins® convention. Since we had so much fun writing and selling that special supplement (exclusive to the convention), we decided to do it again. Besides doing something completely new, the *Stormrider*™ Jump-Start Kit, we decided to continue the tradition of an inexpensive, limited-edition kit for the conventions.

The basic adventure in this revision of *The Bats of Mercille* is the same as last year, but it has been edited and expanded, and updated to conform to the second edition of *Ars Magica*. If you also own our "other" *Ars Magica* Jump-Start Kit, *The Stormrider*, you may find that some sections of that kit have some semblances to this kit — in particular, the village scene. This is of course no accident. At the time I wrote *The Stormrider*, I didn't realize this little story would ever see the light of day again, so I decided to "reuse" one or two ideas. If you plan to role-play through both stories you may wish to change a few details (for instance, there are three oaks in the middle of *Stormrider*'s village, Javielle, as well as in Mercille). Otherwise you could leave these details in, and perhaps speak mysteriously of synchronicity.

Even with the editing and development we've done to it, this kit is less polished and less sophisticated than you might expect from Lion Rampant. In it are displayed the genesis of many of the ideas that have since surfaced in our other products (and will continue to do so). It is in this light that I hope you judge this kit.

These convention supplements are not intended to be anything more than old-fashioned adventuring frivolity — a dab of role-playing here, a dab of adventure there, a dab of hard core combat here. If they continue to be successful, we'd like to have a new one at each convention in the future. But don't expect that our regular products are going to resemble this one; these convention specials will be the lighter side of Lion Rampant, a vacation from our "serious role-playing agenda".

This supplement is dedicated to Woody Eblom, whose search for fun in role-playing has kept me from becoming too pretentious — thank you, Woody.

Now let the games begin!

Understanding this Supplement

In case you're not familiar with the Jump-Start Kit presentation, let me explain a few things to you. A Jump-Start Kit provides you with pre-made characters and a story specifically designed with those characters in mind — we do the work for you so your first adventure can be run quickly and easily. With this kit, even a group of complete novices can role-play a satisfying game of *Ars Magica* with only half an hour of preparation time.

To properly storyguide (gamemaster) this story, you must have read a few chapters of *Ars Magica* and have skimmed the others. Read the Introduction to *Ars Magica* carefully; it gives an overview of the game system and background. Be sure to also have a firm grasp on the Combat and Magic chapters because those rules will frequently come into play. Finally, read the Saga chapter to understand the setting in which this story takes place.

You will need to read this entire kit, from start to finish, before you attempt to storyguide it. Additionally, before you read the main text of the kit, you should skim the eight characters included in the kit, as well as the Briefings you will later pass out to the characters. Go and read them now, and then come back here to finish reading the story itself.

Story Outline

The characters journey to a distant village on the basis of a rumor, and find it largely burned and devoid of life. A few people can be found hidden in some of the houses and in the church, but strangely, everyone else is gone. The survivors talk madly of swarms of deformed bats coming out from a cave every night, bringing with them a horrible black terror. After investigating the town, and perhaps fighting with the bats, the characters find the tunnel that is called The Ear of Lucifer. After a short exploration they will find a large serpent, the lord of the bats, who has lain there for nearly 650 years, since the day the Velorindin Forest lay across this land like a great quilt. This serpent goes by the name Shilth-grin, and can trace its lineage far back, farther back than the characters might imagine. A fight is likely to break out with the serpent in a climatic battle of magic and brawn in the serpent's strange, magical lair.

Setting

The setting of this story is assumed to be in southern France, with the characters coming from the covenant of Mistrudge (described in the Saga chapter of *Ars Magica*). You can certainly have the setting be anywhere you want, however; it doesn't even have to be mythical Europe, as long as it is vaguely medieval.

This story could be the start of an ongoing saga, with these same characters used later, or it can just be the players' first taste of *Ars Magica*.

Preparation

This story is for beginning players, and they should choose from the eight characters we provide in this kit. You should organize them quickly, and start the story as soon as you can. First you should read them the Story Briefing sheet, which lists the eight characters, provides them with an idea of who they are, and paints the background to the story they will soon be a part of. Look through the characters and hand each out to whomever you think would best fit a certain persona, or would like that particular character most — perhaps asking them who they would prefer. You may also let the players work it out among themselves which character they will play. The advantages of you choosing who plays whom are that you can make sure that the characters get in the right hands, and you don't have to wait until all the players have arrived before you hand out characters. In either case, try to get the magi into the hands of responsible, capable players who will be able to take charge of the group, keep the story moving, and pick up game rules quickly.

When the players have received their characters, hand out the other briefing sheets. Give the players about fifteen minutes to read how *Ars Magica* works. If you have fewer than eight players (and hopefully you will — we have found that eight usually is far too many), have some players run a grog in addition to their companion or wizard, their main character, or have one player play two or more grogs. Try to balance it, in any case. The player of noncombatant Lady Esclarmonde, for instance, is an excellent candidate for running a grog, since he or she will then have something to do when battle breaks out.

When the players feel comfortable with their characters as well as the rules briefings, begin the game. Understanding the characters and setting is more important than understanding the details of the rules, so encourage the players to start play even if they are not sure about all the rules.

Storyguide Preparation

You, the storyguide, must put a little work into the story before running it. Develop ideas of how you will present different areas and characters that we describe,

and make sure you have a firm grasp of *Ars Magica* itself; you might reread the combat and magic chapters. Decide for yourself what is really going on in this story, and change any parts that you don't like. The more you change the story before you start to play, the more comfortable you may find yourself while you run it, and the better it will be altogether. You should be comfortable enough to ad lib before you try to run this adventure.

While guiding this story, remember that it is intended to introduce the game to novice players. Go easy on them. Let a grog be killed, perhaps, but avoid inflicting utter defeat. Adjust monster strengths and numbers to fit the current strength of the party.

The Village of Mercille

Background

This small serf village is half burned and will at first appear to be deserted. Most people have left, not wanting to face the bats, the Black Terror, or what they see of themselves in their mad dreams. Strangely, no animals will be found in the entire Mercille valley: There are no birds, no small rodents, no farm animals, there aren't even very many insects. The bats eat them. At first the characters will think believe that nothing living remains. Play up on this note of ominous gloom. Also, after a day of being in a valley with no living beings, have Blanco make special Fatigue rolls (three times per day) of 7+ or lose a (long-term) fatigue level (since there are no living things about he can eat — he has a curse, you understand). The Mercille valley itself is small, only three miles long and surrounded by low hills. It is extremely fertile, for not long ago it was a marsh. Fifty years ago the local Franciscan Monastery aided the local serfs in draining the swamp and establishing a village.

Before you run this part of the story make sure you read or reread the section of the Saga chapter called "The Peasantry." This will give you more background on what medieval villages and rural culture was like.

Almost all the buildings in the village are of timber, mud, and wattle construction. They are made with big, roughly squared timbers, with the spaces between filled with woven stick (the wattle) covered with a straw and mud mixture. Some of the more expensive cottages are actually whitewashed (as is the manor house). Every building but the church used to have a thatched roof, but only the remnants of these remain.

The people of the village who remain do so either because they have been persuaded to stay by a mendicant Friar, Brother Devlon, or because they are plagued by "the dreams". The dreams are a horrible curse which has been afflicting some people, those whose close relatives have been taken off by the bats. These dreams cause people fits of screaming while they sleep, for they reveal the inner fears of a person and their inner weaknesses as well. The dreams are actually warped

recollections of all that a person is ashamed of having done. After this experience a person is not the same as they once were, and they become more than a little deranged. They refuse to leave whatever it is they are most familiar with, and thus tend to stick close to where they once lived. They sometimes experience such vivid dreams that they continue to have them during the day, when awake, and the entire world around them becomes a living hell.

Every night when the bats fly out of Lucifer's Ear, the Black Terror comes. People become scared out of their wits — except the ones in the Church, protected by divine power, and a man named Trafalgo, who is wearing a charm. The Black Terror emotionally incapacitates people and makes it easy for a group of bats to pick them up and carry them into Lucifer's Ear.

The Dominion is presently 2 in Mercille and 1 in the fields — but it is going down fast.

Arriving at Mercille

The characters will arrive in the village early in the afternoon and will have plenty of time to explore before it gets dark. Their first sight of the village will be from a hill on the edge of the small valley. It looks green and fertile in the high summer light. Relatively flat, it is surrounded by rugged hills, and the Pyrenees mountains can be seen to the south. The small, irregularly shaped fields make up a complicated and beautiful patchwork of colors and textures. As they approach Mercille, the characters may also notice (on a Perception roll of 10+) that large piles of rocks, 13 in all, circle the village. From the hill they can't see them very closely, but they do see that these piles are placed right in the middle of some of the fields, and form an exact circle around the village.

The Fields

All about the village are the tiny fields of the villagers, each bordered by small piles of rock, with larger stretches of fields edged with groves of trees. (Each family has from 3-15 of these tiny fields in different areas about the village.) The fields near the river are much larger, for these belong to the knight. Between the village and the river are the commons, where all the villagers are allowed to graze their animals.

At some point while the characters walk toward the village, they may notice (Perception roll of 5+) a very dirty, naked girl (about 10 years old) jump up from a field of wheat and run screaming into the nearby woods. If they somehow manage to catch her, they will find her huddling among the roots of a fallen tree, screaming for her mother to take away the demons that are trying to eat her. She may rant and rave about some of the things she has seen in the last few days, though she cannot properly describe a bat.

"Uncle Tomas came after me, only he was wearing a black cloak. Any his eyes, his eyes' was red, red! red!

an' he kept screeching like a bird . . . Ahn his teeth, Ahn his teeth — pointy, pointy like a fishin' stake."

Try to make her questioning a somewhat scary experience for the players, this poor girl has seen and experienced things few would care to imagine.

They will pass between two piles of stones as they approach. If they investigate one close up they will find it to be a rough pile of boulders of a variety of sizes, reaching over ten feet high. The characters will know that the stones are either field rocks or from the river, on Area Lore rolls of 8+. No clues can be found to reveal what their purpose is, if they uproot all of a pile, however, they will find three decaying human heads, not quite skulls. Each pile has this sort of "find".

Farmers' Cottages

Although the farmers' cottages are all abandoned and burned, some do contain clues as to what occurred in the town.

There is an enclosed yard in the back of almost every cottage. The yards are still partially fenced off with a five to seven foot high wall made of small woven tree branches. Here can be found chicken coops, small herb and vegetable gardens, a tool shed or granary, or even an apple or shade tree.

The inside of the cottage usually contains only one large bed with a straw mattress (feather if the occupants were rich). Sometimes the entire family would sleep in this one bed. The floors are earthen, with some crudely made furniture lying about: two or three trunks, a few



blocky chairs, a cupboard, and a plank table are about all they usually have. Shutters are on every window. Sometimes there will be a loft or an extra bed, but for the most part each cottage looks much the same.

In one or two of these cottages you should place a person, someone who is experiencing the dreams and is hiding themselves away in the ruins. Try to create an interesting role-playing encounter and ensure that the characters gain some useful fragments of information. Many of the cottages will contain evidence of a rapid departure (overturned furniture, etc.), others will be cleared of many of their belongings. In a couple there will be large blood stains, but in the most unexpected locations (on the roof-beams, on the inside of the chimney).

The Inn

This inn is only located in the little village of Mercille because of the prominence of the trade road that goes through it. For some reason it has not been burned down, though its roof is partially scorched. No one has come through for days, however, and none should be expected, at least not until the bats have been driven away. A hammered bronze rooster hangs over the front door: the locals call the inn "The Tinker's Coop." It is a fairly large place with four private rooms upstairs for guests and a large common room downstairs, where poorer travelers sleep and everyone eats and drinks. The distinct smell of putrid flesh pervades the building. If the characters explore the place carefully, they will find that in the kitchen a large wood table and seven large kegs filled with wine have all been moved to one part of the floor, over a trap door. If they move aside these things and lift open this door (using the leather strap attached to it) the smell will become extremely bad — all characters should make Stamina rolls, and if they get 4 or less they immediately become ill. (You know what I mean, but you can describe it graphically to your players if it suits the tastes of you and your group.) If they don't roll a 7+ (a seven or more), they have to go outside, away from the smell, to avoid becoming ill.

Beneath the trap door, on the stairs leading to the wine and root cellar, the characters will find three bodies in an advanced state of decay. In the cellar are several broken, splintered and of course empty kegs of wine, but there is no food left whatsoever. Characters should have to make more Stm rolls if they attempt to go down into the cellar. The cellar contains numerous supplies, including more kegs of wine. On one wall are scrawled demented and poorly drawn pictures of misshapen bats, and demons torturing priests. These people, lost in the dreams, were shut in the cellar by other villagers. Then, when there was no one left to let them out, so they died of thirst in the cellar after the wine was consumed or spilled.

The Market

Under the three oaks in the center of town are five wooden tables with benches pulled up around them. Here the village folk drank, played dice and pined away their free hours. The market cross can be found here as well as a large pond and a rivulet of water draining it. In the water can be found the body of a black-robed priest. There are no visible wounds or marks on the corpse. The priest died of fear: Harassed for several hours by the bats, eventually he collapsed of exhaustion in the puddle, and then drowned in the water.

The Church

Adjoining the yard is a small, stone, village church, half burned to the ground. The ruins of it are still smouldering, and could possibly break into flames. It has a short steeple, a low, stone walled church yard, a walled graveyard in back and a low walled church yard in front. For a country church, it is well-built and sturdy.

A character who goes near what was the front entrance will notice, on Perception rolls of 5+, that the pair of thick wooden doors have been savagely scratched hundreds of times by claws of many different sizes and at all different heights on the door.

The River

Inside the church are eleven extremely frightened villagers and a mendicant Friar, Brother Devlon, huddling near the Altar (Dominion 8; magic won't work at all on people around this holy area). The good friar has been preaching to them about the coming of Armageddon. All of them are now convinced that the end of the world has come with the coming of the bats and that they might as well end their earthly lives in God's own home (Dominion 4).

If the characters knock or somehow let their presence be known, the peasants will likely think they are demons or the foreguard of one of Satan's armies. Friar Devlon will redouble the energy of his sermon in support of this belief. He will tell them that the player-characters are demons who have come from the gathering armies of Satan. He is trying to make up for his years of decadence by trying to become a good preacher now, but to little avail; he simply is not very good at it. Any character with a decent communication and a good verbal ploy or two should be able to outfox him and win the villagers over to their side.

The people in the church are extremely hungry, and this may be the key to their hearts — as you no doubt know is typical for humans. For days now, they have been praying until one by one they have passed out with exhaustion. Then they get up and pray some more. They have had barely enough water to keep singing.

One of the women, by the name of Ermentrude,

knows Lady Esclarmonde. Five years ago, when this serf lost her first husband, she and her baby had to become beggars just to get enough food to live. She remembers Lady Esclarmonde's kindness well. When kitchen scraps were given out at the Esclarmonde manor, the kind lady came out herself and to make sure the baby got some milk, and she saw to it that Ermentrude, in her weak state, got a fair share of the food that the other beggars could otherwise have taken from her. She will be likely to take the side of the lady if any sort of argument begins with Brother Devlon, and she could be influential with the others.

These villagers, if pried from their belief in the coming Armageddon, will tell the characters that all of the village's problems began with the evil nature of the twisted oak (located a mile downstream) and its human minion, the demented hermit. They have a great, superstitious awe of the place, for they still half believe in the old Gods. One man will admit that in his weaker days he used to place offerings before the tree, but now he is terrified of it.

The Manor House:

Once the characters walk through the gate in the fifteen foot high stone wall, they will see what was once a beautiful manor house, now burned almost to the ground. The only building that is left in the compound is a thirty foot high, twenty foot wide stone tower in the northwest corner of the wall, that was supposed to serve as the final bastion of the knight's family.

The knight, Sir Palaçon, and his entire family left Mercille the morning after the first attack of the bats, along with many of the villagers. He left his manor house in the care of two of his yeoman (a father and his son) and his steward. These caretakers locked themselves in the tower the next night, terrified by the bats, forgetting that there was a prisoner still locked in the cell below them. The elder yeoman was so affected by the Black Terror that when he was prevented from leaving the tower by the other two, he killed them. Now he roves about the locked and barred tower, with his sword in his hand, and his heart locked in fury against the outside world. If the characters try to break through the door, reached after a short flight of stairs that hug the wall of the tower (Str roll of 14+; there is room for only one person to try at a time), he will be waiting to attack with his bastard sword.

The inside of the tower is full of supplies, and two bodies rot in the upper room.

A troubadour by the name of Trafalgo is locked up in the tower cell, placed there by Sir Palaçon. His cell that is the cellar of the small stone tower. Only one barred window at ground level looks into the courtyard, and the only entrance is a trapdoor in the floor of the storeroom above. If anyone comes into the courtyard Trafalgo will yell out to them, and plead for water, food and freedom. To free him however, the characters will

probably have to enter the tower. Trafalgo will warn them that his three jailers are up there still, and have been fighting.

His story is that he was in town when the bats had first come. He had been visiting an old hermit (a friend) who lived a little ways from the village under an old willow tree. The villagers thought the old man was a heretic or a witch (some said a wizard), and blamed him for the Black Terror and the bats. Then they killed him. Trafalgo was locked up by the knight for his own protection.

Blacksmith's Shop

A villager named Bobo (don't laugh! this was a common name for a serf) is hiding in his brother's metalworking shop. Bobo was one of the first to experience the dreams and go mad, his brother being Wido, the first villager to be transformed into a bat. Bobo has grown quite cunning and sly, and though he believes himself to have wings and to be a bat creature, he manages to survive quite well, hiding in the blacksmith's large forge for much of the day and night.

This is where he will be when the characters meet him. As they enter the shop he will continue to hide, but eventually he grows impatient. He will leap out, climb up to the loft and crawl out the window onto the roof. He will then lead the characters on a merry chase through the village (assuming they try to catch him at all), but will avoid being anywhere near a wizard, and will never look into their eyes: He knows the evil ways of demons! Because of his madness he has large reserves of power and stamina, and has a strange, unnatural belief in himself (that is, in game terms, a high Confidence). For almost any roll he makes you, therefore, you can assume he has at least a +4, and he will use 3 points of his Confidence (of 8 total) every time he tries to do something (at least until he loses all of it). While he is being chased, he will giggle and laugh, though when he is about to be caught he will become terrified and will renew and redouble his efforts. He is fearful, to the very root of his being, of the minions of Satan.

Some rolls you can have characters make: Sprint down the road (Qik + Athletics - Enc), leap from one roof to another (Dex + Athletics, ease factor of 10+), jump over a fence (Str), find Bobo hidden in yard (Per + Scan, ease factor of 8+), persuade Bobo down from roof (Communication + [appropriate ability, such as Guile], ease factor of 12+), command down from roof (Prs + Leadership, ease factor 15+), or enter fit of rage (high roll on an appropriate personality trait).

After he is caught, Bobo may tell the characters about the Ear of Lucifer, and how he and the other bats fly out of it every night. Bobo is convinced that he and all the other bats rise up from Hell in the evening. Ranting, he speaks of having seen Lucifer himself wander the village (which he believes to be in Hell, after



all). Bobo believes the characters are demons themselves, and when he speaks this thought aloud he will sink yet more deeply into his dream madness.

The Mill

The great grinding stone of the mill sits idle in the front yard. It was once powered by a team of oxen walking in a circle. While the door to one of the granaries has been left open, no animals have come to steal grain. From inside the tool shed of the miller, the characters will hear the frantic barking of a dog. This terrified creature has been bereft of food and adequate water for almost a week, but has somehow survived. If they open the door, the tan-haired hound will run out into yard and down the street, but will collapse before getting very far. If a character cares for it, the dog will turn out to be a loyal companion (but remember that Blanco should be getting hungry about now; perhaps you could sent him a private note...). If pursued the dog will stagger to its feet and attempt to run again, but it will collapse after a minute or so.

The Twisted Willow

This weirdly shaped tree is many years old. It is located almost a mile downstream from the village, near the river and in a large copse of trees. It is a famous landmark to the folk in these parts, and it is said that back in the days when their forefathers (the Celts) worshipped other gods, this tree was sacred, and a

central part of many rituals. Some villagers still visit it on Midsummer's Eve. Many rumors abound about the old man with the long scraggly beard, who lived in a hut underneath this venerable oak. No one would be so foolish as to go near it at night.

At this time, however, the hut of the old man is devoid of anything but a few pots and a pile of strangely shaped sticks (from the tree). The tree lives, and it is magical (magic aura +1 under its branches). If the magus Durgrund decides to use his spell to speak with it, he may, but it will take a few good hours to have even a short conversation. Trees are not notorious for their speed in conversation, nor for their brevity. Durgrund will learn much of value from the tree, however. First of all, the tree, which calls itself Rareak, knows about the serpent, and will tell Durgrund that at one time, "back when I was a sapling", the snake was the object of human worship. It also knows that the bats are from the "evil serpent" and come from a deep hole in the ground that is far away (for a tree, a mile is quite a ways off). Rareak may also say that the serpent can perform magicks with water. It will be concerned about its friend, "the large fertilizer, who was here not minutes ago." (The tree speaks of the hermit.)

The Coming of Night

When night arrives, the bats fly out the Ear of Lucifer and move towards the village, seeking new people to carry back into the caves. This is likely the time when a major battle will occur in the village. If the characters have foresight, they will have carefully selected the site where the battle will take place.

The Bats

Soon after sunset, the bats emerge from the Ear of Lucifer, and Black Terror will rise over Mercille — perhaps striking the cold hearts of even the magi themselves. (To do so it will have to penetrate their *Parmae Magicae*.) About twenty large bats and three swarms of smaller ones will prowl around the village, looking for living things to haul off to the caves. When they see the characters they will attack in great numbers, but without organization.

The bats come in many styles, sizes and shapes, but they are small on the average. They are really not bats at all, but are other creature who have been made into things similar to bats. Some are as large as a small human, some are as small as rats, but all have bodies of less than sleek proportions. These hideous black creatures are created when an animal or human is killed or captured and then is brought down to the serpent's lair and is magically transformed through a hideous process.

There are two kinds of bats, the small ones who were once forest animals, who in combat are mostly only of nuisance value, and the larger, more formidable ones who were once humans and large farm animals.

But even the “large” bats are not very large, for they were shrunk in the enchanting process.

The Ear of Lucifer

The Ear of Lucifer lies atop a large hill, not more than a mile upriver of town. The hill is called Highmound by the locals, and it is less than two hundred feet from the bank of the river. Near its summit, characters will find a large outcrop of rocks that is about forty feet across with parts of it being over twenty feet high. There are small cliffs, a few pinnacles of rock, and some huge mounds. At the center of this rugged place is a hole that leads directly into the hill. The cave is not more than twelve feet around and is about thirty feet deep. Ledges and footholds can be found on the walls all the way to the bottom, so it requires only three Climb + Dex rolls of 6+. If ropes are used, it should not be very difficult at all to get the entire group down. At the bottom is a shallow pool of water, as well as a very irregular, and at times narrow tunnel leading off towards the north.

It will be very difficult to traverse this passageway, and impossible if the characters have no light. It curves around, there are short off shoots that are dead ends, and the floor has very treacherous footing. The characters will be able to find their way along by following a thick trail of dried blood — the bats are not gentle when they drag their prey along. For the first half of this passage, have the characters make a Dex + Climb roll of 7+ to avoid mild injury (sprained ankle, hurt wrist — you pick it). After about a half hour of travel, they may meet some more bats in a small cavern (no more than 10 large ones). After the battle, they will have to make one more Dex + Climb roll.

When the characters finally enter Shlith-hrin’s chamber, make sure you have them roll for fatigue. Have them roll twice to get a 7+: each time they fail they lose a fatigue level for a day — it was a difficult walk and climb.

At the very end of this passageway lives the giant, evil serpent Shlith-hrin, the perpetrator of all the evil that has befallen Mercille. At one time she was worshipped by the tribe of Celts that lived in this area, but that was hundreds and hundreds of years ago. Those people and that time is long gone, but their legacy lives on. The Shlith-hrin was fed so well for so long by these worshipers that it grew too large and now cannot escape its home deep in the tunnels.

This last chamber is dominated by a large pond of brackish water that in places trickles down a series of little waterfalls and rapids into another pool fifteen feet lower down than the first. An underwater tunnel, normally blocked off with an Aquam spell, allows Shlith-hrin to swim back and forth between the two pools. The lower pool is much deeper than the upper one, though both are dotted with large lily pads (sturdy enough for a normal sized human to stand on; that

means Blanco would not be supported by one); and there is other aquatic life, including a some brightly colored fish. A round stone island in the middle of the first pond is a platform for a huge, eight-foot-high, bronze (heavily tarnished) tripod. Atop it is a heavy cup-like basin with a large yellow flame rising from it. At one time, it served as the sacrificial flame for the worshipers. Now its eternal flame merely serves as lighting for the chamber. When the character first enter this room this is where they will likely first see Shlith-hrin, standing before the flames, a deer wrapped in her coils, blood pooling on the floor — caught in the middle of the process of making a bat. When she notices them she will slither into the pool.

This room has a magic aura of +5, but when the serpent dies it will be reduced to +1 (you may not realize this now, but creating an aura is a power far beyond a magus’s reach — this serpent is something else).

The Serpent: Shlith-hrin

This jade-green serpent stretches about thirty feet across her chamber, and is over five feet wide. Her shockingly yellow eyes flicker menacingly in the flame light. A forked tongue slides in and out of a mouth lined with a myriad of tiny, dagger-sharp teeth. She calls herself Shlith-hrin and has a long and twisted history.

Shlith-hrin is currently extremely bloated with food, and this will make her much easier to slay. Having gone so long without food she can scarcely, even now, contain her ravenous greed, and she eats every chance she can get — perhaps even in the middle of combat. Over half of the “bats” are being used to collect living animals for her culinary pleasure. Her body looks as it must feel: bloated, distended, and full. Lumps can be seen all along her thirty foot length

After years of waiting, a human finally managed to not only fall down the shaft of the Ear but also make his way to the center chamber where Shlith-hrin is trapped. Wido was thrown into the Ear of Lucifer by his jealous brother Bobo after an argument, and Shlith-hrin soon after turned him into a bat. He was the first to undergo the horrible process of transformation and is her most trusted servant.

Shlith-hrin was going to wait until more animals and humans had wandered down into her cave before beginning to take over the outside world, but she grew impatient and went on the move only a year after Wido first came to her.

When Shlith-hrin gets hold of a living creature (and doesn’t eat it) she will make it into a bat. This process is done upon the sacrificial island on the upper pool. She coils herself around their living bodies and begins squeezing until water begins to drip out of their orifices (she has the aid of her magic). She then makes various kinds of enchantments around them using plants taken

from her aquatic gardens, and some magical trinkets she had saved from her earlier days. The final part involves putting them into the sacrificial flame for almost a minute.

The creature is greatly shrunk by the process and their skin is turned a leathery black — wings grow, and the creature becomes bonded to Shlith-hrin. Worst of all, it keeps its mortal mind and experiences all that is happening to it — including the strange desires and longings that rise within them.

When the characters come in the chamber and approach the pools, she may cause all the water to spray high up in the air like a fountain would. She will use this distraction to get closer to the intruders as to better attack them. This will be a beautiful sight, so be sure to describe it in detail — and as the characters ooh and ah, have Shlith-hrin strike. She will grab a character and then will pull them under the water.

Before she dies, and perhaps while she fights, Shlith-hrin will scream in anger and fury and will tell the characters that they can't kill her, for then "the Gates of Hell will be truly opened." In her last breath she will ask how they could kill one of their own kind, one of the Old Ones, and will beg that they tell her sister Artemis that she is again lost and a spirit wandering the wicked mortal world — if asked where Artemis is, Shlith-hrin will say that she sleeps upon Mount Olympus, if she is pressed even more strongly in her last breath she will say that Artemis only wakes for one evening upon every summer solstice. (For more information on the Old Ones— which she could be lying about — see *The Order of Hermes*, coming soon.)

When Shlith-hrin dies, the characters will see a cloudy spirit coagulate over her unmoving form. Whoever gets a Per roll over 10+ will notice that the cloud takes the form of a beautiful woman with the legs of a goat. It will then twirl about very rapidly, whirlpool fashion, before vanishing.

Shlith-hrin seeks to recreate the cult that once worshipped her. The first step, she believes, is to flood this entire valley, and to build some sort of magical aura there (this is something no magus could ever do — "build" an aura). Once this is all done it will be safe for her to have the bats begin to carve a wider tunnel out of the cave. This is the purpose of the 13 piles of rock: they serve as the focus of a great magical ritual in which the water will rise to cover the land as it once did hundreds of years ago. If this occurs, Highmound will be an island in the middle of a swamp.

She will be able to emerge from the bottom tunnels

when the bats are able to drive away all the villagers, and turn the old village into a ceremonial site. She hopes eventually to return home.

The bats all die when she dies. Unfortunately, any character who has been bitten will die as well.

Treasure

The serpent's body itself contains a great deal of raw *vis*. A number of the green scales found up and down her length have concentrated magic, *Vim vis*. The characters can collect 12 such scales, each worth one point (or "pawn," as magi call them) of *Vim vis*.

Some of the colored fish swimming about are also have concentrated magical power and are each worth a pawn of *Aquam vis*. There are 11 of them to be found in the two pools.

Also, her old Celtic worshipers were prone to collecting skulls, as a sign of reverence. There is a large pile of these on the island, and one of them has the power to speak. It knows many things and likes to speak about them loudly and without end. Unfortunately, it speaks only an ancient dialect. It speaks very gruffly and resents being handled — and it may attempt to bite.

Options

Here are some fun things you can add to the story to make it more fun, more interesting or merely more treacherous. I hope that even if you don't use these suggestions you'll have fun reading them.

- Have another magus exploring the village at the same time. This very sullen wizard has made a bargain with the serpent: If she keeps other wizards away from the town and scares away the common folk, she will be given knowledge of the history of the Order of Hermes. To this end, the wizard has laid traps around the village and is planning on using some of her store of *vis* if she goes into Certamen with any magi.

- The villagers are actually in cahoots with Shlith-hrin, and are her voluntary worshipers. The cult has gotten so out of control, however, that the village has been depopulated, and the remaining villagers have become more than a little deranged.

- Shlith-hrin wasn't spouting empty threats. Beyond her chamber a tunnel continues on down into the earth, and, eventually leads to Hell . . . Strange things may pop up from this gateway on occasion — demons, perhaps — now that the ancient guardian has been killed.

Read this page aloud to the players; then allow them to use it for reference during the story.

Introduction

You are all inhabitants and friends of a covenant of magi (wizards), located in southern France, in the Languedoc region. It is the High Middle Ages, circa 1300 A.D., an age of chivalry, romance and heresy. Your covenant, named MistrIDGE, is a stone tower located atop a mist-covered hill, under which deep catacombs extend. A wooden stockade lies far beneath the tower at the foot of small cliff; the buildings found within it are where many of the grogs and companions live. The studious wizards spend much of their time in their laboratories, but occasionally they venture forth into the world on a mission of import. Today you will roleplay one of these missions. Below are listed the characters you can choose from for this adventure.

Characters

Lysandra: Wizard of the Evermutating Air and the Everchanging Mind. She has a somewhat feline and aggressive personality.

Durgrund: Wizard of the One thousand Changes and of the Verdant Forest. A glum man, he avoids crowds and being stared at.

Raymond: A officer of the grogs, Raymond is strong-willed, with a lot of common sense (he can get advice from the Storyguide). He is missing his left eye.

Lady Esclarmonde: A wealthy, widowed noble lady. Well educated, with a forceful personality, but she is non-combatant.

Blanco: A very largely built Spaniard, yet he is a thief, and one afflicted by a unfortunate curse. He doesn't along with others and is horribly ugly.

Braeble: A lusty, powerful warrior, very well armed but he is still young and has never been tested in battle. Desperately wants to prove himself.

Danlo: Shield grog, stout defender of the Wizards, though he tires easily. A healer of sorts and a proficient archer as well. Has an ugly past.

Garian: A capable Fighter and forester. Gets along well with the common folk. A practical and a no-nonsense kind of man. Enjoys drinking.

Your Mission

(We suggest that this be roleplayed out, but it can simply be read to players instead.)

A very frightened, apprentice troubadour (an entertainer), Jalrano, has just come to MistrIDGE to tell of a terrible curse that has fallen over the nearby village of Mercille. Most of the villagers have left and many others are missing. Strange, deformed bats have been seen at night, flying about the valley. More and more of them are seen each passing night, and they bring with them a consuming terror. As Jalrano ran from the village, he saw the bats swarm over the manor house, and swears he saw human faces on some of them.

Jalrano fears for the life of his master Trafalgo who was blamed for the curse of the bats. Jalrano loudly claims Trafalgo is innocent. The magi have heard that the Baron de Venquese is assembling a large party of knights, but until now they didn't know why. The formidable expedition will depart within days, so if you wish to solve this mystery you will have to do it before the host arrives.

The Wizards Council of MistrIDGE has determined that the problem at Mercille must be investigated immediately. They are concerned by the prospect of an army of knights active near the covenant, and the mysterious threat of the bats could become more dangerous or grow out of control.

With knowledge of the village's location, some idea of what to expect, and two magi, you and your party have a good chance of succeeding on this mission.

You will enter the village, attempt to discover what is going on, and, if possible, deal with the menace. Your specific goal is information, though you may find magic in raw or refined form. Proceed with caution, learn what is happening, eliminate potential dangers to MistrIDGE and, most importantly, figure out what's going on before the Baron gets there. Don't let MistrIDGE get blamed for what is going on.

Basic Briefing

Character Types (p. 13)

There are three types of characters in *Ars Magica* — magi, companions, and grogs. Magi are the wizards around whom the game is based. Just as in legend, they wield potent magic and are more powerful than almost all non-magical people. (The magi in this adventure, however, have only recently finished apprenticeship, so they are not nearly as powerful as experienced magi.) Companions are exceptional people who offer the magi their service and talents. They supply the specialized skills that the magi have never had time to pursue. Grogs are mercenaries hired to fight for and guard the magi. Their sworn duty is to risk their lives in defense of their lieges. Their brutal lives promise little boredom.

While the character types are not balanced in terms of power, they have distinct roles that are important parts of the story, and all three types are fun to play.

Characteristics (p. 15)

Characteristics describe the untrained potential of your character, including such things as strength, presence, and dexterity. The average score for a characteristic is 0. A positive score indicates an above average characteristic while a negative score indicates a below average trait. Thus Obo, with a -2 Dexterity, is something of a klutz, while Norek, with a +2 Dexterity, is agile and nimble. Characteristic scores generally range from -5 to +5.

Characteristics are added to relevant rolls. For instance, if Norek were trying to climb a tree, he would add his +2 Dex to his roll. But if Obo were trying to climb a tree, he would have to add his -2 Dex to the roll, thus giving him a penalty.

Your eight characteristics are listed near the top of your character sheet.

Intelligence (Int)- thinking power

Perception (Per)- awareness of surroundings

Strength (Str)- muscle power

Stamina (Stm)- toughness & endurance

Presence (Prs)- physical & social attractiveness

Communication (Com)- speaking & communicating ability

Dexterity (Dex)- coordination

Quickness (Qik)- speed of motion & reaction

Virtues & Flaws (p. 16)

Your Virtues & Flaws show how your character is qualitatively different from other characters. They are a big part of your character conception and can have an important effect on play, so familiarize yourself with them thoroughly. The effects of most Virtues & Flaws are already taken into account in your character's stats.

Stress & Simple Rolls (p. 8)

All rolls are made using one ten-sided die. There are, however, two ways to read the die. For rolls not made during stress, read the numbers on the ten-sided die as 1-10, as you normally would (called a **simple roll**). But during stress, such as in combat, you make a **stress roll**, and both exceptional success and terrible failure are possible. Read the "1" as a "double." This means if you roll a 1, you roll again and double the result. If you roll a second "1," roll the die a third time and quadruple, etc. The "0" also reads differently on a stress roll. If you roll a "0," it's a zero and not a ten, and there is a chance you might have botched. You must roll

again, and if you roll a second "0" you have botched, and something very bad occurs. In particularly hazardous situations the storyguide might have you roll multiple times to see if you've botched. (Note: If you are re-rolling after rolling a 1, a "0" means 10.)

For both stress and simple rolls, once you have rolled the number, you add whatever modifiers apply.

Ability Rolls (p. 8)

You have many abilities listed, each with a score that is added to appropriate ability rolls. Ability rolls make up the basic structure of the game, covering such things as climbing trees, telling a convincing lie, and sneaking up on a dozing guard. (Your combat abilities have already been added into your combat totals; see the Combat Briefing.)

When using an ability, you roll a die, then add the appropriate characteristic score and the appropriate ability score. Compare the total to the **ease factor**, a number provided by the storyguide (game master). The harder the task, the higher the ease factor. If your total beats or equals the ease factor, you have succeeded.

You also have a **specialty** listed for each ability (designated "SP:"). If you attempt an action that falls within this specialty, you get an additional +1 bonus.

For Example: Norek tries to climb a tree. The storyguide rules that the ease factor is 6, that Dex is the appropriate characteristic, and that Climb is the appropriate ability. Norek rolls a die (and gets a 5) + Dex (+2) + Climb (2) = a roll of 9. In addition, Norek gets a +4 bonus with all rolls related to the forest because of his virtue Way of the Woods, so his final roll is 13. Norek's roll easily beats the ease factor, and he successfully climbs the tree.

Confidence (p. 25)

Your character has a Confidence (Cnf) score that can affect ability rolls. Confidence represents your ability to rise above your own limits. Before any stress roll, you can declare that you are using one or more Cnf points, which you then add to your roll. If the roll succeeds, you can use the Cnf points again later. If you fail, however, you lose them for the rest of the adventure — you lose confidence in yourself. When you are rolling on a ten-sided die, one point can make a great deal of difference, so remember to use your Confidence.

Personality (p. 26)

Your character's personality traits are assigned scores, like characteristics. A positive number means a higher-than-average level in that trait, and a negative number indicates limited expression of that trait. So, Jeremé's +1 Brave means he is braver than average, while his -2 Easy-Going means he is less easy-going than most people. (Most scores range from -3 to +3.) Any time you or the storyguide feel it is appropriate, make a personality roll versus a trait. Roll the die and add the score. A roll of 6+ means that the trait is expressed. Most of the time, however, you just use personality traits casually, as a general guide to role-playing your character.

Size (p. 24)

The average human Size is 0, and almost all humans fall within the range of -1 to +1. Obo is a very large man, so his Size is +1. This gives him an extra body level, an extra fatigue level, +1 on his Soak, and -1 on his Def.

Combat Briefing

Combat rules reproduce the dangerous nature of medieval warfare. Be careful, because a botched Soak roll can bring death even to a mighty warrior, and wounds are a serious matter. Be brave when bravery is called for, but don't be foolhardy. Avoid combat when you can.

The Five Combat Rolls (p. 49)

In *Ars Magica* combat, five rolls are important; look for the bonuses you get to these rolls near the bottom of your character sheet. All of these totals have been derived from other scores on your character sheet. They are:

First Strike (1st)- This roll decides how quickly you can strike with a particular weapon. You have a separate 1st for each weapon (because some weapons strike faster than others and you are more skilled with some than with others).

Attack (Atk)- How likely you are to connect with a particular weapon.

Damage (Dam)- How likely you are to hurt an enemy once you connect with the weapon.

Defense (Def)- How well you can avoid being hit, either by parrying with a weapon or by dodging.

Soak- How well you can withstand physical damage without getting seriously hurt. It depends mostly on your armor.

Making Combat Rolls (p. 47)

Each round (about 6 seconds) you can do one thing, such as hurl a spear, cast a spell, or swing a sword.

Who Goes First? 1st vs. 1st

When two combatants meet, each makes a 1st roll (a stress die + the 1st total for the weapon being used). The one who rolls higher strikes the other first and then the one who rolled lower strikes back. This order of attacks continues throughout the battle between these two opponents.

Do You Hit? Attack vs. Defense

When it is your turn to attempt to strike another combatant, you roll a stress die and add your Atk total for the weapon you are using. The target of your attack rolls a stress die and adds Def. If your Atk roll exceeds the Def roll, you have hit and might do damage (see below). Otherwise your opponent has evaded your blow.

Do You Do Damage?

Damage vs. Soak

Once you have hit (see above), you roll to see if you have damaged your opponent. Roll a simple die + Dam and compare the total to our opponent's roll of a stress die + Soak. If your total is equal to or below that of your opponent, you have not damaged your opponent. If your Dam roll is higher than your opponent's Soak roll, your opponent loses one body level for each 5 points by which your roll exceeds your opponent's. (See below for the effect of damage.)

Missile Weapons (p. 47)

Missile weapons are handled somewhat differently from melee weapons.

1) There is no 1st roll. Missile weapons that were aimed in a previous round are loosed at the beginning of the round. Those aimed in the current round are loosed at the end of the round.

2) There is no Def roll for the target. The storyguide sets an ease factor according to the difficulty of the shot, and you must match this ease factor to score a hit.

Wounds (p. 52)

Each character has a number of body levels, each of which indicates a different level of wounds. As you are injured, you lose body levels. Look at the column of body levels on your character sheet. An X already marks the "Unhurt" level, meaning that at the start of the game you are not injured. As you lose body levels (and put X's in progressively lower boxes), you become more wounded. Each body level between Light and Heavy Wounds has a penalty associated with it (-1, -3, and -5). When you are at one of these levels, you suffer this penalty on all actions (but not on Soak rolls). When Incapacitated, you can take no action at all. If you lose a body level past Incapacitated, you are dead.

It is hard to recover from wounds. If you treat someone's wounds, roll a die + Chirurgy (a skill) + Int. If you roll a 9+, the other character regains a body level. If you roll a 3+, you have at least stabilized the wounds so they won't get worse.

Fatigue (p. 54)

During combat, you will have to make Fatigue rolls. Every time you move immediately from one strenuous activity to another without pausing a round, such as fighting first one opponent and then another, you must make a Fatigue roll. Roll a die + your Fatigue total (listed above your fatigue levels). If you roll 6+, you avoid fatigue. Otherwise you lose a fatigue level, and penalties apply like wound penalties. Wound and fatigue penalties are cumulative. You recover quickly from fatigue, unless it is the result of prolonged exertion.

Brawling (p. 50)

It is possible to fight without weapons, performing such maneuvers as wrestling a weapon from an opponent, tackling, immobilizing, or throwing an opponent to the ground. These maneuvers depend on rolls that use your Brawl score and various characteristics as modifiers. Player-characters fighting one another in this adventure, if it comes to that, will use brawling rules.

Complications

Rules that cover a variety of specific situations, such as damage from falling and striking from advantage, are available to the storyguide, but they do not warrant discussion here. Ask the storyguide about your options, but remember this may be their first time running *Ars Magica*, so don't make their job too difficult.

Magic Briefing

Ars Magica has a comprehensive magic system, but for your first session, you need only concern yourself with how to cast spells. There are two kinds of spells you can cast: **formulaic spells**, that are dependable but work only in specific ways; and **spontaneous spells**, that are weak but versatile.

Magic Arts (p. 61)

Fifteen arts represent your mastery of various aspects of magic. They are:

Techniques	Meanings
Creo	(I create)
Intéllego	(I perceive)
Muto	(I transform)
Perdo	(I destroy)
Rego	(I control)
Forms	Meanings
Animál	(animal)
Aquam	(water)
Auram	(air)
Córporem	(body)
Herbam	(plant)
Ignem	(fire)
Imágonem	(image)
Mentem	(mind)
Terram	(earth)
Vim	(magic)

Two arts, one technique and one form, describe a typical spell. The technique describes what the spell does. The form is what the spell affects. For instance, Kyndrek's formulaic spell *Twist the Living Tree* is Muto Herbam because it transforms a tree.

Forms can also protect you from mundane danger. For every full 5 points you have in a form, you get +1 on rolls to protect you from related dangers. Lucienne's score of 7 in Auram, for example, would give her a +1 on a roll to resist being blown over by a gale.

Formulaic Spells (p. 63)

The formulaic spells you have studied and learned are listed in your grimoire. You may cast any of these spells whenever you want. The spell's Level shows how hard it is to cast.

To cast a formulaic spell, roll a die and add your casting bonus. If your roll matches or beats the spell's Level, you have cast the spell with no fatigue. If you roll within 10 points of the spell's Level, you have cast the spell but lose a fatigue level. If you roll more than 10 points below the Level, the spell fails and you lose a fatigue level.

- If the spell must be aimed, see the section on Targeting.
- If you must overcome the target's magic resistance, see the section on Magic Resistance.

For Example: Kyndrek casts *Converse with Plants and Trees* (Level 25). He rolls a 4 + 17 (his casting bonus) for a total of 21. The total is 4 points lower than the spell's Level, so he succeeds in casting the spell but loses a fatigue level in the process.

Spontaneous Spells (p. 64)

The more flexible but less powerful method for casting a spell is called **spontaneous magic**. With this kind of magic you can do almost anything, provided you have enough magical skill. You

determine what effect you want to have, and based on that effect, you determine the technique and form involved. You can choose any combination of technique and form, even if you have no formulaic spells of that combination.

To cast a spontaneous spell:

1) Decide the effect you seek; based on the effect, decide the technique and form.

2) Decide whether you will exert yourself in casting the spell.

3) Roll a die and add your Technique + Form + Int. If you are exerting yourself, divide the total by 2. If you are not exerting yourself, divide the total by 5. The result is the Level of the spell. The storyguide determines the actual effect based on this Level.

4) If you exerted yourself, lose one fatigue level.

- If the effect must be aimed (storyguide's discretion), see the Targeting section.

- If the target has magic resistance, see the section on Magic Resistance.

Spontaneous spells are rarely effective outside of a magus's specialties in the arts, and even then only minor effects are typical. So don't try to do too much with spontaneous magic; it is weak for beginning magi.

Targeting (p. 65)

Some spells must be aimed to strike a target. For each of these spells you have a **Targeting total**. (Spells without Targeting totals need not be aimed.) To see whether you hit your target, roll a die and add your Targeting total. If the roll matches an ease factor set by the storyguide (based on the difficulty of the aiming), you have struck the target.

For Example: The storyguide rules that Kyndrek needs an 8 to hit with his *Piercing Shaft of Wood*. He rolls a 2 + 5 (his Targeting total) for a total of 7, so he just misses his target.

Magic Resistance (p. 66)

Magical creatures can sometimes resist the effects of your spell. To affect a creature with magic resistance, your Penetration roll must exceed the target's magic resistance roll. Your Penetration total equals the roll you made to cast the spell plus your Penetration talent.

You have magic resistance as well. Each magus has a skill in creating a magical defense called a *parma magica*. At dawn and dusk you perform a ritual and then you are protected until the sun sets or rises, whichever comes next. As long as you are under a *parma magica*'s protection, you get a bonus on your magic resistance of 5 times your *Parma Magica* score.

The Dominion (p. 72)

Your magic is affected by the nature of the surroundings. When you are in holy areas, or even an area inhabited by the faithful, such as in the village of Northfield, you receive a penalty on your magic rolls. In wilderness areas you receive no penalty, and in Mistridge you even get a +3 bonus on all spells because of the magical aura of the place.

Magical Affinities (p. 24)

Your magus has specialties in magic, represented by affinities that appear on the character sheet as abilities. You can add your score in an affinity to rolls involving the kind of magic specified. Lucienne's score of 4 in Affinity: Muto gives her +4 with Muto spells. Kyndrek gets a +3 bonus with Herbam magic because of his affinity. (These bonuses are figured into your casting bonuses.)

Name LYSANDRA
 Player CONVENTION
 Covenant MISTRIDGE

Age 28
 Year Born 1168
 Current Year 1196
 Decrepitude 0

Gender ♀
 Size 0
 Confidence 3
 Current Cnt 3

Intelligence +3 Strength 0 Presence +2 Dexterity +1
 Perception 0 Stamina 0 Communication +3 Quickness +1

Abilities PROVINCIAL Score Exp

Speak Own language (4) 4
 Speak Latin (5) 5
 Scribe Latin (3) 3
 Magic Theory (5) 5
 Hermes Lore (2) 2 POLITICS
 Hermes History (2) 2 HOUSES
 Parma Magica (2) 2

Finesse: PRECISION 3
 Craftsmen: MUTO 2
 Concentration: EXTENDED 2
 LEADERSHIP: 1
MAGICAL BEINGS
 Dodge 3
VS. SURPRISE ATK

ATHLETICS: SPRINT 2
OCULT LORE: 2
FANTASTIC BEASTS
LEGEND LORE: 1
BEASTS
GUILE: 1
BRIDE

Magic Arts

Techniques	Forms
Creo <u>1</u>	Animal <u>4</u>
Intéllego <u>1</u>	Aquam <u>0</u>
Muto <u>8</u>	Auram <u>6</u>
Perdo <u>0</u>	Córporeum <u>1</u>
Rego <u>4</u>	Herbam <u>0</u>
	Ignem <u>3</u>
	Imágonem <u>0</u>
	Mentem <u>10</u>
	Terram <u>0</u>
	Vim <u>1</u>

Virtues & Flaws

SUPERIOR INT
 AFFINITY W/ FANTASTIC BEASTS
 LOOSE MAGIC
 RESTRICTION: -2 DURING THUNDER
 AND LIGHTENING

Personality Traits

Brave +1
LEADER +1
BOLD +2

Reputation Location Score

Reputation	Location	Score

Defense

Parry 5+
 w/ 5+
 (Skill + Parry Bonus - Size)
 Dodge: 5+
 (Skill + Qik - Enc - Size)

Armor

Type QUILTED Cuirass
 Protection 1
 Load .5

Weapon

Weapon	Isu/Rate	Ath	Dam

Body Levels

Soak Total:	Fatigue Total:
<u>1+</u>	<u>0</u>
Unhurt	Fresh
Hurt	Winded
Light Wounds	Wary
Medium Wounds	Tired
Heavy Wounds	Dazed
Incapacitated	Unconscious

Fatigue Levels

Equipment

Load .5 (Str 0) Enc 0

Lysandra

Description: A tall, thin young woman with long black hair -- a streak of red running down its left side. Her gaunt face of white skin contrasts sharply with her deep purple robes. She also wears a heavy bronze chain necklace with a green stone cut in the shape of an eye, hanging from it.

Lysandra is a very bright, cunning, and ambitious magus. Newly released from apprenticeship at a distant covenant she only recently joined Mistridge and seeks to quickly make her mark upon the world. Yet she is not entirely immersed in herself. Lysandra has a deep affection for those she affectionately calls the mortals, and still has fond memories of her years before she understood or could use the art of Magic. It is not unusual for her to profess an envy for the Mortals, "You lead such simply lives, I envy you for it," though in truth she would never give up her powers.

Lysandra is normally accompanied by her large calico cat -- "Portin", who is magical and thus not frightened by magical beings. Possibly her friend Lady Esclamonde will carry him about, when she does not. She hopes to make him into her familiar someday.

Above all else Lysandra enjoys people and their funny little ways. She is normally very tolerant of her followers and lets them say and do pretty much as they please -- and is not shy of expressing her amusement for their antics. However, when the time comes, she will demand that they do her bidding and will tolerate no degree of noncompliance. Her transformation from benevolent tolerance to demanding autocrat sometimes startles people, especially young grogs who grow used to a tolerant and friendly magus. Lysandra describes herself as someone who simply knows what she wants and who usually gets it. And she wants many things: knowledge, magical power, understanding of the human mind, and a long, full life.

Role-playing tips: Keep a stern, no-nonsense expression on your face. Your demeanor and posture should be stiff and formal. You are easily amused however, and when you are a broad smile lights up your face.

Lysandra's Grimoire

Spells--

Transformation of the Ravenous Beast to the Torpid Toad: Lvl 20

Near, Sun/Perm Muto Animál, your bonus is +12

Turns any animal into a toad, unless the animal can make a Size roll of 9+. Birds are so dissimilar to toads that they get a +2 bonus on the roll.

Circling Winds of Protection: Lvl 20

Reach, Spec. Rego Auxam, your bonus is +10

This spell surrounds you with winds that circle you at great speed. Since the wind picks up dust, you may be obscured. Anyone standing near enough to you to attack you with a hand weapon must make a Size roll of 9+ at the beginning of each round or be blown away. Melee attacks against you are at -2 Atk, and missile or thrown weapon attacks are at -10. The winds continue for five rounds after you end concentration.

Wreaths of Foul Smoke: Lvl 15

Near, Inst. Crea Auxam, your bonus is +7

Thick, yellow, sulphuric smelling smoke rises up from the spot you designate, filling a circular area nine paces across. It blocks sight and makes it difficult to breathe. Anyone breathing the smoke must make a Str roll of 9+ each round. Each failed roll indicates the loss of a fatigue level. Once a character is unconscious, further levels lost will be body levels. The smoke dissipates naturally.

Talons of the Winds: Lvl 20

Near, Inst Muto Auxam, your bonus is +14

A wind is transformed into an abrasive medium that tears and claws at everything in its path. It will be up to twenty paces wide and will blow through forty paces before ending. Soft materials like leaves and cloth are shredded, and people take +5 damage from innumerable bloody cuts and abrasions. Not surprisingly this spell has a certain demoralizing effect on its victims.

Homet Fire: Lvl 15

Near, Conc. Muto Ignem, your bonus is +9

Turns a fire into a swarm of fireballs, each the size of a large insect. They fly and harass at your command. The burning touch of the balls gives all those you target within 7 paces of the fire a -2 penalty on all rolls and two extra botch rolls.

Coerce the Spirits of the Night: Lvl 25

Near, Conc. Rego Mentem, your bonus is +14

Makes a ghost obey you as long as you can coerce it with threats, such as defiling its grave or banishing it to Hell. The more lurid and dramatic the threat, the more cooperative the ghost will be. (Little need the ghost know that your threats are empty.) For each demand you make, the ghost can break free if it rolls the

spell's Level or better on die + Mystic Points.

Unseen Arm: Lvl 5

Near, Conc. Rego Terram, your bonus is +4

Moves non-living things slowly; cannot oppose intentional resistance. Magi use this spell to manipulate things at a distance, but it cannot be used to pull something from someone's hand or to move something that is held. It can only move light things, like book pages, instruments, a small pouch of coins, etc. Casting requisites: appropriate form for the target.

Confusion of the Numbd Will: Lvl 15

Near, Moon Rego Mentem, your bonus is +14

Confuses a person. If the character decides to take any action, the player must make an Int roll. A roll of 13+ ends the spell. A roll of 8+ lets the character take the intended action, but the spell remains in effect. Any lower roll means the character is confused and takes some other type of action. While under this a character always strikes last and gets at least a -1 on all

Emotion of Reversed Intentions: Lvl 25

Eye, Sun/Moon Muto Mentem, your bonus is +18

The main emotion influencing a character at the time of the casting is replaced by its opposite over the next minute. The new emotion is felt as strongly as the original one was, but it lacks justification. Therefore, the reversed emotion can be talked out of someone. The target can resist with an Int roll of 8+.

Terms

Near: within fifteen paces (yards)

Eye: eye contact, once you establish eye contact, even momentarily, you can hold it while casting your spell, and the target cannot look away until the spell is cast. Normally eye contact is almost automatic if your target is within ten paces; and someone who is avoiding eye contact at all costs can do so. Those who avert their eyes but still look in your direction, must make Int roll to avoid contact.

Reach: within two paces.

Sun: spell lasts until sunrise or sunset, and then ends.

Moon: lasts until both the new moon and full moon have come.

Concentration: This spell lasts as long as you concentrate on it. When distracted or when you attempt to do something else in addition to concentrating you must make concentration roll to maintain the spell.

Name DURGRUND Age 32 Gender 0
 Player CONVENTION Year Born 1164 Size 0
 Covenant MISTRIDGE Current Year 1196 Confidence 7
 Decrepitude 0 Current Cnt 7

Intelligence <u>3</u>	Strength <u>-2</u>	Presence <u>0</u>	Dexterity <u>3</u>
Perception <u>3</u>	Stamina <u>-1</u>	Communication <u>0</u>	Quickness <u>2</u>

Abilities PROVINCIAL Score Exp

Speak Own language (4)	<u>4</u>	Finesse: HERBAM	<u>5</u>	ATHLETICS:	<u>2</u>
Speak Latin (5): TITLES	<u>5</u>	Certamen	<u>0</u>	SPRINT	
Scribe Latin (3): DOCUMENT	<u>3</u>	Concentration: IGNORE PAIN	<u>3</u>	SURVIVAL:	<u>2</u>
Magic Theory (5): TOMES	<u>5</u>	SEARCH:	<u>3</u>	WOODLAND	
Hermes Lore (2): POLITICS	<u>2</u>	IN THE DARK		FOLK KEN:	<u>-3</u>
Hermes History (2): SPELLS	<u>2</u>	ANIMAL KEN:	<u>1</u>	CLERGY	
Parma Magica (2): REGO		FALCONS			

Magic Arts		
Techniques	Forms	
Creo <u>3</u>	Animál <u>6</u>	Ignem <u>0</u>
Intéllego <u>3</u>	Aquam <u>0</u>	Imágonem <u>0</u>
Muto <u>4</u>	Auram <u>0</u>	Mentem <u>1</u>
Perdo <u>0</u>	Córporem <u>1</u>	Terram <u>3</u>
Rego <u>6</u>	Herbam <u>12</u>	Vim <u>1</u>

Virtues & Flaws

SELF-CONFIDENT
 KNACK W/ANIMALS
 RESTRICTION (-2) FOR EACH PAIR
 OF EYES ON HIM.

Personality Traits	
Brave <u>+1</u>	
CONFUSED <u>+2</u>	

Reputation	Location	Score

Defense Parry ☐
 w/ (Skill + Parry Bonus - Size)
 Dodge: ☐
 (Skill + Qik - Enc - Size)

Armor Type FUR HAUBERK
 Protection 3
 Load 1.5

Weapon	1st/ Rate	Atk	Dam

Body Levels		Fatigue Levels	
Soak Total: <u>2+</u>		Fatigue Total: <u>-2</u>	
Unhurt	☒	Fresh	☒
Hurt	☐	Winded	☐
Light Wounds	☐	Wearry	☐
Medium Wounds	☐	Tired	☐
Heavy Wounds	☐	Dazed	☐
Incapacitated	☐	Unconscious	☐

Equipment Load 1.5 (Str -2) Enc 0

Durgrund

Description: A young man with black curly hair, which is completely in tangles and unkempt. He has long sideburns, but the rest of his facial hair hasn't grown yet. His green eyes stand out, as do his delicate hands. He frequently wears a glum expression.

Durgrund is a darkly ambitious magi. He is determined to succeed in the world of wizards no matter what it takes, but he would prefer to make it without hurting others very much. Durgrund is tough minded and will not back down to others, on this mission especially he is out to prove that he is truly a wizard of power.

If someone tries to force Durgrund to do something, he will react as strongly as necessary to show that he will not be intimidated. However, if he is treated in a polite, above board manner, he can be very pleasant and gracious, an amicable man to deal with. His friends never try to tell him what to do.

As an apprentice, Durgrund was sorely abused by his master, in subtle but devastating ways that he never speaks about. Eventually becoming fed up with this treatment, Durgrund petitioned to the covenant council to free him from his sworn bonds to his master, regardless of the possibility that such an action could cancel his future magical studies. He was released and in recognition of his grim courage another wizard took him on as a second apprentice.

The first apprentice was not pleased about this, he was receiving less time with the master that he was used to, and eventually he and Durgrund eventually came into open conflict. The outcome of this fight is not known at Mistrige, Durgrund comes from northern France, so no one knows much about him. (Make sure you brief the other characters about what they know of your past -- make up yourself anything we do not provide.)

Durgrund has been deeply affected by his past, though it is not readily apparent in his personality. He shies away from human contact, and dislikes being around people in general; he simply doesn't understand them (thus the negative score in Folk ken). Although he shuns involvement in other peoples matters, he can become easily angered if he watches someone abuse or manipulate someone else.

Role-playing tips- Always look glum, never let your emotions express themselves on your face -- you demonstrate them in different ways than other people. Be kind to other people in a deadpanned manner, under-emphasizing most things.

Durgrund's Grimoire

Spells

Converse with Plants and Trees: Lv 25

Reach, Conc. Intéllego Herbam, your bonus is +14
You can speak with plants for one conversation. The level of the conversation depends on the type of plants: longer-lived and more "noble" plants will have more to say. A single question and response will take ten to thirty minutes, with slower growing plants speaking more slowly. Typically plants will be able to talk about the soil and the other plants around them, but will have limited awareness of more rapid events, such as the passing of animals or people. Onlookers cannot understand your conversation.

Fiercing Shaft of Wood: Lv 20

Touch, Inst, Aimed +2 Muto Herbam, your bonus is +15
Turns a piece of wood into a sleek, barbed, strong shaft that then flies through the air at a target. Damage depends on the size of item from which the shaft is formed: Staff (upper size limit) +20, two-foot branch +15, wand +10. If it pierces a body, removing the shaft causes the target to lose another body level unless a Str roll of 7+ is made add Chirurgy score of the one who removes the shaft).

Thaumaturgical Transformation of Plants to Iron: Lv 20

Reach, Sun, Year, Terram Muto Herbam, your bonus is +15
Makes any plant, dead or alive, as hard as iron. Affects any amount of continuous plant material up to the size of an entire tree or a small glade of grass. Sharp-edged plants can become deadly when this hard.

Tangle of Wood and Thorns: Lv 15

Near, Spec, Aimed +1 Rego Herbam, your bonus is +17
Hurls a length of wood that you hold at a target (targeting roll is required). The wood wraps around and immobilizes the target, who must make a Str roll of 10+ to break free (one attempt per round). If the length of wood has thorns, it does +6 damage when it hits and each time the target tries to break free.

Wall of Thorns: Lv 20

Near, Sun/Inst. Creo Herbam, your bonus is +14
Creates a straight wall of woody, thorny bushes up to twenty paces across, one pace thick, and four paces high. To hack through the thorns, which are unnaturally resilient, requires beating 15 on a damage roll 4 times with an edged weapon. Forcing one's way through bodily requires a Str roll of 9+ and does +15 damage regardless of the attempt's success. The wall grows out of existing bushes or fertile soil. A Climb roll of 9+ allows a character to scale the wall, but the character takes +10 damage in the process.

Soothe the Ferocious Boar: Lv 10

Near, Inst. Rego Animál, your bonus is +10
Calms an animal until it is threatened or aroused again. You must speak soothingly or musically to it.

Viper's Gaze: Lv 15

Eye, Spec. Rego Animál, your bonus is +13
Holds an animal rigid as long as you can maintain eye contact and concentration.

Earth's Canardie: Lv 15

Near, Inst, Muto, Aimed +1 Rego Terram, your bonus is +8
Turns the ground just underneath the surface into jagged rocks which suddenly push their way to the surface, causing the ground to swell suddenly in a circle one pace across. The bulge bursts, spewing rocks up into the air. Anyone standing on the circle is knocked into the air and then hit with the rocks, and partially buried once they have landed. Damage is +10. Must be aimed to hit a specific person.

Repel the Wooden Shafts: Lv 10.

Near, Conc. Rego Herbam, your bonus is +17
Deflects the blow of any weapon made of wood, up to the size of a two-handed club. You can deflect a different weapon each round. The weapons automatically miss, but attackers must still roll to see if they botch (with two extra botch rolls for melee weapons).

Terms

Near: within fifteen paces (yards)

Reach: within two paces.

Sun: spell lasts until sunrise or sunset, and then ends.

Moon: lasts until both the new moon and full moon have come.

Concentration: This spell lasts as long as you concentrate on it. When distracted or when you attempt to do something else in addition to concentrating you must make concentration roll to maintain the spell.

Self: Affects only you and your accouterments (clothing etc...)

Companion

Ars Magica

Name BIANCO

Age 26

Gender M

Player _____

Year Born 1170

Size +1

Covenant MISTRIDGE

Current Year 1196

Confidence 2

Decrepitude 0

Current Cnf 2

Intelligence +2

Strength +2

Presence -4

Dexterity +2

Perception +1

Stamina +2

Communication -3

Quickness +1

Abilities

SPANISH

Score Exp

Speak Own Language (S) 5

SPK PROVINCIAL 3

CURSES 2

BASTARD SWORD ATK 2

WILD MELEE 4

DAGGER (RH) 4

"HAMBONE" 4

DAGGER (LH) 4

"HAMBONE" 2

SUBTERRUG 2

INTIMIDATE 4

LEGGERDEMAIN 4

PICK POCKETS 4

STEALTH 3

SNEAK 3

DODGE 3

VS. THRUSTING ATKS 1

ATHLETICS 1

GRACE 1

CLIMB 1

UNEVEN SURFACES 1

Virtues & Flaws

LARGE

KNACK W/ DAGGERS

CURSE: CAN ONLY EAT

LIVE OR RAW MEAT

FLAW: DARK SECRET,

HIS EATING HABITS

Personality Traits

Brave 0

Loyal +1

COWARDLY +1

Reputation

Location Score

0

0

0

Defense

Parry 0
w/ 0
(Skill + Parry Bonus - Size)

Dodge 1+
(Skill + Qik - Enc - Size)

Armor

Type FULL HARD LEATHER

Protection 6+

Load 2.5

Weapon

1st/
Rate

Atb

Dam

BASTARD SWORD (2H) 6+ 10+ 13+

DAGGER (2H) 5+ 10+ 7+

DAGGER (LH) 5+ 8+ 7+

Equipment

Load 3 (Str 1) Enc 2

Body Levels

Fatigue Levels

Soak Total: 7+

Fatigue Total: 0

Unhurt	☒			☒	Fresh
Hurt		0	0		Winded
Light Wounds		-1	-1		Wary
Medium Wounds		-3	-3		Tired
Heavy Wounds		-5	-5		Dazed
Incapacitated					Unconscious

Blanco

Description: A huge man, with a morass of carbuncles (pimples) and other scars all over his fleshy face. The greatness of his bulk is exceeded only by the depth of his ugliness. It is very difficult to look at him for long. His manners, however, are even more gross than his looks.

You've been at Mistridge only one year. As a cutpurse from a southern land (Spain) and of darker blood (Moorish) than the locals, you were caught stealing from a wizard shortly after your arrival in France. As punishment you have been forced to serve the magi for seven years. You have been told that you will die if you dare to leave before that time has passed. You believe that threat explicitly; these wizards are more powerful than you ever imagined a person could be. Besides, they still pay you and no one can harm you as long as you are with them no matter what you do to them. You can do just about anything you want. All you got to watch out for is to make sure the magi don't find out everything.

Your large size, and daunting bulk have made you an imposing, menacing figure among the grogs. They all fear you and some of them don't take well to some of your disgusting personal habits: you don't like to bathe, you spit in your ale, and you pop your pimples in public. This, combined with some rather ugly misunderstandings, lead to more than a bit of conflict -- but that's nothing new. It's not their job to like you, only to leave you alone, and the magi make sure they do that.

To be honest, the main reason you're still with the magi is a practical one: society doesn't like folk who only eat living creatures. Ever since you stole the statue of a satyr from the witch living high in Pyrenees you have felt an overpowering urge to eat raw meat. Normal food disgusts you. You can only eat living or raw things (preferably the former), and people shun you for it. You have hidden your eating habits from the folk at Mistridge, and no one yet knows of it.

You are bad tempered when you get up in the morning and when you're hungry. You find great pleasure in scaring small children and while you are good at taking orders, you need to have some respect (fear) for those who give them. You never let anyone but the leaders push you around, and you miss no opportunity to get on the good side of those with power.

You are also an opportunist and will steal given the slightest opportunity, but you are careful about this when it comes to things the magi consider theirs.

Role-playing tips: Practice sneers and frowns. Use your negative presence as if it were a good thing, reveal your ugliness, and try to speak with an slur. Play out your flipant, uncaring attitude about thing, and be as selfish as you can be.

Name LADY ESCLARMONDEAge 31Gender ♀

Player _____

Year Born 1165Size 0Covenant MISTRIDGECurrent Year 1196Confidence 4Decrepitude 0

Current Cnf _____

Intelligence +2Strength 0Presence +2Dexterity -2Perception -1Stamina 0Communication +2Quickness -1Abilities PROVENÇAL Score ExpSpeak Own language (5) 5VALDJ 4+PoliticsDiplomacy: 2GIACETTACHARISMA: 1PoliticsCHARM: 1st IMPRESSIONS 3INTRIGUE: 2ALLIANCESFOLK KNOWLEDGE: 4EVALUATE HORSES: 1BLOODLINESRide Horse: 2

PERFORMANCE

CHURCH KNOWLEDGE: 3

DOCTRINE

SCRIBE LATIN: 2

FANCY SCRIPT

SPEAK LATIN: 3

POLITICAL PHRASES

LEADERSHIP: 2

ENGENDERING LOYALTY

PLAY HARP: 2

CEREMONIAL MUSIC

SING: Solo 1

Virtues & Flaws

SELF CONFIDENT

GOOD INT

WEALTH

EDUCATED

NONCOMBATANT

OATH OF FEALTY

FEAR OF FORESTS

OVER CONFIDENT

Personality Traits

Brave +2Loyal +1

Reputation

Location

Score

Defense

Parry

w/ _____

(Skill + Parry Bonus - Size)

Dodge

(Skill + Qik - Enc - Size)

Armor

Type None

Protection

Load

Weapon

1st/
Rate

Atk

Dam

Body Levels

Fatigue Levels

Soak Total: 0+Fatigue Total: 0+

Unhurt

Hurt

Light Wounds

Medium Wounds

Heavy Wounds

Incapacitated

Fresh

Winded

Weary

Tired

Dazed

Unconscious

Equipment

Load 0 (Str 0) Enc 0

Lady Esclarmonde

Description: A full bodied, matronly woman who dresses in expensive green and blue gowns with robes that are lined with ermine fur. Her hair is brownish blond, and she has gentle blue eyes. When she moves, she moves with energy and directness of purpose, and strikes a regal figure.

Lady Esclarmonde is the widowed wife of the wealthy landed knight Sir Esclarmonde. She has refused to get remarried, much to the outrage of the Baron who has tried to arrange several matches with some of his favored vassals. Now her son manages the fief just to the north of Val du Bosque, and provides her with a handsome monthly allowance. (People rarely try to oppose her, it is not healthy) For the last few years, Lady Esclarmonde has been a pilgrim wandering through Europe, and has spent long periods of time in different abbeys and convents.

A year ago she met the wizard Lysandra at a local fair, and they struck up a friendship. Now she spends much of her time at the covenant of Mistridge, for she is fascinated by the magical powers and the wisdom of the wizards and enjoys the social liberties she is given. However, the outside society has not yet learned of her dealings with the wizards and she actively avoids thinking about what will likely happen when they do.

Above all else, Lady Esclarmonde insists upon independence. She is bossy and imperious and will not tolerate being dominated by men. Because of her status she is used to being deferred too, and because of her will and presence she is used to getting her way. When she decided on something she is nearly always sure that she is right, not matter what, for in her experience she has never been proved wrong. She is serenely and completely self confident.

She rides about upon her roan colored, ribbon bedecked pony, which she has named "Sweet Ale" (her old nickname for her husband) and has recently sent her two servants home to the manor, as they found it difficult to live among wizards. Though she is unstintingly fair and just, she is somewhat demanding of the service of the grogs, and enjoys whatever small comforts she can obtain. The wizards allow her these faults because of her broad knowledge and wisdom, her ability to deal with the locals, and because they too are a little awed by her. You are in short: a are a good woman, an upholder of justice, and a seeker of truth.

Roleplaying tips: Ham up the noble lady act. Be pompous and arrogant but don't go too far. Push and then stop for a while and then push again, push till you get your way (after all, your way is best). While you play her keep your chin up and eyebrows arched, and fold your hands across your lap. Above all else, be proper.

Companion

Ars Magica

Name RaymondAge 42Gender M

Player _____

Year Born 1154Size 0Covenant MISTRIDGECurrent Year 1196Confidence 2Decrepitude 0Current Cnf 2Intelligence +2Strength +7Presence -1Dexterity -1Perception +1Stamina +3Communication -2Quickness -1

Abilities

Provoked Score Exp

Speak Own Language (SI) 5LEADERSHIP: 5

NEW RECRUITS

BASTARD SWORD ATK: 6

FORMATION FIGHTING

DAGGER SNEAK ATK 2KNIGHT SHIELD: 4

VS. BRIGGS

THROWING AXE: 3

MOVING TARGET

BRAWL IMMOBILIZE 4DODGE: 3

VS. UNARMED ATK

FALKEN: 2

PEASANTS

STEALTH: 3

SNEAK

SURVIVAL: 2

MOUNTAIN

GUILE: 2

BRIBE

DRINKING: 2

REMAINING CLEAR HEAD

DIPLOMACY: 1

COURTLY GRACE

Virtues & Flaws

Common Sense

Strong Willed

Simple minded

Missing LFT 646

Personality Traits

Brave +3 DISLOYAL -3Loyal +1RELIABLE +3

Reputation

Location Score

Defense

Parry

w/ SHIELD: 8+

(Skill + Parry Bonus - Size)

Dodge: 0+

(Skill + Qik - Enc - Size)

Armor

Type FULL RINGProtection 8Load 4

Weapon

1st/Rate Atk Dam

BASTARD SWORD (1H) 7+ 8+ 19+DAGGER 0+ 5+ 8+THROWING AXE -4 2+ 6+

Equipment

Load 6 (Str 4 Enc 2)

Body Levels

Fatigue Levels

Soak Total: 1+Fatigue Total: 12+

Unhurt

Hurt

Light Wounds

Medium Wounds

Heavy Wounds

Incapacitated

0

-1

-3

-5

0

-1

-3

-5

Fresh

Winded

Weary

Tired

Dazed

Unconscious

Raymond

Description: A large, stocky man, with rapidly graying hair and a craggy face. He has large green eyes that lurk under his bushy eyebrows.

Raymond has been a warrior at Mistridge ever since he left the service of Sir Montpalier, a knight errant, seventeen years ago. He was the son of knight sergeant, and grew up at Montpalier castle. His earliest years were spent as a knight sergeant like his father.

Then, when he was only 25, he was suddenly brought in to see members of the inquisition, after his lover was accused of being a witch by a jealous rival. In the resulting torture he lost an eye as well as his loved one. When it was all over he decided to find those whom they had tried to force him to admit he was himself, and so he came to Mistridge.

Today he's not sure it was a wise decision, but he doesn't think about it much, he's too busy doing his job. As one of the older grogs he's a leader and besides Torlen (the sergeant) he's the most capable, leading by example, with honesty and cunning.

In recent years, however, he has become more reticent than he used to be, and more uncommunicative. Raymond has lost some of his zest for life, the warrior life ill suits him

Because of his reliability, Raymond has the trust of Lysandra, a wizard. He will not hesitate to obey her orders. If she is about to do something which may endanger herself, Raymond will do whatever he can to protect her, though he will not necessarily sacrifice himself. He is normally found at her side, as a bodyguard.

His personally style of leadership is to carry out the wizards orders as efficiently and as unobtrusively as possible. Raymond is a shrewd judge of human character and works hard to know those who he will risk his life with. He distrusts Blanco, knowing the large rogue is trying to hide something. The Lady Escalamorte doesn't understand discipline, her arrogance must be curbed before she endangers to party. Braeble is a good lad and may become a great warrior someday, but he is trying too hard and doesn't have enough self restraint. Garian the forester has a chip on his shoulder, but for some reason seems to listen to what you say. Danilo the shield grog, is a little too tricky a person for to be completely likeable, and you don't trust him, though he seems to serve Durgrund loyally.

Role-playing tips: Scowl at those who do something you disapprove of, and grunt or yell at them if they keep doing it. You don't talk all that much, so you mostly lead through example. However there is a certain dignity about you as well as a certain sense of tragedy -- play that out.

Name GARIANAge 19Gender 0Covenant MISTRIDGEYear Born 1177Size 0Current Year 1196Confidence 1Decrepitude 0Current Cnf 1Intelligence 0Strength +2Presence -1Dexterity 0Perception 0Stamina +2Communication +1Quickness -1

Abilities

PROVINCIAL	Score	Exp
Speak Own language (4)	<u>4</u>	
Brawl (1)	<u>1</u>	
SURVIVAL:	<u>2</u>	
WOODLAND		
Folk Ken:	<u>3</u>	
Peasants		
Guile: Lie	<u>1</u>	
STEALTH: Hide	<u>2</u>	

SUBTLE: <u>2</u>	
INTIMIDATE	
RURAL Lore: Farming	<u>1</u>
Animal Ken: Wolves	<u>1</u>
TRAC: WOODLAND	<u>2</u>
BROADSWORD: Wild Man	<u>3</u>
Round Shields	<u>2</u>
VS. 2 or more opp.	

Virtue & Flaw

GOOD COMMUNICATION

HATRED TOWARD THE
NOBILITY WHO LOOTED YOUR
VILLAGE

Personality Traits

Brave	<u>+1</u>	Compassionate	<u>-2</u>
Loyal	<u>-1</u>	Disloyal	<u>-3</u>
Reliable	<u>+2</u>		

Reputation

Location Score

Defense

Parry
w/ SHIELD: 5+
(Skill + Parry Bonus - Size)Dodge: ☐
(Skill + Qik - Enc - Size)

Armor

Type HEAVY LEATHER HAUBERKProtection 5+ Load 2.5

Weapon

1st/

Rate

Atk

Dam

BROADSWORD	<u>4+</u>	<u>7+</u>	<u>11+</u>

Body Levels

Fatigue Levels

Soak Total: 1+Fatigue Total: 7+

Unhurt	☒		☒	Fresh
Hurt		0	0	Winded
Light Wounds		-1	-1	Wearied
Medium Wounds		-3	-3	Tired
Heavy Wounds		-5	-5	Dazed
Incapacitated				Unconscious

Equipment

Load 3.5 (Str 2) Enc +11st = Speed + Skill + Qik - Enc
Atk = Attack Bonus + Skill + Dex -
Dam = Damage Bonus + Skill + StrSoak = Protection + Strm + Size
Fatigue = Strm - Enc

Garian

Description: A short, compact little man, who is always wearing a friendly, lopsided grin.

Garian is a farm boy, born and raised as a hard working man, and fully expecting to marry and raise children. Your beloved father was a famous poacher and as a boy you often went with him into the forest. Then, when you were fifteen, your village was looted and burned during a war among the nobility while you were in the forest and you were left to fend for yourself in the world.

For a while you would do anything to stay alive. But life in the forest is hard, and lonely, and slowly your will to live decreased. The one day you met a party of grogs and after speaking with them, you decided to return with them to their home -- to the covenant of Mistridge.

For two years you have been at Mistridge, and you love it here. You are allowed to do pretty much as you please (at least when not working), and you get plenty of food. They order you around too much, and you have to pretend you are more loyal than you really are. The wizards seem to trust you, even though you really don't trust them.

Garian has gotten a bit lazy as of late, and has become a drinker of sorts. You have grown to time your day by how long it will be until you can have your first cup of wine.

In general you doesn't trust anyone unless you somehow have the upper hand over them. To the magi you are a little less loyal; you serves them as long as they serve your needs and desires. If the going gets a little too tough you might try to find your own way out of the mess -- if a way out is still available.

Garian is fierce in battle when the time comes, but at first you are loath to get into a fight. You don't think much of Braeble, he strikes you as a coward, but you nope for the best. You don't like Danio, and are always arguing with him. He's the loyal little lap dog of the magi, and doesn't see how they use him.

Role-playing tips: Play a tough, no-nonsense kind of guy who has seen it all and has lived through it all. Make fun of the others whenever they make mistakes, especially the magi (but only among the grogs).

Grog Ars Magic

Name Braeble
Covenant Mistrudge

Age 16
Year Born 1180
Current Year 1196
Decrepitude 0

Gender 0
Size 0
Confidence 1
Current Cnf 1

Intelligence +1 Strength +3 Presence 0 Dexterity +2
Perception 0 Stamina +2 Communication 0 Quickness +2

Abilities

Speak Own Language (4) 4
Brawl (1): PUNCHING 2
BATTLE AXE/ANK: 5
WILD MLEE 5
SHORT SWORD: 3
FORMATION FIGHTING 3
ARE PARRY: 1
VS. SLASHING WEAPONS 1

CRAFT: DOG HANDLING: 1
TRAINED ATK 1
ATHLETICS: 1
SPRINT 1
CRAFT: BLACKSMITHING: 1
SWORDMAKING 1

Virtue & Flaw

ENDURING CONSTITUTION

BAD REPUTATION

Personality Traits

Brave +2 COWARDLY +2
Loyal +1
Reliable -1

Reputation Location Score

INEXPERIENCED 1
MIST 1

Defense

Parry w/ AXE 3+ Dodge 0
(Skill + Parry Bonus - Size) (Skill + Qik - Enc - Size)

Armor

Type FULL CHAIN
Protection 24 Load 6

Weapon

Weapon	1st/Rate	Atk	Dam
BATTLE AXE (2H)	5+	9+	19+
SHORT SWORD	1+	9+	10+

Equipment

Load 9.5 (Str 3) Enc 6

Body Levels

Soak Total: 16+
Unhurt 0
Hurt 0
Light Wounds -1
Medium Wounds -3
Heavy Wounds -5
Incapacitated 0

Fatigue Levels

Fatigue Total: -14
Fresh 0
Winded 0
Weary -1
Tired -3
Dazed -5
Unconscious 0

1st = Speed + Skill + Qik - Enc
Atk = Attack Bonus + Skill + Dex
Dam = Damage Bonus + Skill + Str

Soak = Protection + Str + Size
Fatigue = Str - Enc

Braeble

Description: A tall, strongly built black haired boy, nearly a man. A pleasant grin is usually found on his round face and he carries an indolent demeanor about him.

You have not had much battle experience, in fact you've had none at all. For the past four years you have been training with your weapons for hours every day, but this mission is the first chance you've ever had to test the skills you've worked so hard to learn. During this story you are very nervous; you have no idea how you will react when you first comes face to face with someone who seriously means to harm you. On one hand you are sure you will fight bravely, on the other you are scared that some deep part of you will crawl out and cause you to run away. You is more fearful of being scared than you are of being wounded or dying.

Being so nervous is unusual for you, usually you are carefree and easy going, folk at the covenant know you to be friendly and cheerful. You impetuous disposition and quick wit can sometimes get you into trouble however. You are very conscientious about obeying orders and protecting the magi. You are especially proud of working with the wizards and have a dislike of nobility, who you feel abuse the serfs. As a young boy you ran away from a very poor home of serf farmers, who were being extorted and overworked by a mean spirited lord named Sir William.

You like Durgrund the Magus a great deal. He stands up for himself and you've never seen him back down to someone else. If you were a wizard you'd be tough like he is. The wizard Lysandra strikes you as a real nice and friendly woman, you don't even have to watch what you say around her, she is so nice. Raymond is bravest person you know, and a good, honest leader. You trust and respect him. You desperately want to prove yourself to the other grogs, for neither of them are your friends and they will report back to the other grogs exactly how well or how poorly you performed on this mission. If they come back and say bad things about you, life won't be worth living. You just know that on this expedition they will be the cold blooded angels watching over you, waiting to report back your sins.

Roleplaying tips: You are very physical person and still have the rambunctious nature and the energy of youth. Be active as you roleplay, but don't wave your arms about, remember, for you carry weapons and you must always have them at the ready -- no matter how quiet the situation might seem. Who knows when you'll get the chance to prove yourself.

Grog

Name DANLO
Covenant MISTBRIDGE

Age 21
Year Born 1175
Current Year 1196
Decrepitude 0

Gender ♂
Size 0
Confidence 1
Current Cnf 1

Intelligence <u>0</u>	Strength <u>0</u>	Presence <u>-3</u>	Dexterity <u>0</u>
Perception <u>+1</u>	Stamina <u>-1</u>	Communication <u>-2</u>	Quickness <u>0</u>

Abilities

Ability	Score	Exp
Speak Own language (4)	<u>4</u>	
Brawl (1): <u>DIRTY</u>	<u>1</u>	
CHIRURGY: <u>BINDING</u>	<u>4</u>	
CROSSBOW:	<u>2</u>	
<u>MOVING TARGETS</u>		
KNIGHT SHIELD:	<u>2</u>	
<u>CLOSE COMBAT</u>		
ALERTNESS: <u>TRAPS</u>	<u>2</u>	

Virtue & Flaw

CLEAR THINKER
DRIVING GOAL TO BECOME
GROG SARGENT

Personality Traits

Brave	<u>0</u>	<u>COWARDLY</u>	<u>+2</u>
Loyal	<u>+2</u>	<u>IMPULSIVE</u>	<u>+3</u>
Reliable	<u>+1</u>		

Reputation

Location	Score

Defense

Parry w/ SHIELD 7+ Dodge: 0
(Skill + Parry Bonus - Size) (Skill + Qik - Enc - Size)

Armor

Type SCALE HAUBERK
Protection 9 Load -5

Weapon

Weapon	1st/Rate	Atk	Dam
<u>MACE (1H)</u>	<u>-2</u>	<u>5+</u>	<u>8+</u>
<u>HEAVY CROSSBOW</u>	<u>-12</u>	<u>4+</u>	<u>15+</u>

Body Levels

Soak Total: -7

Unhurt	☒		
Hurt		0	0
Light Wounds		-1	-1
Medium Wounds		-3	-3
Heavy Wounds		-5	-5
Incapacitated			

Fatigue Levels

Fatigue Total: 8+

Fresh	☒		
Winded			
Wary			
Tired			
Dazed			
Unconscious			

Equipment

Load 6.5 (Str 0) Enc 6

1st = Speed + Skill + Qik - Enc
Atk = Attack Bonus + Skill + Dex
Dam = Damage Bonus + Skill + Str

Soak = Protection + Strm + Size
Fatigue = Strm - Enc

Danlo

Description: An ugly, sober-faced man, with eyes that almost seem to reflect the experiences he has lived through. He has curly black hair, a huge pug nose, and a scraggly-haired chin.

Danlo has not had a happy life. Growing up in poverty in Northern France, you experienced daily the kinds of degradation that few who had kinder childhoods can imagine. One time, as a boy, you were kidnapped, taken away from his family, and taken aboard a ship to serve as a slave. To this day you hates and fears the sea, and don't like any sort of water.

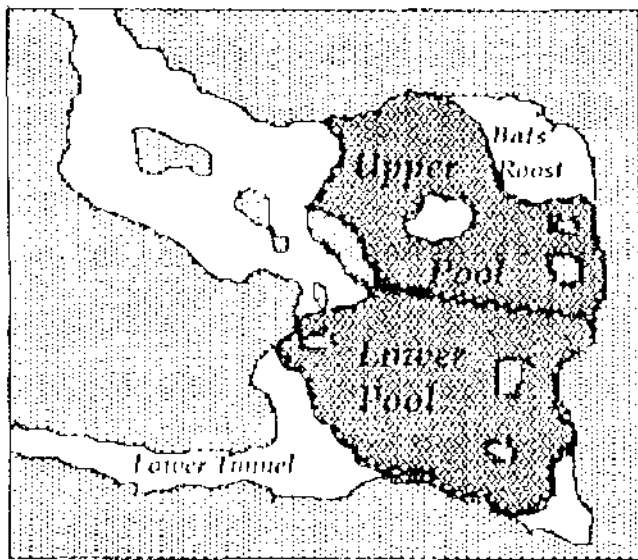
One day, while drowning your sorrow in ale in a village tavern, you witnessed two wizards having a heated argument out in the street. When a brief battle ensued between the two groups of bodyguards you found himself helping an apprentice of one of the wizards hide in the inn. Afterwards, he went to get the local barber (who are also Chirurgeons in these days) to bandage the wounded comrades of the apprentice.

With friendly gratitude, the apprentice managed to get permission for you to come back to the covenant of the wizards to become a bodyguard. Over the intervening years you yourself have learned the art of healing, as well as the use of the crossbow. You likes his crossbow; it has the power and authority you craves for yourself.

The young apprentice you aided has since become a powerful wizard -- Durgrund -- and you is intensely loyal to him. You are his shield grog, and you defend him against sword and steel. The life you lead now is not good, but it is far better than the one you led before. At least you get a regular supply of ale.

You are somewhat shy about your own appearance, though you tend to dislike ugly people. You frequently drink with the grog Garian, who is on this mission with you, but you can't stand his rebellious and disloyal personality. You're always arguing with him about what's the right thing to do. The grog Braeble is a coward, you're sure of it, and you are just waiting for him to run when he gets into his first battle.

Role-playing tips: Speak in street slang as much as you can (make it up as you go along), and speak rapidly and with a snarl when you speak at all. Mostly just stare deeply at people while they speak, keeping your thoughts about them to yourself.

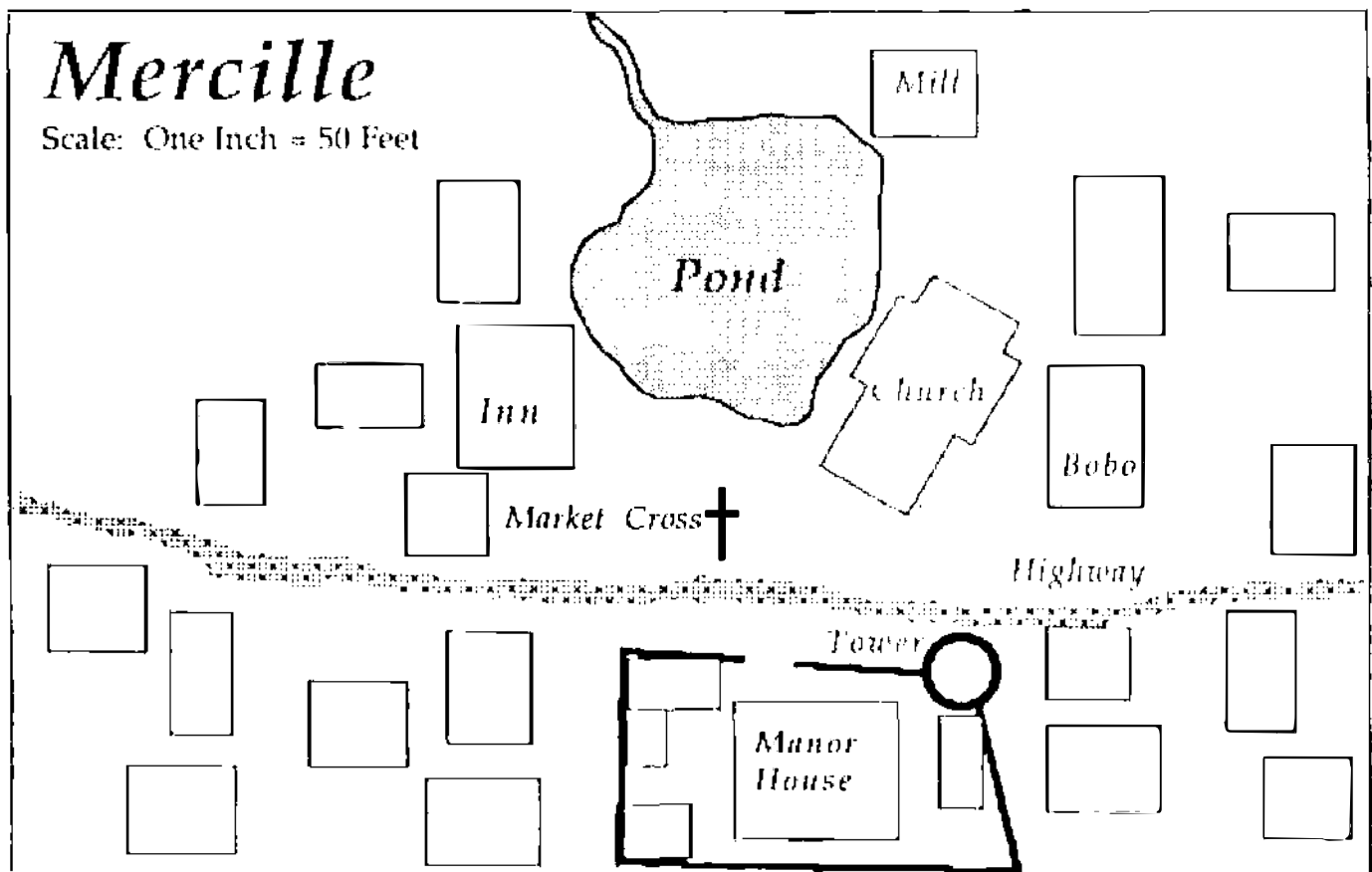
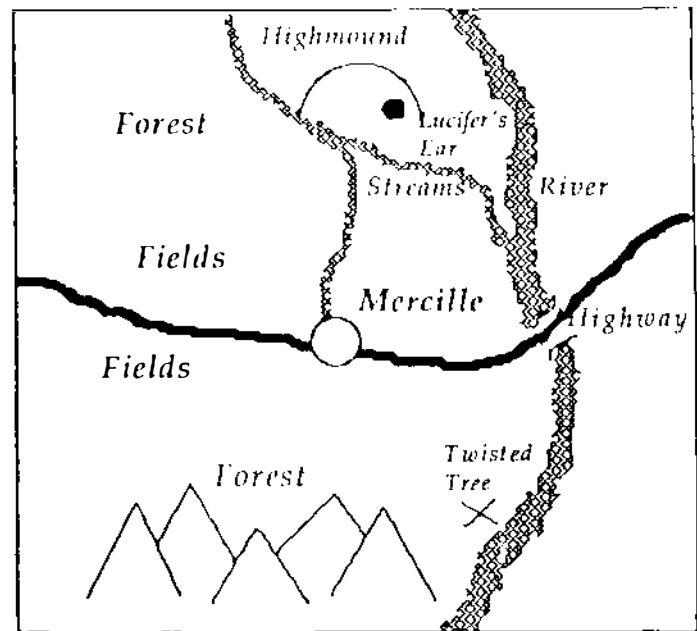


The Cavern of Shlith-hrin

Scale 0 feet 30

Mercille Region

Scale: 1 Inch = 400 Yards



Maps For

THE BATS OF MERCILLE