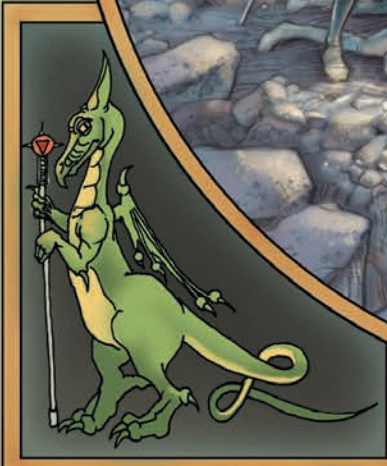


Ars Magica

# Tales of Power



by Andersen, Faulkner,  
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## Chapter One

# Introduction

Welcome to *Tales of Power*, a collection of five stories for **Ars Magica Fifth Edition**. Similar to its predecessor, *Tales of Mythic Europe*, this book contains stories for your troupe. Designed for powerful magi and their associates (advanced companion and grog characters), each story can be played as a stand-alone adventure. The stories can also be incorporated into your saga with little effort, providing a string of spectacular exploits worthy of your characters. Magi should be approximately 50 to 60 years out of apprenticeship, and while most of the stories are designed for one or two magi and their companions, they could easily include every magus in the covenant.

The following introductions offer a brief summary of each adventure, enough to indicate its rough outline without giving away any secrets. Every

member of your group can read the introductions. Groups with multiple storyguides can allocate the stories as desired, with each storyguide picking the story that she would most like to run. Groups with a single storyguide can indicate which adventure they would like to play first.

## A Cardinal Decision

The pope and the Holy Roman Emperor are at odds, and the emperor has besieged Rome, surrounding the city with his army. As the city prepares for the siege, the pope dies. The College of Cardinals convene to pick a new pope. The secular authority

of Rome sequesters the cardinals and won't allow them to leave until they choose a new pope. To most magi, this is a distant problem that doesn't affect them one way or another.

But fate intervenes. Supernatural forces move to influence the papal election, and Infernal, Faerie, and Magic intruders manipulate the cardinals so that they will pick a pope sympathetic to the manipulator's selfish goals. The cardinals' selection will change the Church and its influence on the mundane world, changes that will ultimately effect everyone in Mythic Europe. The magi must travel to Rome and untangle a twisted web of supernatural manipulations, cunning lies, secret machinations, and shocking surprises. Can the magi save the College of Cardinals and Mythic Europe?





## The City of Brass

The tale of the City of Brass is well known in Arabic folklore. Hidden within the Egyptian desert, explorers found the fabled lost city and recovered some of the legendary Brass Bottles of Suleiman. Word of this legend draws the characters (whether by curiosity or necessity) to retrace the steps of this famous adventure and locate the city for themselves. The journey will be arduous, but the real challenge is in escaping from the City of Brass with their lives.

## Encroaching Dominion

A new settlement is established discreetly near the covenant, and very quickly grows at an alarming rate — and with it, the influence of the Dominion. The expansion seems almost too good to be true; one might even guess at supernatural help. While the settlement does not threaten the covenant itself, a significant resource is under pressure

and, in time, more might be on the line. Investigations of the settlement reveal facts which make an easy resolution of this impossible, including the provisions of the Code among the chief problems.

The magi of the covenant need to make some hard decisions and take a stand, one way or the other. They might not even form a united front, forcing them to deal with their internal differences as well as the external threat. Their choices affect the future of their covenant and the policies of the Tribunal.

## Eustace the Monk

The pirate lord Eustace has seized the Isle of Sark, in the English Channel. His fleet is so powerful that the kings of England and France vie for his services; mariners along the coasts of his watery domain fear his name. Rumors swirl about the port cities of the Channel, saying that, as a boy, Eustace gave his soul to the devil in exchange for magical powers and Infernal servants.

Eustace's fleet is unchallenged, and the island of Sark is a natural fortress. Can the player characters discover the truth of Eustace's power? Can they

destroy his fleet and stronghold without a direct confrontation? Can they avoid a pitched battle and win without flinging their mightiest spells against a villainous sorcerer and his minions?

Do they want to?

## A Gathering Storm

The Hermetic Oath, sworn by the members of the Order of Hermes, has protected generations of magi. It is the basis for the Peripheral Code, to which all magi of all covenants across all Tribunals adhere. It has ensured that the Order has remained at peace for over two centuries. And it has allowed its members to study and build upon the achievements of their forebears without fear. But when that Oath is foresworn, when the Peripheral Code is ignored, then the peace that binds the Order is in jeopardy and its magi are brought into conflict.

This scenario visits the repercussions of broken oaths upon the troupe's covenant when the interference of magi stirs powerful mundane forces into action. The covenant finds itself a target, and must defend against enemies from both inside and outside the Order.



## Chapter Two

# A Cardinal Decision

The pope is dead, and Rome is besieged by the Holy Roman Emperor. Threatened by the invading army, the College of Cardinals convenes to select a new pope. The cardinals are far from making a choice. Half of the cardinals want to select a pope who will continue the war against the emperor, and half want to select a pope who will bow to the emperor's desires and end the war. Sequestered until they reach a decision, deliberations have dragged on for days with no clear end in sight. Rome and Mythic Europe wait for their decision.

Why is it taking so long? Supernatural forces hinder the cardinals' decision. Creatures from the different supernatural realms of Mythic Europe have targeted certain cardinals, in the hope of promoting them above the others. They

use their supernatural influence to force the other cardinals to vote for their representative. Is the Order of Hermes involved as well? Is a magus meddling in one of the most important decisions the mundane world makes?

As the church elders deliberate, caught in a tide of supernatural influence, the papal throne remains unoccupied, and the sede vacante (the empty papal seat) has other effects on Mythic Europe. Supernatural auras fluctuate, tempers and temperaments change unexpectedly, and significant annoyances everywhere suggest that something is wrong. Can the magi set things right by protecting the cardinals from a variety of supernatural threats until the College elects a new pope? Can they do so without breaking their own Oaths of non-interference?

## Précis

The pope and the Holy Roman Emperor have been enemies for years. Regardless of who the actual pope or emperor is, the political positions are inevitably at odds as both parties wrestle for control of the northern Italian cities, collectively assembled in the Lombard League. Disputes are usually waged with papal bulls and imperial edicts, but recent incidents have escalated to bloodshed. The emperor, once nearly unbeatable on the grassy field of battle, has done poorly in recent years, and more and more Italian communes shake their spears in revolt. Focusing on one of the League's most important leaders, the emperor surrounded Rome and prepared his siege. As the pope and his general, Matteo Rossi Orsini, readied their defenses, tragedy struck: the pope died from natural causes.

The emperor stopped the siege, claiming that his battle is against the current pope and not the papacy, and withdrew most of his army to Apulia. The College of Cardinals was summoned to elect a new pope. Hoping to control the election, the emperor has captured three cardinals who were trying to enter Rome. The captured cardinals have Guelph sympathies, and the emperor has refused to release them. A new pope must be selected from the eleven cardinals already living in Rome. Orsini, eager for a pope who will continue the struggle against the emperor, ordered his men to herd the cardinals into the Septizodium and keep them there until

## Time Sensitivity

The cardinals have been sequestered for almost two weeks. While most Romans would like a timely decision, none expect that they will hurry their deliberations, and the cardinals could argue for several more weeks before reaching an agreement. Magi may think they have time to return to their labs and invent a spell to address a specific case that comes up in play. But there is no guarantee that the cardinals will remain undecided. In most cases, the story does not allow for player characters to leave and return later.

However, this shouldn't be a problem for truly powerful magi. Spontaneous spells and copious amounts of vis should allow any magus to participate in this adventure, ensuring that a magus does not need to be a Mentem specialist or have expert knowledge in the political workings of the Church or the city of Rome. Liberally using vis should also overcome the Divine aura penalty imposed on spell casting. Remember, however, that using vis when casting spells adds to the number of botch dice, should a player botch a spellcasting roll.



## Guelphs and Ghibellines

This adventure involves two important medieval Italian and German political factions. Their history is long and complicated and not essential to this adventure, other than to demarcate one against the other. The Guelphs are supporters of the pope and the Papal States, and the Ghibellines are supporters of the emperor and the Holy Roman Empire. While most men do not wear their political insignia on their sleeve, the principals in the current struggle have made their political sympathies known and come from families who declared their political affiliation long ago. Everyone knows who is for the pope and who is for the emperor.

they choose the new Holy Father.

The war depends on the choice of the next pope. A staunch opponent to the emperor means a continuation of hostilities, which could mean the sack of Rome. A moderate pope would end the war and concede to the emperor's wishes. Rome holds its breath as it waits for the cardinals to decide. Regardless of the outcome, the city wants a decision.

However, the war is merely the immediate issue; the next pope needs to guide the Church through many challenges. Cathar heretics hide in the hills of southern France like fleas on a dog's back, and are equally difficult to remove. The king of Hungary is demanding papal support for his crusade into Bosnia to rid the Bosnian Church of its heretical Patarians. The nobles of France cry for another crusade into the Levant, while the damage of the last crusade against the Byzantine Empire still scars the hills of Anatolia. And within the papal curia, certain members are discussing the Order of Hermes and how that organization should fit into the greater scheme of things.



As Rome waits, the cardinals cannot reach a majority verdict. Supernatural entities and two wizards are interfering with the cardinals' deliberations. One

of the cardinals, Riccardo Annibaldi, is a diabolist, and using his demonic master's aid, he stands at the threshold of assuming the highest religious posi-

## Changing the Adventure

"The Cardinals' Decision" is drawn from the historical record of the papal conclave of 1241. Pope Gregory IX died on 22 August 1241, while Rome was surrounded by the army of the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II. If your saga has progressed this far, it is entirely suitable to use these men as the pope and the emperor. If your saga is set at a different date, you can change the specific pope and emperor effortlessly. As mentioned in the adventure, several popes and emperors have wrestled for political control over northern Italy. In 1220, the pope is Honorius III.

Storyguides who do not wish to set this adventure in Rome have more work on their hands, but the storyguide

characters don't need to change. Many medieval papal elections happened outside the city of Rome, but only one outside the Italian peninsula (1119, in the Abbey of Cluny). The essentials of the story stay the same as long as the College of Cardinals is sequestered in a building with an aura that Alyates won't enter. Making this an Infernal rather than Faerie aura could be interesting, turning the Planetary Divinities into Infernal False Gods (*Realms of Power: the Infernal*, page 37) instead of potent faerie beings. Other buildings would need to change, and you might have to forgo Frederick's encircling army, but the backbone of the adventure remains.



tion in the Roman Church. Tommaso da Capua, another of the cardinals, has been selected by the Planetary Divinities, powerful faerie creatures who were once worshiped in the Septizodium and continue to linger within its dilapidated marble walls. The faeries want their chosen man elected leader.

Two wizards also watch the cardinals. Alyates of House Jerbiton had clandestinely controlled the pope for several years, using a fixed Arcane Connection and an enchanted device to accomplish the task. Through subtle magic, Alyates kept the pope warring with the emperor, hoping that eventually the emperor would actually attack the pope. The plan worked, but unfortunately for Aly-

ates, the pope died. He has an Arcane Connection to one of the cardinals, the most prominent Guelph candidate, Romano Bonaventura. If he can get Arcane Connections to the other cardinals, he can magically make them vote for Bonaventura. As yet, he has not achieved this goal.

The second wizard, Buonacorsus, is not a Hermetic magus. He belongs to a group of rival wizards called the Augustan Brotherhood, many of whom serve the emperor. He hopes to magically persuade the cardinals to pick Goffredo da Castiglione, a septuagenarian Ghibeline who is sympathetic to the emperor.

This four-way supernatural influence has created a tangled web of indecision,

with cardinals changing their minds and their votes, never forming a majority for a single candidate. While it is not difficult to ascertain that other powers are controlling the cardinals, it may be difficult to deal with the various puppet masters. Moreover, if one is weakened, three grow stronger.

News of the protracted conclave reaches the player character magi, who are asked by another agent to intervene. The magi must go to Rome and sneak inside the Septizodium. They are limited by their Oaths of Hermes, particularly the provision not to interfere to the extent that it might harm their sodales. Player characters must defuse the various threats of manipulation and let the cardinals reach their own decision. Can the magi resist temptation and not select the man who would best benefit the Order of Hermes?

## Dramatis Personæ

This adventure has four primary antagonists: Oriens the demon, Alyates, Buonacorsus, and the faerie Planetary Divinities. All four supernaturally manipulate people's emotions, memories, and decisions toward their own ends. The targets of these antagonists are the College of Cardinals, and each of the antagonists has selected a specific cardinal to control. The other cardinals, those whose votes are necessary to win the election, are only briefly described.

## Oriens

The demon Oriens is a lord of the Order of Spirits of Deceit (*Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 38). As Prince of the East, he is the most powerful of the four demons of the cardinal directions, and ruler of hundreds of lesser demons.

## Oriens

**Order:** Spirit of Deceit

**Infernal Might:** 40 (Mentem)

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per 0, Pre 0, Com +3, Str +4, Sta +4, Dex +4, Qik +4

**Size:** +2

**Confidence Score:** 3 (13)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Entrancement; Tough

**Personality Traits:** Haughty +5, Deceitful +6, Trustworthy -5

**Reputations:** Prince of the East 9 (demons)

**Hierarchy:** 9

**Combat:**

**Claws:** Init +4, Attack +17, Defense +15, Damage +8

**Soak:** +7

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-7), -3 (8-14), -5 (15-21), Incapacitated (22-28), Dead (29+)

**Abilities:** Athletics 5 (climbing), Brawl 7 (claws), Entrancement 5 (minor clergy), Folk Ken 6 (clerics), Guile 7 (tempting rulers), Intrigue 6 (clerical benefices)

**Powers:**

*A Sight Too Beautiful to Behold*, 3 points, Init +1, Corpus: With this power, Oriens can cause the eyeballs of the

targeted individual to melt, permanently blinding and disfiguring the target. The power is usable at Voice Range.

*Change Form*, 0 points, Init 0, Corpus: See *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 38.

*Coagulation*, 4 points, Init -1, Corpus: See *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 31.

*Forked Tongue of the Serpent*, 3 points, Init -1, Mentem: See *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 38.

*Obsession*, 1 to 3 points, Init -5, Vim: Abuse of Political Power. See *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 31-2.

*The Serpent's Oracle*, 2 points, Init -3, Vim: See *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 38.

*Trust of the Innocent*, 1 point, Init -1, Mentem: See *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 38.

**Weakness:** Protected Group (Christian peasants)

**Vis:** 8 pawns of Infernally tainted Mentem Vis, 2 pawns in each of the 4 eyes.

**Appearance:** Oriens' true form is horrific; a snarling, four-eyed, cat head attached to the neck and body of a powerful, bipedal serpent whose reptilian legs end in clawed paws.



Oriens hopes to place his diabolist servant on the papal throne, which would wreak untold havoc with mankind by leading thousands of Christian worshippers into falsehood. Oriens has many servants, but the diabolist cardinal has advanced the furthest and is closest to the pinnacle of Infernal deceit.

Because of a complicated hierarchical contract with more powerful demons, Oriens cannot directly interact with the sequestered cardinals unless specially summoned by his vassal Annibaldi. Thus blocked from direct interference, he must rely on his underling to achieve the papal tiara. But the demon has invested too much in this man to sit idly by, and therefore lingers in spiritual form outside the Septizodium. Because he can assume any form at will, he sometimes turns into a crow and perches on the roof, while other times he masquerades as a soldier or passerby, all in an attempt to discover what is happening. Oriens will not be happy if his servant is exposed and defeated.

Oriens has the Entrancement Virtue and can supernaturally control targets. Magically manipulating a man to sin isn't the same thing as tempting him into error, which means that Oriens will use this power on enemies and lackeys, but not on the cardinals. Finally, Oriens can control a large group of subservient demons. Use the statistical information for Fimus, Warrior Demon (*Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 68). While his army is huge, you should limit the number of demons he has at his disposal for this story, depending on how dangerous you want to make it.

## Alyates of House Terbiton

Alyates is a Greek magus born in the Tribunal of Thebes. He was apprenticed in Constantinople and, upon completing his Gauntlet, remained within the City of Cities. Throughout his career, Alyates

had been interested in theology, especially the Credo (Latin, "I believe"), the fundamental beliefs of a Christian and how those beliefs differ between the Roman Church of the west and the Greek Church of the east. He has long thought that magic might be able to permanently affect a man's mental faculties and change his beliefs. As a result, he has focused on Mentem magic and the medical and philosophical properties of the human mind. Alyates' first explorations into man's beliefs were benign. He hoped to bind the Christian cleavage between east and west. Arrogant but passive, Alyates had great hopes for his future.

The Latin conquest of Constantinople in 1204 dashed those hopes to the ground and covered them in blood. His covenant, Thermakopolis, was destroyed defending the city. Most of the covenant members were slain, and Alyates was severely wounded. He disappeared into Anatolia to recover from his wounds, but he never announced that he had survived. Alyates blamed the crusaders' crimes on the Roman Church and its head, Pope Innocent III.

To bring about the Church's end, the magus decided to force the pope into a war with the Holy Roman Emperor, a long-term enemy of the bishop of Rome. He clandestinely searched the remains of his old covenant and retrieved the Cup of Carbonius. This enchanted item creates a mystical link to a target, with a high Penetration bonus, through which Alyates could cast spells. He then went west to Rome to bring about the pope's downfall.

Alyates knows that spells leave telltale sigils, making him hesitant to overtly destroy his targets with magic. He has found that subtle manipulation worked better, and that precise control of a target can be managed with a less powerful spell whose sigil fades faster. Alyates is a master of planting suggestions and creating decisions in a target's cognition, the part of the mind that determines what choices a person makes. Small suggestions are also easily

destroyed with Perdo Mentem magic, removing the evidence of an implanted suggestion.

By manipulating the pope's decisions, Alyates has exacerbated the animosity between the pope and the emperor. Never casting spells whose consequences would be too obvious, Alyates managed to keep the two men enemies for years. He hoped to strain the relationship to the breaking point and create war between the most powerful western prince and the Roman Church. He nearly succeeded, but his efforts unraveled when the pope died.

Undaunted, Alyates wants to continue his plan using a new target. Through prior efforts, he has an Arcane Connection to Romano Bonaventura, the leading Guelph candidate sequestered in the Septizodium. He watches the daily proceedings through Bonaventura's eyes, but without Arcane Connections to the other cardinals, he cannot make them vote for Bonaventura. He cannot obtain them himself because of the Septizodium's Faerie aura and the faeries living inside, against whom his magic is especially weak. Alyates cannot even enter a Faerie aura without become disoriented and physically ill. He must have Bonaventura acquire and somehow deliver the necessary Arcane Connections. As the player characters enter Rome, Alyates has decided to force Bonaventura to grab Arcane Connections from the other cardinals and throw them from the Septizodium's balcony. Disguised as a fishwife selling lunch to the soldiers outside the building, Alyates hopes to snatch up the falling Arcane Connections.

Besides his skills with Mentem spells, Alyates can also create flawless magical disguises called personae (see Houses of Hermes: Societates, page 90). He has created detailed histories for these personae, each of which has a Reputation of 3. "Margarita Ramberti" is a fishwife, a local Roman merchant. Alyates' second persona has been intentionally left undefined, so a storyguide can create a specific persona that works well for his group.

Alyates knows that another wizard, a member of the Augustan Brotherhood named Buonacorsus, lives in Rome. After a few casual inquiries, Alyates assumes this wizard is more charlatan than magician, and is unconcerned by his presence. Alyates will use this knowledge if it serves him (see "Catching Alyates" later).

## MEET ME AT MIDNIGHT

CrMe 15

R: Eye, D: Sun, T: Ind

This spell implants a thought in the target's mind to meet the caster at a time and location specified when the spell is cast. The thought lasts until the spell expires.

(Base 4, +1 Eye, +2 Sun)

## FORCING THE UNDECIDED'S DECISION

ReMe 35

R: Eye, D: Sun, T: Ind

This spell allows the caster to implant a complex suggestion into the target's mind, which the target then completes to the best of his ability.

(Base 20, +1 Eye, +2 Sun)

## BORROW THE EYES OF ANOTHER

InMe 30

R: Arc, D: Conc, T: Ind

The caster can see through the eyes of anyone to whom he has an Arcane Connection (*Art & Academe*, page 33).

Similarly, the spell *Borrow the Ears of Another* lets the caster hear through the ears of anyone to whom he has an Arcane Connection.

(Base 5, +4 Arc, +1 Conc)

## LOSS OF A LASTING DAY'S MEMORY

PeMe 20

R: Eye, D: Mom, T: Ind

This spell removes a specific event from a target's memory. The event can be up to a day in length and may involve multiple elements.

(Base 15, +1 Eye)

## Alyates of House Terbiton

**Characteristics:** Int 0, Per 0, Pre +3, Com +3, Str -2 (1), Sta -1, Dex -1, Qik +2

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 90 (47)

**Decrepitude:** 0 (1)

**Warping Score:** 7 (1)

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** The Gift; Hermetic Magus; Gentle Gift; Affinity with Mentem, Educated, Improved Characteristics, Persona\*, Premonitions, Puissant Mentem; Driven (to destroy the pope); Dark Secret (not actually dead, and an Oath breaker); Susceptibility to Faerie Power, Visions

**Personality Traits:** Cynical +3, Egotistical +2, Rigid +2

**Reputations:** As Malgarita: Successful Manager 3 (merchants of Rome)

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init +2, Attack n/a, Defense +2, Damage n/a

**Soak:** +3

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Inc (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Animal Handling 2 (horses), Area Lore: Constantinople 3 (city covenants), Area Lore: Rome 3

(abandoned temples), Artes Liberales 3 (grammar), Awareness 2 (determining magical effect), Bargain 2 (books), Code of Hermes 3 (mundane interactions), Concentration 5 (spell concentration), Etiquette 2 (court), Finesse 5 (Mentem), Folk Ken 2 (priests), Greek 5 (witticisms), Guile 2 (elaborate lies), Italian 4 (merchant slang), Latin 4 (Hermetic usage), Magic Theory 8 (Mentem), Organization Lore: Order of Hermes 1 (politics), Parma Magica 6 (Corpus), Penetration 5 (Mentem), Personae 2 (Margarita and one other), Philosophiae 2 (ceremonial magic), Premonitions 3 (personal danger), Scribe 2 (copying lab texts)

**Arts:** Cr 18, In 5, Mu 5, Pe 15, Re 16; An 5, Aq 5, Au 5, Co 18, He 5, Ig 5, Im 5, Me 27+3, Te 5, Vi 7

**Twilight Scars:** Elongated forehead

**Equipment:** Clothing typical of his current persona

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)

**Spells Known:**

*Curse of the Unruly Tongue* ReCo 5/+33

*Meet Me at Midnight* CrMe 15/+47

*Rising Ire* CrMe 15/+47

*Convince a Man He Has an Enemy* CrMe20/+47

*Memory of the Distant Dream* CrMe 20/+47  
*Weight of a Thousand Hells* CrMe 25/+47  
*Perception of the Conflicting Motives* InMe 15/+34

*Posing the Silent Question* InMe 20/+34

*Borrow the Ears of Another* InMe 30/+34

*Borrow the Eyes of Another* InMe 30/+34

*Peering into the Mortal Mind* InMe 30/+34

*Loss of but a Moment's Memory* PeMe 15/+44

*Loss of a Lasting Day's Memory* PeMe 20/+44

*Blessing of Childlike Bliss* PeMe 25/+44

*Passion's Lost Feeling* PeMe 25/+44

*Black Whisper* PeMe 40/+48

*The Call to Slumber* ReMe 20/+45

*Trust Me* ReMe 20/+45 (*Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 73)

*Aura of Inconsequence* ReMe25/+49 (*Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 73)

*Forcing the Undecided's Decision* ReMe 35/+45

*Enslave the Mortal Mind* ReMe 40/+45

*Shroud Magic* MuVi 20/ +11

**Appearance:** Alyates is an average-sized man with dark hair and a full beard, dressed in ostentatious robes of blue and gold. Malgarita is a stocky woman with large hips and shoulders, a crooked nose, and graying hair, dressed in the traditional clothes of a fishmonger.



## CONVINCE A MAN HE HAS AN ENEMY

CrMe 20

R: Touch, D: Moon, T: Ind

This spell convinces the target that he has an enemy, selected at the time of the casting. The target does not remember why the selected person is his enemy and naturally assumes that the origin of the dispute happened long ago. This spell does not dictate a target's response to his enemy, but merely installs the notion of enmity in the target's mind.

(Base 4, +1 Touch, +3 Moon)

## THE CUP OF CARBONIUS

ReVi 83

Pen +52, 3/day

R: Arc, D: Conc, T: Ind

The Cup of Carbonius is a gold chalice that creates a mystical link from the activator to the target, using the Hermetic spell Opening the Intangible Tunnel. The owner places an Arcane Connection inside the cup and triggers it with a command word, at which point the cup activates the spell. The created link stays open as long as the owner desires, with the cup itself maintaining the concentration needed to keep the link active.

The owner, or anyone else who can peer into the cup and see the Arcane Connection, can cast spells through the link. Only spells of level 30 or lower can be cast through the cup at the target. The cup's power must Penetrate the target's Magic Resistance to establish the link, and every successive spell must also Penetrate. The cup's Penetration was determined in its creation; any spell cast through the cup's mystical link must determine its Penetration in the usual way. Remember that the Arcane Connection used also adds a modifier to a spell's Penetration multiplier (ArM5, page 84). Only Hermetic spells can be cast through the mystical link, and just as with the spell Opening the Intangible

Tunnel, spells can be cast back through the cup, from the target to the bearer.

This is a powerful effect and causes Warping to the target. Because this effect is so strong, of much greater magnitude than any spell that can be cast through it, Carbonius' sigil is the strongest lingering identifier.

(Effect: Base 25, +4 Arc, +1 Conc, +2 frequency, +5 maintain concentration, +26 Penetration)

## THE HOMEWARD BOUND BRACELET

ReCo 42

Pen 0, 3/day

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind

This magical silver bracelet instantly transports the wearer to a location to which he has an Arcane Connection. The wearer must touch the Arcane Connection to the bracelet and speak the command word at the same time for the item to function.

(Effect: Base 35, +1 Touch, +2 frequency)

## Buonacorsus of the Augustan Brotherhood

Buonacorsus is a senior member of the Augustan Brotherhood, a group of non-Hermetic wizards who want to increase the emperor's political importance (see Rival Magic, Chapter 3). After years of thought, Buonacorsus devised a plan to make the Church subservient to the emperor. Knowing that the Italian popolo (the common people) would never accept a world without a religious leader, Buonacorsus planned to replace the current pope with a man loyal to the emperor. Because Virgilian magic, the magic of the Augustan Brotherhood, targets areas and not people, devising a method to magically kill the pope was difficult. After studying the pope's personal habits and spending

many years in Rome to invent city-specific rites, Buonacorsus finally devised a plan. He enchanted a stone statue to make a building unbearably hot, hoping that long-term heat exposure would kill those inside. While not every pope likes to stay in Rome, especially during the humid summer, the current pope did. Buonacorsus hoped that the man's reluctance to leave the city would be his downfall. He paid workmen to move the statue inside the pope's residence. Days later, the pope died.

Buonacorsus wants Goffredo da Castiglione, a Ghibelline, elected pope. Buonacorsus knew that the traditional location for papal elections in Rome was the Septizodium, and he ordered his team of workers to move his awakened statue to the building. He also cast A Murder is Planned and Suffer the Judgment of Jericho rites on the Septizodium. The first rite indicates that things are going as planned, that his rites are still in effect as long as the crows use the roof as their roost. The second brings the building down if the wrong cardinal is selected. He then cast the rite A Murderous Assault Will Befall You. Though the rite will have a poor Penetration total and may fail, Buonacorsus still hopes it succeeds, and that the ensuing racket of cawing crows will alert him if Hermetic wizards have entered Rome.

Thus prepared, Buonacorsus sits in his secret hiding place in the Colosseum, using his powers of divination to follow the events in the Septizodium. He can accurately divine the daily happenings of any character with a Reputation of 4 or higher. Either Castiglione will be selected pope, or the cardinals will all die.

## A MURDER IS PLANNED

School of the Vigilant Bees, Ease Factor 21

R: Touch, D: Moon, T: Structure

Cast upon a building, this Rite attracts 500 crows that make the building

their home over the course of Moon duration. The birds are free to come and go, but they always return to the building as they would any other natural roost. The suggestion lasts for Duration: Moon and affects all birds equally. Once the Duration expires, most of the crows are likely to leave for less crowded roosts.

The rite is triggered upon casting, and then starts to draw crows to the warded building.

(Base 3, +9 Moon, +6 Structure, +3 for a group of crows)

### A MURDEROUS ASSAULT WILL BEFALL YOU

School of the Vigilant Bees, Ease Factor 33

R: Touch, D: Diam, T: City

This rite causes 500 of Rome's crows to flock and attack a group of people entering Rome through any of the city's gates. The trigger is a person who considers himself a member of the Order of Hermes. When such a person enters through a city gate, he and everyone at the gate are assaulted by 500 murderous crows. The crows do not discriminate, and will attack anyone in the immediate area. While the crows are roused to action by magic, they are not themselves magical and are not resisted by Magic Resistance. The assault lasts no less than a Diameter, or two minutes, enough time for twenty standard combat rounds, during which time any and all targets in the area are subject to attack.

Like other Virgilian rites, the magic must Penetrate the Magic Resistance of both the trigger's initiator and the af-

fected target. The initiator is the person who thinks of themselves as "a member of the Order of Hermes," and the affected target is the nearby crows.

(Base 15, +3 Diameter, +9 City, +3 for a group of crows. Ease Factor raised by 1 magnitude (+3) to reflect the intricacies of using Virgilian divination in the trigger.)

### ESCAPING THE GLOOMY PLACES

School of Prometheus, Ease Factor 15

R: Touch, D: Diam, T: Structure

Similar to He enters among them, veiled in shadows (see Rival Magic, page 60), this rite dims all light within a room and adds +3 to Stealth rolls. The triggering action is when anyone in the warded area yells "Omnis sonus excitat!"

## Buonacorsus of the Augustan Brotherhood

**Characteristics:** Int +2, Per +3, Pre 0, Com +4, Str 0, Sta -3, Dex +1, Qik -2

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 104 (39)

**Decrepitude:** 3 (15)

**Warping Score:** 7 (4)

**Confidence Score:** 1 (7)

**Virtues and Flaws:** The Gift; Court Wizard; Affinity with Virgilian Theory, Educated, Generous Master, Great Communication, Unaging; Enemies (the Guelphs); Clumsy, Susceptibility to Infernal Power

**Personality Traits:** Persistent +3, Cowardly +2, Patient +2

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init -2, Attack n/a, Defense +2, Damage n/a

**Fist:** Init -2, Attack +4, Defense +1, Damage 0

**Soak:** -3

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Inc (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Animo 9 (stone statues), Artes Liberales 4 (rhetoric), Brawl 3 (dodge), Charm 2 (royal superiors),

Civil and Canon Law 2 (papal conclaves), Etiquette 1 (court dinners), Finesse 4 (controlling rites), Folk Ken 2 (imperial retainers), Guile 1 (lying to women), Italian 5 (enunciation), Intrigue 2 (Neapolitan nobility), Latin 5 (Virgilian nuances), Organization Lore: Augustan Brotherhood 3 (personalities), Organization Lore: Order of Hermes 1 (current practices), Penetration 6 (School of the Stones rites), Philosophiae 2 (ethics), Profession: Scribe 3 (preparing materials), Sortes Virgilianae 6 (questions about Rome), Stealth 5 (fleeing), Virgilian Theory 7 (School of Stones)

**Schools:** School of Boreas 0, School of the Naiads 1, School of Prometheus 9, School of the Stones 14, School of the Sylvan Dryads 0, School of Vigilant Bees 10

**Equipment:** Scholarly robes, a copy of Virgil's Aeneid

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)

**Rites Known:**

*A Murder Is Planned* 15 (School of the Vigilant Bees, Ease Factor 21) Casting Score +29

*A Murderous Assault Will Befall You* 15 (School of the Vigilant Bees, Ease Factor 33) Casting Score +29

*Escape the Gloomy Places* 6 (School of Prometheus, Ease Factor 18) Casting Score +19

*Stony Protection of the Hearth* 12 (School of the Stones, Ease Factor 18) Casting Score +30

*Suffer the Judgment of Jericho* 20 (School of the Stones, Ease Factor 21) Casting Score +38

*Summer's Sweltering Heat* 17 (School of Prometheus, Ease Factor 30) Casting Score +30

*The Hounds' Bay of Recognition* 8 (School of Vigilant Bees, Ease Factor 15) Casting Score +22

*The Soldiers' Secret Ambush* 14 (School of the Stones, Ease Factor 21) Casting Score +32

**Appearance:** Hirsute and swarthy, Buonacorsus looks at first glance like a seedy Mediterranean farmer, slightly overweight with a dishonest gleam in his eye. He wears a simple white linen tunic and straw hat.



("Every sound alarms!")

(Base 6, +3 Diameter, +6 Structure)

## STONY PROTECTION OF THE HEARTH

School of the Stones, Ease Factor 18

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Room

This rite launches a stone boulder at anyone who enters the room without first saying the opening line of Virgil's Aeneid. Buonacorsus uses this to protect the entrance to his home.

(Base 15, +3 Room)

## SUFFER THE JUDGMENT OF JERICO

School of the Stones, Ease Factor 21

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Structure

Cast upon a building and triggered if a Guelph pope leaves that building, this rite weakens the building's stone walls to the point that they collapse under their own weight. Those trapped inside the building, as well as those in close proximity, take +21 damage.

Penetration is a concern. Once elected, the pope will have a Divine Resistance of 25. The rite must have a higher Penetration, or it will not recog-

nize the triggering pope as he leaves the building.

(Base 9, +6 Structure, +3 Stone.

Ease Factor raised by one magnitude to reflect the intricacies of using Virgilian divination in the trigger.)

## SUMMER'S SWELTERING HEAT

School of Prometheus, Ease Factor 27

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Structure

This Rite makes the warded area hot, humid, and uncomfortable. Anyone trapped inside the area for a day must

## Virgilian Magic

### CASTING TOTAL:

Casting Score + stress die

While most of Buonacorsus' rites happen off-stage, as storyguide you need to know how they work. Virgilian Magic is fully explained in Rival Magic, pages 52-64, but this small insert should suffice if you do not have access to that supplement. Before beginning play, make sure you have rolled all of Buonacorsus' casting totals for his active rites and have recorded the Penetration of each rite.

Virgilian magic is a magic power, affiliated with the Magic Realm just like Hermetic magic. It is divided into three practices: Sortes Virgilianae (divination), Vigilo, (casting rites), and Animo (constructing magical animations). The first and the third practices have an associated Supernatural Ability. The second practice is subdivided into six Schools, called the Schools of Boreas, Naiads, Prometheus, Stones, Sylvan Dryads, and Vigilant Bees. A School is similar to a Hermetic Form. A rite is very specific and must be individually invented and studied, and has an accompanying score.

To cast a rite using Vigilo magic, an Augustan magus uses the following formulas:

### CASTING SCORE:

Communication + School + Rite  
+ Aura Modifier vs. Ease Factor of rite

If the casting total is higher than the Ease Factor of the rite, the rite works. To determine the rite's Penetration, add the wizard's Penetration Ability score and subtract the Ease Factor from the casting total. The uniquely Virgilian Target: Pentagram receives a Penetration Multiplier Bonus of +5.

### PENETRATION TOTAL:

Casting Total + Penetration Ability  
- Ease Factor

For example, Buonacorsus casts the rite The Soldiers' Secret Ambush in his hiding place. His Communication is +4, his School of Stones is 14, and his rite score is 14, giving him a casting score of +32. His hiding place has a Magic aura of 3, granting an additional +3 to the roll. The storyguide rolls a 9 on a stress die, for a casting total of 44, which is higher than the rite's Ease Factor of 21. The rite's Penetration is casting total (44) plus Buonacorsus' Penetration Ability (5 with his specialty), minus the Ease Factor (21) or 28.

Each rite has three components: a warded area, a trigger, and an effect. A warded area is a physical location. A trigger is an event or person that passes

through or affects the warded area, and the effect is the magical result of a triggered rite. If the effect is triggered by a person, that person is called the "initiator." Magic Resistance can prevent a rite from triggering, and possibly protect the initiator from the magical effect, if the magical effect directly targets the entity with Magic Resistance. This is similar to Hermetic magic. For example, The Soldiers' Secret Ambush animates swords with magic, which must Penetrate the target's Magic Resistance to strike. Suffer the Judgment of Jericho weakens a building's walls which then collapse, so Magic Resistance won't stop a falling stone from striking someone standing in the building. Both rites are triggered when an initiator walks into the targeted area, and in both cases, the magic must Penetrate the initiator's Magic Resistance to trigger the effect.

Once a rite is cast, it stays in static existence until triggered, much like the Hermetic Waiting Ward spell. It can linger indefinitely, and all of Buonacorsus' rites are waiting for the player characters. Intellego Vim spells cast on an area warded by a rite may detect an active rite. To determine the magnitude of a Virgilian rite, divide the Ease Factor by 3. For example, The Soldiers' Secret Ambush is a 7th magnitude effect. Once detected, a rite can be dispelled by following the regular rules of Perdo Vim magic.

## Planetary Divinities

At some point in their complicated and extensive history, the ancient Romans started venerating the planets, the visible heavenly bodies commented on by Greek and Roman philosophers. Distinct from the gods, many of whom are associated with the same planets, the planetary divinities were seen as lesser gods, and were given names and temples of worship. The actual supernatural beings observed were the *Astra Planeta*, planetary spirits that belong to the Magic Realm and were uninterested in the Romans' devotions. The worshipers attracted a different crowd: a group of seven powerful faeries noticed the Romans' veneration and inserted themselves into the role of the *Astra Planeta*. To the Roman worshipers, the planetary spirits suddenly took an interest and began to respond to their prayers and supplications. The planetary divinities would favor specific people, charismatic worshipers who increased the divinities' followers and advanced their reputation. The veneration of the planetary divinities diminished with the downfall of the Roman Empire. For hundreds of years, the planetary divinities idled in their regio, hidden inside the Septizodium.

The vociferous arguing of the cardinals roused the planetary divinities from their torpor. They noticed that one of the cardinals had a demonic patron. They also saw another regularly targeted by magic, and noticed another wizard activating the enchanted statue on some mornings. Bemused, the faeries wanted to play too. While not completely understanding what the men were trying to decide, they correctly ascertained that one would rule the others, misinterpreting the title "pontiff" as "Pontifex Maximus," the high priest of all of the religious cults of pagan Rome. Visiting the dreams of the cardinals, they selected the man most sympathetic to classical paganism, Tommaso da Capua, and promised to make him the pontiff. Swayed by their enchantments, Tommaso agreed.

make a deprivation check (see ArM5, page 180).

The base level of this rite is derived from the level 15 guideline, which strongly chills an area. The opposite of the chilling effect, this rite strongly warms an area.

(Base 15, +6 Sun, +6 Structure)

### THE HOUNDS' BAY OF RECOGNITION

School of Vigilant Bees, Ease Factor 15  
R: Touch, D: Diam, T: City, Ritual

This rite makes every dog in Rome bark for two minutes when a new pope is elected within the city of Rome. The rite is triggered the moment the former cardinal accepts the tiara. The rite must Penetrate the Magic Resistance of its trigger, the newly elected pope, to activate. The effect must also Penetrate to affect any dog in the city that has Magic Resistance.

(Base 3, +3 Diameter, +9 City)

### THE SOLDIERS' SECRET AMBUSH

School of the Stones, Ease Factor 21  
R: Touch, D: Diam, T: Room

This rite protects the warded area by causing a group of ten long swords to magically animate and attack intruders for the duration of the rite. Use the caster's Finesse score to calculate the Attack modifier and do not modify the other combat statistics. The caster does not have to be present to direct the swords. Swords controlled by Buonacorsus' rite use the following Combat statistics: Init +2, Atk +9, Dfn n/a, and Dam +1.

The rite is triggered when anyone besides Buonacorsus enters the warded room. Its magic must Penetrate the trigger's Magic Resistance to activate and to strike the target with the resulting enchanted swords.

(Base 6, +3 Diameter, +3 Room, +6 Metal, +3 for a group of swords)





# The Cardinals

The planetary divinities gain vitality by being venerated. Tommaso's love of the classics and agreement to be the Pontifex Maximus feel like veneration, and the faeries want more. They think that having the cardinals support Tommaso will mean more vitality. To encourage this, the faeries visit the cardinals in their dreams and promise to make them better, stronger, smarter, or more eloquent. A divinity can only affect the Characteristic it is associated

with: the Sun is associated with Presence, the Moon Dexterity, Mercury Quickness, Venus Communication, Mars Strength, Jupiter Intelligence, and Saturn Perception. If promises don't work, threats might, and the divinities can also permanently decrease a person's Characteristics. Both threats and promises are expressed in the person's dreams. The planetary divinities can speak, in archaic Latin, but prefer to express themselves through dreams.

There are eleven cardinals sequestered inside the Septizodium. Because of their station in the church, each cardinal receives the Free Supernatural Virtue: Commanding Aura, which grants a Magic Resistance of 20 and a+4 Soak bonus.

## Planetary Divinities

**Faerie Might:** 40 (Vim)

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per +2, Pre +2, Com +2, Str -2, Sta -3, Dex +2, Qik +2

**Size:** 0

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Positive Folktales; Greater Power (x3), Ritual Power (x4); Highly Cognizant, Humanoid Form, Personal Power; Intangible Flesh, Restricted Might (sunlight); Traditional Ward (Folk Charm)

**Personality Traits:** Appropriate to the planet +3

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init +2x, Attack n/a, Defense +2, Damage n/a

**Soak:** 0

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Pretenses:** Artes Liberales 4 (astronomy), Athletics 4 (flying), Awareness 3 (sleepers), Faerie Lore 4 (Roman deities), Folk Ken 4 (worshippers), Intrigue 1 (plotting against each other), Latin 4 (astrological terms), Penetration 5 (Mentem)

**Powers:**

**Affliction of Heavenly Insanity,** 2 points, Init +0, Mentem. R: Eye, D: Sun, T: Ind. Similar to the Hermetic spell Blessing of Childlike Bliss, this power continually changes a person's thoughts, continuously scrambling a person's memory and perceptions throughout the duration of the effect. Magi cannot cast spells under this power's effect. A target may decide

to perform a single action and succeed with an Intelligence + stress die roll against an Ease Factor of 12. The action must commence and finish in a single combat round.

Cost 20 levels. (Base 10, +1 Eye, +1 Sun)

**Enticement of the Dreamer,** 3 points, Init -1, Mentem. R: Touch, D: Dream, T: Dream. The planetary divinity can enter a sleeping person's dream and influence it. The divinity must touch the target, brushing him with the faerie's intangible fingers. Upon awakening, the sleeper remembers the dream with an Intelligence + simple die roll against an Ease Factor of 6.

Cost 30 levels. (Base 15, +1 Touch, +1 Dream)

**Flight,** 2 points, constant, Corpus. The divinities can fly.

Cost 15 spell levels (Base 4, +2 Sun, +1 constant)

**Heaven's Gazing Erosion of Man,** 2 points, Init +0, Mentem or Corpus. R: Eye, D: Mom, T: Ind. This power permanently grants the target 3 Aging points in the particular Characteristic associated with the planetary divinity.

The target also gains 3 points toward Decrepitude.

Cost 20 levels. (Base 15, +1 Eye)

**Invisibility,** 4 points, Init -4, Corpus. The divinities can turn invisible.

Cost 15 spell levels (Base 4, +2 Sun, +1 for moving image)

**Planetary Divinity's Blessing of (Great Characteristic),** 10 points, Init -17, Vim.

R: Eye, D: Mom, T: Ind. Ritual. A specialized version of the common faerie power Grant (Major Virtue), this power allows the planetary divinity to permanently or temporarily increase a specific Characteristic in a target from +3 to +4 or from +4 to +5. Like other ritual powers, permanently increasing the Characteristic reduces the divinity's Might Score. Each planetary divinity can only increase the Characteristic with which it is associated.

Cost 50 levels. (Special)

**Planetary Divinity's Blessing of (Improved Characteristics),** 5 points, Init -1, Vim. R: Eye, D: Mom, T: Ind. Ritual. A specialized version of the faerie power: Grant (Minor Virtue), this power allows the planetary divinity to increase a specific Characteristic by 3 points, to a maximum value of +3. Just like the power The Divinity's Blessing of (Grant Characteristic), the increase is temporary or permanent as the faerie chooses, and each divinity can only affect the Characteristic associated with that divinity.

Cost 50 levels. (Special)

**Vis:** 8 pawns of Vim vis located in the various props of the faerie's costume, such as toga, sandals, and rod.

**Appearance:** Like performers draped in elaborate costumes, each planetary divinity looks like a youth wearing a Roman toga, ceremonial accoutrements, and bearing emblems representative of their planet.

## Riccardo Annibaldi

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per -1(1), Pre +2, Com +2, Str -1(1), Sta +1(1), Dex +2, Qik -1(1)

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 45 (45)

**Decrepitude:** 0 (4)

**Warping Score:** 0 (0)

**Confidence Score:** 1 (9)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Diabolist; Senior Clergy; Corruption, Greater Immunity (mind control), Wealthy; Arcane Lore (free), Enticer of Multitudes, Mentored by Demons (x2), Temporal Influence; Commanding Aura (free); Ambitious, Enemies; Arthritis, Fragile Constitution, Motion Sickness, No Sense of Direction

**Personality Traits:** Manipulative +3, Tense +3

**Reputations:** Strict Leader 4 (Church), Foe to Heretics and Witches 4 (Church)

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init -1, Attack n/a, Defense +3, Damage n/a

**Fist:** Init -1, Attack +2, Defense +2, Damage -1

**Soak:** +1

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5,

Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Artes Liberales 2 (rhetoric), Awareness 2 (lying), Brawl 3 (dodge), Charm 2 (social equals), Corruption 6 (5) (personal influence), Civil and Canon Law 5 (papal prerogatives), Concentration 2 (sermons), Bargain 3 (future favors), Etiquette 3 (public functions), Folk Ken 3 (social equals), Guile 3 (social inferiors), Infernal Lore 4 (demons), Intrigue 6 (vocational advantage), Italian 5 (expansive vocabulary), Latin 5 (church usage), Leadership 7 (priests), Legerdemain 3 (slight of hand), Organization Lore: Church 5 (personalities), Philosophiae 3 (ethics), Ride 2 (leisure), Teaching 2 (ordinary lectures), Theology 5 (against the New Aristotle)

**Equipment:** Expensive clothes appropriate to his station

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)

**Appearance:** Square-shouldered and stiff, Riccardo is a severe, uptight figure.

## Riccardo Annibaldi, Diabolist Cardinal

Riccardo Annibaldi is a diabolist, to whom Oriens has given Infernal blessings. The Annibaldi family is a powerful Italian family hailing from Rome and Lazio, a territory to the south of the city. At the moment, Riccardo is only a cardinal-deacon, the lowest rank of cardinal, but he anticipates greater offices through the aid of his demonic patron.

In game terms, the diabolist is a Mythic Companion, which allows him twice as many Virtues as Flaws. The diabolist's Corruption Supernatural Ability allows him to invoke a Personality Trait on a listener (*Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 91), which he will use to his benefit. Common examples are making a belligerent cardinal peaceful, a peaceful cardinal argumentative, and an argumentative cardinal agreeable.

To retain his Infernal powers and please his demon patron, Riccardo must cut himself each night, sacrificing a small amount of blood to his patron. The cut does not have to be large, and the cardinal is very discreet about this. Knowing that the wounds may give

## Tommaso da Capua

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per -1(1), Pre +3, Com +2, Str -1(1), Sta +1(1), Dex -1, Qik -1(1)

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 46 (46)

**Decrepitude:** 0 (4)

**Warping Score:** 0 (0)

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Senior Clergy; Wealthy; Temporal Influence; Commanding Aura (free); Ambitious, Monastic Vows; Clumsy

**Personality Traits:** Starry-eyed +3, Impetuous +3

**Reputations:** Romantic 4 (Church), Thoughtlessly Impulsive 4 (Church)

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init -1, Attack n/a, Defense +3, Damage n/a

**Fist:** Init -1, Attack +2, Defense +2, Damage -1

**Soak:** +1

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Inc (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Artes Liberales 6 (Ovid's Metamorphoses), Awareness 2 (servants), Brawl 3 (dodge), Charm 3 (superiors), Civil and Canon Law 5 (papal curia responsibilities), Concentration 2 (sermons), Etiquette 3 (public

functions), Folk Ken 3 (social inferiors), Hunt 3 (local favorite), Intrigue 5 (vocational advantage), Italian 5 (Capuan dialect), Latin 5 (church usage), Leadership 7 (congregation), Organization Lore: Church 4 (history), Philosophiae 3 (ethics), Profession: Scribe 3 (copying texts), Swim 1 (wading), Teaching 3 (multiple students), Theology 5 (Paul's Epistles)

**Equipment:** Expensive clothes appropriate to his station

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)

**Appearance:** Plump and cheerful, Tommaso looks approachable and friendly



him away, he usually cuts himself on his upper thighs, near his groin. Player characters may notice the self-inflicted wounds, although the location of the wounds makes it difficult. If he does not cut himself, Riccardo gains five pounds of weight by morning, a sign of the burden of serving his patron and representative of the sin of gluttony. If Riccardo is prevented from finding a private location in which to cut himself, player characters may notice him gaining weight. Finally, because of his Greater Immunity Virtue, Riccardo cannot be affected by mind-controlling supernatural effects. All of the cardinals can be affected by Oriens, Mentem magic, and the Planetary Divinities except Riccardo.

Finally, Riccardo has a few vials of poison, a very mundane and lethal way to deal with cardinals who won't vote for him.

## Tommaso da Capua, Pontifex Maximus

Tommaso is the Major Penitentiary, or leader of the Apostolic Penitentiary,

the tribunal of the Roman Curia that oversees issues of forgiveness of sins in the Church. A native of Capua, a commune located further south along the Italian peninsula in Campania, Tommaso is a highly educated man. To his undoing, he loves classical literature, such as Boethius, Ovid, and Cicero, especially the metaphysical passages that mix natural philosophy with the heavenly bodies. Fate is unkind Tommaso is the perfect foil for the Planetary Divinities, and he immediately believes their promises.

As Pontifex Maximus, Tommaso receives the blessing of the Planetary Divinities, who can use their faerie magic to raise his Characteristics to +5. He is currently favored by Venus, who has raised Tommaso's Communication to +5.

Nominally, Tommaso is a Guelph and will trigger Buonacorsus' Suffer the Judgment of Jericho if he is elected pope.

Angelo in Pescheria, and served as a cardinal-legate to France's royal court. A lifelong Guelph, Bonaventura is the leading candidate of the Gregorian electors. He is an outspoken opponent of the emperor, and Alyates wants Bonaventura as the next pope, certain that the Guelph's hostility will lead to a war between the Roman Church and the Holy Roman Empire.

So taken is he with himself and his chances to win that Bonaventura hasn't notice that supernatural forces are at work. Instead, he angrily finds his fellow cardinals temperamental, unable to commit to a decision they had made the day before. If asked, he has met and dined with Alyates on several occasions. He does not know Alyates is a magus, thinking him a Greek scholar interested in theology.

## Goffredo da Castiglione

Castiglione is the cardinal bishop of Sabina, another of the seven dioceses of urban Rome. He is without strong Guelph or Ghibelline attachments, and is the preferred candidate for pope among the Moderates of the Opposition

## Romano Bonaventura

Bonaventura is the bishop of Porto-Santa Rufina, one of the seven suburbicarian dioceses of the city of Rome. He is also the cardinal deacon of Sant'

## Romano Bonaventura

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per -2, Pre +3(2), Com +2(2), Str -2, Sta -1, Dex -1, Qik -3(1)

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 65 (65)

**Decrepitude:** 2 (2)

**Warping Score:** 0 (0)

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Senior Clergy; Wealthy; Temporal Influence; Commanding Aura (free); Ambitious, Enemies; Poor Hearing

**Personality Traits:** Argumentative +3, Aggressive +2

**Reputations:** Opposes the Emperor 4 (Ecclesiastic), Warmongering 4 (Ecclesiastic)

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init -3, Attack n/a, Defense +1, Damage n/a

**Fist:** Init -3, Attack +2, Defense 0, Damage -2

**Soak:** +1

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Inc (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Artes Liberales 2 (grammar), Awareness 2 (lying), Brawl 3 (dodge), Charm 2 (superiors), Civil and Canon Law 5 (papal prerogatives), Concentration 2 (sermons), Bargain 3 (threats), Etiquette 3 (religious services), Folk Ken 3 (Guelphs), Guile 3

(social equals), Intrigue 6 (vocational advantage), Italian 5 (expansive vocabulary), Latin 5 (church usage), Leadership 7 (priests), Organization Lore: Church 5 (politics), Philosophiae 3 (moral philosophy), Profession: Scribe 3 (glossing the Bible), Ride 2 (leisure), Teaching 2 (extraordinary lectures), Theology 5 (heresy)

**Equipment:** Expensive clothes appropriate to his station

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)

**Appearance:** Despite his age, Bonaventura is still an impressive figure. He struts when he walks, chest puffed out and shoulders back, and is loud and abrasive when he speaks.

## Goffredo da Castiglione

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per -2, Pre +3(2), Com +2(2), Str -2, Sta -1, Dex -1, Qik -3(1)

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 65 (65)

**Decrepitude:** 2 (2)

**Warping Score:** 0 (0)

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Senior Clergy; Wealthy; Temporal Influence; Commanding Aura (free); Ambitious; Monastic Vows; Fragile Constitution

**Personality Traits:** Soft-spoken +3

**Reputations:** Submissive 4 (Church), Frail 4 (Church)

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init -3, Attack n/a, Defense +1,

Damage n/a

**Fist:** Init -3, Attack +2, Defense 0, Damage -2

**Soak:** +1

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Inc (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Artes Liberales 2 (logic), Awareness 2 (architecture), Brawl 3 (dodge), Charm 2 (inferiors), Civil and Canon Law 5 (land ownership), Concentration 2 (sermons), Bargain 3 (future favors), Etiquette 3 (public functions), Folk Ken 3 (Ghibellines), Guile 3 (social inferiors), Hunt 3 (pigeons), Intrigue 6 (vocational ad-

vantage), Italian 5 (circumlocutory expressions), Latin 5 (church usage), Leadership 7 (priests), Organization Lore: Church 5 (titular buildings), Philosophiae 3 (ethics), Ride 2 (leisure), Teaching 2 (single student), Theology 5 (history)

**Equipment:** Expensive clothes appropriate to his station

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)

**Appearance:** Castiglione is a thin man with a weak chin and a pointy nose. Patches of wispy white hair cover his temples and the back of his head. He is stooped and shallow-shouldered, with an overall dreary appearance.

party. Buonacorsus wants Castiglione to ascend to the papal throne.

## Guelph Cardinals

These cardinals are Guelphs, and they want a pope who will continue an aggressive stance against the emperor. When not magically influenced, each votes for Romano Bonaventura. A Guelph pope concentrates his energies in Italy and continues to rail against powerful kings. As far as the Order of Hermes is concerned, any Guelph besides the diabolist Annibaldi and the warmongering Bonaventura would be a good pope.

### RINALDO CONTI DE SEGNI

**Age:** 51

**Reputation:** Quarrelsome 4 (Church)

**Personality Traits:** Gullible +2

Rinaldo is one of the younger members of the conclave. An official of the papal curia, he is a cardinal deacon, the lowest rank of cardinal. He is vehement in his opposition to the emperor.

### SINIBALDO FIESCHI

**Age:** 45

**Reputation:** Indecisive Leader 4 (Church), Lazy 4 (Church)

**Personality Traits:** Slothful +2

Sinibaldo is a cardinal priest of San Lorenzo in Lucina, a titular church and minor basilica in Rome. Although he is a dyed-in-the-wool Guelph, Sinibaldo admires the emperor personally. If it weren't for the muddy waters of politics, he thinks the emperor would make a good friend.

### GIL TORRES

**Age:** 68

**Reputation:** Open-minded 4 (Church)

**Personality Traits:** Kind +2

A cardinal-deacon of Santi Cosma e Damiano, an ancient titular church in Rome, Torres is the sole Spanish cardinal in residence. Of all the Guelphs present, he is the most easily swayed away from his former political attachment. He is also the cardinal most tolerant of wizards and magi.

## Ghibelline Cardinals

Called "Moderates of the Opposition," these men are against the war while supportive of the emperor. They want to elect a pope who will end the war and, if not magically influenced, they will vote for Goffredo da Castiglione. In general, politically minded magi think that a Ghibelline pope would be harmful to the Order, as he would eventually attach the Church to the Holy Roman Emperor. The best Ghibelline would be Castiglione, who is too frail to do much harm.

### RAINIERO CAPOCCI

**Age:** 69

**Reputation:** Loyal to Superiors 4 (Church)

**Personality Traits:** Weak-Willed +2

Rainiero is a cardinal deacon of Santa Maria in Cosmedin, a minor basilica located south of the Septizodium. He has lived in Rome his entire life, and desperately wants the emperor's siege to be abandoned permanently. He will capitulate to almost any imperial demand.



GIOVANNI COLONNA

Age: 43

Reputation: Ambitious 4 (Church), Too Connected to His Family 4 (Church)

Personality Traits: Ruthless +3

Giovanni is more interested in extending his family's influence in Rome than his personal influence in the Church, although the latter could certainly help the former. His family has been involved with a bitter feud with the Orsini family, and Giovanni is assumed to constantly be in opposition to any Orsini initiative or desire.

ROBERT SOMERCOTES

Age: 72

Reputation: Stubborn 4 (Church)

Personality Traits: Conservative +3

Robert is the cardinal deacon of the church of Santa Eustachio, a titular church and accompanying hospital in Rome. Robert is an Englishman who has remained uninvolved in Italian politics.

STEFANO DEI CONTI

Age: 65

Reputation: Pacifist 4 (Church)

Personality Traits: Sycophant +3

The archpriest of the Vatican Basilica and cardinal priest of Santa Maria in Trastevere, Stefano has only slight Ghibelline sympathies. Old age has pacified his nature, and he prefers peace at almost any cost.

Absentee Cardinals

These men were captured by the emperor on their way to Rome and are thus not in the Septizodium. Instead, they are confined in Apulia with the emperor's army.

ODDONE DI MONFERRATO

Age: 45

Reputation: Loyal Supporter 4 (Church)

Personality Traits: Avoids Conflict +3

The cardinal deacon of Saint Nicola in Carcere Tuiliano, Oddone has no political agenda concerning the Guelphs or the Ghibellines and will vote with the majority.

GIACOMO DA PECORARA

Age: 47

Reputation: Hardline Guelph 4 (Church)

Personality Traits: Resentful +3

Da Pecorara is a staunch Guelph and actively despises the emperor. If released from imperial confinement, Giacomo will demand that the cardinals excommunicate the emperor according to the dead pope's wishes.

PETER OF CAPUA THE YOUNGER

Age: 61

Reputation: Short-Sighted 4 (Church)

Personality Traits: Unrealistic +3

Peter is the cardinal deacon of Santa Grogio in Velabro, a basilica church located near the Tiber River. Peter can be easily persuaded to vote for the election's frontrunner, whoever that is at the time of the vote. He has a difficult time understanding what would be good for the Church in the long run.

the entire city. The Septizodium is the main location of the adventure, as the building where the cardinals are sequestered. The Aurelian Walls are the player characters' introduction to the city, and they may use the Piazza dei Satiri as a temporary headquarters. Both the Colosseum and the Temple of Mercury house antagonists who stay hidden until discovered by the player characters.

The City of Rome

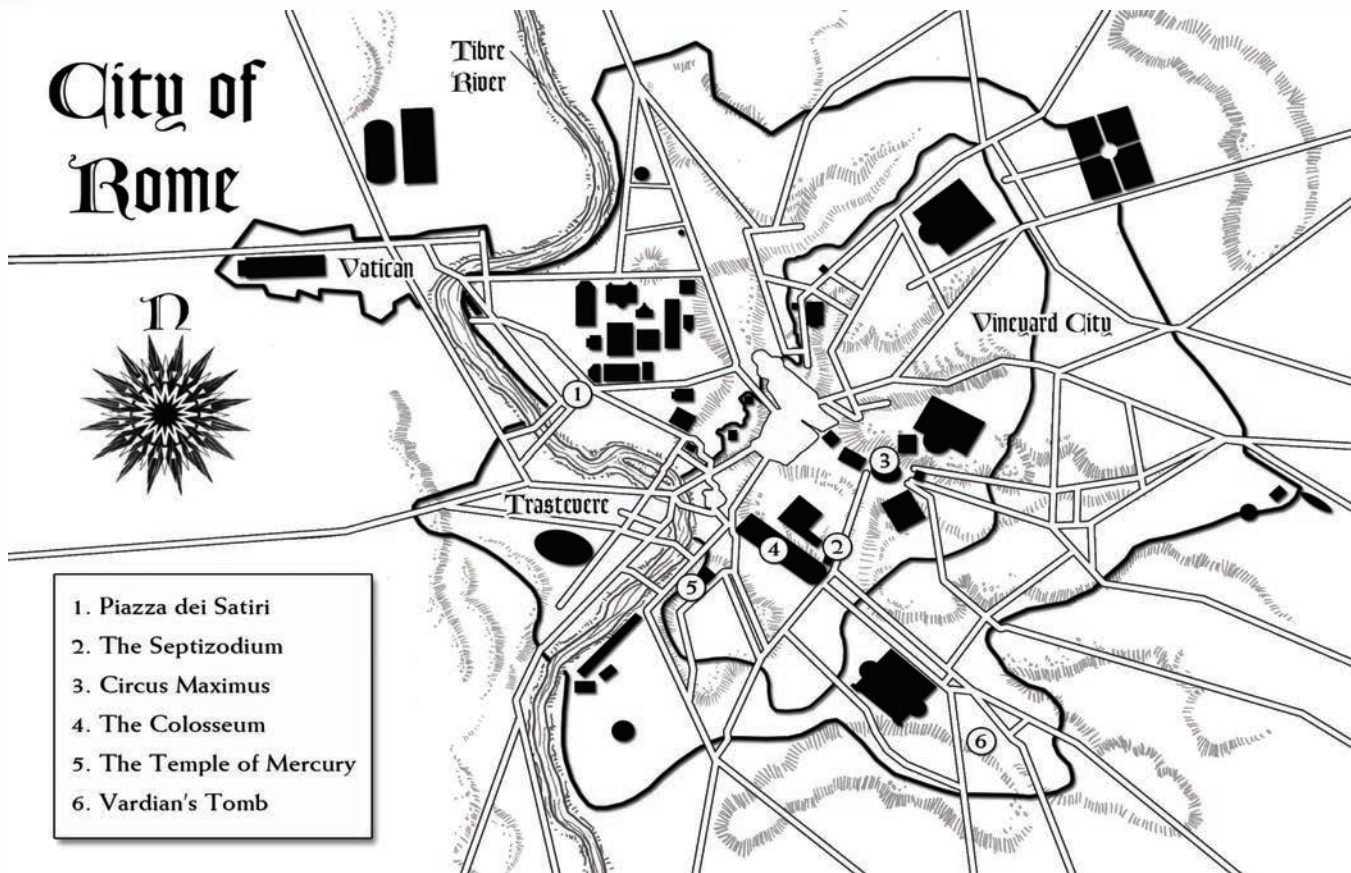
Rome is divided into four main parts: the crowded shores of the Tiber; the rural vineyard city; the Leonine Walls of the Vatican; and the Trastevere. Like other medieval cities, it is overcrowded and cramped, abundant with merchants, opportunities, and prosperity. Rome is also thick with greed, violence, and filth. The majority of the city's 35,000 inhabitants live near the Tiber River, along the east bank between the bend at Sant' Angelo's and the island, and a little further south on the west bank in a region called Trastevere. Cramped and overcrowded, both regions are filled with winding narrow alleys, busy streets, hawking merchants, penitent pilgrims, bustling clerks, and swaggering nobles. The human tide flows outside Rome's gates into a suburban sprawl of cottages and small farms that line the old Roman highways. Half of Rome is densely crowded and bustling with activity.

The other half of Rome, the vineyard city, is agricultural land, fenced pastures and plotted vineyards, allocated to various parishes and individual farmers. Standing among the hills, one would hardly notice being in a city at all, surrounded by fresh air, grazing goats, and buzzing bees. Small cottages and huts sit haphazardly throughout the area, interspersed with a small parish house here and there, but for the most part, this region of Rome is vacant.

Ancient ruins abound in both halves of Rome, sticking up like the bones of a

Settings and Locations

This story is localized to a few specific areas in Rome and does not explore



fallen giant. Sections of ruined masonry lay everywhere and many of these have been incorporated into contemporary city life. An ancient temple wall serves as a load-bearing wall for a recent structure. A row of columns serves as a boundary line between two residences, appropriately supporting a line of drying clothes. Other remains have been bricked up and fortified, standing alongside the taller square towers of the noble families.

A major pilgrimage destination and housing many holy buildings, Rome has many areas with powerful Divine auras. But Rome is also a busy city, home to many, many people, and, like other large cities in Mythic Europe, it is a conglomeration of supernatural auras pockmarked with regiones. Areas important to this adventure have specific auras listed later, but storyguides can use the following rules of thumb for other auras in Rome. Most streets and buildings along the Tiber have a Divine aura of 3, which dips to 2 at

night. The Trastevere, famous for criminal and illegal activities, has a Divine aura of 2 during the day and an Infernal aura of 2 at night (when the Divine aura dips to 1 and the Infernal aura overrides it). The Vatican has a higher Divine aura, perhaps 4 or 5 depending on exact locations. The vineyard city has a Divine aura of 1 throughout the day which disappears at night. Rome has approximately 400 churches, ranging from huge cathedrals to small parish churches, whose Divine auras range from 4 to 9, depending on the church's importance.

## The Aurelian Walls

The walls that surround Rome were built in the third century, nearly a thousand years ago, although characters would know that information only through magic. Educated characters would know that the walls of the city are mentioned both by Pliny the Elder in his

Naturalis Historia, and in the Mirabilia Urbis Romae. Both works describe the walls in different degrees, Pliny writing much earlier than the anonymous author of the Mirabilia, and indeed before the current walls were built, thus possibly confusing the characters. 13th-century Romans know that the walls are ancient, as old as the ruins that serve as the city's foundation.

The walls make a 22-mile circuit around the city, surrounding the Seven Hills of Rome, crossing the Tiber to enclose the Trastevere region and the Leonine City. 150 feet tall and 11 feet thick, the brick-faced concrete wall includes buildings that were standing before its construction, creating a conglomeration of styles and defensive fortifications. In total, 361 towers stand at 100-foot intervals along the wall, which also includes castles, battlements, arches, major gates, and postern gates. Like many medieval cities, the inhabitants' housing needs have spilled outside its gates, so while the city wall encompasses several square



miles, the Roman suburban sprawl extends past the gates and along the main avenues entering the city.

The wall has two types of gates: main gates and smaller postern gates. Both main and postern gates are a single arch, made of irregular stones, protected on both left and right sides by brick-faced concrete towers. The difference is size: a postern gate is one-half to one-third the size of a main gate. Because the wall is 11 feet thick, a gate seems like a tunnel running through the wall. For spell effect purposes, the tunnel area within the gate is considered Target: Room. Both the exterior and interior faces of the gate are protected by stout wooden doors and iron portcullises. The main gates have an upstairs room built into the gate, allowing archers to protect the gates through a series of windows.

Matteo Orsini's garrison is not large enough to man such a huge circumference of wall, and it concentrates its energy on staffing the city's main gates and the castles closest to those gates. Thus there are large expanses of wall that are virtually unprotected. Even if the characters weren't powerful sorcerers, they could easily find a way into the city.

## Piazza dei Satiri

One of several busy plazas in Rome, this piazza is a typical example of those located in the populated area of the city. Moss-covered ruins and recent fortifications surround armed nobles, peasant workers, and merchants, while a small parish church and a larger church sit nearby. The Piazza dei Satiri is located near the ruins of the Theater of Pompey, which serves as one of the primary fortifications of the Orsini family. Attached stone towers rise above the walls of the theater, overlooking the plaza and the nearby church of Santa Barbara. Several family houses are linked to the towers. With Matteo Orsini's recent appointment as senator, the family's fortunes have risen and more structures are being built.

## Vardian's Tomb

Vardian's Tomb is a covenant located in the rural section of Rome, in a series of the abandoned underground catacombs. It is home to a small number of Ex Miscellanea and Jerbiton magi, most of whom are interested in finding defixiones (see *Ancient Magic*, page 51). If they have not asked for help, having noticed Alyates and considered him too powerful for them to deal with, they do not figure prominently in this adventure. Even if they have initiated the characters' involvement in the matter, their aid and support to the player characters is meager.

The catacombs are too small to

house visitors, and the magi of Vardian's Tomb instead offer to put the magi up somewhere in town. Use the information describing the Piazza dei Satiri to construct a similar temporary residence for the player characters. All they know about Alyates is that he is Greek, skilled in Mentem magic, and has a sanctum located somewhere in Rome. While interviewing a ghost, a magus of Vardian's Tomb discovered that Alyates was manipulating the old pope, and his ghostly informant warned that Alyates might be at it again, controlling a cardinal to get to the next pope.

Across the plaza from the church is the house of Malgarita Ramberti, one of Alyates' personae. With its distinctive smell of fish, the two-story wooden building is not large, but it's enough to serve as both home and fish-selling stall. During the day, Malgarita or one of her employees sells fresh fish. At night, the storefront closes and Malgarita retreats to her private residence upstairs, the very same rooms she has promised to let the player characters use (see later). She has more than one residence, and can easily stay at one of her other shops or at her warehouse located on the Tiber. She promises to make the visitors dinner each evening. The plaza has a Divine aura of 3 during the day, which dips to 2 when the sun sets.

The first level of Malgarita's home is a single large room, with a door from the piazza and a long shuttered window. The shutter folds down into a counter, where Malgarita displays fish to her customers. A stone hearth and chimney rest against the far wall. A ladder can be placed at a trap door in the ceiling that leads to the second level, a windowless attic split into two rooms of equal size. The first room has a wooden table and a few chairs. The second room is her bedroom. A wooden chest holds a few items of female apparel, inexpensive

cosmetics, and other personal effects. A fresh, straw-stuffed mattress lies in a corner. With little effort, Malgarita can arrange for more mattresses, depending on the player characters' desires. The entire building has an overwhelming odor of fish.

There is a chance that the player characters will not stay with Malgarita. In that case, you can use this piazza as a setting for other events that transpire, like an attack from Oriens' minions or Buonacorsus' mundane allies.

## The Septizodium

The Septizodium, or Temple of the Seven Planetary Divinities, is a three-story stone building that sits at the extreme southeastern slope of the Palatine Hill, overlooking the Via Appia and across the street from the Circus Maximus. Six times wider than it is deep, the ramshackle building's long axis runs north-south, with an impressive façade covering the eastern side of the building. Three large, parallel alcoves grant access to the building with doorways set at the back of the alcoves. Two long balconies run the length of the eastern façade, lined by marble columns every few feet. Life-sized marble statues stand be-

tween some of the columns, representations of nymphs, naiads, and other water spirits. Many of these statues are missing a limb or head, or suffer from other wear. Inside the building, stairs lead upwards, granting access to the second and third floors and their exposed balconies. Four exposed stairways lead from the ground floor, through the second and third floor balconies, and exit onto the flat roof.

The center alcove leads to the most impressive room. Marble half-columns line the room, the far wall of which supports a stone relief of the seven planets dominating the night sky. This room contains the sequestered cardinals. Wooden tables, chairs, and sleeping cots are supplied for the men. The southern alcove leads to a room of similar size and marble decoration, but without the stone relief. The northern alcove leads to a dilapidated room whose upper floors have collapsed. While the walls still stand, the ceiling is gone. The second and third floors contain two rooms each, now that the northern sections have fallen. All four of these rooms allow access to the columned balconies that line the eastern façade. However, the southern section is separated from the central section by a wall, so that the only way to cross between sections is through a doorway on the ground floor.

## THE FAERIE REGIO

The Septizodium has a Faerie aura of 5. The main room on the ground floor is also a Faerie regio, usually accessible only on nights of the full moon. The regio has a Faerie aura of 7. The regio's entrance is between a pair of ivy-covered columns sculpted into the relief on the far wall. As they are part of the relief, people cannot physically walk between the pillars — they would walk straight into the stone wall — and the regio is only open at specific times. The divinities can enter and leave the regio at will, bringing those they wish to accompany them, and Hermetic magic can force a way through

## A Man is his Reputation

Much can be gleaned from a man's Reputation. As storyguide you should be prepared to use the Reputation rules found in *ArM5*, page 19. Most of the storyguide characters have an Ecclesiastical Reputation. According to the rules, only an ecclesiastic should be allowed to make a stress die + Reputation to see if he has heard of the person in question. However, since the ecclesiastics in question are so important, allow any character to make a Reputation roll. Increase the necessary Ease Factor by 3 for non-ecclesiastical characters. For example, a magus from Ireland needs to match an Ease Factor of 15 to have heard of Annibaldi (Whole Church), while a magus from the Lazi region would need a

12 (same province), and a magus from Rome would need a 9 (same diocese).

If a character has more than one Reputation players should check for each Reputation individually. It could happen that a character knows one Reputation about a man and not a second.

For simplicity, allow Buonacorsus to accurately scry on any Roman character with a Reputation of 5 or higher, using his *Sortes Virgilianae* Ability. This includes most of the cardinals. He will likely fail in his attempts to gain information about the magi, and you can assume he does. If you own *Rival Magic*, however, you can make attempts using the rules on page 53.

using the regular rules for regiones.

Inside the faerie regio, the landscape is vastly different from the gloomy interior of the Septizodium. Instead of stone ceilings and walls, the regio looks like a small, grassy garden at twilight, encircled by rose-covered bushes and ivy-draped trellises. Romanesque benches are arranged in a pleasant display. The garden has attached enclosures reserved for each divinity's private affairs.

## The Colosseum

Built on an elliptical floor plan, Colosseum is over 600 feet long and more than 500 feet wide. Much of it is in ruins. The interior is a grassy field, 280 feet long and 180 feet wide, awash with wild flowers that dance in the noontime breeze. Most of the three-story external arcade stands, as does the fourth-story attic. The open-aired, stone tiers used for seating remain, cracked by weeds and spotted with birds' nests. Much of the interior infrastructure is intact, separated with brick partitions built by the present inhabitants. Below ground lies a complex network of rooms, passages, and cells, previously used to stage and

house the many gladiatorial events held in the Colosseum. Many of these underground passages remain, still connected to a sewer and water system that is no longer in use.

The southwestern section of the Colosseum has been fortified by the Frangipane family, who use the facility as a power base for their family's fortunes. The Frangipane family members are Ghibellines, sympathetic to the emperor and often at odds with the pope and the Guelphs, particularly the Orsini family. The eastern section has been used by individuals to make private residences, shoring up sections of the arcades' arches like seabirds nesting on a cliff face. Anchorites, lunatics, outlaws, and other semi-permanent squatters live tucked among the arches and tunnels that interlace beneath the stone seats.

The Colosseum has Infernal, Faerie, and Magic auras, distributed in various locations as determined by past happenings or supernatural incidents. The Frangipane clan's residences have a small Infernal aura, a consequence of the family's greed and ambitions. Faerie auras dot the interior field, and on certain nights some faeries recreate



specific stories, like tossing Christians to the lions or the gladiatorial combats of Emperor Caligula.

Buonacorsus' residence is in one of the few Magic auras of the building, three rooms sitting one after another against to the outer wall of the third-floor arcade. Accessed via a stairway running from the seats to a tunnel whose other exits have been bricked up, Buonacorsus has lived in these rooms for several years. The first room is an antechamber, where he receives the few visitors he entertains, lined with musty couches, dirty dishes, and half-empty casks of wine. The second room is his bedroom, brimming with personal artifacts that are more sentimental than valuable, and the final room is his laboratory, where he has invented his many rites and awakened the stone naiad statue. All three rooms are in a Magic aura of 3. A secret door in the floor leads from the laboratory to the corridor below, which has several exits.

## The Temple of Mercury

Across from the Colosseum and the Septizodium, almost three-quarters of the way up the slope of the Aventine Hill, is the Temple of Mercury. Long abandoned, it is no longer adorned with apotropaic herms and statues of the Roman god. The roof is cracked and portions of the temple have fallen down. Only half of the marble columns stand, hidden behind clinging vines and overgrown weeds. From a short distance away, it looks like nothing more than another pile of weedy rubble, indistinct from the hundreds of similar piles littering the vineyard section of Rome. But beneath the cracked marble floor lies a secret.

Hundreds of years ago, the basement of the Temple of Mercury was used to store votive offerings to the god of commerce, and as a meeting place for the few Cult of Mercury members who lived in Rome. The temple ceased to be used after the Ostrogoth siege of Rome

in 546, lying in ruins until explored by Bonisagus in the eighth century. Forgotten again, it has lain fallow until rediscovered by Alyates several years ago. Since then, he has made it his home, appreciating the Magic aura of 3 in a city full of Divine and Faerie auras.

Alyates left the ruined temple alone and concentrated on the rooms beneath. A dilapidated stairway leads down to a clean, spacious, stone room. A single wooden door leads to a lavishly decorated room, half living quarters and half laboratory. Spontaneous Imaginem spells keep the air fresh, scented with lavender, and spontaneous Ignem spells keep the room well lit. The room is protected by a level 30 Aegis of the Hearth spell, annually cast from a casting tablet that Alyates keeps among his personal treasures. The site is not marked with a sanctum marker; as far as anyone knows Alyates died in Constantinople in 1204.

## Expected Sequence of Play

The adventure asks the player characters to enter Rome, specifically the Septizodium, and purposefully meddle in mundane affairs. This is not oath-breaking, which stipulates that meddling is forbidden if it "brings ruin to our sodales." In this case, the storyguide must impress upon the magi that not interfering may bring ruin upon the Order. The magi are not asked to pick a pope, merely to protect the cardinals from supernatural manipulation so that they can select a pope using their own mental faculties.

To get the magi involved, someone has to tell them what is happening in the Septizodium. Because of the supernatural involvement in this high-stakes game, this is easy to accomplish. Someone attached to one of the interested parties asks the magi to help protect the cardinals. Connecting this agent to a

magus' Story Flaw is an excellent idea, and you are encouraged to warp the following suggestions so that seem palatable to your players. The player characters should only know about one threat at first: Oriens, the Planetary Divinities, Alyates, or Buonacorsus. They discover the other threats and how convoluted the deliberations are once inside the Septizodium.

If you favor a subtle approach, let the player characters do some of the work. Have the magi notice that the Magic aura that surrounds their covenant dips a point, for a day or two, before returning to normal. Investigation shows that other nearby auras area also fluctuating, ever so slightly, and people start having prophetic dreams that something is terribly amiss. Some great decision must be made, claim the awakened dreamers, but who, where, and what is a mystery. Let the player character fret and fiddle about, although if they have the means to enter dreams or question auras then they discover that the auras are fluctuating because the cardinals' supernatural manipulators are warring. When one gains an advantage in the number of needed votes, the other auras dip. The manipulators don't know they are doing this; this is Mythic Europe responding to an incredibly important decision. A pope affiliated with a realm other than the Divine may permanently alter every aura in Mythic Europe.

A more direct approach is to have an agent arrive and ask the player characters to intervene, telling them that something is wrong inside the Septizodium, and asking them to check it out and protect the cardinals. Who this agent is depends on your group.

- A divine agent arrives and asks the magi to help. Perhaps the magi have done something immoral and are looking for redemption. Perhaps they are paragons of virtue and regularly receive visiting angels. Perhaps a character's Guardian Angel steps forward; perhaps it is St Nerius



who strides into the covenant seeking aid. The agent does not have to be supernatural. A nearby priest or bishop might know what is going on and ask the magi for help. A divine agent tells the magi about Oriens and that one of the cardinals is a diabolist. The prospect of an infernal pope should terrify most Christians, who firmly believe that the Holy Father is the right hand of God. The idea of setting a diabolist on the papal throne is an abomination.

- A demon arrives, possessing a covenant character and informing the group that another demon is active in Rome. Demons are short-sighted and hold grudges, especially against each other. One of Oriens' enemies acts against Oriens, hoping to thwart the cardinal demon's plan. Between head-spinning and vomiting iron nails, the possessed character tells the magi that a diabolist is ready to assume the papal throne, and once successful every non-Infernal aura in Mythic Europe will dim. The possessed character cackles as it says that the first order of business of the diabolist pope will be to declare the Order of Hermes heretics, and allow the princes of northern Mythic Europe to crusade against the magi.
- A faerie agent arrives, one somehow

connected to the covenant or a residing character. The faerie tells the magi that the planetary divinities are selecting the pope, and giggles with glee. Churches will disappear, replaced by pagan temples. The great faerie powers will return and rule the world. Unless the planetary divinities are stopped, and this would please the faerie agent even more. If the faerie and the covenant have tangled before, defeating the planetary divinities' chosen man will resolve the faerie-covenant conflict.

- A magic agent arrives, most likely another member of the Order of Hermes but other options are available. It all depends on the characters' pasts and the players' future goals for their characters. If a magus wants to become a Quaesitor or a hoplite, then a Guernicus magus arrives and tells the magi about Alyates and his suspected involvement with the past pope. Is he involved in delaying the decision? Or, a maga from a Roman covenant of Vardian's Tomb asks for help, saying that she thinks a Hermetic magus is interfering in the conclave but feels out of her league in dealing with the problem. If the player characters have previously encountered Virgilian wizards then the agent says that another is med-

dling with the papal conclave. The player characters will probably be reluctant to interfere, and the requestor must stress that involvement is not interference. The pope is a powerful man with vast resources. Controlling him would give Alyates or the Virgilian wizard a powerful advantage over their enemies, who the requestor insists would eventually be the Order of Hermes, present company included.

Use any other angle that pressures the magi into action, including character Story Flaws and covenant Hooks and Boons. Tell them what will happen if they do nothing: a diabolist will be elected pope and lead a crusade against the Order, a faerie puppet pope will bring a return of pagan worship and pagan powers, a rival wizard will eventually lead the emperor against the Order of Hermes, and a meddling Hermetic with a pope on a string could ruin the Order as well.

## Approaching Rome

Powerful wizards have fantastic ways of traveling and may have the means to instantly travel to Rome. Those who rely on more conventional means of



travel — like the perfectly acceptable walking — encounter the Holy Roman Emperor's troops. The soldiers have blocked every major road leading to Rome. Originally stationed to lay siege to the city, most of the troops have retreated to Apulia. A few large groups are stationed along the roads to capture any cardinals summoned to the papal conclave, but the troops aren't expecting any more cardinals at this point. Most people, the imperial troops included, are waiting for the College of Cardinals to select a new pope. Regular clergy, pilgrims, merchants, and other travelers are not unduly harassed.

Have your players make a Perception + Awareness + simple die roll against an Ease Factor of 6. If they succeed, their characters see the imperial troops lazing alongside the road before the troops see them. Failing this roll means that the soldiers see the characters at the same time that the characters see the soldiers, and botching this roll means that the characters inadvertently walk into the imperial troop's camp. On the eve of the siege, the emperor had nearly five thousand men stationed around Rome. Currently the imperial army is a hodge-podge collection of foreign mercenaries and vassal German and Neapolitan nobles' troops. The magi encounter one such group, a battalion of two hundred soldiers led by fifteen Neapolitan knights. The knights are either enjoying the day with a nearby hunt or a lunchtime siesta, depending on what time of day it is, leaving the actual work to the soldiers.

The soldiers are tired and bored. Ordered to capture cardinals, the soldiers let other parties pass, especially now that the emperor wants to act friendly toward the Roman citizens. As long as the group doesn't look rich and are not traveling in style, the soldiers let them pass after answering some mandatory questions. Ask the group's spokesman for a Presence + Charm + stress die roll. Remember the -3 penalty to social rolls if the character has the Gift. If the roll succeeds against an Ease Factor of 6 the

group can pass. Failure means that the soldiers need to bring their superiors into the discussion, meaning a delay more than any real trouble. Of course, this depends how the player characters react. If the player botches the roll the soldiers think the group contains a disguised cardinal and move to arrest them, calling for help as they press forward.

The magi cannot know that the soldiers will not molest them and may take preventative measures. Twenty soldiers stand by the road with another 100 loitering in a nearby camp, making two distinct groups. If the knights are not hunting they are also in the camp. If a magus wants to affect all the soldiers by the road with a single spell, the Target must be Group (10 individuals) with an additional Magnitude included (to affect 100 individuals). Boosting the spell by an additional Magnitude, to affect 1000 individuals, won't work in this case because the two groups aren't physically close enough to count as a single distinct group.

## Crossing the Porta

Rome has several gates, which are open during the day and closed at night.

The main gates are guarded by a garrison of twenty soldiers, professional men-at-arms in the employ of one of several powerful Roman noble families. Currently Rome is controlled by the Orsini family and the main gates of the city are protected by Orsini men. Several wealthy families dominate Roman politics in the thirteen century, their fortunes waxing and waning as they vie against one another for control. Although important to a saga set in Rome, these political vicissitudes are not important to this adventure.

The guards know that the emperor has called off the siege. Like their adversaries, they wait for the College of Cardinals to select the next pope. They are naturally concerned about the outcome — an aggressive pope means a return to the siege, while a moderate pope means an end to the current conflict — but until the cardinals choose their man the guards have little to do. While the siege is on hiatus the city operates as usual and the guards monitor the steady flow of traffic.

The soldiers notice armed men and step out of the shadowy gateway to bar their path. Scanning the strangers with their eyes, the Orsini guards are looking

## Sigils

Magic leaves a mark called a sigil, which is specific to an individual. Alyates' sigil is a short burst of purple light in the targeted area and Carbonius' sigil is a chilling shiver along the spine. Buonacorus also has a sigil — although his tradition doesn't call it that — the heavy scent of lavender. Alyates can use his Shroud Magic spell to change his sigil, but he can only do this on spells that are level 40 or lower. If he thinks his magic is being watched he changes the sigil. If Alyates sees one of the player character magi casting a spell and notices the sigil, he will change his sigil into that sigil when he uses spells on the cardinals. While he could change his sigil to resemble Buona-

corsus', he does not know it.

To recognize who a specific sigil belongs to requires an Intelligence + Order of Hermes + stress die roll. The Ease Factor depends on how wide spread this information is in your saga. If sigils are generally kept to a small group of people, witnesses and covenant members, then the Ease Factor should be quite high (12). If the Order of Hermes keeps careful notation and records of sigil and their owners, the Ease Factor should be lower (9). If your player character magi are from a House that is more likely to keep this information — Houses Mercere, Bonisagus, and Guernicus perhaps — the Ease Factor should be even lower (6).

for imperial soldiers, men who might serve as the emperor's spies. They generally know their enemy, and even though the imperial army is not homogenous, the Roman guards have encountered enough distinct groups serving the empire to recognize them. They can tell a Guelph from a Ghibelline on a Perception + Folk Ken + simple roll against an Ease Factor of 6. Use the stats for a Standard Soldier (ArM5, page 22) for the Orsini guards. If this roll succeeds the guards are able to tell that the character is not a Ghibelline.

The characters should have little problem with the guards. If they attempt to cast spells, they instantly notice the difficulty imposed by Rome's Divine aura of 3.

Once past the guards the characters will cross through the gatehouse and possible trigger the Augustan rite A Murderous Assault Will Befall You. Every magus considers himself "a member of the Order of Hermes", the rite's complicated trigger, as may others: Redcaps and possibly some custos and companions. If the rite penetrates any Magic Resistance the trigger's initiator might have, 500 crows rise from their roosts and mob the gatehouse's entrance into the city, diving and cawing and creating an incredibly loud clamor that can be heard throughout the city. The rite's enchantment only has a Duration: Diameter and the crows fly off at that point, uninterested. Buonacorsus cast this rite on each of Rome's twelve gates and five posterns.

If the rite doesn't penetrate a magus' Parma Magica then the magus will feel his Parma Magica stop the spell, indicating that it just resisted active magic. Clever players will ask questions and investigate the rite. A Murderous Assault Will Befall You is an 11th magnitude effect, fairly simple to find with an Intellego Vim spell (base effect 1). Correctly casting such a spell indicates that the rite is Magical, its magnitude, and the approximate Technique and Form (Rego Animal). Such a spell also shows that while Magical, the effect is

not Hermetic.

While cacophonous, this scene isn't dangerous, and the player characters should handily deal with the crows. This rite signals to Buonacorsus that a magus has just entered the city. Buonacorsus fears that his mundane enemies have magical allies and cast the rite to warn him if any wizards enter the city.

If the characters use other means to enter the city, like Rego Corpus spells that instantly transport them, they will miss both the encounter with the soldiers and the crows at the gate. Most likely they proceed directly to the Septizodium. This encounter is not essential, but does introduce a different kind of magic and the presence of other interested parties. You should somehow warn player characters that a Virgilian wizard is plotting against the cardinals. One possibility is to find an excuse for one of the party to leave through a gate on some quick excursion; the magic works whether the character is coming or going. You could also use the enchanted statue in the Septizodium as an indicator of the Augustan Brotherhood's involvement (see later).

## Outside the Septizodium

From the gatehouse the magi should proceed directly to the Septizodium. It is easy to find and, due to the recent events, anyone can direct the magi to the building. The first thing they notice is the 500 crows roosting on the building's roof and upper balconies. Armed guards can be seen in the plaza in front of the building and a sizable crowd mills around wondering if the cardinals will reach a decision. Orsini's guards keep a tight watch on the Septizodium, preventing the eleven cardinals from leaving the building and prohibiting visitors. Matteo Orsini has ordered restricted rations for the cardinals, who remain thirsty and dangerously underfed. One meal is delivered

at noon, consisting mostly of cheese, bread, and weak wine. The cardinals are denied even the most minor human decencies. Without chamber pots the men must urinate and defecate in a corner of their room, the same room they use for sleeping, eating, and deciding the next pope.

Orsini's guards restrict the front entrances and patrol the roof, using the external staircases to avoid the building's interior. The guards know about the cardinals' deliberations, having heard them repeatedly screamed from one cardinal to another. While Latin is the lingua franca of the Church, most of the deliberations are spoken in Italian. The guards, as well as most citizens living nearby, know the state of things inside the building, making it easy for the player characters to get accurate information.

The four Guelphs, Riccardo Annibaldi, Rinaldo Conti de Segni, Gil Torres, and Sinibaldo Fieschie, want to elect Romano Bonaventura, who will continue the struggle against the emperor. The three Ghibellines, Giovanni Colonna, Rainiero Capocci, and Robert Somercotes, favor Goffredo da Castiglione, who will not oppose the emperor. Two cardinals, Tommaso da Capua and Stefano dei Conti, did not have strong convictions either way. The winner needs a two-thirds majority, or eight out of the eleven votes. Most Romans thought that the Guelphs would win and elect Bonaventura.

The debate hung in stalemate for a week, until Annibaldi announced that he wanted to be pope and stopped supporting Bonaventura. Soft-spoken Tommaso da Capua did the same, declaring that he should be pope. The soldiers overheard Guelphs voting for Ghibellines and Ghibellines voting for Guelphs, and then heard the situation reversed the next day. Where at first they thought a Guelph would win, now they don't think anyone will. To unlock the stalemate, Colonna and Somercotes demand that Matteo Or-



sini instruct the emperor to release the three captured cardinals. This "conversation" happens in the morning, shouted from the interior to Orsini standing in the street. Thus far Orsini has told them to decide themselves.

The crowd thins after lunch is delivered, and is smallest during the afternoon, the hottest part of the day. It grows larger again toward evening, when the cardinals make their daily vote. They vote once each day, writing their choice on small slips of parchment and letting one member of the group read the results. The crowd waits for a winner to be declared. If nothing happens by dusk, the crowd disperses, realizing that another day has passed without a decision being made.

As the characters survey the scene, they may notice a woman fishmonger bringing a meal to the guards. The woman notices the magi unless they have taken careful steps to remain hidden. This is Alyates, in his Malgarita persona. Even if they are hidden Alyates had a good chance of noticing the player characters. His Visions Flaw has already indicated that other magi will interfere with his plan and his Premonitions Virtue rings like a bell once he is close to the player characters.

Alyates has a plan and is in the middle of following it through. As the player characters arrive, Alyates has manipulated Bonaventura to take his first Arcane Connection to another cardinal, a slipper belonging to Sinibaldo Fieschi, and made Bonaventura decide to throw the slipper off the upper balcony. Alyates is waiting for Bonaventura to appear and toss the slipper to the plaza below, where she hopes to scoop it up. Noticing the player characters disturbs the magus and he abandons his plan. The player character may notice Bonaventura casting a slipper to the plaza below on a Perception + Awareness + stress die roll against an Ease Factor of 9. On a truly spectacular roll, 15 or higher, the character also notices a particularly large crowd watching Bo-

naventura. This is the demon Oriens, although the character won't know it at the time.

Alyates has no idea who the player characters are — unless they have Reputations within the Order of Hermes — and decides that the best way to investigate them is to interrogate any mundane companions they have in tow. He wants to know if the magi are after him. Disguised as Malgarita, he approaches the magi and offer to sell them a fish lunch. Pretending to notice that they are foreigners, she then offers them a room above her shop, at a very convenient price. If they refuse she casts a minor Mentem spell to influence one of the mundane character's decisions. Even with no voice and gestures and in a Divine aura Alyates should be able to cast Meet Me at Midnight on one of the characters, telling the character to meet her later, alone. She retreats to the shadows and waits for the character to slip away from the group. The aura directly outside the Septizodium is a Divine aura of 1.

If Alyates is successful he convinces the player characters to stay with Malgarita in the Piazza dei Satiri. Malgarita Ramberti will provide a quick background for the characters. She is a lonely fishwife who has had some success with three shops and three employees. She

asks that she still be allowed to sell fish from the first-floor window, but if the characters insist, she can cease for the time being. She purposefully plays with a small bone hanging from a necklace, and if asked she says that it is a finger bone of St Jerome, her most prized possession. It is actually just a finger bone, but Alyates hopes that mentioning this relic will suggest to the magi that Malgarita has Magic Resistance and in this way he can keep his Parma Magica activated while he interacts with the characters.

With the player characters relaxed and off guard, Malgarita tries to take items that serve as short-term Arcane Connections to the player magi's mundane staff. This is merely to keep tabs on the magi and she will not risk discovery if acquiring an Arcane Connection proves too difficult. Malgarita leaves each morning, first to go to the Temple of Mercury and use the Cup of Carbonius to cast spells to control Bonaventura, then to the plaza in hopes of retrieving Arcane Connections. His success depends on what the player character magi do. If they do nothing, he gets one Arcane Connection to a cardinal each day, and in a week has Arcane Connections to enough cardinals to elect Bonaventura pope.

If he has an Arcane Connection to the magi's staff he uses it to watch the magi. However, he won't take the Cup of

## Buonacorsus' Animation

The Animations of the Augustan Brotherhood are Magic Things, even though they are mere shadows of true Magic Creatures. The animation hidden in the Septizodium does not have the power of original thought, even though it has been awakened, nor can it move. It has a single power that must be triggered by someone else, like an enchanted item. The power has a Penetration of 21.

**Magic Might:** 15 (Ignem)

**Characteristics:** Int 0, Per +3, Pre 0, Com +1, Str 0, Sta 0, Dex 0, Qik 0

**Size:** 0

**Soak:** +10

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Destroyed (16+)

**Abilities:** Awareness 3 (watching for signals), Penetration 5 (School of Prometheus effects)

**Powers:**

*Summer's Sweltering Heat*, (see Buonacorsus' rites)

**Appearance:** The marble statue is a nude naiad standing poised as if for a dance leap, with arms raised above its head. Its left eye is solid gold and its right eye is solid silver.



Carbonius out of his sanctum in the Temple of Mercury. After casting his spells on Bonaventura, Alyates spies on the magi if he can. After watching them for a few minutes he decides whether he should continue or not, based on what they do. If they get too close to him, he will abandon his efforts and retreat from the city.

If the magi arrive in the morning, there is a chance that they notice Buonacorsus triggering the enchanted statue from the Colosseum (see later: The Animation).

## Inside the Septizodium

Getting inside the Septizodium should be almost effortless for the magi. Of the six available rooms inside the building, the cardinals only use the two on the ground floor and two on the second floor. Day after day the men spend most of their time enduring the atrocious heat, complaining about their

conditions, and bickering. The cardinals know that they are the only people who are supposed to be in the building, but in their captivity they abandon normal protocol and speak with intruders, especially if those intruders' hands are full of bread and wine. Each day at noon several servants bring lunch into the building, and characters could easily slip in disguised as servants.

### FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Inside the scene is disastrous. The building is hot and stinks of human cohabitation. Flies buzz everywhere. The eleven men, half of them older than 60, have stripped to their underwear, their regular clothing tossed in corners. Some bicker and complain with each other, some lie listlessly about fanning themselves, other yell invectives at the guards. All wait for lunch to arrive, and when it does they hustle toward it to

gather their share of the food. Scuffles have erupted as the portions diminish. After lunch, sometimes after an afternoon nap, the cardinals vote. An argument typically follows.

The four leading candidates mill about their colleagues petitioning votes, conversations which are easily overheard. Annibaldi promises wealth and fortune to those who vote for him, also suggesting that he could make life quite difficult for those who oppose him. Tommaso quotes Greek philosophers and references famous Greek myths in his persuasions. Bonaventura rails against the emperor and says that it is each cardinal's duty to vote for him. Castiglione complains about the heat — he is the frailest of the group — and meekly promises to make peace with the emperor to preserve the tranquility of the Church.

The invisible planetary divinities lounge around the perimeter of the room, enjoying every squabble. While invisible they are not incorporeal, and pinch and poke those they don't like. To see the faeries requires a successful Perception + Second Sight + stress die roll against an Ease Factor of 14 or a level 40 Intellego Imaginem spell (base 20, +4 Vision). As eager spectators the faerie instantly notice new participants in their game, especially if the magi cast obvious spells. Having already noticed the sigil displayed when Alyates casts a spell on Bonaventura, the planetary divinities assume that the player character magi are the wizards targeting the Guelph. Clandestinely, away from the cardinals if possible, they reveal themselves to the magi and say that it isn't fair that they have appeared on the scene. The other manipulators are using proxies and they should too.

The magi won't know what this means but the planetary divinities explain that they, a demon, and obviously the magi are all trying to control the election through their proxies, and by arriving inside the building the magi aren't being fair. That fact that the



planetary divinities are not always acting through their proxy is lost on the faeries. They are more interested in the play than the results. They know that Bonaventura is the cardinal targeted by the wizard, who is also controlling the heat in the room (this is incorrect), and that a demon has been seen hovering around the balcony. They don't know who the demon or his proxy is. They don't know why the heat decreases when Castiglione pulls ahead in the vote. They readily admit all these facts.

If Alyates suspects that the magi have entered the Septizodium he runs to the Temple of Mercury and casts Forcing the Undecided's Decision on Bonaventura to suggest that the cardinal stand near the magi and watch them. When this happens Bonaventura's eyes will flash with purple light, Alyates' sigil, and depending on where the magi are they may notice this. Alyates then casts Borrow the Eyes of Another to see what the magi are doing. If Bonaventura has successfully maneuvered his way near the magi, they may see this second spell's sigil. Watching won't do Alyates much good and he might decide to cease Borrow the Eyes of Another and cast Borrow the Ears of Another, giving the magi a third chance to see his sigil. Seeing the sigil is relatively easy by this point, but recognizing it is a different matter. Suggestions on recognizing sigils are in the insert: Sigils.

If Buonacorsus hears the magi enter the city then he triggers his Animation. Every cardinal inside must make a Deprivation check at mid-afternoon (see later). This magical effect has a Penetration total of 21. It is an Ignem equivalent effect for determining whether it penetrates the magi's Magic Resistance. However, magi notice the cardinals groan under the heat, and they may check for active magic using Intellego Vim spells. To determine the magnitude of Buonacorsus' rites, divide the rite's Ease Factor by 3.

Oriens is also watching the magi, either in his undetectable spiritual form

or the form of a crow. Perdo Vim magic chills his spine, even though the magi have no way of harming Oriens at this stage of the game. Like every demon, Oriens must first be detected before he can be destroyed (see *Realms of Power: Infernal*, page 33). Oriens doesn't explicitly know this, but being the accomplished deceiver that he is, he is accustomed to hiding behind the curtain and acting through agents, in this case his diabolical cardinal servant.

The four Ghibellines and the three Guelphs readily admit that they change their votes often, although none of them understand why. Some remember dreams, while others may reluctantly admit to slight bribes and threats. Let players make Perception + Folk Ken rolls after watching each of the cardinals. Success against an Ease Factor of 9 lets the characters know the cardinals dominant Personality Trait, which might shed light on their activities. The four main candidates do not change their votes and continually vote for themselves.

As the magi spend the day observing and interacting with the cardinals, let the players make Reputation rolls for each man they meet.

## THE ANIMATION

Sitting on the northeast corner of the third floor balcony is a stone statue of a nude naiad. Sculpted to appear similar to the other statues, this is a recent addition, commissioned and enchanted by Buonacorsus. Awakened through a process of Virgilian magic, the Animation has the single power to make the interior of the Septizodium hot and humid. The Animation cannot move and is positioned so that its gaze runs up the slope of the Palatine Hill toward the Colosseum. To trigger the item, Buonacorsus leaves his secret hideout in the Colosseum, climbs to the top of the arcade, and waves a white cloth. If the animation sees the white cloth it activates

its single power; the animation successfully sees the cloth on a Perception + Awareness + stress die roll against an Ease Factor of 12. The Animation's sight is limited by natural conditions and cannot see the Colosseum in the dark.

Intellego magic will certainly pick out this statue, as it is the only enchanted statue on the balconies. It is easier to find the statue when its magical effect is activated, but even if searched for before Buonacorsus triggers the Animation, it shouldn't be hard for an experienced magus. Careful observation may also work. On an Awareness + Perception + stress die roll against an Ease Factor of 12 the observer notices that the only statue not facing the Via Appia is the Animation. Finally, if the timing is right, succeeding with an Awareness + Perception roll against an Ease Factor of 15 allows the observing character to see a figure waving a white cloth in the statue's direction. Looking back, Buonacorsus can examine the balcony with a successful Perception + Awareness + stress die roll against an Ease Factor of 9. If he fails this roll he assumes that the coast is clear and will trigger the effect about an hour after sunrise, after he has performed a divination to see how the vote is going.

The Animation's effect can be lethal, over time and against a frail or elderly occupant, but will probably only inconvenience the player characters. A Perdo Vim spell removes the effect, which should be considered an eighth magnitude spell for purposes of determining what level the Perdo Vim spell needs to be. Destroying the statue would also do the job. The statue can be physically removed from the balcony, and the easiest method is to push it over the railing. If it is pushed, determine damage by rolling a stress die + 18 (approximately a 36 foot fall) against the animation's Soak (+10) + a stress die. The animation continues to function if "wounded" but not if it is destroyed. If the statue is removed, Buonacorsus can no longer affect the

cardinals. His magic is too time-consuming to create additional rites and he has exhausted his arsenal with those he has already cast. If the player characters cease at this point, having dealt with the Animation and perceiving no new threats, the cardinals are still in danger. Buonacorsus' rite to bring down the building, Suffer the Judgment of Jericho, is still waiting to be triggered.

## THE AFTERNOON VOTE AND EVENING

After lunch the cardinals debate a little bit more. If Buonacorsus knows the magi are in Rome then he has activated his Animation, which quiets most of the debate. Annibaldi uses his Corruption Supernatural Ability to influence those he speaks with, and by spending a Confidence Point he can instill a Personality Trait. He uses the environment's discomfort to his advantage, making it psychologically more bearable to those who agree to vote for him. This same power allows him to make his enemies even more uncomfortable. Personality Traits that might psychologically ease a sufferer's heat exhaustion grant the character a +1 to the Deprivation check forced by Buonacorsus' statue. The reverse is also true, and characters under an imposed negative Personality Trait receive a -1 penalty to the check.

After Deprivation checks have been made, the characters hear the crowd chanting for the cardinals to vote. Slowly they rouse themselves and vote, writing their choice on slips of cheap parchment. The four main candidates vote for themselves and the other seven votes are divided. Three of main contenders rail against their colleges, Castiglione being the only one who returns quietly to his cot.

After the vote one cardinal drops to the floor, drooling and raving like a madman. A character who can see the planetary divinities will see one of them

approach the cardinal and touch him, inflicting him with the faerie's Affliction of Heavenly Insanity power. The cardinal had promised to vote for Tommaso and then didn't, and the faerie is punishing the man's disloyalty. When the effect ends, at sunset, the man will confess to inquiring characters that he had promised the sun faerie to vote for Tommaso but then changed his mind.

After sunset the cardinals retire for the night. Annibaldi sneaks away to the balcony. At midnight Annibaldi must prove his devotion to Oriens by sacrificing a few drops of his own blood. If he fails to perform this rite he gains five pounds at dawn. Both the cuts and the weight gain can reveal Annibaldi as the diabolist. Annibaldi knows that he will gain weight if he doesn't perform the blood sacrifice, but also knows that letting someone see him cut himself will reveal his infernal allegiance. Let a player make a Perception + Awareness + stress die roll each day after the diabolist misses a night of cutting himself. If the roll meets or exceeds an Ease Factor of 15 the character notices the additional weight.

Annibaldi heads upstairs to the balcony. If he is not followed he cuts his thigh and whispers his devotion to Oriens while the blood runs down his leg. If he thinks someone is following him he will not go. If Annibaldi makes his sacrifice Oriens appears, in the shape of a huge crow, and lands on the balcony's edge. Tired of waiting, the demon tells his disciple to poison one of the cardinals. Somercotes has regularly resisted Annibaldi's petitions and Oriens tells Annibaldi to poison the English cardinal's food. Annibaldi agrees.

During the night the faeries enter the cardinals' dreams. To those who can see the planetary divinities, it appears as if one of the faeries leaps into the air and shrinks as it falls and disappears inside the sleeping cardinal's head. In the cardinal's dreams the faerie promises the cardinal benefits if he will vote for Tommaso, typically offering to

permanently increase a Characteristic, up to +5. This power works on a Characteristic reduced by Aging Points. If this doesn't work, a faerie can threaten the dreamer by making them insane for a day, or more permanently reduce a Characteristic. In the morning, each man must decide if he will or will not vote for Tommaso. Those who do will receive a Characteristic increase, those who promise to and don't suffer an evening of insanity.

At night, the player characters must decide what to do, either sleep somewhere in the Septizodium or somewhere else. Oriens does not like Hermetic involvement. If the player characters leave the building at night, perhaps returning to Malgarita's shop to sleep, the demon sends a team of his minion demons after them to ambush them on the street. He won't become involved personally at this point and remains at the Septizodium watching his underling. Use this possibly dangerous interlude to break up the overall social nature of the adventure.

## CONTINUED DELIBERATIONS

Each day progresses as those before it. The leading candidates petitioning their fellows, shuffle to lunch, toss through an afternoon nap, vote indecisively, argue, and then go to bed. By now the magi should understand the situation and act to remove the interfering party that they were initially requested to stop. They should at this point realize that other parties are controlling the cardinals too. They might want to stop all supernatural manipulations. The faeries are difficult to remove, the demon dangerous, and the storyguide wizards absent, although the player characters can at least end Buonacorsus' heat wave by destroying the Animation.

The demon, diabolists, and Alyates react to the magi's involvement. Annibaldi suggests that some of the cardinals



walk to the upper balcony to escape the heat and stench of the building. He kindly assists them. On the balcony, Oriens waits to talk to the cardinal. The demon is an expert shape-changer and can assume the form of anyone he chooses. There is no Hermetic way to see through this disguise, which perfectly imitates a person's look, sound, and smell. Divine Virtues and Supernatural Abilities may stand a chance based on the specific Virtue or Ability. Physical mannerisms may give Oriens away, and a player can make a Perception + Awareness + stress die against an Ease Factor of 18 to notice subtle imperfections in the impersonated person's manner, stance, and gestures. In the guise of a fellow dignitary, Oriens targets the cardinal with his Trust of the Innocent power, forcing the cardinal to believe Annibaldi.

As Oriens talks with cardinals upstairs, Annibaldi readies the second part of his plan. When lunch is delivered Annibaldi offers to bring one of the elder cardinals his lunch. As he puts the food on a plate he will discretely poison it. The poison is fatal, equivalent to an asp's bite (*ArM5*, page 180). Pick one of the elder Ghibelline cardinals besides Castiglione, starting with Somercotes. If Annibaldi succeeds he poisons another the next day, hoping to remove the Ghibellines one after another, ending with Castiglione. After two days of this ploy, Annibaldi and Oriens convince all of the cardinals other than the leaders to vote for Annibaldi.

Alyates gets frantic once other magi become involved. He is convinced that the magi know that he was manipulating the old pope to fight against the emperor. While collecting Arcane Connections from cardinals might not be breaking the Code of Hermes, manipulating Bonaventura while he is electing a pope definitely is. Alyates is no longer content to collect one Arcane Connection a day, and instructs Bonaventura to collect as many as he can. Each time

this suggestion is implanted in Bonaventura's consciousness, Alyates' sigil flashes. Bonaventura then takes articles of clothing from the cardinals and toss them from the balcony. In his Malgarita persona Alyates scrambles around the plaza snatching up falling Arcane Connections. He knows when the vote will be cast and retreats to his sanctum prior to that to cast spells on those to whom he has an Arcane Connection. Player characters watching the voting would then see each cardinal's eyes flash purple, as Alyates implants the suggestion in each to vote for Bonaventura.

There isn't much Buonacorsus can do except activate his Animation, fret, and hope for a Ghibelline pope, preferable Castiglione. He activates his Animation in the morning. The Animation's effect makes the building smells like lavender, Buonacorsus' sigil.

### FORCING THE ELECTION

Tired of waiting, Orsini halves the cardinals' food and water rations a few days after the player characters enter the Septizodium. He threatens to stop sending food by the week's end. Everything should intensify and the added pressure should cause some cardinals to break and vote for anyone just to get out of the Septizodium. At the end of the week, if a decision still hasn't been made, Orsini agrees to the pleas for additional cardinals. Orsini carries the cardinals' petitions to the emperor, who releases the three cardinals from captivity and adds them to those already in the Septizodium. If the magi have successfully dealt with Oriens, Alyates, and the planetary divinities, the new cardinals tip the scales to the Gregorian's side. Within a few days Bonaventura is elected pope. If the player characters have not stopped Buonacorsus, Bonaventura and the assembled cardinals leaving the Septizodium triggers the rite Suffer the Judgment of Jericho and the building comes tumbling down.

The player characters have seconds to react to save the new pope. Have the group roll for initiative. The storyguide rolls a stress die to determine the rite's initiative. Magi can use the fast cast defense rules to react before the building topples. Unfamiliar with Virgilian magic, the players are not allowed a roll to determine the magic's Form, however the toppling stone building should be enough of an indication as to what Hermetic Forms might help the cardinals. Suffer the Judgment of Jericho is a seventh magnitude effect, requiring a fourth magnitude spell (level 20) to save the cardinals. The question isn't power but speed; can the magi react in time to save the cardinals?

### Catching Alyates

Alyates keeps appearing in his personae as long as it serves him. Player characters may notice Bonaventura's repeated trips to the balcony to discard articles of clothing. They may also see the fishwife rushing around the plaza trying to catch the articles. Once he has Arcane Connections to seven cardinals — in addition to the Arcane Connection he has to Bonaventura — he abandons his persona and retreats to the Temple of Mercury.

Player characters who notice Malgarita early could follow her to the Temple of Mercury and confront Alyates there. They also might be able to trace him using Intellego Vim magic when he casts a spell on one of the cardinals. The Invisible Eye Revealed cast on one of the cardinals reveals that Alyates is watching him from afar, although the spell won't necessarily reveal where Alyates is hiding. If the player characters stayed at Malgarita's shop, the personal affects stored there work as Arcane Connections to her, and since Malgarita is Alyates, player characters can use these items to track Alyates to the Temple of Mercury. Other than his Aegis of the Hearth



spell, the Temple of Mercury is unprotected from intruders.

Alyates does not immediately confess, saying that collecting Arcane Connections to the cardinals isn't a crime. Manipulating one is, and if accused he says that the Augustan wizard Buonacorsus forced his hand. He claims that he discovered that the Virgilian wizard had placed an enchanted statue in the Septizodium. Because he could not enter the building, he had to work through agents. "I was only using Arcane Connections to see what was going on inside, to try and find that wizard's damnable device!" If accused of controlling the cardinals he will say that he was trying to make them push the statue over the side of the balcony, but that the Faerie aura kept fouling his spell. He suspects that the wizard lives in the Colosseum and can point out the statue if the magi haven't discovered it yet. If believed, Alyates departs as soon

as he can, using his bracelet to vanish when the magi look the other way.

If disbelieved he offers a contest of certamen, a gentleman's duel, to settle this affair. If he wins the magi must drop all accusations; if the player character wins Alyates will turn himself in at the next Tribunal. He will not admit to purposefully trying to control the cardinals for his own gain. If the magi can easily prove he is lying — perhaps they already have Buonacorsus in chains — Alyates snaps. "The pope killed my sodales," he will rant. "I can only be charged with mundane interference if it leads to endangering my sodales. Not doing this endangers my sodales! The pope is dangerous, look at what happened to Thermakopolis!"

If action flares, Alyates flees, using his Homeward Bound Bracelet and an Arcane Connection to his fishmonger shop. If he has Arcane Connections to the magi's assistants he turns them

against their masters using mind-control spells. He has Arcane Connections to other places, and may depart entirely. If the player characters find an Arcane Connection to Alyates and can mimic his Rego Corpus instantaneous travel effect, an interesting chase could ensue. The Jerbiton "leaps" from city to city toward Constantinople, perhaps with the magi in hot pursuit. If the player magi cannot follow him with Rego Corpus spells then he is gone. This is not necessarily a bad ending, since success depends on saving the cardinals more than capturing the villain, and Alyates could return in the future, bent on revenge.

## Catching Annibaldi and Stopping Oriens

There are several ways to detect that Annibaldi is a diabolist. Like the other cardinals, he has Magic Resistance and a Commanding Aura, both stemming from his position as a cardinal. Unlike the other cardinals, his mind cannot be controlled by magic. He has never changed his mind or his vote during the conclave. The other cardinals remember this if asked. Tommaso originally voted for Bonaventura and Castiglione originally voted for the young Giovanni Colonna, until Colonna and the other Ghibelline cardinals convinced Castiglione to place himself as the leading Ghibelline candidate. Player characters who attempt to mentally control Annibaldi, just for a moment, fail because of the diabolist's Greater Immunity. This might indicate that he is different than the other cardinals.

It is also fairly easy to follow Annibaldi as he seeks to speak with his patron, Oriens. It might be just as easy to see the marks of his self-sacrifice or the weight gain if he is denied cutting himself. The longer the player char-



acters delay the conclave the easier it becomes to discover that something is wrong with Annibaldi.

If Annibaldi is ever caught in any of his actions, he yells for Oriens to protect him. The summoned demon will burst into the Septizodium with any remaining Warrior Demons at hand, their sole intent to slay everyone inside and turn the former shrine to the heavenly bodies into a slaughter house. When Orsini's guards hear the cardinals' screams they rush to their aid, most likely to join the clerics as corpses on the marbled floor.

## Stopping the Planetary Divinities

The divinities don't care much who wins; they prefer getting the promises from the cardinals and then having the cardinals do as they promise. As long as at least one cardinal votes for Tommaso the faeries plague their dreams. Dealing with the planetary divinities is as easy as herding cats, and magi should have their hands full stopping the persistent faeries. Magi skilled in *Perdo Vim* magic can kill them, a brutal but effective way of removing them from the scene. A *Rego Vim* expert might be able to close the regio entrance, trapping the divinities inside their supernatural cubbyhole. Any method that prevents the divinities from tampering with the cardinals should be considered a success.

More than playing with the cardinals, the planetary divinities want to be worshiped. They want their shrine to regain its elegance and popularity so that they can gain *Vitality*. The player characters might have ingenious ways to do this, and the faeries will make deals with the magi if offered dazzling promises. If the magi swear to fill the Septizodium with pagan Romans, for example, the faeries will leave the car-

dinals alone. However, they make the magi promise that the other unseen manipulators also abandon the game; the planetary divinities will stop if the influences of both wizards and the demon are removed from play.

## Catching Buonacorsus

Buonacorsus is harder to catch because his magic is subtler and more difficult to track. The player characters might find the Animation hidden in the Septizodium and remove or nullify it. The statue is the clue. Buonacorsus spent many seasons awakening and enchanting the Animation, which serves as an Arcane Connection to him, one the magi can use to track him down. Similar to an invested device, the statue adds a +3 bonus to the Penetration Multiplier, although Buonacorsus doesn't have any Magic Resistance.

A more pedestrian tactic would be to find the wizard through the statue's manufacturer or movers. Buonacorsus enchanted the statue but did not carve it. Casual inquiries throughout Rome will point the player character to a renowned sculptor specializing in marble and living in one of the Ghibelline sections of the city. The sculptor spent two seasons making the statue and he definitively remembers it. It was commissioned by a "strange noble" and then delivered to his residence in the Colosseum by six of his day laborers. The sculptor assumed the noble was connected to the Frangipane family although he didn't recognize him. The sculptor can also direct the player characters to the men who moved the statue, who are visiting a nearby wine shop. When questioned, these men easily remember the residence, especially because they were there recently to move the same statue from the Colosseum to the Septizodium. Directions to Buonacorsus' home are easily obtained.

Buonacorsus has prepared his home against invasion. Loitering around the

grounds are several Frangipane knights, men loyal to the emperor and voluntarily supporting the Augustan wizard. Normally only a half-dozen men mill about, but if Buonacorsus knows that he has been discovered he asks for and receives a troop of a dozen knights. The men guard the entrances to the section of the Colosseum that houses Buonacorsus. Loyal imperialists, they remain for as long as Buonacorsus desires.

Inside the Colosseum the regular entrance to the first room is protected by his rite, *Stony Protection of the Hearth*. The second room is protected by the rite *The Soldiers' Secret Ambush*, and the final room is protected by *Escaping the Gloomy Place*, triggered when Buonacorsus shouts the command phrase. Buonacorsus spends most of his time in the third room (laboratory) during the day and in the second room (bedroom) at night. He hears the triggered ward in the first room on a *Perception + Awareness* roll + stress die against an *Ease Factor* of 3 (during the day) or 9 (at night). Buonacorsus is a coward. If discovered his only choice is flight. As soon as he hears the crash, he shouts out the triggering phrase for his third ward and flees to the laboratory's secret escape exit. He has practiced this maneuver repeatedly. Once he has fled the room he can easily escape the building through one of several planned exits. From there, he leaves the city at first opportunity and heads to the emperor's lines.

If captured, Buonacorsus confesses. He knows that Alyates is influencing the cardinals' decision and says that Alyates' involvement forced his hand. If the player characters seemed surprised to learn about Alyates, Buonacorsus uses that to his advantage, shifting blame away from him. He remains silent about the *Suffer the Judgment of Jericho* rite. Most likely the player characters have more means of getting the information than Buonacorsus has of keeping it. Having no Magic Resis-

tance, he is vulnerable to all types of Mentem effects and his mind can be as easily tilled as a garden. He can't remove the rite from the Septizodium, but he can tell the player characters what the triggering conditions are.

The player characters must decide what to do with Buonacorsus once captured. He is nearly powerless by himself, removed from the emperor's military support, and his rites take too long to cast to be much help. Affecting noble traditions, he promises to be an ideal captive if the characters want to ransom him, and he says that his colleagues will pay handsomely for his return. Whether this is true or not depends on if you want to continue using Buonacorsus as a storyguide character after this adventure.

Buonacorsus has a variety of goods within his home, mostly personal effects, but a few items that may interest player characters. Members of the Augustan Brotherhood use vis, so an assortment of raw vis would be appropriate, an average amount for a typical adventure in your troupe's saga. Buonacorsus only uses vis when enchanting Animations and casting rituals, both of which he has already done, so the amount and type of vis placed here won't affect the adventure. His written works include a complete copy of *The Aeneid* and several texts commenting on some of the rites he has invented and his knowledge of the School of

the Stones. Another Augustan wizard could use these texts to increase his scores in the mentioned rites and the School, but a Hermetic magus would find these nearly incomprehensible, although they could be used as a source of insight for integrating Virgilian magic into Hermetic magic (see *Rival Magic*, page 12).

## Rewards

Dropped in the middle of a complicated web of magically-controlled cardinals, players could get overwhelmed with the number of supernatural agents manipulating the cardinals. Remind them they there were only asked to stop one of the antagonists, and the story is a success if the player characters stopped the supernatural interferer they were initially asked to stop. Stopping more than one is phenomenal. Regardless of whether the player characters succeed or fail, all surviving characters should get 9 experience points for going on the story.

Each magus and companion character also receives Confidence Point rewards. Each surviving character gets two Confidence Points. Stopping the threat he was asked to stop gives the character another. Uncovering a different threat and stopping it grants another Confi-

dence Point, to a maximum of 3 more. Staying impartial and letting the cardinals pick a pope themselves grants a Confidence Point. The maximum Confidence Point award is 7: 2 for surviving, 1 for stopping the threat he was asked to stop, 3 for uncovering and stopping threats that the character was not asked to stop, and 1 for not magically picking a pope.

There are other material rewards. Both Alyates' magic cup and bracelet can be considered spoils of conquest. Vis can be found in both Alyates and Buonacorsus' laboratories. Alyates might have lab texts of his spells and some tractatus on his highest Arts scores.

Depending on how obvious the magi were, they may have formed a relationship with the new pope. There is no telling how this could unfold, positively or negatively, but at the very least a storyguide could develop additional stories based on the pope remembering the strange men and women who saved him. Less honorable player characters may have actually helped pick the new pope; perhaps they insist that he owes them a favor and try to capitalize on it. At the same time this angle can be ignored. If "The Cardinals' Decision" is a one-time adventure, run by a beta storyguide or as a break from your regular saga, the ramifications of interacting with the next pope do not need to be large at all.



## Chapter Three

# The City of Brass

This adventure details the City of Brass, the fabled city of Arabic myth described in the *1,001 Nights*. The player characters must visit the city to retrieve an item, and several options are provided to suggest an appropriate quest for your group. A journey into the heart of the Egyptian Sahara leads to a mystic gate, a

portal to an isolated region of the Magic Realm and the City of Brass. The journey to the city is only the beginning; the real challenge lies in escaping the city alive. Far from being abandoned, as the misleading legends suggest, the City of Brass is teeming with 'afrit and jinn, magic creatures living in a complex society of inter-

actions and intrigues. To accomplish their goals, the characters must navigate the Machiavellian schemes of the city's inhabitants. Their actions can etch them a place in the folklore of coming ages, or dig them a grave that no mourner will find.

The City of Brass is extremely dangerous. The journey alone can easily destroy

### Prelude: The Tale as Told...

The City of Brass adventure is based on "The City of Brass" story, one of the many tales found in the *1,001 Nights*, a collection of folklore found in Arabic speaking areas. Also referred to as *The Arabian Nights*, the tales are available in several modern translations. The following synopsis provides storyguides with the basic story. How much of this is shared with the players depends on the efforts their characters undertake in research and information gathering.

A few hundred years ago in Damascus, Caliph 'Abd-el-Melik gave a feast for the great men of his empire. The assembled kings, sultans, sheiks, and scholars traded tales, and talk eventually turned to the fabled Brass Bottles of Solomon. The ancient prophet-king had used the bottles to imprison devils and wild jinn. Inspired, the Caliph ordered his Emir, Musa, to lead an expedition to find these bottles. Musa traveled to Egypt, and met the sheikh 'Abd-Es-Samad, a wise old mystic who told Musa that the bottles could be found in the City of Brass. He joined the expedition, and they traveled into the Sahara and discovered an abandoned palace made of marble. Deserted yet splendid,

the marble palace's walls and doors were inscribed with verses lamenting man's mortality and extolling God's eternal existence. The profoundly sad verses also told the palace's history. In days long past, the area was ruled by King Kush, governor of Egypt during the reign of Alexander the Great. Musa discovered King Kush's tomb, capped by an iron tablet inscribed with mystical glyphs and runes. Emir Musa removed the tablet and later presented it as a gift to his caliph. (The iron tablet of King Kush is an addition to the original story that provides a motivational hook to involve the player characters.)

Leaving the tomb and city, the group found a road leading up a high ridge, where they discovered a statue of a brass horseman that pointed them towards the City of Brass. Along the trail they also passed a pillar of basalt, which served as a prison for a powerful jinni. Entrapped by Solomon for serving an idolatrous king, the jinni wails repentance as it waits for the end of days. Crossing the next ridge, Musa's expedition discovered the City of Brass, protected by deadly traps and illusions. With 'Abd-Es-Samad's aid, Musa entered the city with minimal losses to his

party.

Inside, the City of Brass was deserted, littered with the dry corpses of the former inhabitants, fallen as if calamity struck them in the midst of daily life. Alongside these gruesome souvenirs, the streets were lined with fruit-bearing trees and fountains of pure water. Riches of gold and jewels beyond comprehension lay scattered about. Musa found the city's queen's tomb, still protected by the guard's corpses, decorated with inscriptions that told how the city's food sources dwindled away, starving the citizens. The inscription also said that explorers might take whatever treasure they could carry, but forbade touching the jewels in the tomb. One greedy member of the group ignored this warning, and as soon as he began prying loose a jewel one of the corpse-guards sprang to life and beheaded the thief.

Leaving the tomb, Musa's expedition returned to the caliph carrying all the wealth they could. Good fortune prevailed and Musa had found twelve brass bottles. The caliph opened each one, freeing the repentant 'afrit, each of which extolled the greatness of God, and releasing them to the wilds.

a weak group of characters, and only the strongest spell-casters could survive the city if things go wrong. However, the City of Brass is not aimed exclusively at magus characters. Opportunities for companion and grog characters exist, and these tangential stories can easily contribute to the larger goals of the whole party. UnGifted companions and grogs might prove vital in surviving social interactions, particularly when ferreting out correct information from false and in seeking potential allies.

## Motivations

The City of Brass story is a quest; player characters are asked to visit the city to find something important and return alive. The storyguide needs a suitable reason for their troupe to become interested, and the following three ideas may be used alone or in any combination that ignites a group's interest. Self-motivated players might be interested

in the adventure in and of itself. In the spirit of high adventure, similar to the motivation in many of the original stories, your magi might decide to visit the City of Brass of their own volition.

### THE EXOTIC VISITOR

An elderly Egyptian Ex-Miscellanea magus named Ibrahim visits the covenant. He might be an old friend of one of the magi or merely a traveler asking for Hermetic hospitality. During dinner, he tells the characters the story of the City of Brass and reveals that 'Abd-Es-Samad is the founder of his magical lineage. He emphasizes the Brass Bottles of Suleiman, saying that his recent research focuses on identifying the magical secrets of these non-Hermetic objects. He has been unsuccessful, his original research foiled by a long succession of fraudulent relics, unpromising leads, and malign faerie interventions. However, he has recently

acquired an authentic Brass Bottles of Solomon, and hopes it will provide the necessary Insight so that he can integrate Solomon's magic with Hermetic magic (see the Integration rules in *Ancient Magic*, pages 7-9).

If the magi take an interest in his research, Ibrahim shares his notes, hoping that together they might succeed where he alone has failed. He will not part with the bottle, but does allow others to experiment if he can assist in their lab. The bottle provides a single Insight, but for more Insight and Breakthrough points, the integrator needs more bottles, which can be found in the City of Brass. When the magi form an expedition to locate the City of Brass, Ibrahim expresses his sadness at not being able to participate. He is far too old to lead or even participate in the journey. He can provide an uncorrupted copy of *1,001 Arabian Nights*, in Arabic, to aid magi in their quest.

If the characters express no interest in an expedition, Ibrahim leaves after a few days. It may be years before they hear from him again, when he writes them a letter discussing his sadness at his limited progress with the relic, which he has confirmed to be authentic. Shortly afterward, they hear of his passing into Final Twilight and the Brass Bottle mysteriously arrives at the player's covenant as a gift along with his blessing to use it as they will.

### THE TABLET OF IRON

The covenant receives a strange and mystical iron tablet as a gift, payment of a debt, part of a legal settlement, or assignment for investigation. The tablet is inscribed in ancient Greek with a long flowing verse, lamenting the transience of the material world. The homily reads:

*In the name of God, the Eternal, the Everlasting throughout all ages...*

*... be admonished by the misfortunes and calamities that thou beholdest, and be not deceived by the world and its beauty, and its*





falsity and calumny, and its fallacy and finery, for it is a flatterer, a cheat, a traitor. Its things are borrowed, and it will take the loan from the borrower...

The verse extols the greatness of God, who alone is eternal and infinite, and describes the riches and wealth of a great kingdom, laid to ruin by the encroaching Sahara. The author ends his verse with his signature and seal: King Kush. This is the fabled lid of his sarcophagus, taken by Musa and presented to his caliph as a gift to inspire wisdom. Musa did not realize that the tablet also acted as a magical ward that protected the corpse from malevolent spirits. The strange glyphs and arcane symbols suggest that the magic was a non-Hermetic spell, equivalent to a high level Rego Vim effect. Intellego Vim spells cannot find any traces of magic, the residue of the effect having long since dissipated, but magi may accurately guess that the spell was broken when the table was removed from the sarcophagus. With the tablet removed, the dead king's spirit was vulnerable to the City of Brass's jinn, and the ruler of the 'Afrit, the Malik, took the king's remains and holds King Kush's ghost hostage.

Other ghosts loyal to King Kush, especially his son Prince Keshan, want to liberate their king. The prince believes that whoever has the tablet has the power to free his father, and following vague, mystical visions he has been seeking the tablet's owner. The process has been difficult, as the tablet has changed hands many times over the years and the visions are hazy. Recently, Keshan's visions have guided his soldiers as far as the covenant, but he is unsure how to proceed next.

Once the magi receive the tablet, the ghosts locate the covenant and repeatedly try to enter. They are unlikely to be able to cross the Aegis and their pleas in Greek or Arabic are unlikely to be understood by the covenfolk. This does not discourage them, and they continue to try to communicate their intent

In Mythic Europe, the stories of *1,001 Nights* contain a mixture of truth, half-truths, and total fabrications. Few collections tell the tales the same way, misleading readers with conflicting particulars to the stories. Magi might seek out these tales before an expedition to the City of Brass. Collections can be found in the libraries of Andalusia and other Iberian cities, but are rare in other parts of Mythic Europe. A few copies might exist in Hermetic circles. The Merinita-based Keepers of the Thousand Tales believes that re-enacting stories promotes the immortality of faeries associated with the tales, (*Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 81). In this case, what this has actually done is create and perpetuate faerie copies of the Magic jinn and 'afrit.

Libraries with a small or incomplete collection may exclude the City of Brass story, but larger collections contain the

tale. Most texts are in Arabic, requiring a score of 4 in Arabic to study. Latin copies are rare, and a magus who owns one will certainly demand favors for its use. Each text of collected tales counts as a tractatus on Faerie Lore, Infernal Lore, or Magic Lore, with particular reference to the *jinn* and other supernatural aspects of Islamic folklore. An encyclopedia collecting all of these tales would contain fifteen tractatus, but no such book presently exists in Mythic Europe.

The moral of the City of Brass story is simple: man's creations must eventually fall and only God is eternal. There is a deeper theme within the tale. Medieval Arabic writers knew that the Sahara was expanding, slowly overtaking and swallowing cities and small kingdoms and growing in heat and intensity. The history of both the marble palace and City of Brass reminds readers of this ever growing threat.

## A Bibliography for Storuguides

Modern English translations of *The Arabian Nights* are easy to find, and most include the City of Brass story. The website [www.wollamshram.ca/1001/](http://www.wollamshram.ca/1001/) compiles texts from various translators: Burton, Lane, Payne, and Speke. "The City of Brass" story is found in the sixth volume of the Burton translation. While colorful, Burton's translation includes sensational elements popular during the time of his writing. The more recent two-volume Everyman's Library edition by Husain Haddawy is considered a more accurate translation.

The single volume Penguin Classics version edited by William Harvey is a reasonable starting place and provides an introduction to the wider corpus of stories. The three-volume set and its accompanying treatise "The Arabian Nights: A Companion", edited by Robert Irwin, is recommended for those who wish to delve into the tales in greater depth.

Further details on the Mythic Middle East, jinn, and sahir can be found in *The Cradle and the Crescent* for troupes wishing to expand on the level of detail presented here.

to the magi, returning again and again until dealt with. Although relatively weak compared to the magi, their numbers are considerable and the effect they have on the local mundane population provokes a situation that the magi cannot afford to ignore for long. Until the

reason for their visitations is uncovered, these specters haunt and terrorize the area around the covenant, drawing unwanted attention from the local nobility, the church, and possibly the Quaesitors.

Simply handing the tablet over to the ghosts is not an option, for they are



incorporeal and cannot physically return it to its rightful place. Disposing of it elsewhere is problematic. The ghosts follow the tablet, which might cause problems depending on where the tablet is placed. This could be traced back to the magi and may draw Hermetic investigation. A better solution is for the magi to return the iron tablet to the Marble Palace and recap the king's sarcophagus. The ghosts can directly ask the magi to do this, as it is what they want to happen. The ghosts can lead the magi to the Marble Palace, where Prince Keshan's ghost beseeches the magi to retrieve his father's corpse. To rescue King Kush's corpse the magi must enter the City of Brass, and recover the corpse through force or negotiation with the Malik of the 'Afrit. If the magi are unwilling to assist Prince Keshan, he refuses to call off the specters or captures valued members of their expedition and holds them hostage until the magi cooperate.

The iron tablet might be an active Arcane Connection to the tomb of the Marble Palace, or the storyguide might rule that the link has faded during the intervening centuries, depending on which option best suits the troupe and the implementation of this story.

### LITTLE LOST BRASS BOTTLE

The magi come into the possession of an authentic Brass Bottle of Solomon. This may be a gift from Ibrahim (see *The Exotic Visitor*, earlier), or acquired in whatever way makes most sense for your troupe. Analyzing the bottle in the lab, the magi may purposefully or accidentally release the imprisoned 'afrit (this could be the result of a "Special or Story Event" on the Experimentation & Extraordinary Results table). If released inside an area protected by an *Aegis of the Hearth*, the 'afrit's power is limited, which sours his attitude towards the "rescuer." Alternatively, if the bottle is discovered by a curious grog, companion, or apprentice, it may be opened unwittingly.

This option may be more interesting for some troupes as it allows the involvement of non-magi in the story, particularly if the 'afrit is released outside the covenant and the magi only learn of it after the fact.

The released 'afrit, Jawal al-'Afrit, is brash but friendly. He enjoys provoking people and instigating trouble. A sly collaborator and selfish opportunist, he has a madcap and reckless zeal for adventure. He claims that he needs the characters' help returning home, and tries to entice the characters to take him there with tales of the riches and splendor of the City of Brass. This is a lie, for he returns to his tower in the City of Brass whenever he is closed inside his bottle. However, if the bottle is left with him in the city, he doesn't have to deal with people conjuring and commanding him anymore.

The bottle is the authentic work of Solomon, and Jawal must obey the commands of whoever releases him, though he can twist the wording and has wide discretion as to how he goes about his task. Jawal is mischievous, not malicious. He likes to see others get into trouble, but not come to grievous harm. However, he gladly manipulates others for his benefit. It takes a clever and powerful magus to tame Jawal.

Tailor the personality and power level of Jawal to suit the capabilities and interests of the players and characters. If they are the compassionate sort, present as Jawal humble and generous, earnestly requesting the magi set him free by taking his bottle to the City of Brass. If they are selfish and callous, make Jawal a clever mastermind who uses trickery to get his way. If they are freewheeling adventurers, then Jawal becomes a magical friend who causes all sorts of incidental troubles. He could inspire this story with his many tales, as well as further adventures in the Mythic Middle East.

The bottle could also be the faulty work of lesser magic, which means Jawal can act as he wishes when released. It may still be possible to befriend or try to



tame him, or the 'afrit may feign obedience in order to trick his "master" into serving his purposes or to lure him to his doom. He may simply abduct some of the characters to be sold as slaves in the City of Brass, and the other characters have to travel there to rescue them.

## Jinn and Brass Bottles

Jinn (singular jinni) and 'afarit (singular 'afrit) are central to this story, as are the brass bottles in which Solomon bound them. This section provides enough information to run this story, but much more can be found in Chapter 4 of *The Cradle and the Crescent*.

### The Brass Bottles of Solomon

God gave King Solomon dominion over the Jinn and the wild spirits. Solomon used this power to tame them, imprisoning many demons and rebellious jinn within brass bottles, each stopped with lead and imprinted with Solomon's seal. Defeating the 'afarit of the City of Brass in a great war, Solomon imprisoned them in bottles and then cast the bottles into the sea. Over the ages, fishers along the African Mediterranean coast occasionally catch the bottles in their nets. The released 'afrit usually creates a magnificent show of light and smoke, crying repentance and begging for release. The spectator is usually awed, grants the request, and the 'afrit fades away. The bottle is closed, forgotten about, and tossed back into the sea.

This is exactly what the 'afarit want people to do. The magic of Solomon, which binds them to the bottle, cannot be broken so easily, but as long as the bottle is sealed the 'afarit dwell in the

### Typical 'Afrīt of the City of Brass

In the City of Brass, characters will encounter the 'afrit everywhere they go. Up and down the avenues they encounter jinn going about their daily business, shoppers going to market, and merchants in stores or pushing mobile carts selling exotic wares to each other for strange prices.

With the exception of the Malik, the City of Brass is neither the Locus nor the associated terrain for their Way of Land Virtue for any of these jinn. For the most part, the Loci of these 'afarit are Brass Bottles somewhere in the

mundane world, and Way of the Land is associated with the desert. The bottles form Vestiges in the city in the form of the various towers and other buildings, and these 'afarit dwell here in the city when they are sealed away in the bottles. They can roam anywhere in the city and outside the walls as long as they are within sight of the twin Brass Towers. They are prohibited from going any further unless someone opens their bottle in the mundane world, or someone makes a magical bargain with them that allows them to travel.

City of Brass, in the Magic Realm, and go about their lives there. They cannot leave the city unless summoned to the mundane realm by someone opening their bottle. However, if they are so summoned, they must obey the commands of the one who holds the bottle. The 'afarit have spread the legend that they must complete three tasks, but in reality they must obey the holder of the bottle for as long as he holds the bottle. The 'afarit are able to interpret the command, but they may not disobey. They are not bound by impossible commands, nor can they be commanded to destroy themselves. They can be commanded to return to the bottle, which has much the same effect as far as the mundane realm is concerned.

All Magic jinn are a type of genius loci, but the magic of Solomon made the brass bottle the locus of the 'afrit bound within. An 'afrit within shouting distance of its bottle is immune to Acclimation from being in a weak Magic aura, but, as a genius loci, the 'afrit cannot normally go any further from the bottle, and it can only regain Might while within the bottle, and thus in the Magic Realm. The magic of Solomon means that an 'afrit cannot move its own bottle, although it can hold it, as long as it does not move. Solomon's binding also means that the 'afrit can travel any

distance from the bottle or carry the holder of the bottle to fulfill a command from the holder of the bottle.

While the bottle is sealed, the 'afrit is in the Magic Realm, not literally inside the bottle, so the bottle can be carried through an Aegis of the Hearth or a ward that would exclude the 'afrit were he present. Opening the bottle summons the 'afrit, bringing it to the mundane world through the bottle, so that it does not have to cross any ward or Aegis that the bottle is within. However, a 'afrit summoned into an Aegis is affected by the ritual's suppression of magic within the area. The ability to command the 'afrit is not affected by an Aegis, as it is the result of a ritual effect created long ago.

There is no easy way for anyone other than the 'afrit bound into the bottle to use the bottle as a path to the Magic Realm. However, Hermetic research may be able to find a way, particularly if you want to make access to the City of Brass easy in your saga.

As a further complication, Solomon bound many spirits besides jinn, including ghosts, demons, and even ancient non-Hermetic sorcerers. He also used objects other than bottles, notably oil lamps and rings; these often need to be rubbed to summon the jinni. Beings other than 'afarit await the sum-

## Character Guide: Typical 'Afrit

**Magic Might:** 15 (Igm)

**Locus:** a Brass Bottle of Solomon

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per 0, Pre +1, Com -1, Str +2, Sta +2, Dex -1, Qik +1

**Size:** +1

**Season:** Winter

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Magic Spirit (*Jinni*); Arcane Lore, Educated, Large, Warrior; Greater Malediction (Bound in Bottle), Magical Air\* (Minor Personality Flaw)

**Magical Qualities and Inferiorities:** Focus Power, Greater Immunity (Heat & Flames), Greater Powers (x2), No Fatigue, Ritual Power, Ways of the Desert; Gift of Tongues, Improved Powers (x2), Lesser Powers (x3), Personal Powers (x2), Second Sight, Variable Powers (x2); Greater Malediction (bound by bargains), Monstrous Appearance; Reduced Abilities (x10), Restricted Power

**Personality Traits:** \*Crafty +2 (applies to Communication to twist wordings of agreements), Brave +1, Loyal -1

\* Essential Trait

**Combat:**

*Fist:* Init +1, Attack +4, Defense +6, Damage +2

*Scimitar:* Init +3, Attack +8, Defense +7, Damage +8

(Combat scores may need to be adjusted for the size of the form the jinni takes. Each point of increase subtracts 1 from both Initiative and Defense, but adds +2 to Damage.)

**Soak:** +2

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-6), -3 (7-12), -5 (13-18), Incapacitated (19-24), Dead (25+)

\* Injury increments may need to be adjusted for the size he takes

**Abilities:** Arabic 5 (clever wordplay), Artes Liberales 1 (astronomy), Athletics 2 (leaping), Awareness 2

(alert), Bargain 4 (services), Brawl 4 (fistfight), Concentration 2 (powers), Dominion Lore 1 (Solomon), Finesse 2 (precision), Folk Ken 2 (desires), Guile 4 (twisted wording), Infernal Lore 1 (Iblis), Leadership 3 (intimidation), Magic Lore 3 (jinn), Penetration 2 (Lord of Fire), Second Sight 4 (spirits), Shapeshifter 3 (fiery being), Single Weapon 4 (scimitar), Theology: Islam 1 (jinn)

**Powers:**

*Corporeal Veil of the Jinn*, 0 points, Init -4, Corpus:

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

This power gives the 'afrit the Major Virtue: Shapeshifter and the Ability Shapeshifter 1. The 'afrit can take as many forms as he has points in the Ability. Most 'afarit's first form is that of a monstrous man, which can range in Size from +4 to -5. Additional forms include smoky vapor, a stationary stone pillar, and a spinning column of fire. At higher scores, they may start to choose the forms of animals or alternate personae. No matter which form they take though, they are easily identified. See the section on Jinn, earlier, for more details on this power.

As smoky vapor, the 'afrit cannot be harmed or restrained by physical means. It can squeeze through the tiniest cracks, and solid objects pass right through it. As vapor, the 'afrit moves slowly and for the most part cannot participate in physical combat.

As a stone pillar, the 'afrit is rooted to the ground, cannot move, and is immune to most physical damage. It is easily mistaken for a mundane pillar carved to resemble a grotesque humanoid.

As a whirling column of fire, the

'afrit immune to most physical harm, but can be doused and is easier to restrain. The heat inflicts +10 damage to anything in direct contact with the 'afrit. This is also added as a damage bonus in combat.

No Hermetic Equivalent; Greater Power (50 levels, -5 cost); Variable Power; Restricted Power (all forms have an identifying trait)

*Domination*, 1 or more points, Init -4, Mentem

R: Voice, D: Sun, T: Ind

Some 'afarit have the power to control people's minds and emotions using their voices. Once initiated, there is no limit to the distance that may separate the 'afrit from its subject. The effect lasts for a duration of Sun, but may be perpetuated by spending a point of Might at sunrise and sunset. The 'afrit can control multiple people, and can affect multiple targets at once by spending 1 point of Might per person.

ReMe50 (Base 30, +1 Eye, +2 Sun, +1 Flexibility); Greater Power (50 levels)

*Fabricator of (Form)*, Variable points, Init -9

R: Touch or Voice, D: Mom, T: Ind or Group

Many Jinn have the power to conjure material items that are real, in much the same way as Hermetic Creo Rituals. This power allows a jinni to create inanimate goods within a specific Form, and the power may be taken multiple times to cover multiple Forms. The jinni chooses if the fabricated goods are permanent or merely last a month. If permanent, the power's cost permanently reduces the jinni's Magic Might. The cost is 1 point per Magnitude of the effect, and the maximum effect is equal to the jinni's Might or 25, whichever is lower.



## Character Guide: Typical 'Afrit (cont'd)

Cr(Form); Ritual Power  
*Fiery Aura of the 'Afrit*, 0 points, Init -2, Ignem

R: Touch, D: Diam, T: Ind

An 'afrit can engulf himself in a coat of flame that does him no harm but sets fire to things he touches and inflicts +5 fire damage. This is added as a bonus to combat while in corporeal form. In vapor form he becomes a hot sulphurous smoke that causes people to choke and gag, requiring a Stamina stress roll against an Ease Factor of 3 to avoid losing a Fatigue level (taking Light Wounds once all Fatigue is lost). If in the form of a stone pillar, the 'afrit is engulfed (cont/d) in flame and those close enough to touch it take +5 damage. As a column of fire, the 'afrit's heat damage increases by +5.

Crlg 10 (Base 5, +1 Conc); Lesser Power (1 levels, -3 cost)

*Flight*, 1 point, Init -5, appropriate Form  
R: Touch, D: Conc, T: Ind

Many jinn have the power to fly. Some jinn are carried off by a whirlwind, others call forth clouds that carry them into the sky, some have wings that seem too small to carry them, and other jinn may roll out a rug and call it a flying carpet. No matter the method, it is but a cosmetic personalization and the effect is the same. The jinni is able to carry others along up to the limit of his Strength.

Relg 15 (Base 4, +1 Touch, +2 Sun); Lesser Power (15 levels, -2 cost)

*Invisibility*, 1 point, Init 0, Imaginem

Some jinn have the power to become invisible and can remain so for as long as they choose.

(Base 4, +3 Constant, +1 changing image); Personal Power (20 levels, -1 cost)

*Jinni's Leap*, 0 points, Init -1, Corpus

Many jinn can transport instantly

to any location they can perceive, up to 50 paces distant.

ReCo15 (Base 15); Personal Power (15 levels, -2 cost)

*Lord of Fire*, points equal to Magnitude, Init + (1 - Magnitude), Ignem

'Afrit can duplicate Creo Ignem and Rego Ignem spells up to level 25.

Focus Power (25 levels)

*Seer of Fire*, points equal to Magnitude, Init + (1 - Magnitude), Ignem

The 'afrit can duplicate Intellego Ignem spells up to level 25. The necessary condition is that it must gaze into a fire or inhale smoke.

Focus Power (25 levels, Restricted Power)

*Smite with Fire*, 3 points, Init -7, Ignem

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Ind

Powerful 'afrit have the power to unleash a fiery blast at will. The form and shape depends on the 'afrit's personality; from a bolt to a jet streaking out forth from it, to a column that drops on its opponent or a fireball that explodes on impact. These differences are all cosmetic and the effect is the same, inflicting +15 fire damage upon the target.

Crlg20 (Base 10, +2 Voice); Lesser Power (20 levels, -1 cost)

(The point costs and Initiatives of the Powers have not taken into account the 'afrit's two Improved Powers Magical Qualities, which gives the 'afrit 10 mastery points. 1 mastery point can reduce a power's cost by 1 or improve its Initiative by 1. Select which powers to modify to personalize each individual 'afrit. 1 mastery point can also be converted into 5 experience points, which the 'afrit may spend on Spell Mastery for its powers.)

**Equipment:** sparse clothing, jewelry, scimitar

**Encumbrance:** 0

**Vis:** When slain the 'afrit leaves behind a lump of coal, containing 3 pawns of Ignem vis.

**Appearance:** The most common appearance of an 'afrit is that of a large muscular man, with dark red or black skin, gleaming eyes, wild hair, jagged teeth, horns, and sometimes wings. 'Afrit are often mistaken for demons.

Using *Realms of Power: Magic*, the Typical 'Afrit Character Guide template was generated as a Winter Character with a base Might score of 15, taking the Minor Inferiority of Reduced Abilities multiple times to balance out the Powers and other Qualities. This makes it easy to generate more powerful 'afrit by assigning them a higher Might score and removing Reduced Abilities multiple times for more experience points. New Qualities may be chosen as well for additional Powers, more experience points, and so forth. Most 'afrit have a Might score between 15 to 25, while the nobility ranges between 30 and 45 and the Malik has a Might of 50

Each 'afrit needs only a name and a Minor Personality Flaw for individual distinction. Further individualization can be made with minor Virtues and Flaws modifications. For example, Kabira the Seeress has the Virtues of Intuition and Premonitions, but lacks the Virtues of Warrior and Large. Her Minor Personality Flaw is Busybody, and she also has the Visions Flaw. Finally, she has Privileged Upbringing, in essence freeing up experience points for a Premonitions score of 4. Characteristic points can be rearranged. For example. Kabria has Intelligence +2, Communication +1, Strength +1, and Stamina +1. Whatever the modifications, Qualities, Inferiorities, and Powers remain consistent.

## Afdal-Kathir, the Malik's Champion

**Magic Might:** 40 (Ignem)

**Modified Characteristics:** Pre +2, Sta +3, Dex +2

**Size:** +1

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Modified Virtues & Flaws:** Magical Champion, Affinity with Single Weapon, Essential Virtue: Fierce Fighter (+3 Dexterity in combat), Puissant Single Weapon, Self-Confident, Tough, Wrathful (major), Curse of Venus, Proud (minor), Oversensitive

**Modified Qualities & Inferiorities:** Add Greater Immunity to steel weapons; Improved Abilities (x3), Improved Characteristics (x3), Improved Powers (x2). Remove Reduced Abilities (x8)

**Personality Traits:** *Hubris* +3, *Wrathful* +3, Fierce Fighter +3 (Dexterity), Crafty +2 (Communication), Easily Offended +2, Loyal +2

**Combat:**

*Fist:* Init +1, Attack +13, Defense +9, Damage +2

*Scimitar:* Init +3, Attack +20, Defense +13, Damage +9

**Soak:** +10

**Modified Abilities:** *Area Lore:* City of Brass 3 (*garrison*), Athletics 4 (leaping), Awareness 4 (combat), Brawl 7 (fistfight), Carouse 3 (drinking songs), Concentration 4 (powers), Dominion Lore 3 (Solomon), Faerie Lore 3 (Arabic), Finesse 5 (precision), Guile 3 (twisted wording), Infernal

Lore 3 (Iblis), Leadership 4 (intimidation), Magic Lore 5 (jinn), Penetration 5 (Smite with Fire), Second Sight 5 (spirits), Single Weapon 8+2 (scimitar)

**Modified Powers:**

*Fiery Aura of the 'Afrit*, Init -1

*Lord of Fire*, Multicast, Penetration

*Smite with Fire*, 0 points, Fast Cast, Multicast

**Equipment:** *Clothing, jewelry, partial scale armor, two brass scimitars*

**Vis:** 8 pawns of Ignem vis

**Appearance:** Afdal-Kathir's handsomeness appeals to the wrong sort of lady. He dresses in finery and carries himself with a regal demeanor.

## Amina, the Malik's daughter

**Magic Might:** 35 (Ignem)

**Modified Characteristics:** Int +2, Pre +4, Com +1, Str +1, Sta +1, Dex +1, Qik +2

**Size:** +0

**Confidence Score:** 2 (5)

**Modified Virtues & Flaws:** Add Gentlewoman, Improved Characteristics (x3), Self-Confident, Venus' Blessing; Indiscreet; Non-Combatant.

Remove Large and Warrior.

Replace Lecherous with Proud.

**Modified Qualities & Inferiorities:** Add Greater Immunity (steel weapons); Improved Abilities (x2), Increased Might (x4), Remove Reduced Abilities (x9)

**Personality Traits:** Crafty +3 (Communication), Proud +3, Brave -1, Loyal -2

**Combat:**

*Dodge:* Init +2, Defense +7

**Soak:** +2

**Wound Penalties (material form):** -1 (1-6), -3 (7-12), -5 (13-18), Incapacitated (19-24), Dead (25+)

**Modified Abilities:** *Area Lore:* City of Brass 2 (*aristocracy*), Artes Liberales 4 (astronomy), Awareness 3 (opportunity), Brawl 4 (dodge), Carouse 3 (games), Charm 4 (men), Concentration 3 (powers), Dominion Lore 3 (Solomon), Etiquette 4 (courtly), Faerie Lore 3 (Arabic), Finesse 5 (grace), Folk Ken 4 (desires), Infernal Lore 3 (Iblis), Intrigue 4 (plots), Magic Lore 5 (jinn), Penetration 4 (Domination), Philosophiae 3 (metaphysics), Shapeshifter 5 (persona); Remove Single Weapon

**Modified Powers:**

*Corporeal Veil of the Jinn*;

Amina has the additional forms of a serpent and a beautiful young maiden.

*Flight*, 0 points, Init 0

*Domination*, Init 0

**Vis:** 2 pawns of Rego and 5 pawns of Ignem

**Appearance:** In her preferred form, as a maiden, Amina's appearance is flawless, but still horrifying. If Amina is in sight, but not the focus of attention, viewers seem to glimpse hideous deformities or monstrous features, but when they look to check, they see nothing but a beautiful young woman. Similarly, if they are concentrating on part of her body, such as her face or hands, they catch glimpses of horrors in other parts of her body, which are not there when they look.



## Za'al-Zoresh, the Grand Vizier

**Magic Might:** 30 (Ignem)  
**Modified Characteristics:** Int +4, Per +1, Com +1, Str +1  
**Size:** +1  
**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)  
**Modified Virtues & Flaws:** add Gentleman, Great Intelligence, Student of Magic Realm, Ambitious (major), plus Busybody  
**Modified Qualities & Inferiorities:** add Focus Power (x3), Greater Power, Improved Abilities (x10), Improved Characteristics (x3), Improved Powers (x2); Restricted Power, Slow Power; Remove Reduced Abilities (x10)  
**Personality Traits:** Ambitious +3, Crafty +3 (Communication), Ruthless +2, Nosy +2

**Combat:**  
*Knife:* Init +0, Attack +0, Defense +0, Damage +0  
**Soak:** +2  
**Wound Penalties (material form):** -1 (1-6), -3 (7-12), -5 (13-18), Incapacitated (19-24), Dead (25+)  
**Modified Abilities:** Area Lore: City of Brass 4 (aristocracy), Area Lore: Egypt 5 (ancient days), Artes Liberales 5 (logic), Concentration 4 (powers), Dominion Lore 4 (Solomon), Etiquette 3 (courtly), Finesse 4 (grace), Faerie Lore 4 (Arabic), Folk Ken 4 (desires), Greek 4 (written), Guile 5 (twisted wording), Infernal Lore 4 (Iblis), Intrigue 6 (plots), Magic Lore 6+2 (jinn), Penetration 4 (Seer of Fire), Philosophiae 4 (metaphysics), Profession: Scribe 4 (copy), Second Sight 5

(spirits), Shapeshifter 6 (persona), Theology: Islam 3 (jinn)  
**Modified Powers:**  
*Corporeal Veil of the Jinn,* Init +1  
 Za'al-Zoresh has the additional forms of an asp, a vulture, and an Arab scholar.  
*Domination,* 1 or more points, Init +0, Multicast  
*Lord of Fire,* Taken twice, Za'al-Zoresh can duplicate Creo and Rego Ignem spells up to level 50  
*Seer of Fire,* Taken twice, Za'al-Zoresh can duplicate Intellego Ignem spells up to level 50  
**Vis:** 4 Intellego, 6 Ignem  
**Appearance:** Za'al-Zoresh appears scholarly, with flowing robes and a long white beard.

mons in different supernatural realms, and the nature of that realm may make some eager to be summoned, even if they must serve.

Other types of enchanted binding exist. Bottles created by lesser wizards are greatly inferior and follow different rules. Hermetic magi have a Muto Vim spell called The Wicked Jar (*Realms of Power: Infernal*, page 122), and Hermetic Sahir may develop a similar spell called Jar of Suleiman. There are also Hermetic Spirit Mysteries and the Goetic Art of Binding. All of these forms of magic function according to their own rules, but none duplicate all the powers of King Solomon's bottles. Indeed, the spirit may well be able to act however it wishes once released. Lesser enchantments would explain stories in which a trapped jinni is released from a bottle only to destroy his releaser.

Faerie duplicates exist as well, because stories about these bottles have given rise to faerie imposters. Curcubites (or "Bottles of Solomon") are unique faeries that take the form of the bottle itself and create a fantastic show of imagery when opened. They gain vitality

from the sense of awe and wonder created (see *The Cradle and the Crescent*, page 66). Other faerie jinn grant three wishes, doing so in such a way as to teach a greater moral lesson.

Duplicating Solomon's magic may be impossible. It would be considered at least a Hermetic Breakthrough, and may require Integration (or Initiation) of other forms of non-Hermetic Magic first. Since Solomon's power over the jinn was granted by God, this may well be considered a form of Holy Magic as well.

## A Note on Jinn

Many of the antagonists in this adventure are Magic jinn, a type of spirit common to Islamic folklore. 'Afarit are a type of jinni, often aligned with the Form Ignem but not always. As beings of the Magic realm, 'afarit and jinn are uninterested in the affairs of mankind and indifferent to the words of the Prophet. At best they fear the Divine and give token reverence, but many are outright pagans with heathen habits. When corporeal,

## Ihab Ia'ara, an 'Afric Merchant

**Modified Characteristics:** Com +1, Str +1  
**Modifications to Virtues & Flaws:** add Merchant, Puissant Bargain, Minor Essential Flaw: Poor Fighter (-3 Dexterity in combat), plus Avarice (minor)  
**Personality Traits:** Avarice +3, Decorous +3, Crafty +2 (Communication), Loyal +1, Brave -1, Poor Fighter -3 (Dexterity)  
**Modified Abilities:** Bargain 4+2 (sell),

Brawl 3 (wrestle), Charm 2 (wit), Faerie Lore 1 (artifacts), Guile 4 (half truths)  
**Equipment:** Fine robes, jewelry, knife, cart of mysterious wares.  
**Appearance:** Ihab has red skin and the devilish appearance common for an 'afrit, yet his demeanor instantly indicates his role as a merchant. He dresses in fine silk robes and wears many jewels.

## Al-Malik 'Izz-Doresh al-Dahish ibn El-A'mash al-'Afrit

**Magic Might:** 50 (Igmem)

**Locus:** City of Brass

**Modified Characteristics:** Int +1, Per +1, Pre +3, Com +1, Str +7, Sta +5, Dex +2, Qik 0

**Size:** +4 (as manifested)

**Confidence Score:** 5 (11)

**Modified Virtues & Flaws:** Add Daimon, Great Stamina (x2), Improved Characteristics (x3), Magical Master, Puissant Leadership, Self Confident, Magical Monster, Major Essential Flaw (Easily Amused), Wrathful (major), and Close Family Ties; plus Oversensitive

(note that this places the Malik above the normal Virtue & Flaw limit, but they are still balanced)

**Modified Qualities & Inferiorities:** add Greater Immunity to steel weapons, Greater Power (x2), Focus Power (x3), Sihr, Vis Mastery, Improved Abilities (x12), Improved Characteristics (x3), Improved Confidence (x3), Improved Powers (x6), Personal Power (x2), Variable Power, Restricted Power, and Remove Reduced Abilities (x10). Ways of the (Land) pertains to the City of Brass.

**Personality Traits:** Easily Amused +6 (–6 to Intelligence to pay attention or make good decisions when

being entertained), Wrathful +5, Fierce +3 (Essential Trait, +3 to Strength when overcoming opposition), Brave +2, Loyal +1

**Reputations:** Mighty 4, Fierce 3, Easily Distracted by Entertainment 2

**Combat:**

*Fist:* Init 0, Attack +8, Defense +6, Damage +7

*Scimitar:* Init +2, Attack +12, Defense +7, Damage +13

**Soak:** +5

**Wound Penalties (material form):** –1 (1–9), –3 (10–18), –5 (19–27), Incapacitated (28–36), Dead (37+)

**Modified Abilities:** Area Lore: City of Brass 4 (politics), Area Lore: Egypt 4 (ancient days), Artes Liberales 4 (astronomy), Awareness 3 (treachery), Bargain 5 (magical bargains), Brawl 5 (fist), Carouse 3 (power drinking), Charm 3 (impress), Concentration 4 (powers), Dominion Lore 4 (Solomon), Etiquette 4 (courtly), Faerie Lore 4 (jinn), Finesse 3 (grace), Folk Ken 3 (desires), Guile 5 (twisted truth), Infernal Lore 3 (Iblis), Intrigue 5 (plots), Leadership 5+2 (jinn), Magic Lore 6 (jinn), Penetration 4 (Igmem), Philosophiae 4 (moral), Profession: King 5 (feasts), Second Sight 5 (spirits), Shapeshifter 5 (persona), Sihr 18 ('afarit), Sin-

gle Weapon 5 (scimitar)

**Modified and Unique Powers:**

*Aura of Fear*, 0 points, Init n/a, Mentem

R: Per, D: Constant, T: Spectacle

The Malik emanates an aura of awe and fear. This must Penetrate, and those who are affected to refuse to approach him unless they make a successful Brave Personality trait roll against an Ease Factor of 12.

CrMe35 (Base 4, +3 Constant, +4 Spectacle); Personal Power (35 levels, –4 cost)

*Corporeal Veil of the Jinn*, In addition to the standard forms, The Malik can assume the shape of a lynx and an ancient Phoenician prince. He can vary his Size to as large as +6 or as small as –9.

*Domination*, 1 or more points, Multicast, Penetration

*Fabrication* As a variable power, the Malik is able to craft fabrications up to a level of his Might score of 50.

*Fiery Aura of the 'Afrit*, 0 points

*Flight*, 0 points, Fast Cast

*King of Fire*, points equal to magnitude, Init (– Magnitude), Igmem The Malik has spontaneous magical power as defined by a Major Magic Focus in Fire. The maximum level of effect is 50, and he can use the Mastery Abilities

jinn are fond of luxury and indulge in extravagant eating and drinking, wearing scandalous clothing, and displaying immodest manners.

Jinn of the wild are elemental spirits of the land, usually tied to some natural feature such as an oasis, a mountain, or a stretch of desert. This sort of jinni is a true genius loci. As such, it cannot venture far from the land it is bound to unless it forms a magical bargain or is somehow coerced. These are the sorts of jinn that are of the most interest to the Sahirs (both Hermetic

and non-Hermetic), and are easy to identify as jinn using Magic Lore or an appropriate Area Lore. These wild spirits are the most primal manifestation of the jinn. By comparison, the bottled jinn seem tamed by civilization.

All Jinn have the Free Virtue of Magic Spirit (Jinni), which includes the effects of Magical Air. All Jinni also have the Major Virtue of Ways of the (Land) plus the Major Flaw of Greater Malediction: Bound by Bargains. Since these two are universal to all jinn, the 'afarit presented here have tak-

en these as a Major Quality and a Major Inferiority. This is to make it easy to create a wide variety of different 'afrit characters based on a simple template and some notes on specific individuals (Characteristics, Virtues, Flaws, and any additional Abilities &/or Powers). Magical Characters are able to take General and Supernatural Virtues and Flaws as Qualities and Inferiorities. A bottled jinni must take Greater Malediction (Bound in Bottle) as a Major Flaw.

Jinn often possess a wide variety of powers, including taking material form,



## Al-Malik 'Izz-Doresh al-Dahish ibn El-'A'mash al-'Afrīt (cont'd)

of Fast Cast, Imperturbable, and Multicast, as if he had a Mastery score of 4. This counts as two Focus Powers taken together, each increased to level 50 and Mastery Abilities taken twice.

Focus Power (2 x 50 levels; 2 x each: Fast Cast, Multicast)

*Oath Swearing*, 10 points, Init -10, Vim  
R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Group, Ritual

Enforces the power of a solemnly-sworn oath between two or more parties. All parties must agree to the oath of their own free will, and it must Penetrate the Magic Resistance of all parties to take effect. If a participant in the oath tries to act in direct contravention of it, he immediately becomes aware of this. If he carries on regardless, then he is struck with a Minor Flaw. This Flaw can be removed by re-swearing the oath in front of the original participants. This power persists until there is no further record of the oath, either in the memories of the participants or in written form. New participants may be added to the oath by swearing to it in the presence of the creature, if it pays the original Might cost again. The Might Points spent on Oath

Swearing regenerate normally.  
No Hermetic equivalent: Ritual Power.

*Presence*, 0 points, Constant, Imaginem:

R: Arc, D: Constant, T: Ind

The Malik is aware of everything happening in the streets of the City of Brass, in his Palace, around the city walls as far as someone standing on the wall can see, and up along the Forgotten Road up unto Sight range from the Basalt Pillar. The Restriction to this power is that he cannot perceive what happens inside the other buildings of the City of Brass. The effect of this power is that the Malik is present everywhere in this realm, so his senses are not blocked by Magic Resistance; the senses are not magical. (see *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 103).

InIm30 (Base 2, +4 Arc, +3 Constant, +1 Non Hermetic); Greater Power (30 levels, -3 Cost)

*Replenish the Faithful Servant*, variable points, Init -3, Vim

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Ind

The Malik is able to transfer Might to a jinni of the City of Brass within range of his voice. If replenishing another's Might Pool, the cost is an equal number of points. The Malik cannot

increase the Might Score, but can restore damage done to the score by ablative magic. In this case, the cost is an equal reduction in the Malik's Might score (though this is replenished when the Malik forms a new aspect)  
ReVi20 (Base 10, +2 Voice); Greater Power (20 levels, -2 cost, Restricted Power)

*Sibr*, Supernatural Ability

The Malik possesses the Solomonic art *Sibr*, explained fully in *The Cradle and the Crescent*, page 46. By using Might or Confidence points, the Malik can easily summon an 'afrit with a Might of 25 or less and command it to perform a single task. Summoning more powerful 'afrit is possible, but more prone to possible failure.

*Smite with Fire*, 0 points, Fast Cast, Multicast

Vis: 5 Rego, 10 Ignem

**Appearance:** The Malik has black skin and long red hair like a horse's tail. He has two eyes like burning coal and a third eye that looks like a lynx's eye in the middle of his forehead. With the legs and torso of a man, the Malik has two pairs of arms, one human and one lion. He has a pair of huge, vulture-like wings.

flying, invisibility, and conjuring wealth and other items. Jinn also often possess powers with one or more elemental Forms (matching the alignment of its Might score). The template presents powers typical of an 'afrit from the City of Brass, and other common powers of higher ranking 'afrit are described in individual entries.

Not all jinn are aligned with the Magic Realm. There are Faerie Jinn, as mentioned, but there are also Jinn affiliated with the Infernal Realm. Further details, as well as guidelines for creating

jinn aligned to other supernatural realms and additional examples, are provided in *The Cradle and the Crescent*, Chapter four.

## The Corporeal Forms of Jinn

The corporeal form of a jinni is considered part of its Essential Nature. It can maintain this form indefinitely and dissolve it at will. Though created by magic,

it is considered a natural body and not repelled by Magic Resistance. Indeed, jinn can mate with humans and produce children with magical blood. While in corporeal form, a jinni must eat, breathe, and sleep, just like a human being, and killing the corporeal body destroys the jinni. A jinni knows this weakness and will change into its spirit form to avoid death.

The jinn presented here have the Variable Power Virtue and Restricted Power Flaw in conjunction with the pow-

## Travel in the Desert

The sun burns hot in the deserts, meaning that characters need to take precautions against heat and sunstroke. This includes covering their skin to avoid sunburn and carrying adequate supplies of water to stave off dehydration. The Deprivation check time for lack of water is reduced in the desert to 4 hours, while the sunlight does +1 non-combat damage if skin is left exposed (see *ArM5*, pages 180–181). Powerful magi can easily protect themselves from the heat and their thirst by using magic such as the Ward against Heat and Flames or Ritual magic to create water. However, some magi may lack these capabilities and there are also the companions, grogs, and pack animals to consider.

Another (usually natural) hazard is dry quicksands, which can

swallow a man and his mount in seconds. If a character steps on one of these, he begins to sink immediately and is pulled under within two rounds. Death from suffocation follows if he is not rescued (again, see *ArM5*, pages 180–181). A character who is caught in an area of dry quicksand may make a Strength or Quickness stress roll against an Ease Factor of 9 in the first round to leap or pull himself free before he sinks a significant distance, with a botch indicating that his arms are trapped in the following round. Thereafter it is up to his companions to help him escape its clutches, though if his arms are free he may assist in the second round, reducing any further Ease Factors that he may have to roll against by 3. Thereafter he is pulled under and not be able to help.

er Donning the Corporeal Veil (*Realms of Power: Magic*, page 102). This links the power to the Shapeshifter Ability (taken as a Major Quality), allowing the jinni to manifest in a number of additional forms equal to the Ability score. The jinni doesn't need to roll to switch forms; it simply discards one form and manifests in the shape desired. Each form is considered part of the jinni's Essential Nature. The power isn't limited to just animal shapes. Jinn may choose variants such as an elemental form, a more regal (or more humble) version of their normal self, or even an inanimate object. The jinni can vary the size of its manifestation, from as large as its base size + Shapeshifter score, to as small as base size – twice Shapeshifter score. So, for example, an 'afrit with a Size of +1 and a score of 3 in Shapeshifter can appear as large as Size +4 or as small as Size –5.

The Restricted Power Flaw has the effect that, no matter what the alternate form, there is always some tell-tale sign of the jinni's true identity. Beast forms have certain distinct similarities and contribute features to other shapes. An elemental form may take the shape of the jinni or bear his likeness somehow. Even an alternate human form still exhibits a signature quirk or carries a trademark object. The jinni cannot lie about his identity, though he may introduce himself by any one of the different parts of his true name, use a recognized nickname, or spell the name backwards.

## Jawal the Mighty, 'Afrit of the Brass Bottle

**Magic Might:** 25

**Modified Characteristics:** Str +4, Sta +3

**Modified Virtues & Flaws:** add Improved Characteristics (x2), Great Strength, Overconfident (major); plus Reckless

**Modified Qualities & Inferiorities:** Add Greater Power, Improved Powers (x2), Lesser Power, and Remove Reduced Abilities (x4)

**Personality Traits:** Overconfident +3, Reckless +3, Brave +2, Crafty +2 (Communication), Loyal –1

**Combat:** Add +1 to Attack and Defense, and +2 to Damage

**Soak:** +3

**Modified Abilities:** Brawl 5 (wrestle), Charm 2 (first impres-

sions), Concentration 3 (powers), Faerie Lore 1 (Arabic), Finesse 4 (precision), Magic Lore 4 (jinn), Penetration 5 (Domination), Single Weapon 5 (scimitar)

**Modified & Additional Powers:**

*Fiery Aura of the 'Afrit*, Init +3

*Smite with Fire*, 0 points, Init –5

**Vis:** 5 Ignem

**Appearance:** Jawal appears as a large muscular man, with dark red skin and gleaming yellow eyes. He is bald save for a long tail of coal black hair that reaches from his head to his feet. His ears are pointed and he has a wicked grin of jagged teeth. He is clothed in nothing but smoke and jewelry.

## Dramatis Personae

The City of Brass features a number of significant characters, most of whom are Jinn. See the Typical 'Afrit information on the previous pages for character templates and special rules governing 'afrit in play..



## Afdal-Kathir, the Malik's Champion

Afdal-Kathir is the Malik's nephew. He is the court's champion and commander of the city's garrison. Afdal is desperately in love with his cousin Amina, who wants nothing to do with him.

## Amina, the Malik's daughter

The Malik's daughter is a cunning speaker but famously proud and self-confident. She is a powerful 'afrit in her own right.

## Za'al-Zoresh the Grand-Vizier

Za'al-Zoresh is the Malik's cousin, seer, and advisor. He is always scheming to gain more power, sometimes in conflict with the Malik's interests. However, he seeks not to usurp the throne, but to increase his own influence and authority.

## Ihab Ia'ara, an 'Afrit Merchant

Ihab travels about the city with a floating cart of wondrous items. For trinkets of minor power, he accepts payment in vis or trade for a Hermetic item. Exotic and powerful items demand higher prices, such as dangerous quests or subtly insidious bargains. The nature of a special item should be determined by the storyguide as fits the needs of the story at this point; something to help the characters do something they cannot do on their own, or something cursed that hinders the characters and creates further complications.



## Al-Malik 'Izz-Doresh al-Dahish ibn El-A'mash al-'Afrit

Al Malik I'zz-Doresh al-Dahish ibn El-A'mash al-'Afrit, called "the Malik" for short, is the sultan of the City of Brass. A powerful Named Spirit, the Malik is a Daimon, and can manifest his Aspect in different forms. The Basalt Pillar on the Forgotten Road (see later) is another aspect of the Daimon, and displays identical facial features to the physical 'afrit aspect. Because of Solomon's powerful magic, even a normally unbindable Daimonic Aspect like the Malik could be bound. One of the Malik's Aspects is bound in the Basalt Pillar and cannot be discarded — it cannot leave its prison in the mundane realm although the Daimon itself is free to move within the Magic Realm. If questioned in his different Aspects,

the Malik will not lie about his identity, but he answers cryptically and elusively.

The Malik has not attempted to manifest an Aspect outside of the Magic Realm and the City of Brass, and does not know whether he can. He can discard the Aspect in the City of Brass and form a new one after a day, appearing upon his red carnelian throne in his palace. This allows him to create an Aspect with a refilled Might pool, and to manifest with a different set of powers if he so chooses. One example of an alternate power is the ability to bind spirits, as in the case of the ghost of King Kush. The locus of the Malik Aspect consists of the streets and walls of the City of Brass, the Palace, and all public buildings.

# Expected Sequence of Play

The locations described here presume that the characters are taking the initial mundane route that Emir Musa traveled, as described in the Tale of the City of Brass. If the characters use some other more direct means to enter the Magic Realm, skip over the details of Part One up to and including the Marble Palace, and place them directly on the Forgotten Road that leads to the City of Brass.

## Part One: Into the Tale

The simplest way to begin is to journey to Egypt by mundane means and then retrace the steps of Musa's expedition. Trade between Venice and Alexandria is thriving and characters may be able to use their mundane contacts to book passage on a merchant vessel or procure their own ship. This is perhaps the easiest way, but not necessarily the safest. It requires wandering through the desert, which may tax the survival skills of the player characters. There is also the danger of nomadic raiders and wild animals to contend with, and as they draw closer to the regio they may encounter malicious jinn and other dangerous creatures. You may decide that entrances to the City of Brass may be accessed from other mundane desert areas such as the western Maghrib, the Great Syrian Desert, the Empty Quarter of Arabia or at the edge of the Taklimakan, depending on your saga.

A more direct yet more dangerous route is to leap directly into the Magic Realm and navigate the Twilight Void. This is easier said than

done, and lessens the opportunity for grogs and companions to play a part in the story, but may be suitable for exceptionally high-powered or fast-paced sagas. This requires that the magi correctly identify the city's location as being within the Magic Realm rather than Arcadia or somewhere in the mundane realm, which of course requires research. See *Realms of Power: Magic*, Chapter Three for details on direct travel to and through the Magic Realm.

Alternatively, characters with Faerie Lore may decide that the best route involves tracing the story back through Faerie by entering into Arcadia on a quest for the city. A character with Arcadian Travel may attempt to use her knowledge to navigate to the mundane location of the Marble Palace but risks being side tracked into a Faerie reflection of the true city by Faerie jinn feeding off the human vitality created by the retelling of the tale. She may become lost in one of the other tales from

the *1001 Nights*, but such an adventure is beyond the scope of this book.

## Mythic Egypt

In 1220, Egypt is in Ayubbid hands, ruled by the sultan's son and viceroy al-Malik al-Kamil. He is currently embroiled with Papal Legate Pelagius and the forces of the Fifth Crusade, who have just taken Damietta and are moving inland towards Cairo. In the meantime, trade with Christian Europe continues unabated in Alexandria, where the Venetian embassy has been comfortably established. Disguised as merchants, the magi have no trouble blending into the ancient city although any blatant use of magic draws the attention of local mundane authorities or Islamic hedge wizards. Further details on the Gifted and unGifted sahir of the Order of Suleiman are given in *The Cradle and the Crescent*.

Once the characters arrive in Alexandria they have no trouble getting sup-

### 'Umar, a Desert Bandit

**Characteristics:** Int 0, Per +1, Pre 0, Com +1, Str +1, Sta +1, Dex +3, Qik +3

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 28

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Outlaw; Improved Characteristics (x3), Puissant Guile, Puissant Stealth, Social Contacts (criminals), Tough, Warrior; Avarice (major), Close Family Ties; Reckless

**Personality Traits:** Avarice +3, Reckless +3, Loyal (+2 to gang/tribe, -2 to others)

**Reputations:** Bandit 2 (local)

**Combat:**

*Knife:* Init +3, Attack +10, Defense +9, Damage +2

*Short Sword:* Init +4, Attack +12, Defense +10, Damage +5

*Short Sword on Horseback:* Init +4, Attack +15, Defense +13, Damage +5

**Soak:** +4

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5,

Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Arabic 4 (merchants), Area Lore: Sahara 3 (merchant trails), Athletics 2 (run), Awareness 2 (opportunity), Berber 5 (bandits), Brawl 5 (knife), Carouse 1 (stay sober), Charm 1 (wit), Folk Ken 2 (nomads), Guile 4+2 (infiltrate groups of travelers), Legerdemain 2 (slight of Hand), Ride 3 (speed), Single Weapon 5 (short sword), Stealth 3+2 (sneak), Survival 3 (desert)

**Equipment:** Knife, short sword and camel

**Encumbrance:** 0

**Appearance:** 'Umar might disguise himself as a pilgrim, merchant, hermit, or laborer to infiltrate a group of travelers. His goal is to lead them into an ambush set by his fellows.



## Da'ud, Jinni of the Oasis

**Magic Might:** 30 (Auram)  
**Locus:** An oasis in the Egyptian Sahara

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per 0, Pre +1, Com +1, Str +2, Sta +2, Dex +1, Qik +2

**Size:** +1

**Season:** Autumn

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues & Flaws:** Magic Spirit (*Jinni*); Arcane Lore, Educated, Improved Characteristics (x2), Inspirational, Large, Well Travelled; Indiscreet, Magical Air\*, Optimistic (major); Carefree

**Magical Qualities and Inferiorities:** Focus Power, Gentle Air, Greater Powers (x2), No Fatigue, Ritual Power, Shapeshifter, Ways of the Oasis; Gift of Tongues, Improved Powers (x2), Personal Powers (x3), Second Sight, Variable Power (x2); Reduced Abilities (x2), Restricted Power

**Personality Traits:** Carefree +3, Enthusiastic +3, Optimistic +3, Honorable +2, \*Inspiring +2 (Presence), Loyal +2, Brave +1

\* Essential Trait

**Reputations:** Benevolent 3 (local)

**Combat:**

**Knife:** Init +2, Attack +2, Defense +2, Damage +4

**Soak:** +2

**Wound Penalties (material form):** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Arabic 5 (poetry), Area Lore: Egypt 3 (Sahara), Arts Liberales 2 (grammar), Ath-

letics 2 (leaping), Awareness 2 (alert), Bargain 3 (services), Brawl 3 (knife), Charm 3 (wit), Concentration 2 (powers), Coptic 4 (nomads), Dominion Lore 2 (Solomon), Finesse 3 (grace), Folk Ken 3 (nomads), Greek 4 (ancient), Guile 4 (fast talk), Infernal Lore 1 (Iblis), Leadership 2 (inspiration), Magic Lore 4 (jinn), Penetration 2 (Lord of Winds), Philosophiae 2 (natural), Second Sight 4 (spirits), Shapeshifter 3 (whirlwind), Theology: Islam 1 (jinn)

**Powers:** Several powers are the same as for the 'afarit, so refer to the descriptions given earlier.

**Corporeal Veil of the Jinn**, 0 points, Init -3, Corpus:

With a Shapeshifter score of 3, Da'ud can manifest as large as Size +4 or as small as -5. He can take three additional forms, including a dove, a whirlwind, and a beggar. He is easily identified no matter what form he takes.

**Fabrication**, 5 points, Init -8, (various)

Da'ud is able to craft Fabrications up to level 25

**Flight**, 0 points, Init -1, Various

Da'ud uses a flying carpet or carries himself with a gust of wind, depending on his mood.

**Invisibility**, 0 points, Init 0, Imagination, Fast Cast

**Jinni's Leap**, 0 points, Init, Corpus, Fast Cast

**Lord of Winds**, points equal to Magnitude, Init + (2 - Magnitude),

**Auram:**

Da'ud can duplicate Creo and Rego Auram spells up to level 25. Focus Power (25 levels, Fast Cast)

**Aura of Refreshing Breeze**, 0 points, Init n/a, Auram

**R:** Touch, **D:** Constant, **T:** Ind Da'ud is constantly surrounded by a refreshing, sweet-smelling breeze.

CrAu10 (Base 1, +1 Touch, +3 Constant, +1 Unnatural); Personal Power (10 levels, -1 cost)

**Equipment:** Clothing, jewelry, knife

**Encumbrance:** 0

**Vis:** If killed, Da'ud leaves behind a plume of white smoke containing 5 pawns of Auram. However, like all jinn, killing the material form does not destroy him.

**Appearance:** Da'ud appears as a jovial nobleman dressed in finery and jewels.

Da'ud is the caretaker of the Blessed Oasis, a location in the middle of the Egyptian Sahara that attracts lost wanderers. He assists the needy and is helpful to others who treat him with respect. He does expect to be rewarded for his service, but he never mentions it. It doesn't need to be anything extravagant; something as simple as a poem or a minor token of appreciation will suffice. If none is given, the wanderers will not be able to locate the oasis again.

plies for a planned trip into the desert. They do have trouble finding a local guide, especially if they make it known that they will be traveling off the usual trade routes in search of a city believed to exist only in legend.

### AL-BAWITI

Regardless of where the characters began their journey, the last bastion of civilization before entering the desert is the village of Al-Bawiti. Though the weather is hot, this is not yet the desert. These are dry plains and grassland.

The rural folk are nomadic goat herders, and have a few sources of water that they guard jealously. Al-Bawiti is the characters' last opportunity to rest, load up on supplies, and gain information.

This leg of the journey can be glossed over if desired. However, if the storyguide needs to find a way to oc-

## Sorash D'resh al-Zawba'a

**Magic Might:** 35 (Terram)

**Locus:** A patch of the Egyptian Sahara

**Characteristics:** Int -1, Per +1, Pre -1, Com -2, Str +5, Sta +4, Dex +1, Qik +1

**Size:** +1

**Season:** Autumn

**Confidence Score:** 2 (5)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Magic Spirit (*Jinni*); Magical Monster; Affinity with Single Weapon, Arcane Lore, Berserk, Educated, Great Strength (x2), Great Stamina, Improved Characteristics, Puissant Single Weapon, Warrior; Magical Air\*, Wrathful (major); Anchored to the Desert, Incomprehensible, Infamous, Reckless

**Magical Qualities and Inferiorities:** Focus Power (x2), Greater Immunity (Heat & Flames), Greater Power (x2), No Fatigue, Shapeshifter, Ways of the Desert; Gift of Tongues, Improved Abilities (x3), Improved Attack (x2), Improved Confidence, Improved Initiative (x3), Improved Powers (x3), Improved Soak (x2), Lesser Immunity (Sand & Stone), Personal Power, Second Sight, Variable Power; Blatant Magical Air, Greater Malediction (bound by bargains); Baneful Circumstances (contact with iron), Restricted Power

**Personality Traits:** \*Wrathful +3 (Strength), Vicious +3, Brave +2, Loyal -1, Merciful -3

\* Essential Trait

**Reputations:** Cruel and Merciless 4 (local)

**Combat:**

*Fist:* Init +10, Attack +12, Defense +8, Damage +5

*Clawing Wind:* Init +10, Attack +13, Defense +9, Damage +5

*Scimitar:* Init +13, Attack +21, Defense +14, Damage +11

*Soak:* +12

**Wound Penalties (material form):** -1 (1-6), -3 (7-12), -5 (13-18), Incapacitated (19-24), Dead (25+)

**Abilities:** Arabic 5 (merchants), Area Lore: Egypt 3 (ancient days), Artes Liberales 3 (astronomy), Athletics 3 (jump), Awareness 3 (alert), Bargain 3 (magical), Brawl 7 (clawing wind), Carouse 2 (secretly stay sober), Charm 3 (win trust, Concentration 3 (powers), Finesse 3 (precision), Folk Ken 3 (bandits), Guile 3 (twisted truth), Hunt 3 (tracking), Infernal Lore 2 (Sons of Iblis), Leadership 3 (intimidation), Magic Lore 4 (jinn), Penetration 4 (Flay), Philosophiae 2 (natural), Sahara Lore 4 (trade routes), Second Sight 4 (spirits), Shapeshifter 3 (sand), Single Weapon 9+2 (scimitar), Survival 3 (desert), Theology: Islam 1 (jinn)

**Powers:**

*Corporeal Veil of the Jinn*, 0 points, Init -4, Corpus

In addition to his normal corporeal form, Sorash can manifest as a whirlwind of sand, a jackal, or a vulture. His snarling face can be recognized on any shape he takes. As a whirlwind, he fights using *Clawing Wind*. This is not a separate power. Rather, this is the natural effect of being struct by a whirlwind of sand.

Greater Power (50 levels, -5 cost, Variable Power, Restricted Power)

*Flay*, 2 points, Init +1, Corpus

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind

As Sorash touches an opponent, the skin is partially flayed from her body. The victim suffers a Heavy Wound. Note that Sorash can use this power in any physical form he takes, but as a spirit he can only touch other spirits.

PeCo20 (Base 15, +1 Touch); Greater Power (20 levels, -2 cost, +2 Initiative)

*Invisibility*, 0 points, Init -1, Imaginem; Fast Cast

Most Jinn have the power to become invisible at will and can remain so for as long as they choose.

(Base 4, +3 Constant, +1 changing image); Personal Power (20 levels, -2 cost, Fast Cast)

*Presence*, 0 points, Init -2, Imaginem

Greater Power (30 Levels, -3 cost)

*Lord of the Desert*, points equal to Magnitude, Init + (1 - Magnitude), Various:

Sorash can duplicate effects up to level 35 that are defined by a Minor Magic Focus in deserts. Example effects include whipping up a sandstorm, creating heat enough to cause fatigue or injury (but not fire), and causing dehydration.

Focus Power (35 levels, Fast Cast, Multicast, Penetration)

**Equipment:** Brass scale hauberk, brass scimitar

**Encumbrance:** 0

**Vis:** If the corporeal form of Sorash is killed, he leaves behind a whirling column of black sand that, if collected, yields 4 pawns of Terram vis and 3 pawns of Auram.

**Appearance:** In the form of a man, Sorash appears as a ragged desert nomad with tattered clothing and a weather-beaten face. He can also take the form of a desert jackal, a vulture, or a whirlwind of sand.

Sorash is an angry jinni, a member of the wrath-driven Zawba'a tribe. He is not as bloodthirsty as his brethren, though he is just as cruel and merciless. He serves the Malik of the City of Brass by guarding the Regio boundary that separates the Marble Palace from the Egyptian Sahara. He cannot be willingly convinced to help the characters, the best they can hope for is an agreement not to harm them, but he does not let them pass unless they defeat him. If coerced, he can lead them to the Marble Palace which leads to the City of Brass, but he begs to go no further (he is weakened outside of his native environment).



cupy companion and grog characters, he can use this as way to give them the chance to shine. They can speak with the locals and gain added information that may be helpful in their quest, such as the best direction to travel, landmarks to look for, dangers to avoid or the location of a blessed oasis, and bits of the original tale. If the characters are itching for a fight, have them encounter a group of nomadic bandits.

### AS-SAHARA-AL-GHARBIYAH

This is the Egyptian Sahara, the western desert. The weather is blistering hot and dangerously dry. It takes a month to reach the next stage of their journey, the Marble Palace. If the characters have some sort of advantage, such as directions from the locals in Al-Bawiti or someone possessing a Virtue such as Way of the Land: Desert, then it takes half as long. Unless special precautions are taken and specifically mentioned, water supplies run out.

### Encounters in the Desert

The following encounters may be used to make the trip through the desert more interesting and exciting. The

### Verses of Woe and Weeping

*"Here was a people whom, after their works, thou shalt see wept over for their lost dominion; (...) Death hath destroyed them and disunited them, and in the dust they have lost what they amassed..."*

— inscribed on the outer entrance of the Marble Palace in classical Greek

The architecture and sculpture is classical Greek style, and there are verses of poetry inscribed in Greek over every entrance and doorway. These are the verses that caused Emir Musa to weep so profusely in the original tale, and they might have the same effects on characters who acquired the Despair Personality Trait from the aura alignment.

Each time a character reads one of these verses or hears it being read aloud, roll a simple die and add the character's Despair Personality Trait. If the total is 9 or more he begins to weep uncontrollably. The powerful non-Hermetic effect has a Penetration of 60 and a non-standard Duration. The Ease Factor required to recover from weeping is (3 x the character's Despair trait). The player rolls a stress die modified by the

character's strongest appropriate Personality trait (for example, Carefree, Cheerful, or Optimistic would add to the roll; Compassionate, Depressed, or Pessimistic would subtract from it). If the roll succeeds, the character stops weeping. If the roll botches, the character weeps hysterically for several minutes and loses a Fatigue level.

The Despair trait and the Weeping Verses do not affect supernatural creatures with a Might score affiliated with the Magic Realm, and cannot contradict an Essential Virtue. Those affiliated with the Divine (such as those who possess True Faith or possess Holy Powers) weep only momentarily, but recover immediately if they proclaim that only God is eternal in Arabic, Greek, or Hebrew.

Another prominent verse from the original tale was inscribed upon the Tablet of Iron, mentioned previously. This was the lid covering the sarcophagus of King Kush, and was removed by Emir Musa as a trophy of the expedition to be given as a gift to his caliph to remind him of the mortality of the great kingdoms of man. This careless action in turn leads to the "King's Ransom" plot.



## Spectral Soldiers of King Kush

The ghosts of King Kush's soldiers haunt the tombs of the Marble Palace. They possess an undying loyal to their liege and serve with single-minded dedication, ignorant of any other purpose or existence. They are equipped and fight in the style of Greek soldiers from around the time of Alexander. King Kush is being held hostage in the City of Brass, and the ghosts are willing to do whatever it takes to rescue him. The characters must deal with these specters before passing through the Marble Palace on their way to the City of Brass. The ghosts strike an amicable bargain if possible, but resort to force if need be, even going so far as to take one or more members of the expedition hostage to compel cooperation.

Kush himself was African, educated in Greece, and had served as an officer in Alexander's army. After Alexander's death he served Ptolemy as a regional governor, appointed king over the Western Desert.

### SPECTRAL SOLDIERS OF KUSH

**Magic Might:** 10 to 30 (Mentem)  
(Low ranking soldiers are in the 10–15 range; high-ranking officers have Mights from 20 to 30)

**Characteristics:** Int 0, Per 0, Pre 0, Com 0, Str +2, Sta +2, Dex +1, Qik +0  
(scores may vary for each individual)

**Size:** 0

**Age:** Ancient (20 to 30)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Magic Spirit (Ghost); Warrior, Dutybound

**Qualities and Inferiorities:** No Fatigue; Improved Abilities (x5); Improved Power, Lesser Power (x2); Restricted Power

\* Specters with a higher Might score and more Qualities have further improvements to their Characteristics and Abilities. Officers may have additional powers, such as conjuring lower ranking soldiers.

**Personality Traits:** Dutiful +3, Loyal +3, Brave +3

**Combat:**

*Short Sword/Round Shield:* Init +1, Attack +10/+11, Defense +8/+11, Damage +7

*Short Spear/Round Shield:* Init +2, Attack +9/+10, Defense +7/+10, Damage +7

**Soak:** +9

**Wound Penalties:** –1 (1–5), –3 (6–10), –5 (11–15), Incapacitated (16–20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Area Lore: Egypt 3 (things to lament), Artes Liberales 2 (literacy), Athletics 3 (marching), Awareness 3 (in combat), Bargain 2 (haggle), Brawl 5 (dagger), Carouse 2 (drinking), Folk Ken 2 (warriors), Greek 5 (ancient), Profession: Soldier 5 (honor guard), Single Weapon 6 (with shield), Survival 2 (forage)

**Powers:**

*Strike*, 0 points, Init special, Terram  
The soldier can strike to inflict injury upon corporeal beings, its weapon being made solid for that split second. Initiative is based upon the soldier's Combat scores.

CrTe10 (Base 5, +1 Touch); Lesser Power (10 levels, –2 cost, special Initiative)

*Animation*, 0 points, Init –5, (Corpus)

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

The specter is able to animate its own skeletal corpse, including the armaments it was buried

with. The specter can only animate its own corpse, not that of another, so if its corpse is destroyed it can no longer use this power.

ReCo25 (Base 10, +1 Touch, +2 Sun; Lesser Power (25 levels, –5 cost); Restricted

**Equipment:** Short sword or spear, large round shield, full scale armor

**Vis:** 2 Mentem in ghostly essence

**Appearance:** The specters have the appearance of the Greek soldiers who occupied Egypt in ancient times. Though they can inflict wounds with their spectral weapons, if met in the tombs they animate their bodies and fight physically. This is more of an unconscious reflex than a purposeful decision.

The Magic Might of these spirits varies according to their soldierly rank. Most have a Might of 10 to 15, higher-ranking officers have a score as high as 30, and Prince Keshan has a Might of 40.

### SPECTER OF PRINCE KESHAN

**Magic Might:** 40 (Mentem)

**Season:** Spring

**Characteristics:** Int +2, Per 0, Pre +3, Com +1, Str +3, Sta +2, Dex +2, Qik +2

**Size:** 0

**Confidence** 2 (5)

**Age:** Ancient (40)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Magic Spirit (Ghost); Magical Champion; Educated, Self Confident, Warrior; Driven: to rescue his father (Major); Dutybound, Visions

**Qualities and Inferiorities:** Focus



Desert Bandits encounter can be used as a warm-up combat. The Blessed Oasis can be used if the expedition is in sore need of aid and comfort, and should be reached before anyone suffers lethal injury from the sun. The Scorching Sand is used to inject an element of real danger.

## THE DESERT BANDITS

The trails of North Africa are plagued by bandits who prey upon travelers and merchant caravans. Berber and Arab nomads form gangs of a dozen or more, supporting their tribes through thievery and plunder. A favored tactic is for one of their number to infiltrate a party posing as a fellow traveler or a laborer. He then steers the party into an ambush and robs them blind. The infiltrator may be discovered beforehand to give the characters an advantage, or the infiltration aspect can be discarded and you can have bandits simply jump the characters at some point where terrain is well suited for an ambush. Use the statistics given for 'Umar, a typical desert bandit, and adjust the size of the gang to suit the combat prowess of the expedition. To give the bandits an advantage, grant one of them possession of a Brass Bottle and command over an 'afrit with Magic Might 15.

## THE BLESSED OASIS

The Blessed Oasis is easily mistaken for a mirage, and the storyguide may wish to tease the players by making it seem ever on the horizon, so that the characters arrive there suddenly when they have grown weary of chasing it.

The Blessed Oasis is a lush garden located in the middle of the desert, around the edges of a small pond of fresh sweet water. The air is fragrant and pleasant, and is invigorating to breathe. Intellego magic reveals that there is a

## Spectral Soldiers of King Rush (cont'd)

Power, Gentle Air, Greater Power (x2), No Fatigue; Improved Abilities (x14), Improved Characteristics (6x), Improved Powers (x5), Lesser Power (x2); Restricted Power (x2)

**Personality Traits:** Brave +3, Determined +3, Dutiful +3, Loyal +3

### Combat:

*Short Sword/Round Shield:* Init +3, Attack +11/+12, Defense +10/+13, Damage +8

**Soak:** +9

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Destroyed (21+)

**Abilities:** Area Lore: Egypt 4 (things to lament), Artes Liberales 3 (astronomy), Athletics 3 (marching), Awareness 3 (in combat), Bargain 4 (haggle), Brawl 5 (dagger), Carouse 2 (drinking), Charm 3 (wit), Coptic 4 (ancient), Etiquette 4 (courtly), Folk Ken 3 (warriors), Greek 5 (ancient), Hunt 2 (track), Intrigue 4 (alliances), Leadership 6 (soldiers), Philosophiae 3 (natural), Profession: Soldier 5 (honor guard), Single Weapon 7 (with shield), Survival 2 (forage)

### Powers:

*Strike*, 0 points, Init special, Terram CrTe 10 (Base 5, +1 Touch); Lesser Power (10 levels, -2 cost, special Initiative)

*Animation*, 0 points, Init +2, (Corpus)

**R:** Touch, **D:** Sun, **T:** Ind

ReCo 25 (Base 10, +1 Touch, +2 Sun; Lesser Power (25 levels, -5 cost, +5 Initiative); Restricted

*Summon the Spectral Soldiers*, 0 points, Init +2, Mentem

**R:** Arcane, **D:** Mom, **T:** Ind or Group

The prince can summon any or all of his soldiers, regardless of the intervening distance (however, this cannot be done across Magic Realm Boundaries). This power only works upon the ghosts of his army, not upon other spirits.

ReMe 50 (Base 15, +4 Arc, +2 Group, +1 Flexible), Greater Power (50 levels, -5 cost, +5 Initiative); Restricted

*Ghost Touch*, variable cost, Init (2 - Might points spent), Terram

The prince's ghost can move physical objects around (see *RoP: Magic*, p. 102)

ReTe2 5, Focus Power

*Eidolon*, 0 points, Init +1, Imaginem

**R:** Touch, **D:** Conc, **T:** Ind

The prince is able to create an illusionary image of himself that can be seen and heard by corporeal beings (see *RoP: Magic*, p. 102)

CrIm 15 (Base 2, +1 Touch, +1 Conc, +2 move by command, +1 intricacy); Greater Power (15 levels, +1 Init, -2 cost)

*Presence*, 0 points, constant, Imaginem

**R:** Arcane, **D:** Constant, **T:** Ind

The prince is able to perceive all that occurs within the Marble Palace (see *RoP: Magic*, p. 103)

InIm 30; Greater Power (30 levels, -3 cost)

**Equipment:** Short sword or spear, round shield, full scale armor

**Vis:** 3 Rego and 5 Mentem in ghostly essence

**Appearance:** The prince appears more regal and stately than his soldiers.

level 5 Faerie aura during the day, and a latent level 4 Magic aura. At night the Magic aura waxes to a strength of 5 and the Faerie aura wanes to a strength of 4. The supernatural properties of this aura restore all lost fatigue levels to a character who spends a full night and day resting at the oasis. Also, recovery rolls for disease and injury are greatly hastened, and one recovery roll can be made for each disease and injury after sleeping here for a single night.

The Oasis is inhabited by a jinni named Da'ud, the genius loci and caretaker of the pond and garden. He is the spirit of the invigorating cool breeze that protects the pond from evaporation and helps nourish the garden. Da'ud is a friendly and helpful jinni. He has heard the words of the Prophet and believes that it is his duty to aid the faithful. He can provide the characters with refreshment and nourishment from the garden, and he has the power to fabricate mate-

rial goods out of thin air.

He also has a habit of showing off his knowledge and cannot help but let information slip from his lips. He is happy to tell the characters how to get to the Marble Palace and everything he knows about it. On their own it would take a week, but if the characters follow his directions they get there in three days. If Da'ud joins the expedition, he can lead them there in a single day.

## THE SCORCHING SAND

In this encounter, the characters face the threat of a severe sandstorm, a natural hazard that carries with it a supernatural menace. The sandstorm picks up slowly as the characters travel, at first being a mild annoyance, then building to obscure vision, and eventually increasing to the point of inflicting a stress die + 5 points of damage per round of ex-

posure to it. The sandstorm is completely natural and Magic Resistance provides no protection, although Auram or Terram Form Bonuses add to a magus' Soak roll. On the other hand, as it is completely natural, Rego Auram and Rego Terram spells can provide complete protection.

During the storm, a character spots a massive dark cloud in the distance. Extending from the ground to the sky all along the horizon, the sheer wall of whirling sand is headed their way. This is a magically created sandstorm, although the characters are unlikely to realize that fact as they desperately seek shelter. A malicious jinni named Sorash D'resh al-Zawba'a, also known as the Wrath of Scorching Sand, is generating the magical sandstorm.

Sorash is using his *Lord of the Desert* Focus Power to create a Very Severe weather Phenomenon (CrAu(Te) 35; Base 5, +1 Touch, +2 Concentration, +2 size, +1 Terram). Although awe inspiring, a storm this massive is not unnatural for this terrain. Once it hits, the magical storm lasts for a full minute (10 rounds), and inflicts +30 damage per round on all those exposed to it. This storm represents the upper limit of Sorash's Focus Power, and the Penetration is only 7 (his Penetration Ability score, adding Finesse because of the Penetration Mastery).

Though it appears to the characters that the sandstorm is moving towards them, they are actually moving towards it, even if they remain stationary. What they are experiencing is a mobile regio boundary, and Sorash is the genius loci of that boundary. A Magic aura suddenly rises up at a strength of 6 (this adds to his Penetration, but also adds to Parma Magica-based Magic Resistance). Sorash attacks those who cross the boundary simply because he is malicious. After the storm, he may attempt to harass the characters further. This is an opportunity for the magi to overpower him and coerce him, and he can be forced to take them directly to the Marble Palace.

## A King's Ransom

As mentioned, the Tablet of Iron that protected the sarcophagus and spirit of King Kush was removed by Emir Musa. This left the king vulnerable and the sarcophagus (with the corpse and ghost of the king) was taken by the Malik. This theft ensures the submission and service of the Prince and his spectral soldiers, who now serve as guardians to prevent outsiders from using the Marble Palace as a gateway into the Magic Realm. Though reluctant to stop his father's potential rescuers, the prince is bound to do so and tries to turn them away (by force if need be).

Once the prince sees how powerful the characters are, he turns against the Malik and asks them to rescue his father. If he thinks he can get the upper hand over them, such as by demanding a hostage to ensure cooperation, he does so. If he thinks the magi are extremely powerful, though, he is more humble in requesting assistance. If the characters strike a fair and honorable deal with the

prince and do manage to liberate the king, then they may be able to call upon the prince and his spectral army for assistance in other matters.

If the Tablet of Iron was the primary motivation for the expedition, then the characters have travelled to this point to return the tablet and speak to Prince Keshan. He explains the situation, and tries to negotiate for assistance. He takes a humble tone, but is insistent and resorts to coercion if the characters refuse.

If the characters had another motive for traveling to the City of Brass, and encounter the ghosts unexpectedly, the prince reacts in a more confrontational manner. The characters are not permitted to pass through unless they first strike a bargain. Since the magical gateway requires travelers to first pass through these tombs in order to later find the Brass Horseman that leads to the City of Brass, this becomes an unavoidable plot point.



## Into the Magic Realm

Up until this point, the characters have been traveling through successively higher levels of Magic regiones.

These layers and the corresponding Magic auras are as follows:

- The Scorching Sand (Magic aura 6)
- Outside the Marble Palace (Magic aura 7, aligned with Despair)
- Inside the Marble Palace (Magic aura 8, aligned with Despair)
- Brass Horseman (Magic aura 9)
- The Forgotten Road (Magic aura 10, aligned with Ignem)

The layers of regiones are closely stacked together in such a way that they are difficult to find, but once located, the layers lead directly one into the other, culminating in the Forgotten Road that leads directly to the City of Brass. Once they can see the two burning towers of the city, the characters are within an Ignem Boundary in the Magic Realm.

- City of Brass (Magic aura 10, Ignem Boundary 7)

This means that all Magic activity in the area receives a bonus of +17 (+10 from the Aura and +7 from the Boundary). Ignem related magic receives an additional +7 (for a total of +24). The Magic aura does not add any botch dice to Magic-related rolls, but the Boundary level does, adding its level to botch dice involving any roll that benefits from the Magic aura. That means 7 botch dice are added to any Magic roll of 0.

Faerie powers and Faerie Abilities receive a +5 bonus (equal to half the Aura), but they still roll seven additional botch dice because they benefited from the Magic aura. Infernal powers receive a -10 penalty because of the aura, but since this is no benefit, the seven extra botch dice are not added. Faerie and Infernal rolls do receive an additional twenty botch dice for being in a level 10 Aura

of a foreign Regio. Divine powers are unaffected.

When the characters pass into the Magic Realm, all Arcane Connections to the mundane world are interrupted. Further, all active, non-permanent spells and effects are cancelled and have to be recast. This includes Parma Magica and any enchanted item effects.

Time is virtually at a standstill in the Magic Realm, and characters do not make Aging Rolls while they are there (though their actual age still increases and will affect the next Aging Roll made in the mundane world). Wounds and Fatigue are recovered as normal.

The duration of many magical effects is extended while in the Magic Realm. Spells of a Duration of Momentary or Concentration operate as normal, but those of Diameter or greater persist until the end of the current season, and the Duration of Year is effectively permanent.

## The Marble Palace

After trekking through the desert the characters come across the ancient ruins of the Marble Palace. Even in its ruined state, the structure is beautiful, marred only by the eerie absence of life. After spending a few moments here, characters begin to feel a sense of gloom and mortality. There is a powerful Magic aura of 7, and it is aligned with the emotion of despair. This emotional alignment does not affect those with The Gift or another Magic-realm-based ability, but all others acquire the Personality Trait of Despair at a score of +3. They feel a sense of transience and mortality and are saddened by the knowledge that all things eventually come to an end and that a final fate awaits them. If they adhere to a Divine faith, they may take small solace in the fact that God is eternal.

A Magic regio lies inside the ruined Marble Palace, readily accessible as the characters draw nearer due to the mag-



## Zayad-Sayaf and Zayad-Sabad, Guardians of the Gate

**Magic Might:** 25

**Modified Characteristics:** Str +9, Sta +3, Dex -1, Qik -1

**Size:** +3 (as manifested)

**Modified Virtues & Flaws:** Add Improved Characteristics (x2), Great Strength (x2)

**Driven (major), Dutybound,** plus Reckless and Higher Purpose

**Modified Qualities & Inferiorities:** Add Improved Powers, Lesser Power, and Remove Reduced Abilities (x8)

**Personality Traits:** Driven to guard the city +3, Brave +3, Dutybound +3, \*Reckless (Zayad-Sayaf) +3, Higher Purpose (Zayad-Sabad) +3, Stalwart +2 (applies to Stamina to maintain their guard),

Loyal +2

(Stalwart replaces Crafty as the Essential Trait)

**Combat:**

*Fist:* Init -1, Attack +6, Defense +6, Damage +9

*Great Sword:* Init +1, Attack +12, Defense +9, Damage +18

*Scimitar/Round Shield:* Init +1, Attack +11, Defense +8/+11, Damage +15

**Soak:** +10

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-8), -3 (9-16), -5 (17-24), Inc (25-32), Dead (33+)

**Modified Abilities:** Brawl 6 (fist), Finesse 4 (precision), Great Weapon 7 (great sword), Magic Lore 4 (jinn), Penetration 5 (Smite with Fire), Single Weapon 7 (scimitar)

**Modified & New Powers:**

*Fiery Aura of the 'Afrit*, 1 point

*Flight*, 2 points, Fast Cast

*Smite with Fire*, 2 points, Fast Cast, Multicast

**Equipment:** Full Metal Scale, Great Sword or Scimitar and Round Shield

**Vis:** 5 Ignem

**Appearance:** The guards initially appear as twin columns of flame on either side of whichever gate the characters approach. As the characters come within shouting distance, they manifest as twelve foot tall guards clad in full armor made of brass scales. Zayad-Sayaf is armed with a great sword, and Zayad-Sabad has a scimitar and a round shield, all likewise made of brass.

ical architecture used in the palace's construction. The regio has an aura of 8 and is also aligned with Despair. Within the regio, the palace is beautifully impressive and aesthetically magnificent, with superior construction, bright clean walls, and lofty arches. The palace rivals any structure found in the mundane world. It is decorated with precious metals and minerals, and pristine and intact sculptures abound.

The Marble Palace is a gateway between the mundane realm and the City of Brass, which is located in the Magic Realm. Gateways such as this are very rare, House Mercere has documented only a handful, and this can be a valuable resource and story seed for future use if desired, particularly if the characters take the trouble to obtain an Arcane Connection to the building.

### TOMBS OF THE FOUR HUNDRED

The palace is utterly deserted on both the mundane and regio level.

The chambers and living quarters are empty, and there is no sign of anyone having lived there in many centuries. The only evidence of human presence that can be found are the tombs of four hundred soldiers, located under a lofty dome in the center of the palace. The tombs are arranged in a great circle surrounding a smaller domed chamber, and are all made of gray stone, except for the tomb of the prince which is made of white marble. Each tomb contains the skeletal corpse of an ancient soldier, buried with his arms and armor, and each corpse is tied to a specter.

The tombs of the four hundred soldiers surround a smaller domed chamber, which is the crypt of their liege, King Kush. The domed chamber can be entered by any one of eight sandalwood doors, each inscribed with a weeping verse. In the center of the domed chamber is an empty tomb, where the king's carved sarcophagus and corpse used to be.

## Interlude: Into the Myths

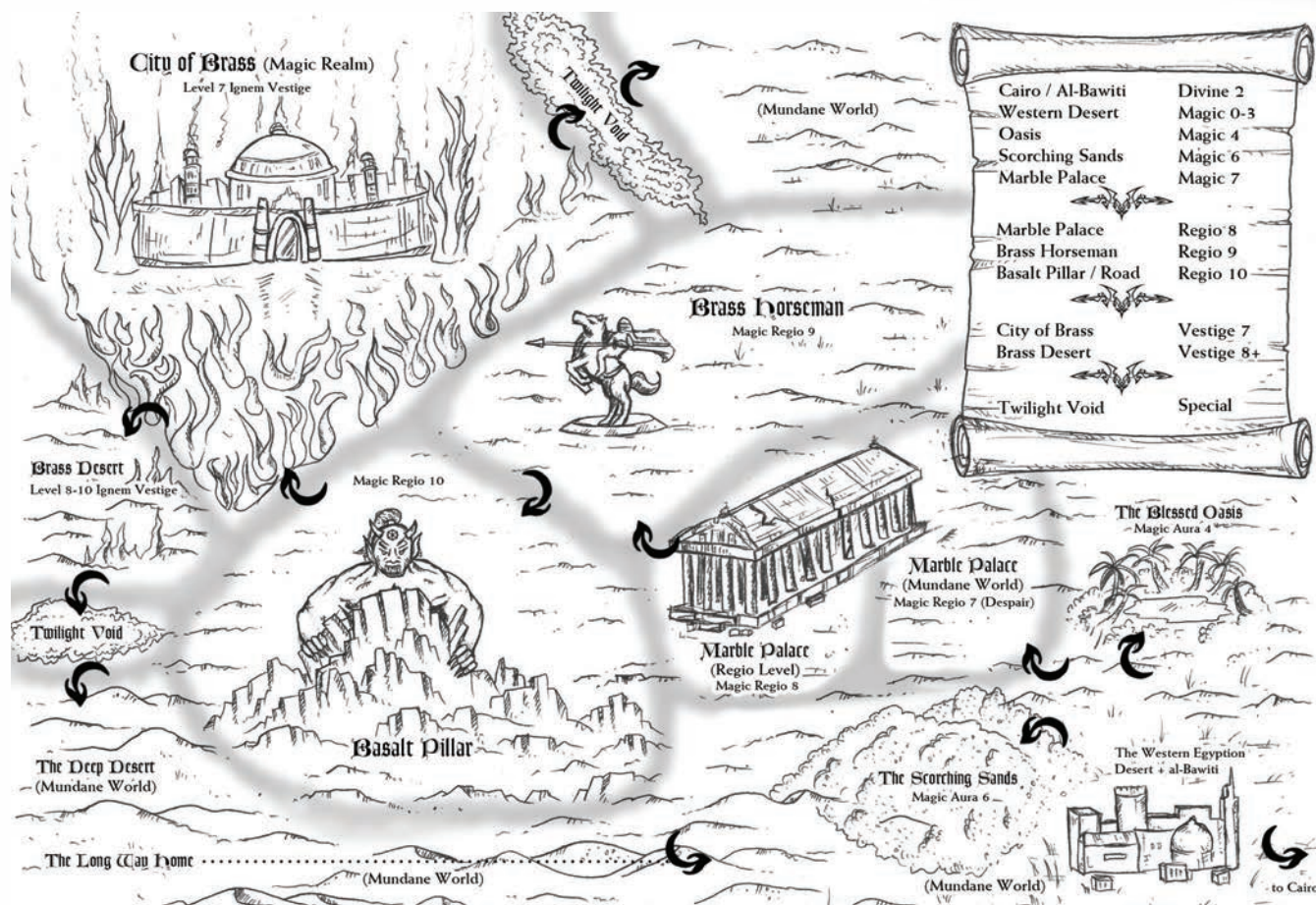
The characters continue their quest towards the City of Brass. Some groups might be heading to the city simply for the sake of exploration, but most are on some quest, either to retrieve the lost bottles of Solomon or to rescue King Kush's ghost.

### The Brass Horseman

"O thou who comest up to me, if thou know not the way that leadeth to the City of Brass, rub the hand of the horseman, and he will turn, and then will stop, and in whatsoever direction he stoppeth, thither proceed, without fear and without difficulty, for it will lead thee to the City of Brass."

—verse inscribed in Arabic on the base of the Brass Horseman statue





Characters who have researched the folklore expect to find a Brass Horseman somewhere just outside the palace, and they are not disappointed. Outside the palace regio, in a connected and more powerful Magic regio, waits the Brass Horseman. The spirit of Prince Keshan can lead characters to this landmark, as can those who have read the original tale. Spells and supernatural powers such as Second Sight can also spot the Brass Horseman's connected regio.

The location of the Brass Horseman's regio in the mundane world is indeterminable and may lie within the Egyptian Desert, the Empty Quarter of Arabia or even the terrifying Taklimakan beyond the Roof of the World. It may even exist at all these sites simultaneously or flit between them and being lost in the Twilight Void every few days.

The statue of the Brass Horseman sits upon a high hill amid the desert plain in a regio with a Magic aura of 9. It is sculpted of solid brass, and wields a great spear with a broad head in its

left hand. The spear glistens so brightly that it can nearly deprive beholders of their sight (as per *Flash of Scarlet Flames*, Penetration +25).

The statue itself consists of a single

## The True City, the Magic City

The City of Brass is populated with a multitude of jinn. During the centuries since the original expedition, these jinn have grown stronger and become bolder. The characters discover a thriving cosmopolitan city, inhabited by 'afarit and other jinn, as well as those closely associated with them (sahirs, sorcerers, mortals with jinni blood, and other sorts of magical beings).

The city has several political factions which are deadlocked in a static

and unchanging state of affairs. The wiser jinn realize the unique potential that humans possess, and seek to involve them in their affairs.

Depending on whether you wish the original tale to be true or not, the jinn of the city either chose to remain invisible out of fear when Musa's original expedition arrived, covered the city with illusions to mask their presence or were able to divert the original explorers into a Faerie reflection of their home.



## The Brass Buildings

The City of Brass is primarily built from a grand conglomeration of Vestiges, each linked to a Brass Bottle or other artifact in the mundane realm. Vestiges are ultimately insubstantial, though they affect all five senses and are virtually real as far as casual investigation is concerned. Each tower has many open doorways and windows, and they are easy to enter to explore and pass through. Theoretically, us-

ing the Magic Travel rules from *Realms of Power: Magic*, one could find his way to the mundane realm by exploring a tower and exiting from the correlating jinni's bottle. The Vestige score of the building is equal to one-fifth the might score of the inhabiting jinni. This is considered part of the locus of that jinni, allowing them to roam anywhere about the city and within sight of the city walls.

solid piece of brass, seemingly impervious to attempts to break off or detach parts of it for later study or use as an Arcane Connection. It can be melted by intense heat or disintegrated by a powerful Perdo Terram effect, but resists magical attempts to damage or modify it as if protected by Magic Resistance of 75. Destroying the statue also destroys the gateway to the Magic Realm, and the characters must find an alternate route to their destination.

If the characters read the inscription and touch the hand not holding the spear, the statue of the horseman turns and spins like blinding lightning, coming to rest facing a new direction, spear lowered to point out the way to the City of Brass. The characters see a long dusty road trailing off into the desert mist.

## The Forgotten Road

Activating the statue mystically opens a path to another Magic regio containing a duplicate statue and the road to the Basalt Pillar. This regio has an aura of 10 and is aligned with Ignem (add an additional +10 to all Ignem related activities). This road borders the Twilight Void, near the Ignem Boundary that contains the City of Brass. The sun is exceedingly bright and it is exceptionally hot. If characters stay upon the road as marked, they are safe from harm.

If characters stray off the path into the endless desert, they are blinded by the sun's glare and suffer +6 heat damage per round. They also run the risk of being attacked by wild 'afarit or other creatures that have strayed into this regio from the Magic realm or are traveling to the City of Brass.

### THE BASALT PILLAR

*Extolled be the perfection of my Lord, who hath appointed me this severe affliction and painful torture until the day of resurrection!*

—Declaration of Dahish ibn El'Amash, the 'afrit trapped in the Basalt Pillar

After some time traveling the road the characters come to a pillar of black stone, and see a humanoid creature embedded within it. This is one Aspect of the Malik, imprisoned here long ago by King Solomon. The Malik, Dahish ibn El'Amash, is sunk into the stone up to his armpits, and is unable to affect anyone or anything physically, although he can still converse. When the magi encounter him he is alternating between screaming in pain and crying out in repentance in Arabic.

When asked about his current condition, he tells the Tale of the Idol of Red Carnelian, interjecting cries of re-

pentance and pleas for forgiveness. In ancient days, a Phoenician king worshiped an idol made of red carnelian, given to him by another of the "Kings of the Sea" (the Phoenicians). The king's daughter was quite assiduous in her adoration of the idol. The king made the 'afrit Dahish the idol's guardian and general to the million jinn that served in the army.

King Solomon ordered the idolatrous king to break the idol and give his daughter to Solomon as a wife. Dahish counseled refusal, and convinced the king to rebel against the Prophet. Millions of 'afarit fought on both sides of the conflict, but Solomon's 'afarit ultimately proved more powerful. The idolatrous king was defeated. Dahish was beaten and captured, bound in chains and thrown down before King Solomon. The Prophet-King was kind in his punishment, and bound Dahish in this pillar prison until the day of resurrection, to repent and plead for forgiveness until then.

In truth, Dahish and the Malik are aspects of the same Daimon. Solomon's power was so great that he could bind Aspects, and the 'afrit is also compelled to honor the bargain he made with the Prophet-King to spare him. The Daimon must forever maintain an aspect of himself bound in a Basalt Pillar at this location. Attempting to disenchant the pillar or some other attempt to liberate the 'afrit requires knowledge of Solomon's magic (at least 30 Insight points), and is considered equivalent to a 75th level ritual.

Dahish know many details of the City of Brass, for this Aspect can still see and hear all that happens in the city, even if he can't use his powers while imprisoned. He is very tight lipped and never gives out information freely. He trades information for favors however, and in this way he manipulates events from his prison. The only thing he freely admits to is the location of the City of Brass, for it is just over



the next ridge. The imprisoned Aspect of Dahish marks the gateway between the regio and the Magic Realm — traveling over the ridge beyond the pillar takes the characters directly into the Ignem Boundary that contains the City of Brass without any apparent change in scenery and without moving through the Twilight Void.

## Part Two: Into the City

Leaving the Basalt Pillar behind them, the characters come to a rise in the road. Just over the hill they spot the City of Brass. The characters have now imperceptibly crossed into the Magic Realm, into a level 7 Ignem Boundary that appears as an unimaginably vast desert of constant sun and heat similar to the regio they have just left. The Boundary includes both the road and the city, with the desert stretching out beyond until it passes into the Twilight Void. All Magic activity within this location receives a bonus of +17, and Ignem related activity receives a bonus of +24, which should be kept in mind within the city. *Realms of Power: Magic*, pages 23–26, has more details on the Magic Realm, the Twilight Void, and Boundaries.

From this distance, the city appears to be a massive object of black stone with two pillars of fire jutting out from it. The stone is the massive black walls surrounding the city, and the twin flames are the two great towers made of brass of Andalusia for which the city is named. The city has many magnificent architectural features: lofty buildings spiraling into the air, wondrous arches, and breathtaking domes. The seemingly impregnable walls are eighty cubits high (120 feet), with twenty-five gates that can only be opened from within. As

### Family Matters

Capricious and unpredictable, the Malik is deeply serious when dealing with his family. His concern and compassion for family can be used to gain the Malik's favor, or leveraged to gain an advantage over him. The Malik has many wives, but only one child. His daughter Amina is the light of his heart, but causes him no end of grief. She is spoiled and often gets her way, and every time she finds herself in trouble her father bails her out. She is promiscuous and has many suitors, but the Malik often has them put to death when she is through with them. Corporeal destruction is no great threat to a jinni suitor, but it is to the mortal

men she sometimes takes as lovers. As a further complication, Aminia's cousin and the Malik's champion, Afdal-Kathir, is hopelessly in love with her. She wants nothing to do with him.

The Malik's cousin, Za'al-Zoresh, presents a ruthless and persistent threat. Despite his wickedness, the Malik often forgives his cousin's misdeeds and only lightly punishes him when his intrigues are unravelled. Though a constant challenge to the Malik, Za'al-Zoresh is not trying to usurp the throne. He merely seeks to manipulate it to his advantage and gain power over the city's other nobles.

they draw closer, the characters see two columns of flame on either side of one of the gates.

The twin pillars of fire are the great towers of the Brass Palace, gleaming in the sunlight. The tiny columns of fire in front of one of the gates are two twelve-foot tall 'afrit guards, Zayad-Sayaf and Zayad-Sabad. Clad in scale armor made of brass, Sayaf is armed with a brass great sword and Sabad is equipped with a brass scimitar and shield. Exceptionally perceptive and aware characters will realize that these guards were not initially there, but faded into existence as the expedition drew close enough to see them, almost as if in response to their approach. The gate they stand in front of is merely the one the characters looked upon first, but they flicker and reappear at whichever gate the characters approach.

where his Aspect is imprisoned. When the Malik perceives that the approaching expedition possesses great magical power, he becomes curious about their business.

There are several ways to deal with these guards, and though some of their actions may seem strange, these are the orders of the Malik. If the characters address them, the guards ask each visitor to state her name and business. No matter what the answer, the guards open the gate. If any character refuses to answer, they do not open the gate and stand impassively. However, if the characters attempt some other form of entry, such as climbing the wall or flying over it, the guards do not interfere. If the characters attack the guards, the guards fight for a few rounds to allow the Malik to assess the visitors' power, and then dissolve in a puff of smoke and retreat.

### Passing the Gates

Approaching the City of Brass by stealth is very difficult. The Malik perceives anything that transpires within the walls of his city, and all along the Forgotten Road to the Basalt Pillar,

### In the City

Once the characters enter the city, they may be overwhelmed by the experience. The magnificence of the art and architecture exceed the greatest

splendors of the mundane world. The towers and spires are masterpieces of delicate precision, the streets are literally paved with bricks of gold and other precious metals, every building is of exquisite quality and crafted from some sort of fiery metal such as brass, copper, bronze, or gold. There are fountains and luscious groves nearly every other block, constantly flowing with nourishing waters and overflowing with wholesome fruits. The city thrives with the hustle of urban life; up and down the avenues the characters meet merchants with stores and mobile carts, selling rare and exotic wares for strange prices.

The most powerful inhabitants of the City of Brass are the jinn (mostly 'afarit), those who followed Dahish during the war with Solomon as told in "The Tale of the Red Carnelian." The most powerful amirs have Might scores of up to 35 and may have similar statistics to Jawal (see earlier). They roam about the city and outside the walls, although they must stay within sight of the twin Brass Towers. They are prevented from going further unless someone opens their bottle in the mundane world, or if a sorcerer or sahir manages to contact them and strike a bargain that allows them to travel.

The next most powerful group are jinn who have migrated to the City of Brass from the mundane realm — mostly poor members of the Jann tribe. They appear almost identical to humans and have limited Might scores. Though these migrants are of a lower social status than the native inhabitants, they have the advantage of privacy because their towers have closed doors. Among this group are also visitors from other parts of Jinnistan on official business, in the service (under a bargain) of a higher-ranking authority.

There is a small population of humans in the City of Brass. Most of them are slaves, forced into service after having a bargain twisted against

them, or captured and sold by a jinni of the mundane realm. Some slaves are treated well, working as servants and receiving a small wage. They may be confused with the human appearing Jann, who fill similar roles (and some of whom are actually humans with Magic Blood). Other slaves are treated harshly, subjected to brutal labors such as toiling in the mines beneath the city.

The Malik's peacekeeping force is a contingent of spectral soldiers of King Kush, who have been forced into the Malik's service. Although resentful of their servitude, they serve the 'afrit lord as guardsmen within the city, although none are stationed near the palace and the king's sarcophagus.

## The Malik's Eye

Though the Malik is able to perceive events that transpires in his city — except those that take place behind closed doors — he does not watch the characters' every move. There are other matters that demand his attention, and he is easily distracted by the constant flow of entertainment passing through his court. He observes them closely as they deal with the guards, but after they enter the city he turns his attention to other matters. He focuses on them again if they approach the palace or cause some sort of spectacle, but for the most part he doesn't pay attention to them.

## The Court of the Malik

The characters will eventually wish to meet with the Malik, perhaps to deal with him in order to rescue King Kush. If they also are seeking to rescue someone that was captured by an 'afrit after opening a Brass Bottle, then that individual has been sold as a slave to serve the Malik's court.

Gaining access to the Malik's court is much easier than the characters might

expect. The palace, like the other buildings of the city, is actually a Vestige, and has many open doorways and windows that make it easy to enter or pass through. Still, it may be the instinct of the characters to come up with a clever ruse or means of infiltration. Whatever their method of entrance, the Malik plays along, making it seem much too easy. If the characters pick a fight with some of his guards, all the better! The characters can also simply walk into the court and stand along the outer edge. No one stops them, but it may be difficult to get the Malik's attention.

The Malik's court is crowded day and night with throngs of jinn seeking the king's attention. Some courtiers come merely to participate in the constant feasting and drinking. The Malik sits upon his throne of red carnelian, with a score of honored guests sitting along either side of him: nobles, dignitaries, diplomats, and other elite. The sarcophagus of King Kush stands behind him, the monarch's spirit bound as a hostage to the red carnelian throne. The center of the room is kept clear for summoned speakers and the various entertainers performing in court that day.

The constant circus of the Malik's court continues without end, but occasionally the Malik is absent from court when he chooses to take rest. Every seven days or so, the Daimon discards the Malik Aspect, and reappears a day or two later upon his throne of red carnelian.

### GAINING AN AUDIENCE

Along the outer walls stand the common masses, all seeking but a moment of the Malik's time. Though the Malik may seem frivolous and jovial, he is easily offended and has a fierce temper. He calls upon those seeking audience as it pleases him, and it can take hours, days, or years of constantly mingling in court to receive his call.



One way to get the Malik's attention is to pay one of the courtiers to address the Malik on the characters' behalf. Another method is to organize an entertainment, and give a message alongside the performers. The Malik's greatest vice is that he desires constant entertainment, so even a speaker with an important message may have to compete with a musician and a juggler.

The characters may struggle to get the Malik's attention, but he has been aware of them all along and is just playing with them. As unknown quantities, they are a new distraction that the Malik hopes will prove entertaining, in whatever form it takes. When the time is right, he drops the pretense and invites them to sit by his side at court as honored guests.

## Rescuing the Hostage

If the characters agreed to recover the sarcophagus of King Kush and return the king's specter to Prince Keshan, they need to decide how to accomplish that task. Direct confrontation with the Malik is dangerous. Attacks in court will draw a violent response from most of the attending 'afarit. The Malik's champion, Afdal-Kathir, and his counselor, Za'al-Zoresh, immediately attack. If the characters manage to defeat the approximately 100 jinn that defend the Malik, they have a day before the Daimon can reconstitute his Malik Aspect. If they are not out of sight of the City of Brass by that time, the Malik musters every 'afrit in the city and attacks.

Characters might try to target the hostage directly. King Kush's specter is bound to the red carnelian throne with magic similar to Solomon's. Unraveling the bindings requires knowledge of that non-Hermetic magic. If the characters have such knowledge, unlikely but possible, consider the binding a level 75 effect.

One way to liberate King Kush is to get the Malik to release him willingly. There is no bargain he will agree to, no service the characters can perform for the king's specter, so they have to resort to trickery or coercion. One way to trick the Malik is to get him to offer the characters the granting of a single wish as a reward for some sort of service or overcoming a challenge arranged for his amusement. Coercion may be difficult against such a powerful magical being. However, if the characters are able to take his daughter hostage, or able to cause tremendous havoc in his city, and if they are powerful enough to stand against him, they may be able to force him to capitulate. Whatever the terms of the hostage's release, the Malik will certainly be enraged and demand that the characters leave his city at once.

## Denouement: the Journey Home

If the characters succeed in rescuing King Kush, they can return the way they came, down the Forgotten Road to the Palace of Marble, and into the mundane realm of Egypt. If they return without the sarcophagus of the king, the specters do not open the pathway and refuse the characters entry, returning to haunt the covenant until their promise is fulfilled.

A second option for returning home is to use one of the buildings of the city, most of which act as Vestiges, and access the Twilight Void to then exit into the mundane realm. The characters return at the location of the bottle the building is linked to. This can be hazardous, not only because of the dangers of navigating the Twilight Void, but be-

cause the bottles of most of these 'afarit lie somewhere at the bottom of the sea. However, if the characters are fortunate, they may have made an ally of an 'afrit whose bottle rests in Bagdad or some other safer location. The jinni can guide them through the Twilight Void without hazard next time the bottle is opened, but the characters find themselves in a foreign land having to explain that they themselves are not genies.

A third option lies in the endless desert that surrounds the City of Brass, which is many times hotter and brighter than any earthly desert. Unprotected characters suffer from blinding glare and +6 damage per round from the heat. Within this expanse there is an Ignem Vestige with a strength of 8 that corresponds to the Egyptian Sahara. The Vestige isn't the endless desert, it is the heat. Being able to perceive this Vestige with Second Sight (or something similar) leads the characters through the Twilight Void to the mundane world.

As mentioned, travel in the Twilight Void is hazardous, but it isn't difficult. The following is adapted from the rules in *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 23, abbreviated and modified for this specific situation. The characters succeed unless they botch; it is just a matter of how long the journey takes. The leading character's player rolls a stress die + Perception + Second Sight (or other appropriate Ability). The Magic aura does not add to the roll, but a magus may add his Ignem Form bonus (one-fifth of Ignem score). If using a spell, Intellego Ignem base 3 will allow a magus to perceive the Vestige and travel through it, and each additional magnitude adds a cumulative +3 bonus.

Unless the roll botches, the journey takes a base time of one season. Every three full points of the roll total shortens the length by one step (month to day). Botches increase the time, but only to a year for a single botch. Using an Ability associated with Magic does not require additional botch dice, but one associ-

ated with another Realm (such as the Second Sight gained from Strong Faerie Blood) requires a staggering twenty additional botch dice (twice the level of the Magic aura). Theoretically, the characters could become forever lost in Twilight, but that is not the desired result of this story. Instead, the storyguide should take this as an opportunity to transport the characters to any fantastic location she can imagine and have fun with it.

Travel through the Twilight Void should be described as a strange phantasmal journey through the province of Ignem; patterns of white hot light and cold black shadows, mountains of fire and rivers of ice, and temperature extremes ranging from blistering hot to frozen cold. The characters can perceive this, but it does not affect them. While in the Twilight Void, they are immune to environmental conditions, deprivation, and aging.

## Consequences

Several disastrous outcomes to the expedition are possible, including death, enslavement by jinn, or becoming lost in the Twilight Void. If the characters successfully return from the City of Brass, they may have made a number of new enemies or allies. The repercussions of their epic adventure spread as their tale is told in Hermetic and even mundane circles.

## Rewards

If the characters succeed in resolving the King's Ransom plot, they gain access to a ready and reasonably safe entrance to the Magic Realm, via the pathway to the Brass Horseman that lies beyond the Marble Palace. They

also gain the loyalty and respect of King Kush and Prince Keshan and their army of potent spectral allies.

It is also possible that the characters wind up with one or more genuine Brass Bottles, or otherwise gain the services of powerful jinni or 'afarit. All can provide valuable Insight for Breakthroughs involving spirit mastery or magical servants. The 'afarit can also be allies that add to the magical resources of their covenant.

As for material rewards, the characters are able to take home as much mundane wealth as they can carry. It is freely available and has no value to the magical inhabitants of the city, since the amount of it is virtually infinite.

Finally, as part of the adventure is set within the Magic Realm, characters may accumulate vis instead of experience points while within the Boundary containing the city if you are using the rules in *Realms of Power: Magic*.



## Chapter Four

# Encroaching Dominion

This is a tale in which the player magi experience the growing pressure and encroachment of the Dominion on their magical lands, a story in which the felling of trees by the mundanes' axes and the tolling of church bells cause vis sources to dry out at an increasing rate. But this growth is not natural: some outside force with supernatural power is promoting it. In fact, two groups are directly affecting events, and conflict is bound to occur. The object of this story is not to uncover the conspiracies, it is about making hard decisions about preemptive actions, facing the consequences, and taking part in shaping the future for the area. The alternative is to stand passively by and watch while everything changes drastically, deal with problems only as they occur, and simply accept whatever the outcome might be.

## Précis

A recently surfaced group of magi calling themselves the Soterists (Greek for "saviors") openly support a harmonization between the Order of Hermes and the mundane, and more importantly, the Church. They do not claim to have any solutions to the detrimental effects of the Dominion on magic. However, many speculate that they must have a trick or two up their sleeves. They also work secretly to force situations where the Order must evolve and harmonize, rather than simply accepting the decline of magic.

The Soterists help create a village in a wilderness area, ruining some significant vis sources of the covenant's and threatening others. At first, the village looks like a small lumber camp, then later just a few cottages. But the community thrives and grows rapidly. The sudden appearance of a church really kicks the hornets' nest.

Investigating these events is rather easy; the Soterists are obviously involved. However, it is hard to find evidence linking the events to specific magi. When some things don't quite add up, another group is discovered to be involved as well. But these magi – the *Wächter* (German for "guardians") – help the village out in less discreet ways than the Soterists. Their aim seems to be to provoke an open conflict to end all the harmonization nonsense. Again, pinpointing individual magi responsible as well as proving their misdeeds is difficult.

So the player magi are about to get caught in a conflict between two powerful groups, each using tricks and tools that have a significant impact on the local area. They need to make some hard choices regarding how best to weather the storm.

## Hooks

This story is suitable for use by a beta storyguide, and as events unfold gradually, some care must be taken to sow the seeds. First, the vis resources

under threat need to be of significance to the magi, so they should be brought into the saga in advance of the start of the story. Secondly, the player characters should become aware of the Soterist and *Wächter* movements and their philosophies in advance. This gives the players an opportunity to decide how their magi view this situation. This can easily be included in a Tribunal meeting, by having one item on the agenda be related to the differences of opinion between magi from the two camps.

The story works best if the next Tribunal isn't just one year off, as the intent is open conflict, not a Hermetic courtroom drama. The suggested time frame fits the events between Tribunal meetings, assuming that a meeting happens just before the story opens. If you want to run the story over a longer period, the Tribunal should fall in the early years of the changes, while the conflict isn't as intense and not all the facts are known. Of course, if you like Hermetic courtroom dramas, you can adapt the story to lead up to a Tribunal meeting.

If the potential loss of resources or the philosophies of the two factions isn't enough to get the player magi going straightaway, the escalating situation should. One of the themes of this story is to get the player magi to make important decisions, but they need not agree and form a united front. More drama unfolds if the covenant has magi of different opinions. This makes the choices even harder, and magi of the covenant might support different factions or even work against each other.



The troupe style of playing fits this nicely, as one or two magi supporting the one faction can play one story, where they take their loyal covenfolk and work for their cause, while the following story can see the opposing magi using covenfolk of their own to work against the others.

The scenario outlines the expected sequence of events. The storyguide may adapt and modify events to best suit the saga and characters involved. Bear in mind that these are great events; the major plots of two factions have a life of their own. The climactic and violent end intended for the poor village happens only if the player magi allow it or fail to thwart it. Most likely, the meddling of the magi causes setbacks and changes the grand plan. The Soterists take political action if their project is ruined, while if action is taken against them for loss of vis, they simply offer good compensation. The Wächter in all likelihood do not stop with the abandonment of the village, but push further against the surrounding villages to reclaim more land for the wild. But how and when the player magi act affects the aftermath and shapes the area geographically as well as the player covenant and the Tribunal as such.

## Setting

The default for this story is a setting in the northern part of Germany, in the Rhine Tribunal, as shown by the choices of names of people and places, but if those are changed the location can be moved easily. Notes for a Normandy and a Thebes setting are found here. All character and location descriptions end with a short section on names to use in the other Tribunals as well. The most important characters and the Soterist and Wächter factions have customization notes.

### Rhine Tribunal

The Rhine Tribunal is described fully in *Guardians of the Forest*. The main point for a Rhine setting is incorporating the workings of the Soterists and the Wächter into the structure of the guilds of this Tribunal. Relisius, of the Soterists, is known for his intentions regarding the Dominion and the mundane, and fits best with the Ash Guild, as do most of his supporters. They no longer want to hide and be kept down by the Dominion, but neither do they

want to wage war. Some Apple Guild members silently agree, without taking an active part. They are more likely to accept Holy Magic as a way of meeting the Church halfway. The Ash Guild, on the other hand, pushes for making some Breakthrough to avoid the Dominion's limitation of and detrimental effects on magic, without sacrificing personal power and freedom as how to use magic. This is especially true for Relisius.

As the official mission of the Oak Guild is to reclaim the grandeur of the old days, quite a few support Relisius' cause on a personal level, rather than as a direction the whole guild is taking. If magi can harmonize with the Dominion and the mundanes, they can step out from the shadows and achieve great things indeed. It is very important for Relisius to achieve some sympathy here, as he needs to recruit ingenious researchers from House Bonisagus and Durenmar if he is ever to succeed in actually harmonizing magic with the Divine. However, the Oak Guild maintains the status quo, resisting any great change. This group is a major hurdle for Relisius and the group he is most interested in swaying. Their conservatism might be what



keeps both the Soterists and Wächter from succeeding, rather than the factions that actively oppose them. The Linden Guild is often in active opposition, not so much for ideological reasons, but because they strive for peace and cooperation between magi.

Relisius has among his supporters some masters and perhaps even an archmage, and some of them control key positions in the Tribunal and have a great deal of power among the Quaesitors. They cannot give Relisius *carte blanche* to get away with blatant violations of the Code, but some magi might be loath to open that can of worms, give Relisius' side the benefit of the doubt, or simply drag proceedings out to give time for the situation to change, as things might look different if the opposing faction takes drastic counter measures.

The Wächter hail from both the Hawthorne and Elder Guilds, depending on whether they are Bjornaer or other nature-oriented magi or if they are Merinita or other faerie supporters. The two guilds were originally one, but split over the importance of ancient magical areas, untouched by human hand, versus the faerie areas born of human imagination, stories, and belief. The new threat of the Soterists has partly led them back together, but they remain split over many details, and their lack of unity is from the biggest obstacle to a decisive victory in the conflict. United they might be able to drag out the Soterists' plan, exhausting the support of all but the most fanatical members. As with the Soterists, the Linden Guild often spoils the Wächter's plans, for the sake of keeping the peace. Iselin probably has more direct sympathizers than Relisius has, but the lack of politically powerful and important magi coupled with the split attitudes on the magic versus faerie issue is to her disadvantage.

Special attention should be paid

to the Guardians of the Forest Peripheral Code ruling (see *Guardians of the Forest*, page 18) on stopping precisely this kind of mundane expansion. The storyguide should use this to best effect, to enforce the drama and scale of the conflict. It provides support for the Wächter if they take action against mundane expansion, but it must be interpreted in the light of the clause in the Oath forbidding interference with mundanes. Although it puts the Wächter on stronger legal ground than the Soterists, it does not clearly decide the issue.

The player magi are, at the intended age and power level, most likely to be Masters, and they might have trained one or more apprentices, who have joined the ranks of Journeymen or even risen to Master status themselves. These filii may play a role in the story, depending on the saga. The differing positions of the guilds on this question add more depth to the conflicts faced by the characters, particularly if members of the covenant are members of different guilds. Masters are likely to be influential in their guilds, and the threatened vis sources may even be of particular interest to one guild or another. The events of this story could serve to strengthen a magus's link to his guild, or to drive a wedge between them.

## Normandy Tribunal

A full description of the Normandy Tribunal is found in *The Lion and the Lily*. The most distinctive features of Normandy are the system of lieges and vassals and the rulings on ownership of vis sources. It is also a place of strife, be it for sport, for honor, for gain, or for revenge. This Tribunal interprets the parts of the Code about dealing with mundanes more loosely than any of its neighbors. Any action not directly bringing significant loss or ruin to an

other magus, covenant, or the Order as a whole is unlikely to result in a conviction. The Soterists and Wächter have similar legal situations here, and significant freedom. However, vis sources are rare and valuable, so a threatened source should really get attention. Since not all vis sources in Normandy are permanently controlled by a covenant, the threatened source should probably be a *seisin*, as those sources are most valuable and give the player magi strong reasons to protect them.

The liege of the player covenant may have a great influence on the story, as might any vassals. The decisions of the player characters have the potential to anger lieges or alienate vassals, in addition to their results with respect to the village. The details depend entirely on your saga, but the player magi should not feel that their liege and vassals are paying no attention to their actions.

The five great lineages of magi in Normandy Tribunal have different opinions of the growing conflict between Soterists and Wächter. Relisius and the Soterist cause find many silent supporters among the Quaesitors of Confluensis, but they take care to not overtly speak on his behalf, let alone act, lest they be declared biased or even corrupt. Florum also supports the cause, and is more open about it. They can muster many younger magi with useful *Imaginem* and *Mentem* spells to work as agents to keep an eye on the village. Montverte is always involved in conflicts and conquest and this is as good opportunity as any.

On the Wächter's side of the conflict, only Oleron among the great lineages supports the cause. However, many individual magi from the lesser covenants find their way to this faction. The encroaching Dominion is obviously a problem in the Normandy Tribunal, and the least politically powerful covenants and magi often lose out

on vis sources due to lack of support, and many vassals get squeezed by their lieges. Throwing their lot in with the Wächter could seem like a good idea for many of these magi.

The Tytali of the line of Fudarus are, not surprisingly, undecided or at least divided. They seem to be enjoying the whole conflict greatly, and are trying to decide whether the gains from winning outweigh the challenge of siding with the underdog. Relisius is using much of his time to try to recruit supporters here, but he can never be wholly sure if they actually mean what they say. He feels that getting a fair number of them on his side, all properly motivated to finding a solution to harmonizing magic with the Divine, should do the trick. But the Tytali are an ever-changing wildcard to be used by the storyguide to ensure the story does not end prematurely before all its potential is used.

## Thebes Tribunal

Details of the Theban Tribunal are found in *The Sundered Eagle*. In this Tribunal the culture of the ancient Greeks as well as that of the eastern Roman Empire has shaped the Order of Hermes. The spirit of individual freedom, cooperation, and democracy is strong here. Magi have a tendency to create groups based on interests and opinions across the lines of covenant and House. In Thebes the magi form Leagues to associate with like minded individuals. Another detail to keep in mind is that the Faerie realm in Thebes includes the Greek gods of old, and thus the pro-faerie faction might appeal to classically-inclined magi.

Relisius attaches himself to one of the more influential covenants with sympathizers typically from the Houses of Bonisagus and Guernicus. Polyai-gos is a possibility due to the existence of the apprentice school, which would have Bonisagi. The many Flambeau

found here might join his ranks because of their passion for Christianity. Hedyosmos is also a candidate due to the Guernici, but the Tytali are as ever the wild card. While Epidauros is definitely a Bonisagus and research oriented covenant, their interests lie more in healing than magical breakthrough and they might remain neutral.

Relisius has been residing here long enough to have earned the status of citizen. The randomness of who sits on what council at what time makes him more inclined to simply use influence to affect politics rather than take action himself.

The Wächter and Iselin are affiliated the most with Aegea, it being a joint venture of Merinita and Bjornaer. Erebus also includes many supporters because of their collective interest in the old Greek ways, but as always the Ex Miscellanea hardly present a united front.

Gigas, as the Tremere stronghold, might go either way, depending on how things fit into their current plans. They can be used as a regulatory tool by the storyguide to keep the balance and flow she needs for this story. The many Verditii of Favonis and Ingasia can also see the merits of either side of the conflict. On one hand, they would like to have their magical sanctuary and vis sources kept intact from the spread of the Dominion. On the other hand, they do sell items to mundanes and prefer a large base of competent mundane craftsmen from which to recruit helpers. These represent the undecided whom both factions seek to sway. The rest of the covenants are mostly smaller or have split interests and can give support as the storyguide sees fit. The Mercere of Alexandria should remain neutral and focus on the tasks of running the Tribunal rather than take sides and lend active help.

Regarding the Leagues, the League Against Idolatry is the obvious group to rally to Relisius' ideas. The League of the Vigilant are also likely supporters since the spread of the Dominion

further their fight against the Infernal. On the side of the Wächter, the Children of Olympos are proactively furthering the spread of the Greek pantheon. The League of Constantine is anyone's guess, since they seek to restore the Greek emperor's line, but not revert to paganism.

Of all the Boards of Magistrates, the Judicial Board is the most important group to control if one wants to change the entire shape of Tribunal politics, and both Relisius and Iselin know this. Any High Crime is investigated and handled by amateurs in the world of law rather than Quaesitors, but the matter is voted upon and settled in the People's Court. By having a system to review the conduct of the Archai after their term has been served, the Theban Tribunal in most cases avoids gross incompetence or corruption. Nevertheless, fanatical supporters of a cause might sacrifice themselves and simply accept the punishment of shards, while those from their faction who kept their noses clean can mitigate the punishment by spending tokens of their own on trivial requests for neutralization. Alternatively a magus might have so much influence over the Conciliatory Board as to have Decrees of Contrition successfully remove shards. This legal system is difficult to control since the power changes hands every seven years, but a large enough group working together can influence many of the cases brought before them.

Finally, since vis sources aren't as rare in the Theban Tribunal as in some of the others the stakes may need to be raised here. Make the source threatened a major source or — alternatively — an ancient pagan temple site of interest to most of the player magi, and perhaps the very thing that gives the covenant its status. Since all covenants in Thebes are meant to have some overall and common goal or philosophy this very concept might be the object of the threat.



# Dramatis Personae

The following characters play major roles in the story.

## The Soterists

Soterist is the name given to and informally adopted by groups of magi across Mythic Europe who strive to achieve some kind of harmonization between the Order of Hermes and the Dominion. They are drawn mainly from the Latin houses, and although relatively few in number the power they represent is considerable. While much of what they — Relisius primarily — do in this story is blatantly in breach of the Code, their political power is even greater than their magical and academic power. Having the sympathy of many Quaesitors and other high ranking magi, Praecones, or archmages, they are a force to be reckoned with. Until now though, all they have done is talk, to try to gather support for their cause and affect political decisions in order to ease their plans. Many of them are working on grand magical projects to attain this harmonization, but most simply support the cause hoping for some breakthrough. Although converting to Holy Magic (*Realms of Power: The Divine Revised Edition*, pages 66–70) serves this purpose, the ideal is a solution requiring little or no sacrifice of the freedom and power of Hermetic magic.

### RELISIUS, MAGUS EX BONISAGUS (ASH GUILD)

Age: 104 (78) (Archmage)

Personality Traits: Calculating +2, Enjoys complex plans +3, Leader +2, Overconfident +6, Pious +1

Born, bred, and Gauntleted in the Normandy Tribunal, Relisius was reared in the close and competitive atmosphere that this area is so well known for. His earliest ambitions became his lifelong goal: to harmonize Magic and the Divine so as to stop the conflicts between the Order and the mundane. It is a noble cause in many ways, but it has not been to everyone's liking. In recent decades, his lack of decisive achievements has made his actions much more extreme. He would prefer it if all magi simply converted to strict Christian doctrines and adopted Holy Magic, but they need to be properly motivated and willing to accept the sacrifices in personal freedom and limits to their use of magic. A bright beacon of Christianity, Relisius is a staunch ally in the fight against the Infernal. He also seeks to overthrow fateries by eliminating the pagan and folk beliefs nurturing them. Furthermore, he strives to harness the primal and elemental forces giving rise to the realm of Magic, by bringing it in line with the Divine will of the Lord himself.

At first glance, he has the neat, professional, and slightly dusty appearance which many — if not most — magi of his House are known for. Old, but with alert eyes and strong features, a full

head of white hair and a neatly trimmed beard, he wears comfortable, luxurious robes and a cloak. On closer inspection, and especially if engaged in conversation, he comes off as a driven man, almost bordering on fanaticism and insanity — but without crossing the line in his words. He has two Twilight Scars: When caught in a sunbeam, dust motes circle his head; the heavy, perfumed scent of incense follows him.

### RELISIUS' PLANS

Despite being neither the founder nor the most outspoken proponent of the Soterist cause, Relisius is recognized as the unofficial leader and spokesperson in this Tribunal. If the official statements of sympathetic magi are anything to go by, he is merely one of many. But to the chagrin of all his political opponents, as well as the large group of neutral magi, he has started to act to achieve his goals. Since moving to the Tribunal at least a decade ago, he has managed to mobilize substantial support for his cause in the form of actively collaborating magi as well as passive supporters. He values both, because at some point the neutral magi must throw their support behind

## Generic Agents

Relisius has agents — younger magi of about 25–30 years post-Gauntlet — working for him to monitor and patrol the area around the village, and to accompany the villagers and his other workers for projects like The Clay Pit. The list here gives some suitable Art scores. The storyguide need only choose a set and assign the Arts. Give each magus around 200 spell levels, with a highest individual spell level of Technique + Form + 10. This method can also be used for agents from the Wächter faction.

### GENERIC AGENT MAGI

**Specialist Magus:** One Technique and one Form at 24

**Dual Art Magus:** Two Techniques and two Forms at 16, or three Arts at 19

**Widely Adept Magus:** Any five Arts at 14

**Generalist:** All Arts between 7 and 8

For example, the storyguide needs an Agent to foil the mind control used on some villagers. She selects the Dual Art Magus who has a Rego, Creo and Mentem score of 19, and spells using these Arts up to level 45.

## Petrus, Magus ex Bonisagus

**Guild affiliation:** Ash Guild

**Hermetic status:** Archmage

**Characteristics:** Int +3, Per +1, Pre 0,  
Com +1, Str -1, Sta 0, Dex 0, Qik 0

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 102 (77)

**Decrepitude:** 0 (4)

**Warping:** 5 (26)

**Virtues and Flaws:** The Gift; Hermetic Magus; Flawless Magic; Affinity with Corpus, Affinity with Vim, Deft Corpus, Hermetic Prestige, Inventive Genius, Puissant Magic Theory, Quiet Magic, Sense Holiness and Unholiness; Driven (Harmonize Magic and the Divine), Enemies (Political opponents), Study Requirement; Limited Magic Resistance (Auram).

**Personality Traits:** Driven (Soterist cause) +3, Patient +3, Pious +2, Proud +3

**Reputations:** Brilliant Scholar (The Order) 3

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init +0, Attack n/a, Defense +0, Damage n/a

**Soak:** +0

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

**Abilities:** Artes Liberales 5 (rhetoric), Civil and Canon Law 3 (France), Code of Hermes 4 (dealing with the Church), Concentration 5 (long time), Etiquette 5 (French), Finesse 4 (details), French 5 (nobility), Guile 4 (Church matters), Intrigue 4 (clergy), Latin 5 (Hermetic), Magic Lore 5 (auras), Magic Theory 10+2 (Vim), Organization Lore: The Church 5 (weak willed clergy), Organization Lore: House Bonisagus 3 (breakthroughs), Organization Lore: Order of Hermes 6 (Latin Houses), Parma Magica 5 (Mentem), Penetration 5 (Corpus), Philosophiae 5 (ceremonial casting), Sense Holiness and Unholiness 5 (locations), Theology: Christianity 4 (debate)

**Arts:** Cr 26, In 15, Mu 8, Pe 12, Re 18, An 6, Aq 7, Au 15, Co 30, He 5, Ig 6, Im 8, Me 13, Te 9, Vi 27

**Twilight Scars:** Faint, distant sounds of wind chimes. Surrounded by cool, fresh air.

**Appearance:** A wise, elderly man with prominent brow. Bald head and heavy eyebrows.

**Equipment:** Fine robes, too academic for a merchant and too exotic for a churchman. A reasonable amount of vis from any Art.

**Encumbrance:** 0

**Spells known:**

*Charge of the Angry Winds* (CrAu15/+48) Mastery 1 (Penetration)

*The Incantation of Lightning* (CrAu35/+50) Mastery 3 (Penetration, Multicasting, Resistance)

*Bind Wound* (CrCo10/+65) Mastery 1 (Still casting)

*Gentle Touch of the Purified Body* (CrCo20/+76), Ritual, Mastery 1 (Still casting)

*The Surgeon's Healing Touch* (CrCo20/+76), Ritual, Mastery 1 (Still casting)

*The Severed Limb Made Whole* (CrCo25/+76), Ritual, Mastery 1 (Still casting)

*Cheating the Reaper* (CrCo30/+76), Ritual, Mastery 1 (Still casting)

*Incantation of the Body Made Whole* (CrCo40/+76), Ritual, Mastery 1 (Still casting)

*Physician's Eye* (InCo5/+54) Mastery 1 (Still casting)

*Revealed Flaws of Mortal Flesh* (InCo10/+54) Mastery 1 (Still casting)

*The Inexorable Search* (InCo20/+54) Mastery 1 (Penetration)

*Sight of the True Form* (InCo25/+54) Mastery 1 (Penetration)

*The Wound that Weeps* (PeCo15/+52) Mastery 2 (Penetration, Multicasting)

*Grip of the Choking Hand* (PeCo25/+52) Mastery 1 (Penetration)

*Clenching Grasp of the Crushed Heart* (PeCo40/+52) Mastery 1 (Penetration)

*Veil of Invisibility* (Pelm20/+52) Mastery 1 (Still casting)

*Demon's Eternal Oblivion* (PeVi20/+48) Mastery 1 (Penetration)

*Circular Ward against Demons* (ReVi25/+54) Mastery 1 (Penetration)

*Circular Ward against Faeries* (ReVi25/+54) Mastery 1 (Penetration)

### NORMANDY TRIBUNAL

No significant changes necessary since his concept defines him as reared in these parts. He does not have a guild affiliation or rank.

### THEBES TRIBUNAL

He does not have a guild affiliation or rank. He has spent enough time here to familiarize himself with the order of things, but need not be a polites.

Petrus is the senior active agent in Relisius' plans, and although he wholeheartedly believes in the cause and was central in defining the philosophy and plans with Relisius, he is definitely playing second fiddle here. Perhaps his level of ambition is less than his old friend's, or perhaps he is more realistic in his view of the troubles they are facing. Petrus' and Relisius' masters were close friends, and they were both fostered for a while to the other master. Many of their ambitions stem from their youth, where the sky was the limit. Although Petrus traveled and lived far from Relisius for many years, their paths did seem to cross often enough to discuss their old plans. And now, at last, the gears are in motion.



one or the other side, and the more sympathy and the greater numbers he can muster, the more likely he is to win the bulk of them over. In Normandy Tribunal, there are no changes necessary. If set in Thebes Tribunal, Relisius is a polites and has spent many years here. He is not currently an arche, but may have served with distinction as one previously.

Prior to these events he has been testing many of his methods on a smaller scale and against weak opponents in another Tribunal. Unfortunately for his cause, Relisius has such great confidence in his own abilities that he now starts to act on a much larger scale. His active plans for the village serve as a dress rehearsal for even grander plans; when he sees that this method works, his deputies repeat it elsewhere. His point is that if even a reasonably powerful covenant cannot withstand the inevitable encroachment, harmonization is the only way. With each successful expansion of mundane settlements, more and more magi should fall into line with his cause, and in the end there really is no choice but to harmonize. Once the entire Order works for one cause, brilliant individuals — now free to focus on this pursuit — are bound to break the Hermetic limits of the Divine, as well as use all the positive and useful elements of the Divine powers to strengthen Hermetic magic. Rumors circulate about the design of a Holy Parma Magica or a Holy Aegis of tremendous power to be used against heretics and unbelievers. Relisius cares little about what or whom he may have to sacrifice to attain his goals; he has absolute confidence in his own power and support of his cause.

Relisius himself is the kingpin, the power behind the scenes. He relies on his old comrade in arms Petrus for the practical implementation of his plan, along with other agents and sympathizers. Full game statistics are given here for Petrus. Short notes primarily for inspiration and roleplaying guidance are given afterward for additional Soterists.

## ADDITIONAL SOTERISTS

Relisius and Petrus are backed up by quite a few other magi in the Soterist circle, all of whom support Relisius' philosophy. They're not all involved in his current plan; about a dozen select magi know of it — and they only know what Relisius believes they need to know. These additional magi are his underlings and are younger and less experienced in Hermetic terms than him. Rather than including full stats for a lot of magi who may or may not be used in this story, the following section outlines magi he is likely to have included in his plans and suggests how to create them.

With the Soterist movement being most popular among the Latin Houses, the magi are most likely to be from the Houses Bonisagus, Jerbiton, and Guernicus. They could also include some Flambeau who want their religion spread with force, or Tylali who are in it for the conflict and challenges. The storyguide should prepare some of these magi for use in certain events and confrontations during the course of the story. She can use the magus templates from *ArM5*, pages 24–28, as a base, and then advance them 30–50 years post-Gauntlet. This involves quite a bit of work, but if *Magi of Hermes* is available, statistics for magi of suitable ages can be taken from that book. Bear in mind that statistics are not needed unless the player characters directly confront an agent, so you need not generate all magi in advance.

Relisius has made sure he is well covered for most contingencies and has done his recruiting accordingly. He has included magi able to work craft magic with wood and stone, as well as for engineering and affecting the earth and terrain. Much depends on secrecy, on delicately executed plans, and on control and knowledge of the human mind, so he employs specialists in Mentem and Imaginem magic. Control of the weather and other elements of nature is also vital, as is the ability to heal people or animals and ensure their comfortable

and healthy lives. In order for the magi to function as a coherent group and allow for communication of reports back to Relisius and orders from him they need at least one magus with *Leap of Homecoming*, *Haunt of the Living Ghost*, or a similar spell. Ideas for a few such magi are given here.

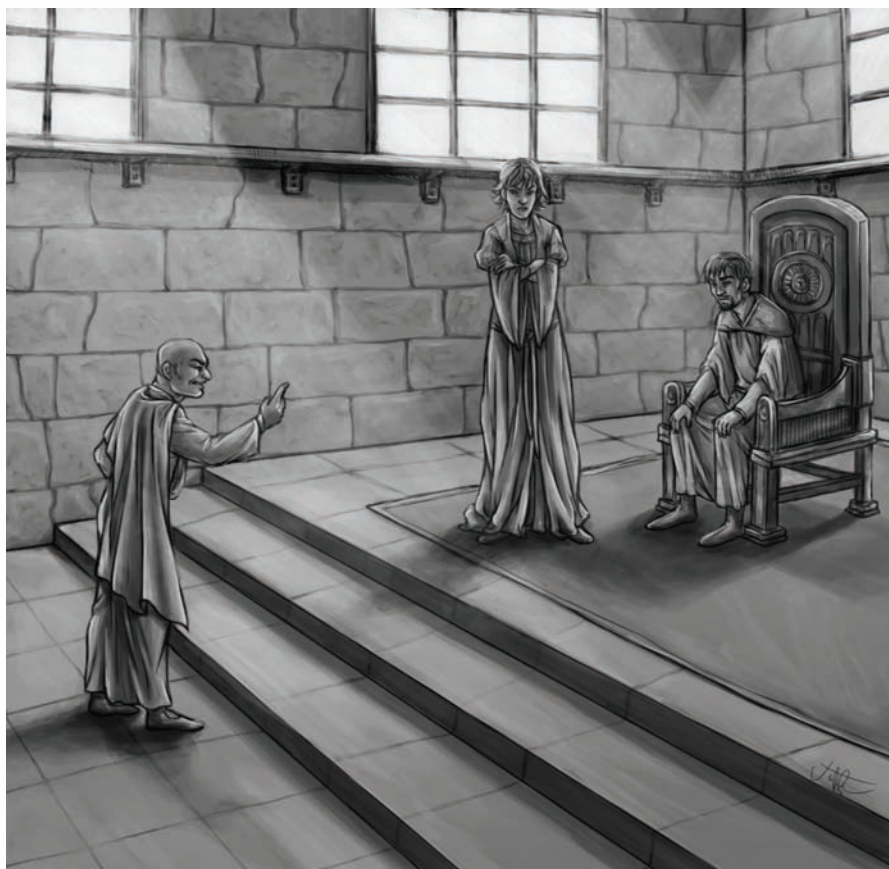
## MAGNUS VON SCHWARZWALD, FOLLOWER OF GUERNICUS (OAK GUILD)

Age: 48 (Master)

Personality Traits: Silent +3, Loyal to Relisius +2, Support for Soterist cause +1, Integrity (Guernicus) +1

Magnus is a Quaesitor who recently gained the status of Master in the Rhine Tribunal. He is quiet and observant, taking everything in with his dark eyes, furrowing his brow, and always looking like he is about to explode. Occasionally he sits bolt upright or springs to his feet, as suddenly as a flash of lightning. Even though they half expect it, people are usually stunned and wait in silence for his booming voice. Sometimes, he deliberately heightens the tension by pausing before opening his mouth. Then, like a thunderclap, he speaks, always in the shortest possible words and sentences, always sounding well thought through. His voice echoes in the silence created by his personality and his methods. Much of this is due to his Twilight scars, effects that he uses almost shamefully often.

In reality, he is not very bright, persuasive, or skilled in Hermetic law. He lives on his reputation and his skills at intimidation. Within the Soterist cause, he is the most well known Quaesitor, as well as being a close friend of Relisius. He isn't as fanatically pro-Soterist as many supporters, but he hates to lose or be wrong. His magical powers are not great, but adequate and mainly specialized in typical Quae-



sitorial Mentem magic: discerning the truth, interrogating witnesses, and determining whether memories or emotions have been altered or controlled. These spells are heavily augmented by masteries, with House Guernicus' abilities put to good use.

**AUGUSTIJN VAN EELDERWOLDE,  
FOLLOWER OF JERBITON  
(ASH GUILD)**

**Age:** 46 (Journeyman)

**Personality Traits:** Builder +3, Support of Soterist cause +1, Desire to inherit +3

Augustijn was born in the Netherlands to a noble family of moderate power and considerable wealth, by his father's second wife. With several half brothers at least a decade older than him, he was far down the line as heir to the estate. Upon entering his apprenticeship to become a magus, his deep

wishes to inherit land and titles began to seem more possible. The Soterist cause appeals as a way to achieve his goal, and as such he sympathizes with Relisius' political views. Concerning magic, Augustijn's mater quickly spotted that the child had a knack for working with stone and wood. This formed the basis of his education in craft magic, which was supplemented by an impressive array of mundane skills. The end result was a skilled architect and engineer, able to build houses, infrastructure, and even whole towns by means of magic ranging from the discreet to the wondrously instant, supplemented by knowledge and planning skills from the mundane world.

## The Wächter

*Wächter* is the popular term for all magi who support the philosophy of watching over and preserving wild and

natural areas, particularly in the Rhine Tribunal. If the story is set in the Theban Tribunal, the term *Prostátes* (Greek for "protector") can be used instead. The Wächter started among the Bjornaer clans supporting the Wilderist cause. In recent years, their numbers have been growing — at least as far as the Latin Houses (primarily the Soterists) know — to include many other nature-oriented Houses and individual magi. House Merinita is strongly represented here, and though many Wächter Bjornaer would also like to rid their ancestral places of faeries, they cooperate in order to avoid the spread of the influence of the Church, since this would be a loss for them both. Many Ex Miscellanea magi also support this cause, but they do not provide a united front. In addition, various individual magi from different Houses form a minority in the group. As far as numbers go, more magi support the Wächter cause than the Soterist, but the Wächter are a less cohesive group and fail to work together as well as their rivals. The movement consists mainly of splinter groups defending their own locale. Serious conflict with the Soterists might drive recruitment or unity, or split them even further.

**ISELIN, MAGA EX MERINITA  
(ELDER GUILD)**

**Age:** 82 (51) (Journeywoman)

**Personality Traits:** Patient +3, Whimsical +2, Impulsive -2

Iselin is a slight and delicately featured mature woman. In Wächter circles, she serves as the spokesperson for the cause. Her unimposing size and soft, melodious, and almost chirping voice gives her some trouble making herself heard in large crowds of magi with opposing opinions. Still, she is patient, quietly taking in all her opponents' arguments and letting them get all worked up. Her green eyes are



in a state of constant flux. Few people dare meet her gaze for more than a moment; the swirling greens have confused many a magus during debate. Little is known about her magical skills, but she is famous for her great network of faerie allies and contacts, as well as her bargaining skills with them. Rumor has it that she has all but united all the cohesive faerie courts in the Rhine Tribunal, a rumor she spends no energy on. Her friend and ally for at least a decade is Timian, who carries out the practical parts of the Wächter's plans. Iselin has two Twilight Scars as follows: Myrtle leaves grow spontaneously among her dark curls, and her cape and hair flow mysteriously in unfelt air currents, with the edge and tips scattering glittering sparkles.

### ISELIN'S PLANS

Her present plan — the concept she seeks to spread to all groups of Wächter — is to stop the petty sabotage and start thinking big. She knows the Soterists are up to no good, helping the mundanes spread their settlements and influence. So why not just help them along? At first, the idea is to work within the lines of what the Soterists are doing, because they are bound to tread lightly at first. In time, they might make mistakes and overdo things. If not, the Wächter just step up their help to an extreme, making it quite obviously supernatural, hoping something blows up. Either the Soterists are framed and convicted of interfering with the mundanes, or undecided magi see the folly of the Soterist goal and give their support to the Wächter. The Wächter are willing to sacrifice much, even to strike the first blow if things come to war. Many Wächter have no qualms about breaking the Code; after all, the better organized and politically inclined Soterists might use the Code against them. If they must become renegades or even die, it is a sacrifice many are willing to make. They might disappear into the wild or a

faerie regio for a long time, and perhaps take on new identities. Iselin's use of faeries in her plans is brilliant, because not only will faeries killed reform in time and return to take their part yet again, but molesting the fay is also a breach of the Code. She has planned carefully which faeries to use and how, since her plans must mesh perfectly with the cognizance of the faeries used, the story they embody, and which part they play.

### ADDITIONAL WÄCHTER

This faction, like the Soterists, also includes in its ranks a handful of co-conspirators for Iselin. These magi should be prepared as for the Soterists. Houses most likely to be represented are the nature-oriented ones and those of Germanic origin: Merinita, Bjornaer, and Ex Miscellanea. Nevertheless, the ranks might also include Verditii wanting to preserve as much vis as possible, only to harvest it at the first opportunity. It is vital to her that her comrades in arms master magic related to nature, namely that involving animals, plants, weather, earth and water. They might focus on the physical objects themselves, Airy Spirits (*Realms of Power: Magic*, page 103), or Elementals (*Realms of Power: Magic*, page 132). Here is a single example magus for inspiration.

#### HEIKE, FOLLOWER OF BJORNAER (HAWTHORN GUILD)

**Age:** 52 (Master)

**Personality Traits:** Wilderist +3, Cooperate with Merinita +2, Ensure coherence among Bjornaer +3

Heike is a short, heavy-set woman with salt-and-pepper hair, who bears more than a passing resemblance to her boar Heartbeast. A Wächter at heart, she is also very determined not to let House Bjornaer tear itself apart over these differences. Apart from this, she

also seeks to maintain positive diplomatic ties between her House and House Merinita, by not allowing the wilderness-versus-faerie question to muddle things. Her intellectual lineage can be traced back to that of the Founder of House Merinita herself, to a group that disliked the direction their House was taking at the time of Quendalon. These magi gained acceptance into House Bjornaer and integrated their nature-oriented magic with the Mysteries of the Heartbeast. Heike's main motive for actively supporting Iselin is her desire to have House Merinita split into two different Houses, one comprising the minority represented by the nature magi and one following the teachings of Quendalon and his faerie magic. This is a goal she has not divulged to many, and especially not yet to Iselin, but she has covert supporters in House Merinita. The ace up her sleeve in this regard is that while the nature magi who broke with Merinita's disciples might be a minority now, they could quickly grow in numbers should they join forces with her comrades from House Bjornaer, descendants of those who changed House back in the day. She also seeks to recruit and unite the multitude of like-minded Ex Miscellanea magi, who remain a widespread and incoherent group. She believes the success of Iselin's plan allows her to pursue these ends. Her magical mastery of various natural forces and elements — weather, earth, plants, and natural bodies of water — gives her ample opportunity to assist with the building and expansion of the village as well as sabotage the same work or even raze it from the surface of the earth.

### Neutral Parties

The events of the story may draw in other magi from the Tribunal. The following characters can fill those roles.



## WOLFGANG, FOLLOWER OF FLAMBEAU (OAK GUILD)

Age: 54 (Master)

Personality Traits: Battle hardened +3,  
Enforce the Code +3, Corruptible -2

Wolfgang is an able Hoplite from the School of Vilano. His reputation precedes him as a no-nonsense and single-minded magus. He follows the letter of the law and ruthlessly brings justice to culprits as he is ordered to do. He uses no more force than necessary, but pays little heed to attempts to buy him, negotiate, or weasel out of the situation. He believes wholeheartedly in the Code being integral to the stability of the Order as a whole, and willingly accepts any censure or penalty laid upon him by just leadership.

## DELIA, FOLLOWER OF GUERNICUS (APPLE GUILD)

Age: 36 (Journeyman)

Personality Traits: Forceful -2, Light-  
hearted +2, Diplomatic +2

Delia is a young Quaesitor who is notably skillful for her age, though not exceptional. Trained outside the Rhine Tribunal, she is somewhat detached from the politics here, and her neutrality is shown by her affiliation with the Apple Guild. She is ambitious, but that is tempered by a realistic assessment of her capabilities. In time, she might become vexed by the different political opinions revealed to her and the various groups trying to influence her. Which way she bends is at this time completely open.

## Villagers, Willehad-im-Wald

Stats are given for a few of the major and important characters in the vil-

lage. In addition to these, there are a lot of farmers and workers along with their families.

## DIETER VON BRANDHÖFEN, PRIEST

Born to impoverished parents and raised under trying conditions on the lowest rungs of society in the local area, Dieter is used to fighting for everything. Around the age of 10, he was orphaned, and a kind old priest took him in and schooled him alongside the more privileged children he was tutoring. Already an unscrupulous child, Dieter missed no opportunity to use the old priest to his own benefit. In the end, Dieter clawed his way up out of the gutter and was allowed to serve in a somewhat special way. His demeanor was unsuited to the monastic life, and his aggressive approach to serving the Lord resulted in his less established position as a wandering religious man. He has been granted a leave of absence by the bishop, allowing him to reside in the village prior to the church being built. He is meant to take care of the flock but actually travels quite a bit to recruit more workers. Once the church is finished, he presides as priest, but continues occasional recruitment expeditions. His forceful and heartfelt sermons, as well as his habit of instilling loyalty in others, are useful to the Church as a whole. His superiors move him around a lot, or use him for specific and unconventional missions, to avoid trouble in established communities. If the story is set in the Theban Tribunal, he is called Alexios Kouvanos, or Maurice Arrante if in Normandy.

## AXEL GUSSEISEN, ENGINEER

Axel is a good-humored and pragmatic engineer from the mountainous southern part of Germany. Originally trained as a mason, he has studied the



## Timian, Magus ex Merinita

**Guild Affiliation:** Elder Guild

**Hermetic Status:** Master

**Characteristics:** Int +3, Per +2, Pre +1, Com 0, Str -1, Sta 0, Dex -1, Qik -1

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 99 (67)

**Decrepitude:** 1 (1)

**Warping:** 7 (15)

**Virtues and Flaws:** The Gift; Hermetic Magus; Strong Sidhe Blood (Physical quirk: hair includes blades of grass); Deft Imaginem, Faerie Magic, Free Study, Minor Magical Focus (Wards against Supernatural beings), Puissant Charm, Second Sight (Faerie), Social Contacts (German High Faerie Knights), Student of Faerie; Plagued by Supernatural Entity (Faerie), Weak Spontaneous Magic; Difficult Spontaneous Magic, Faerie Upbringing, Higher Purpose (Wächter cause), Weird Magic.

**Personality Traits:** Uncomfortable in crowds +3, Impulsive +2, Reliable -2

**Reputations:** None

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init -1, Attack n/a, Defense -1, Damage n/a

**Soak:** -2

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

**Abilities:** Area Lore: Local 3 (faerie areas), Artes Liberales 1 (rhetoric), Bargain 9 (faeries), Charm 9+2 (gaining trust), Craft: Weaving 5 (tapestries), Faerie Lore 9+2 (high faeries), Folk Ken 10 (what people will believe), German 5 (northern), Guile 8 (sustained lies), Latin 4 (Hermetic terms), Leadership 9 (faeries), Magic Theory 9 (Imaginem), Merinita Lore 5 (Initiations), Order of Hermes Lore 6 (Wächter), Parma Mag-

ica 4 (Mentem), Penetration 2 (Mentem), Second Sight 7 (faerie glamour), Stealth 4 (move silently), Survival 6 (forest)

**Arts:** Cr 7, In 9, Mu 6, Pe 16, Re 25, An 7, Aq 8, Au 12, Co 10, He 8, Ig 5, Im 15, Me 10, Te 8, Vi 15

**Twilight Scars:** Voice accompanied by natural sounds, like the rustling of leaves or bubbling of a brook. Right arm is dyed dark green. Fingernails are like the bark of a birch tree.

**Appearance:** Clad in what appears at first glance to be rough-spun peasant's clothing, but which up close has a faerie quality, in greens and browns.

**Equipment:** Apart from his mysterious clothing, he may be assumed to have any reasonable amount of vis of any Art.

**Encumbrance:** 0

**Spells Known:**

*Circle of Beast Warding* (ReAn5/+32)

*Ward against the Beasts of Legend* (ReAn25/+39 F)

*Ward against Faeries of the Waters* (ReAq25/+41 F)

*Ward against Faeries of the Air* (ReAu25/+49 F)

*The Leap of Homecoming* (ReCo35/+35)

*Ward against Faeries of the Wood* (ReHe25/+41 F)

*Ward against Heat and Flames* (ReIg25/+30)

*Haunt of the Living Ghost* (Cr(Mu) Im35/+23) Mastery 2 (Stalwart casting, Ceremonial Casting)

*Image Phantom* (Mulm20/+21)

*Veil of Invisibility* (PelM20/+31)

*Wizard's Sidestep* (Relm10/+41)

*Panic of the Trembling Heart* (CrMe15/+17)

*The Call to Slumber* (ReMe10/+35)

*Coerce the Spirits of the Night* (ReMe20/+35)

*Circle of Warding against Spirits of the Night* (ReMe25/+44 F)

*Ward against Faeries of the Mountain* (ReTe30/+41 F)

*Demon's Eternal Oblivion* (PeVi15/+31)

*Circular Ward against Demons* (ReVi30/+57 F)

F) includes Focus

Timian is Iselin's senior in years only, in the Wächter cause he defers to her. Even though they have a lot in common regarding dealing with the faeries, they do things in different ways. Iselin has a way with words and plans, and in general has a lot of clout in the faerie courts. Timian prefers to be out in the field, play it by ear, and accompany the faeries as they take action. He works with faeries as tools of the cause as well as liaising with potential sympathizers.

### NORMANDY TRIBUNAL

No significant changes, except that he has no guild affiliation or rank.

### THEBES TRIBUNAL

Timian needs to have spent enough time to gain Social Contacts, but less time than Iselin has needed to gain power over the Faerie leaders. His concept as a native of north-western Europe can be retained or he can be changed to a faerie magus from Greek culture. Replace Speak German with Speak Greek and change the speciality of Faerie Lore from High Faeries to Olympian gods. He does not, however, need to have achieved citizenship, and has consequently not served as an arche.

## Dieter von Brandhöfen, Priest

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per +2, Pre +1, Com +2, Str 0, Sta 0, Dex -1, Qik 0

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 33 (33)

**Decrepitude:** 0

**Warping:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Priest; License of Absence, Well-traveled; Driven (Spread the Dominion), Supernatural Nuisance (Faeries), Vow of Celibacy

**Personality Traits:** Pious -1, Loyal to Relisius +2, Selfish +2

**Reputations:** None

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init 0, Attack n/a, Defense +2, Damage n/a

**Soak:** +0 (Stamina)

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Area Lore: Local 5 (churches), Artes Liberales 2 (rhetoric), Brawl 1 (dodge), Charm 5 (parishioners), Civil and Canon Law 1 (regulations for the clergy), Dominion Lore 3 (angels), Etiquette 3 (Church), Folk Ken 6 (people he has recruited), German 5 (preaching), Intrigue 1 (parishes) Latin 4 (the Bible), Organization Lore: The Church 3 (local diocese), Theology: Christian 2 (debate)

**Equipment:** Travel clothes fit for a clergyman, priest's vestments

**Encumbrance:** 0

theory of his profession. As a result, he is highly qualified in the fields of construction, road works, damming, and draining, as well as basic mechanics. He surrounds himself with able-bodied and bright youths trained as masons, carpenters, wheelwrights, well-diggers, and the like, and tries to form them in his image by raising their knowledge from the levels of crafting to engineering.

He was involved in the founding and expansion of Willehad-im-Wald from early in the planning process, although only peripherally. He helped to survey and choose the site, helped Augustijn plan the project, and paid the occasional visit when large or special buildings were to be erected. He doesn't move to the village until the fourth year, when the major projects in his field start. Until that time, he might be found in Bremen, working on other, more mundane, projects.

He is a personal friend of Augustijn, the two of them having worked together on several occasions and learned much from each other. Axel isn't aware

of the bigger picture, including the true motives for the plot or even the identity of Relisius. But he has been promised other similar projects in the future, only bigger. To him, the job is simply that — a job, but a really good one. He is not paid a fortune or in any way promised power, although he is well rewarded when it comes to salary as well as future references, but he is the boss, and the sponsors seemingly supply anything he wants and don't interfere, giving him the opportunity of a lifetime to achieve real innovation in his field. Should the player magi end the story on good terms with Axel, he could be a real boon for the covenant.

If game statistics are important, refer to the Craftsman in Covenants, page 45, modified as follows: Age: Increased to 32. Characteristics: Switch the +2 in Stamina to a +2 in Intelligence. Virtues and Flaws: Add Educated, add another Puissant Craft in masonry and engineering, drop Ability Block (logic), and add Favors. Abilities: Add Artes Liberales, Craft: masonry, carpentry and mechanic, and Philosophiae, drop Charm, Cov-

enant Lore, Guile, and Village Lore.

If the story is set in the Theban Tribunal, he is called Jorgo Stephanopoulos; if in Normandy, call him Claude de Fer instead.

## BISHOP EMERICH

The bishop of the diocese in which the story takes place is not intended to play an important part. He is used primarily to avoid involving too many mundane officials in order to focus on the antagonistic magi, and to limit the number of times the player magi risk breaking the Code by meddling with important people. Relisius has managed to get all the needed permissions from both the civil and religious authorities for his settlement. The bishop is an important and busy man, surrounded by his own aides and one of Relisius' agents. This makes him difficult to approach, but if he is contacted by letter his aides reply. The only time he appears in person is at the consecration of the church. Here he makes the minimal appearance required, escorted by professional bodyguards and accompanied by a few aides. He is by no means difficult to reach by mundane or magical means, and he is not sufficiently pious nor high ranking to have any Magic Resistance.

For game statistics, use those for Dieter with the following modifications:

Virtues and Flaws: Senior Clergy, Sense Holiness & Unholiness, Social Contacts (minor clergy), Student of the Divine, Strong Willed; Ambitious (Major), Dark Secret; Clumsy. Delete Driven.

## Locations

The following locations play important roles in this story.



## Willehad-im-Wald

The newly formed village of Willehad-im-Wald (German for "Willehad in the Forest") is near a stream or small river running through a forested area with light, rolling hills and gently sloping mountains. The village is located after painstaking planning, surveying, and preparing. This exact spot is optimal regarding the quality of trees for logging, the earth for farming, the size and flow of the stream, and placed equidistant from large settlements of importance to trade and along the logical route if a road were suddenly built between two that were not previously connected. The scenario assumes that the land belongs to the bishop, but is not currently used, although the bishop can easily be replaced by another lord; Relisius can be assumed to have obtained permission from more than one authority.

The default location assumed in writing this scenario is in the lands southwest of Bremen. Germany and the Rhine Tribunal were chosen because here you can find both wild areas protected by humans, as well as towns rapidly expanding due to trade in this period. As the city of Bremen is in a special situation due to its Imperial privileges, the usual and bothersome business of reigning nobles isn't relevant. This is a good environment for a meddling Hermetic magus like Relisius of the Soterists to run his little game in.

Of course, the key point is that the village must be close enough to the player covenant to threaten its resources. If the covenant is north of the Alps little needs to be changed beyond the names, but other regions may require some modification of the village's economic base and activities.

The village starts out as a simple camp at the riverside, on a flat and sandy patch of land. There is a track running perpendicular to the river, with the ford near the center of the

settlement. The first wooden structures are built here as well, and farmhouses spring up along the river and the road, with stretches of fields behind them, cutting into the forest. More fields and pastures for livestock are established in the surrounding forest. The logging camp and any new features, like the clay pit, are connected to the center of the village by new paths, like spokes in a wheel. As the camp grows, the tracks are improved and new ones are created, connecting the wheel spokes. Initially, the presence of pious peasants listening to a priest results in a Dominion aura of 1. Once the church has been consecrated, this rises to become as high 3. For more detail on population and features, refer to the insert "Expansion of the Village."

The villagers are at first wary of strangers, but open up as the settlement grows and more travelers and traders pass through. However, they react even more negatively to displays of The Gift than most mundanes, and are quick to call individuals with it heretics and witches, and to call upon the help of their priest. This is the result of mental conditioning performed by Relisius and his co-conspirators.

If the story is set in the Theban Tribunal, the village is called Dryaklios; if in Normandy, it is called Ginestet.

## Expected Sequence of Play

The following sequence of events happens if the magi react cautiously to the growing settlement, or if they don't act at all. The storyguide should take the player magi's activities into account, as the Soterists and Wächter adapt to events. If the magi respond with extreme violence to an early event, the grand plans need not be completely ruined for the antagonists; see the sec-

## Overview of the Story

### EVENTS WITH A TIME-FRAME

Prelude: Preparations for the Village  
Act I: Settlement of the Village  
Act II: A Church is Built  
Act III: The Clay Pit  
Act IV: Growing Tension  
Act V: First Blood  
Act VI: Open War

### FREE-FLOATING EVENTS

Investigation  
Sabotage  
Hermetic Society

### COUNTERMEASURES

Situation I: Alerting the Quaesitors  
Situation II: A Violent End  
Situation III: Siding with the Soterists  
Situation IV: Siding with the Wächter

tion on Countermeasures, later. Moderate responses most often simply extend the time frame, so that a given event happens later than it would in the original plans. They may also lead both the Soterists and the Wächter to increase their help to the village, resulting in a greater expenditure of resources and a greater frequency of magical assistance. Following the main events are a few free-floating events, which need not happen at specific times. They are all listed along with recommended times and situations in which to run them; ultimately the storyguide decides when they are most appropriate. Finally, the Countermeasures section suggests how the antagonists might try to deal with player actions.

## Prelude: Preparations for the Village

The founding and expansion of the village Willehad-im-Wald happen before the first major event. When and what the player characters learn of this depends strongly on the interest and dedication of their scouts — if any — in the area. Hunters, gatherers, or nature-oriented magi roaming the countryside may pick up the first signs of settlement. No rolls are required for this; it is a tool that the storyguide can use at her own discretion to kick things off. Players who have their covenants and magi take interest in their surroundings and use spies and scouts generously should be rewarded with a bit of information. The initial scouting and surveying of the area has been quite discreet, but not impossible to notice. The storyguide can kick off with what is most likely a story involving grogs and companions concerning the mystery of strangers sneaking about.

A little later, the use of gentle landscaping magic might be noticed. After carefully selecting a good location for the village, the Soterists flatten or slope the ground as needed. They might alter the course of the stream to allow for a future waterwheel and for the building of a dam to flood the lower pastures. They remove undesired plants and shrubs, and magically bring young trees to maturity in short time. Most of these effects are noticeable but hard to investigate magically due to the short durations — detecting sigils and determining the specific spells from the magical traces left is difficult.

These activities threaten to destroy a minor vis source and, however trivial it might be, this spells trouble for the future. Most of the information here can be gathered by simply observing the area at regular intervals. Some things are visible at a casual glance, while others require hours or even days of observation to notice.

## Act I: Settlement of the Village

If the player characters miss the clues mentioned in the prelude, their first sign of the project is the first wave of workers. A crowd of woodcutters, carpenters, and general laborers one day arrive with their tools, provisions, work animals, and families. They start clearing the site for the village center and erect two simple communal houses, living in tents while the work is done. Some of their tools are magically enhanced, and the mundane ones are high quality, so the work progresses more quickly and easily than usual. Because craft magic requires the use of Finesse by the workers, it is much easier and simpler to find skilled craftsmen than to train peasants in the use of a magical tool. Whatever magical assistance they have at this time is very simple, for instance making metal bits unnaturally sharp or durable.

Depending on how much time elapses between scouting missions, the changes may appear to be anything from the results of a highly organized and well financed operation to nothing short of magical. Very observant magi using Intellego spells can easily keep tabs on the place almost constantly. In the early years, magical support is discreet and the effects minor. As time goes by, the assistance becomes more overt and powerful.

This section outlines what happens and when as the village expands, if no one else interferes. To begin with the help is from the Soterists and discreet. Eventually the Wächter start to give overt help to expose the situation and give their side an excuse to strike the village down.

### YEAR ONE

Lumberjacks and workers clear trees and, in time, build communal houses. About a dozen families move in, and surprisingly large herds of live-

stock and agricultural areas feed them. The village also holds the hunting rights in the area. A wandering priest holds regular sermons. A bountiful harvest along with an uncharacteristically mild winter gives the village a good start. Most of the magic used is minor, such as items with minor powers aiding work and craft ranging from magnitude 3–5; Covenants, page 50–53 has good examples. More powerful effects include The Bountiful Feast (CrHe magnitude 7), and The Cloudless Sky Returned (ReAu magnitude 6).

### YEAR TWO

Villagers build their individual cottages along the river. There is no lack of raw materials and the work is fast and skilled work. New families of peasants, workers and craftsmen come trickling in throughout the year and are housed communally until they can build their own homes. Farmlands expand and livestock donated by the backer arrive as well. Work on a wooden church starts. Population exceeds 50 adults, and the mild weather and ample food works wonders for both children and the elderly. The magic used is the same as in the first year, but more frequent due to the increased population. Several different Mentem effects, using all techniques and between magnitudes 3 and 8 are cast periodically in no discernible pattern, mainly used by Relisius' agents to cultivate the mentality he needs from the villagers and root out any problems before they escalate.

### YEAR THREE

A smithy, several wells, and a watermill are built during the year. Large amounts of surplus meat, grain, and hides are stored in one of the communal halls. Population almost doubles. This year, several wonders happen. Some of the fields and orchards grow



from seedlings to full bloom overnight, allowing a second harvest. Entire generations of young animals grow to maturity in a day. Scores of trees are felled and cut to lumber in the blink of an eye. These events are interpreted as miracles and received well by the populace. Magic used for the aforementioned wonders includes maturing animals or crops (CrAn base 3 magnitude, +1 touch, +2 sun, +2 group, +1 size, and similar Herbam guidelines for fields of crops). Craft magic guidelines from *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, page 60–61 provide a good idea of what magic is necessary to instantly transform raw materials into a finished product. As an example, a Rego Herbam magnitude 3 Touch/Momentary/Individual effect transforms a large tree into a wooden product, with higher magnitudes affecting more trees at once. The user does require a high Finesse, however.

#### YEAR FOUR

The common storage hall becomes a trading post for the surplus resources, as well as an ale house and lodgings for travelers. Raw materials for the craftsmen begin to arrive at a steady pace, as does salt for preserving the meat. Population is still growing, and although not as quickly as during the first years, it is still significantly faster than that of an average village. Magic use here is no greater than the second year.

#### YEAR FIVE

Specialists like masons and engineers move in, many of whom are familiar with the idea of getting help from magi through enchanted devices. The workshops of the craftsmen see improvements, and they start to produce enough wares to sell at the trading post. Work also starts on digging a clay pit, constructing a kiln for firing bricks, and

making mortar. The roads, fords and bridges in the area are vastly improved, allowing travel almost regardless of season or weather. More magical devices helping the workers find their way into the village, such as *Creo Ignem* and *Rego Terram* devices helping the blacksmith heat his forge and work the iron, the diggers extract clay from the pit and, the tile makers heat the kiln.

#### YEAR SIX

The foundations for a stone church are laid. It is planned in such a way that the old wooden church becomes a secondary building for the new one. Work starts on a crypt for keeping several holy relics and saints' bones, as well as on the bell tower. Craft magic is employed to aid the stone cutters and masons, using the guidelines from *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, pages 60–61.

#### YEAR SEVEN AND ONWARDS

During this year the stone church is finished, and once the bell is installed, the Dominion spreads. The still-growing population thrives and expands further into the surrounding woods in their search for lumber and for hunting and gathering. Several local Magic and Faerie auras wither away. If things make it this far, the Soterists have achieved their goal — for now — in this place and tone down their involvement. Henceforth, they merely monitor the situation and area and avoid significant magical intervention, relying instead on their influence to send in or recruit the needed resources or persons. There are plans to erect more stone buildings and eventually wall the settlement, once it reaches the size of a town. The old fields are converted into sites for dwellings and shops, and a larger area around the town is laid out for fields and pastures. Such an event



really spells doom for the player magi's covenant, its aura, and the vis sources.

## Act II: A Church is Built

The second major event in the set time frame is the building of a wooden church during the second year after the founding of the village. If one or more of the free-floating events have occurred, this may be quite a long way into the whole affair. If the initial discovery of the settlement and the investigation was followed by direct action and minor sabotage by the player magi, the village is behind schedule. Even a few weeks' delay can cause a project to be postponed

until after winter has passed, into the third year, or possibly into the fourth.

In the space of a few weeks the project progresses from initial talk of a church to the main structure being built. The village then waits for the ceremony of consecration, which the local bishop performs as soon as he arrives. The time frame for this should be set so that the player magi feel time pressure, but not that events move so fast that they have no time to react. They should, however, have less than a season, so that they cannot research new spells. Part of the theme of this story is the pressure of having to choose between making use of available means in order to react when problems start, or letting the schemes escalate and responding with well-prepared plans and means.

There are many ways to prevent or delay these events or perhaps alter them to have a different effect than intended. Most of them require going into the village or somehow affecting the people in it. The church building and the rites to be performed by the bishop are important (*Realms of Power: The Divine*, page 9–12), and these should be the focus of events.

It is possible to prevent the church building from being built — at least for a while — by removing or ruining materials or tools or by preventing the workforce from doing their job, using magic or mundane means, as described in the section Sabotage, or Not. The ground might also be made unsuitable for building. A situation could be engineered where misfortune is interpreted as God himself being against the building of this

## Faerie Huntsmen

### MASTER OF THE HUNT

**Faerie Might:** 45 (Corpus)

**Characteristics:** Int 0, Per +3, Pre -1, Com +1, Str +4, Sta +3, Dex 0, Qik 0

**Size:** +1

**Age:** n/a

**Virtues and Flaws:** Piercing Gaze

**Personality Traits:** Merciful -3, Vengeful +2

**Reputations:** Bringer of nature's revenge 4 (local)

**Combat:**

*Dodge:* Init +0, Attack n/a, Defense +6, Damage n/a

*Longbow:* Init -2, Attack +14, Defense n/a, Damage +12 Range 30

*Longsword:* Init +2, Attack +11, Defense +8, Damage +10

**Soak:** +8

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1–6), -3 (7–12), -5 (13–18), Incapacitated (19–24)

**Pretenses:** Brawl 5 (dodge), Single Weapon 6 (longsword), Bows 6 (longbow), Riding 6 (horse), Survival 8 (forest), Hunt 8 (humans), Leadership 5 (hunters)

### Powers:

*Lord of Plants*, 1 or more points, Init (as Longbow), Herbam; The Master of the Hunt can create any Herbam effect at the point where his arrow hits; this is mostly a cosmetic effect and he need not make a successful attack to do this to inanimate objects.

If he shoots at a person or an animal, he needs to make a regular attack roll, and may cause damage in addition to using this power. For every point of Might spent, up to a maximum of 3, the effect has 3 Hermetic magnitudes of power.

He favors creating or animating trees to stomp on his enemies. Once a battle is won, he uses this power to grow twisted and sinister trees and thorny bushes to have nature reclaim the site. These serve to dismantle any structures or large objects as well as partially cover the bodies and rubble, and serve as a warning.

**Appearance:** The Master of the Hunt

The dark faerie huntsmen are a group of fay unsympathetic to humans. They feed on the fear and panic that arise from hunting, cursing, and killing them. They are narrowly cognizant and reenact slightly varied narratives of how nature strikes back at intrusive humans and their tolling church bells. By feeding from this vitality, they increase their numbers by attracting other, like-minded faeries. In the grand plot, they are mere pawns of Iselin, who uses them shamelessly because their mission happens to coincide with her need for getting dirty work done. By having a simple storyteller spread the word about them, a sincere belief in the Dark Huntsmen arises, all the while building up their power.

If the story is set in the Theban Tribunal the Master of the Hunt can instead be a mighty faerie living off the stories of Artemis and effectively becoming a manifestation of this Greek goddess, while her Huntsmen are the minions of Artemis. This is mostly for flavor, and the game statistics can be used without change.



church, if propaganda is spread in the village by infiltrators or conveniently arrived strangers. Simple sabotage is more likely to postpone the church than to prevent it, urging the Soterists to work harder. This is not necessarily a bad thing; although it merely serves to delay the problems, many things are easier for the player magi if the Dominion is low. If superstition is invoked, depending on how events unfurl, the conflict building over the village might come to a conclusion before the Dominion really takes hold. Instead of the player magi acting during the building of the church, the church can be sabotaged once it is in use. The Perdo Herbam spell *The Great Rot* is the obvious choice, although once the rite of consecration is performed, simply removing the structure is not enough to remove the Divine aura.

Should the church end up being built and the rite performed, getting rid of the Dominion rating of 3 in the church and surrounding area is difficult. Perdo Vim magic cannot remove it; the Divine is notoriously hard to affect by means of Hermetic magic. The Dominion degrades naturally if the congregation stops coming to church and no rites are performed. The time it takes for the church to degrade from a Dominion rating of 3 to the rating of 1 for a normal rural area equals the period of time the church has been in use since being consecrated (*Realms of Power: The Divine*, page 12). In time a foreign aura encroaching here could displace the Dominion. Very creative use of Imaginem magic could even ensure that the consecration was performed in a place other than the church building; conse-

quently, every week the villagers attend sermons in a wholly mundane place.

If the plans for the church are in any way delayed or thwarted, it certainly affects the events in the following years.

## Act III: The Clay Pit

The third major event — by now the free-floating Event II: Noticing the Second Faction has most likely happened — begins when news arrives at the covenant that a vis source is directly threatened by the plans for expansion of the village. A fine source of clay has been found in a swamp some distance from the village. The engineer Axel Gusseisen plans to clear a path through the woods, bridge a gully, lead the path round a hill by dig-

## Faerie Huntsmen (cont'd)

is a large, lanky humanoid. His misshapen face has the beak of an owl rather than nose and mouth, and his dark eyes glare maliciously. His lower legs are those of a deer, and he is dressed in black and dark greens.

**Equipment:** An elaborately shaped longbow, a curved and jagged sword at his side. He wears a leather scale hauberk made from the leather of exotic animals. His dark horse bears a quiver of green-feathered arrows at the saddle.

**Encumbrance:** 0

### DARK HUNTSMAN

**Faerie Might:** 30 (Corpus)

**Characteristics:** Int 0, Per 0, Pre 0, Com 0, Str +2, Sta +2, Dex +2, Qik +2

**Size:** 0

**Age:** n/a

**Virtues and Flaws:** None

**Personality Traits:** Vengeful +2

**Reputations:** None

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init +2, Attack n/a, Defense +7, Damage n/a

**Talons:** Init +2, Attack +10, Defense +8, Damage +5

**Spear, Short:** Init +4, Attack +11, Defense +9, Damage +7

**Thrown Spear, Short:** Init +4, Attack +11, Defense +9, Damage +7  
Range 10

**Soak:** +7

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

**Pretenses:** Brawl 5 (talons), Single Weapon 6 (spear), Riding 6 (horse), Survival 5 (forest), Hunt 5 (humans)

**Powers:**

*Spear of Cursed Wood*, 5 points, Init +2, Herbam; A Dark Huntsman can transform his spear — wherever it may be within his sight — into a 10-foot high tree with twisting, flailing, and thorny branches.

The power must be activated as he attacks in melee or throw the spear; it continues to cause the

victim +10 damage each round. Anyone approaching within 3 paces suffers +5 damage from the thorns.

Use the rules for Wall of Thorns (ArM5, page 135) regarding damaging it or forcing one's way through. The thorny bush is protected by the Huntsman's Magic Resistance, as it is a part of his glamour. The Huntsman can approach his spear safely to pick it up again.

**Appearance:** Dark Huntsmen look like stocky humans, except that they have no mouths, and their eyes radiate a mixture of infinite sadness and vengeful spite. Their hands have elongated fingers with sharp talons for nails. They too dress in black and dark greens.

**Equipment:** Their only armament is a single spear with a large, barbed tip. They wear leather scale hauberks made from the leather of exotic animals and ride dark horses.

**Encumbrance:** 0

ging a path into its sides, and finally dig canals to drain the swamp. Unfortunately, this very swamp also holds a significant vis source belonging to the player magi. To make matters worse, the hill has a magical aura rating of 3 as well, and is in fact a tether giving rise to the aura in the area. The player magi need not necessarily be aware of this in advance, although if described as an idyllic place, the perfect forest hill, where all sensory input is stronger than in other places, that might tip them off. A Magic Sensitivity + Perception Stress roll against an Ease Factor of 9 (calculated as 12 minus aura rating) reveals its role. If using Magic Lore or Area Lore the Ease Factor is 3 higher, and success only gives the character a sense of the supernatural, without any details.

Normally such a project would not be built so far from the village; the village would more likely have been built at the site of the clay. But Relisius has planned this very meticulously and has placed the village at the optimum site for many other factors, making this lone resource a secondary one. By establishing a satellite location and seeding it with mundane activity he hopes to affect larger areas with the encroachment of the Dominion. The clay pit won't be worked all year round, but while it is active the workers live there in small huts with their families. In time this site is expected to become a new village by itself, buying food from Willehad and producing its own goods and services to pay for this.

The player magi learn much the same information no matter how they are investigating, as long as they are investigating. When the player magi hear about the clay pit, it is still just talk; the villagers mention their forthcoming plans to send out advance scouts before the engineering and work crew arrives. The scouts leave in a few days, but the work crew isn't due at the village until the end of the second week. The scouting party consists of the most skilled woodsmen in the village. This is by no means an impressive group, since they have little experience of hunting and haven't had the time to thor-

oughly get to know the locale. They have only sparse information of the direction in which they are to go as well as some landmarks for finding the hill and swamp. As with most other major events in this story, simply killing or driving off such a mundane group is easy but won't solve the problem for good. It might entice the Soterists to raise the stakes and risk more overt help or force them to use political power against the saboteurs. On the other hand, this could be the setback that forces the abandonment of the project.

If the player magi have intervened before, Relisius sends an appropriate group of agents to secretly accompany the villagers. The agents may bring along grogs, who may travel as part of the villagers' group. Unless magic used earlier by the player magi suggests that different Arts would be most useful, the agents are skilled in Imaginem and Mentem to counter illusions and mind control, or the elemental Forms for physical aid. These magi have the means to survive and move comfortably in the wilderness, and spells or devices to do so invisibly and silently. The player magi are unlikely to become aware of them before the agents act, although particularly thorough scrying might reveal them (and therefore break the Code.)

At least one of these magi has the means to either teleport back to Relisius' staging area, or to transmit information. In this way, Relisius is able — through his underlings — to know what has happened. But, in the main, they are on the defensive; one of the reasons for this event is to allow the player magi to take initiative. In general they take no direct action against the player magi. The agents may use Perdo Vim or Muto Imaginem to reveal invisible magi, or sabotage any spells they may cast, but they do not cast spells to directly harm the player magi, in the hope of avoiding confrontation at this point. The agents defend themselves and retreat if exposed rather than let the situation escalate. Clever and inventive players should be rewarded with success for their magi.

## Act IV: Growing Tension

This can be treated as the fourth major event. For a time — depending on how events unfold, and on the temperaments of the player magi — there is more than one battlefield. Soterists and Wächter both compete for support from the rest of the Tribunal's magi. The two sides also actively try to hinder the other side's activities in Willehad-im-Wald with increasing intensity; Soterists use Perdo Vim to sabotage the powerful and indiscreet rituals of the Wächter, who in turn start to sabotage the more discreet measures of the Soterists in order to increase the need for more powerful magic. If the player magi are heavily involved in investigation, sabotage, or assistance to either faction at this point, they are also involved in this escalation.

Naturally, the factions come to blows, starting with skirmishes with the other side's agents and eventually, a Wizard's War or two erupts. If nothing else, this serves to identify the individual active magi from both factions to those player magi who have been unwilling to get involved or unlucky with their investigations. Neither of the competing factions is sufficiently fanatic to risk Wizard's March by openly attacking another magus outside Wizard's War — yet! Since both parties feel that the undecided magi are more easily swayed if they know about the Wars, ample information is circulated by the Redcaps. Soterists up the ante by having armed warriors prowl the countryside, clearing more forest with fire and the iron axe. The Church tries to spread the Dominion with every sermon and ringing of bells. Dieter the priest goes to great lengths to invent and spread local stories about divine events, in order to justify building shrines at majestic or oddly colored trees, at roadsides, on hilltops, or on the shores of lakes. The Wächter recruit more and more animals and faeries to sabotage this, and thus goad the



village into a full-fledged crusade against the wild, against which they can strike back with just cause — at least according to their own ethics. If it fits the conditions in the Tribunal, they might even start aggressively recruiting sympathetic hedge mages and funneling them into the Order and their own Houses.

## Act V: First Blood

The fifth major event is the first real confrontation. With all the activities by several magi from both factions and with the player magi most likely working to unravel things for (at least) one such faction, a clash is inevitable. The storyguide should decide when and how, trying to keep the balance. This confrontation should not be the climax of the story, so the leaders of the factions should not be involved. However, it should make it clear that things have built up to open conflict.

The details depend on the actions of the player magi, but the Wächter are the most likely faction to make a preemptive strike. The Soterists are not any way holding back, but the religious zeal they've instilled into the villagers lacks a well-defined enemy and place to strike at. The storyguide should set up a situation that results in the conflict escalating and a magus (from whichever faction) ending up dead at the hands of another magus — without it being part of a legally declared Wizard's War. At this point, it is all but impossible to avoid Quaesitorial involvement.

## Act VI: Open War

As the sixth and final major event, the fate of the village is sealed. Unless player magi start the battle, the Wächter play their powerful and unpredictable card — the dark fae. Suddenly one morning, the Dark Huntsmen ride through the mist, bringing down death and destruction on the

village. At this time, the Wächter have had enough and have decided they have as much support as they are going to get at the moment. Naturally, this draws out the Soterists as well as mobilizing the villagers men in all their religious zeal. Timing is of the essence here, because the player magi must be able to participate in — or at least witness — the attack. Active and well-prepared magi have seen which way the wind is blowing and have made proper arrangements to keep tabs on the village. Mundane scouts or infiltrators could do the trick, although they need some way of communicating with the magi back home for this to be effective. Scrying through spells or devices is also a viable option, however risky it might be with regard to the provisions of the Code. Alternatively, the magi might stake out the place themselves. If the magi are not monitoring the village, the Dark Huntsmen pass around the covenant, kept out by its Aegis, on their way to the village.

As the icing on the cake, the Wächter now strike directly at the other magi. Chaos, carnage, and massacre ensue. At this point, neither side cares about the Code nor about who they are fighting; this is all done for the cause. Both sides have broken the Code in enough ways to guarantee a March in any case. There is ample opportunity to cast great magic and to fight powerful magi or seasoned Faerie warriors. The player magi may support either side, or they may simply try to limit the destruction and save the innocent villagers. They might not even show a united front! Depending on what they've done during the escalating tension and conflict, they might be in the clear concerning the Code, or decidedly not. The whole troupe should be clear on the magi's legal position before the battle, for the sake of the future of the saga. In any case, the magi should be at no loss to find challenging enemies and to use their most powerful spells. Even without fighting

other magi, there are opportunities to use great magic, since Soterists and Wächter alike use all manner of elements in the fight — animals, trees, building materials, reanimated corpses, the river, and the earth and hills themselves.

The way that the battle ends depends on the actions of the player characters. They might even manage to broker a peace in the midst of the violence. If the players intend to continue the saga after this climax, the storyguide should make decisions for the non-player characters that make that possible, but otherwise let the players decide how things finish.

## Investigation

Most player magi are likely to investigate the appearance of a village that threatens their vis sources. Whether the magi decide to use magic or mundane agents to investigate, what little information they can gather comes quite easily. Relisius as the mastermind runs a tight ship, recruiting and supporting through agents and dead drops. The villagers are suspicious of strangers, but successful use of social Abilities reveals what little information they have: primarily that they have all been recruited by Dieter and receive plans and materials through Axel Gusseisen. Learning the names and appearances of the mundane helpers — Dieter and Axel — is fairly easy. Following Dieter around finds him recruiting more villagers and workers, according to some set plan. He is a very hard man to interrogate by mundane means, and he only knows the schedule and geographical plans according to which he carries out his recruiting. His memory has been altered with *Perdo Mentem* (Base 15: Remove major memory, +1 Eye), so that he can recall only the name Pierre Relisius and a fuzzy image of his face. Axel can be followed to a warehouse in Bremen where goods and



materials arrive from various places, to be sent to the village as needed.

Even simple *Intellego Mentem* magic reveals these facts more quickly than questioning the villagers. Using scrying magic, as mentioned earlier, uncovers the occasional visits of Dieter and Axel. Since the villagers make up a small and closely-knit group, infiltrating them is very difficult, although magically assisted disguise helps. The covenant could also arrange for one of their agents to be recruited; Dieter has no way of checking this, and the Soterists may not be given any reason to be suspicious.

If the magi use *Intellego Vim* magic, the guidelines from *ArM5*, page 158 and *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, pages 74–75 apply. All the lower magnitude effects and the short-lived magic are hard to detect, unless the player magi are on the scene almost immediately. Enchanted items could yield a lot of information if stolen and investigated

in the laboratory. Similarly, the powerful *Animal* and *Herbam* spells lasting whole days give the investigating magi something to work with. If the magi can determine the sigils associated with the effects, they can tie them to particular magi. The items are supplied by the Soterists, while the powerful and indiscreet *Animal* and *Herbam* spells are cast by the *Wächter* faction. In order to be able to use this knowledge, the characters need to know which magi have these sigils. The storyguide decides how difficult it is to do this. It may require nothing more than an *Organization Lore: Order of Hermes* roll, or it may require getting access to *Quaesitorial* records. The knowledge gained serves to identify at least some of the major magi from one or both of the factions. Early in the story, this forms the basis for a case at the next scheduled *Tribunal*; later on, it may allow the player characters to persuade the *Quaesitores* to formally intervene.

The woods surrounding the village are more or less constantly patrolled by Relisius' grogs using invisibility devices (*Veil of Invisibility* *Pelm* 24 *Touch/Sun/Ind*, *Penetration* +0, 2 uses/day, environmental trigger: sunrise/sunset). Sometimes, younger magi might patrol the area themselves; otherwise they use devices or spells to keep tabs on the village at regular intervals. If invisible grogs observe magi, the magus casting the invisibility spell has probably broken the Code on scrying, and the magi may clearly do so. However, even if the magi have solid proof, this is not a serious offense, as the offenders were not targeting places the magi were known to be, and its legal resolution must wait for the next scheduled *Tribunal*.

## Sabotage

The player characters are likely to intervene in an attempt to reduce and remove the threat that the village poses to their resources. One obvious general form of intervention is sabotage. The player magi have time to invent new spells for this, and *Hermetic* magic is extremely flexible, so this intervention could happen in any form, and at any time. The storyguide should give the players their freedom here; the story is about the player characters' response, so their actions cannot derail it.

The Soterists and *Wächter* do respond to player character actions, and take the details of what the player magi have done into account. However, their general responses depend on the scale of the sabotage, rather than the method.

Minor and discreet sabotage can be carried by mundane means, but more likely by magic. Stealing, disenchanting or breaking the magical tools impedes the progress, as does removing or damaging the raw materials. Actions such as these should result in setbacks that can be seen and felt, but a single act of minor sabotage is nothing more than a de-



lay; the Soterists do not give up that easily. If the player characters continue to hinder the project, however, they may eventually succeed in stopping growth entirely or even force the village to disband. Faced with constant interference, the Soterists could give up in the end and be bitter about the whole situation. They are sure to investigate by themselves to look for any evidence to prosecute with; see Legal Repercussions in the Aftermath section. Failing this they become future antagonists for the player magi, lurking in the shadows; see Hidden Enemies in the Aftermath section.

Large scale sabotage could involve dispelling the various ongoing magical effects — Corpus spells granting the villagers health, Herbam and Animal spells boosting their farming, Auram spells granting mild weather — with appropriate Perdo Vim spells. Other Perdo magic can easily destroy things that have been created. This is more overt and serious than merely hampering progress by sabotaging tools. Such events have negative effects on the morale of the villagers that not easily remedied by Relisius' agents simply using more Mentem magic. The same goes for terrorizing the village with monsters, illusions, or direct use of mind-altering spells. While the village can recover from a single such attack, repeated destruction wears them down and the village disbands, ruining the Soterists' plans. A situation like this results in a Quaesitorial investigation because the involvement of magis is obvious, and Relisius wants someone punished. The bishop may find the whole situation highly suspect and investigate himself, bringing the Church into Hermetic affairs. See Legal Repercussions in the Aftermath section for some suggestions.

At the extreme, magic of almost any physical Form — especially the four elements — can easily wipe the entire village off the face of the earth. It could be made to look like a natural disaster, or it could remove all traces of the village. This does bring the

## Additional Ideas for Willehad-im-Wald

A merchant arrives ill or injured and needs to stay a bit to recuperate. In the meantime his goods are stored in a warehouse. This gives any saboteurs ample opportunity to steal or wreck the wares, while supporters try to prevent this. Apart from the monetary loss from theft or sabotage, the ill reputation among merchants would be a setback for the Soterists.

A pagan holiday approaches on which local myth says that a faerie mound rises from the ground and sends out faerie owls. The Wächter have made sure this story is told in the village in advance, along with tips for traditional wards. On the night they try to bring forth the

forementioned faeries. The faeries gain vitality from the wards and precautions taken against them. The Soterists try to stop this or just limit the damage.

A group of outlaws have been using this wild area as a hideout between their raids. Suddenly the place is crawling with people, both merchants and peasants ripe for the picking but also added numbers of soldiers and officials wanting to capture them. Either faction could benefit from recruiting their help. The bandits need not be bad to the bone; they could perhaps be pardoned and integrated into the village, or they could become guardians of the wild.

Soterists' plans to a halt, because they do not have the resources to repeatedly build villages to be destroyed. As this response involves the murder of dozens of villagers, including their children, most magi should treat it as a last resort, meaning that the story has a chance to play out first. In any case, destroying the village does not end the characters' problems with the Soterists. First, Relisius and his allies invested magical resources in the project, which have been destroyed, so they try to bring a prosecution against the player characters for depriving them of magical power. Legally, they are on shaky ground, as their project would have deprived the characters of power, through the loss of a vis source, so a counter-suit is possible, but the characters need to defend themselves. Second, the village had the bishop's permission, and he investigates its complete destruction. If he is not convinced that the cause was natural, the Church could bring more trouble. See Legal Repercussions in the Aftermath section for more suggestions.

## Hermetic Society

The Soterists and Wächter are well aware of each other almost from the get go, but they don't start working against each other until the fourth year. Actually, the Wächter have been working — somewhat indirectly — against the mission of the Soterists all along, by helping in more and more exaggerated ways, until the lid blows off. Once the Soterists realize this, they start to move against the Wächter. For the Wächter, this means that the next phase of their plan is set in motion.

The Soterists start to move politically and to sow mistrust and antipathy toward their rivals. Being between Tribunals, investigations can be carried out but the cases won't be heard until the following Tribunal. As representatives of the sophisticated Latin Houses, Relisius and his sympathizers use various means to gain support. As well as directly attacking the Wächter and trying to discredit their philosophy, they act in ways that make them seem like fine members of the community. They might hold symposiums to teach various academic or arcane subjects

to interested parties pro bono, or they might offer favorable deals when trading vis or books with those magi whose sympathy they'd like to gain. The Wächter don't have the same means and connections and instead aim to recruit ideological supporters.

The player magi should also have opportunities to meet the leaders of the two factions, and speak to them, at least briefly.

Relisius is best met at a gathering of important magi, to show how well connected he is. If set in Rhine Tribunal it is a gathering of mainly Ash Guild members but with the Oak Guild also represented. It might be some Bonisagus event, or a magus selling books or magical devices. The challenges of finding a way for magic and the Dominion to live in harmony are one of the topics of discussion at this gathering. Relisius gladly explains his opinions and goals, but does not go into any detail about his active plans. The player magi may be able to speak to him privately, but Relisius is not eager to do so; the player magi may not be sure that he is targeting them, but he knows very well what he is doing. In any case, the conversation should be long enough to allow the characters to get a sense of Relisius' goals and personality.

Iselin is better encountered traveling in the wilds, near the covenant. There should be nothing to tie her immediately to the activities at the village, although the player magi have good reason to be suspicious of any magi in the area. She is also willing to talk to them, and explain her beliefs, which she gives as an explanation for why she is investigating this newly-growing town. Iselin is not interested in a long conversation outside, and takes her leave after explaining herself.

The player characters can choose how to react to the two factions; both accept allies, and the consequences of this are described later. These events simply ensure that the player magi know with whom they are dealing.

## Countermeasures

This section explores some of the possible situations where the actions of the player magi force the Soterist plot off course.

### Situation I: Alerting the Quaesitores

The player magi can easily gather solid evidence that the Code is being broken, and present it to the Quaesitores. The situation is certainly serious enough to warrant an investigation, and a Quaesitor is assigned to look into the problem.

Depending on how the story is unfolding, the Quaesitor could either be the more experienced Magnus von Schwarzwald from the Soterist faction, or the young and neutral Delia. Magnus stalls as much as he can from his position of power. He investigates but fails to find any damning evidence, according to his reports.

Delia, on the other hand, is more willing to act quickly, and her investigation involves the player magi to a greater degree.

Either way the investigations result in a dramatic dampening of magical support for the village, if not a total cessation. Soterist agents still monitor the situation and try to interfere with or expose any sabotage or otherwise harmful acts by the opposition. The Wächter most likely try to expose the situation with overt and inappropriate help to frame the Soterists and discredit their methods. Whether this works depends on how well the new aid is investigated.

The Quaesitors decide what crimes appear to have been committed, and how best to respond. For minor infractions the Quaesitors try to reason with both parties and have them settle their differences rather than take matter to Tribunal. Even if Tribunal action is appropriate, there are no actions in the

early part of this story that merit an emergency Tribunal, so the magi are told to leave the village alone or face larger penalties. They might ignore that, and, in any case, ignoring a growing village is not a realistic option for the player magi. See the section Legal Repercussions for further information, as well as suggestions for penalties.

### Situation II: Siding with the Soterists

If the player magi genuinely sympathize with the Soterist cause, they might want to help. Relisius happily accepts sympathizers and recruits, but keeps his distance to begin with. The player characters need to prove themselves first, by ending any sabotage and meddling in the village. This might even include ending interference stemming from their own covenant if the player magi do not provide a united front. Relisius is careful not to give any orders or even direct suggestions to break the Code. In the short term, he wants to thin out the ranks of Iselin's group and have his plans for the village to progress without setbacks.

If events like Act II: A Church is Built and Act III: The Clay Pit haven't been resolved yet, the player magi take the part of Relisius' agents and try to successfully expand the village, while Wächter agents try to foil their plans. Otherwise the storyguide should run some additional situations for the player magi to prove their loyalty to the cause. Ideas for these can be found in the nearby insert.

With the player magi supporting the Soterists the chances of their main plot succeeding become very high. The story follows the Acts described under Expected Sequence of Play closely, and Act V: First Blood and Act VI: Open War are likely to happen, unless the opposition has been thoroughly dealt with by that time. In this case the section



Aftermath: The Soterists Win should be referred to. The remaining Wächter may go to the Quaesitores if they can find evidence; refer to the section Legal Repercussions in the Aftermath section in this case.

## Situation III: Siding with the Wächter

Once the Wächter faction is noticed and individual magi are identified, the player magi have the option of joining this side. The Wächter are very simple in their expectations and demands from supporters: they want to get rid of the village. Their plans are to make a statement with the razing of the village, where the support of the Soterists is exposed in the end and nature strikes back. Ideally it should look like faeries are the driving force, but the Wächter are content with some of their numbers being identified as collaborators. This is particularly true in the Rhine Tribunal, which does allow for this kind of action with the Guardians of the Forest Peripheral Code ruling (see *Guardians of the Forest*, page 18).

If any magi in the player covenant are actively working against the Wächter or even supporting the Soterists, Iselin wants this resolved. Should some player magi still be neutral she wants them to act just enough to make it clear that they have chosen a side.

Again, the events of Act II and Act III could be run with the player magi taking the role of the Wächter and trying to sabotage them, or the ideas from the insert could be used. At any rate with the Player magi helping the Wächter cause the story should progress nicely through Act V: First Blood to Act VI: Open War.

If Iselin believes that the player magi are deeply committed to her cause, she involves them in planning the final assault on the village, and if they come up with a good plan, she accepts it, instead of using the Dark Huntsmen. Otherwise, she tells the characters immediately in

advance, telling them to go to the village to ensure that everything goes according to plan.

## Aftermath

This story has several potential endings. The main possibilities are outlined here, as well as consequences for the future.

### Soterists Win

If the Soterists win, the village Willehad-im-Wald is there to stay, although it might be damaged to some degree. The player magi must accept the loss of the vis sources or other supernatural resources, and make the best of it. Enterprising magi, interested in dealings with the mundane, or making clever use of suitable companions, can gain much from this new settlement. With its production and trade, as well as the improved travel conditions in the area, the village could become a source of income or supplies for the covenant. Thus, it becomes a new Boon — or Hook — depending on the outcome of the conflict. Also, having a mundane settlement in close proximity means that the magi have an easier time avoiding future encroachment on their lands, since they now have a say in the placement of any new villages.

### Wächter Win

The village has been destroyed, and any maps of the area add the prefix “Cursed Ruins of” to the village name. If the player magi opposed the Soterists they may face Legal Repercussions or Hidden Enemies; see the sections later. The vis source is saved. Though it might have suffered from the church bells and expanding farmlands, in the aftermath the change could become positive. The

vis source could change to yield vis from a different Art or it could grow in size. This is a good opportunity to turn the vis source into a Hook.

The ruined village could become a major or repeatedly used hook for stories. It could become a hideout for bandits or rogue magi. It could draw in faeries, magical creatures or even demons, if the village was ended brutally.

### Inconclusive

The Soterists might be forced to pull back from their original plans, without the village being completely destroyed. Once the help and support from the Soterists stops, progress at the village grinds to a dead halt. Having lost its sense of purpose and with any trade and transport routes set up by Relisius fallen into disrepair, it reverts to the state of so many other sleepy villages. Willehad-im-Wald continues the day-to-day routine of an average farming community and is henceforth of little use to the player covenant in terms of income, resources or contacts. Even though the expansion has been stopped, the Dominion remains (with or without a church), and the Magic aura and vis sources are lost for now, though they might recover slightly over decades. This kind of ending should serve to show the player magi that the world around them has a life of its own, and that all choices have consequences. Sometimes you need to make hard decisions — and sometimes you win and other times you lose.

### Legal Repercussions

As outlined in the section Alerting the Quaesitores, earlier, many actions and situations can lead to a Quaesitorial investigation. There is a lot of potential for variation in what evidence is left behind, what can be found, and how possible infractions are interpreted or prosecuted. The Code varies from Tribunal

to Tribunal, and saga to saga, but the following notes should help the storyguide to prepare.

## DEPRIVATION OF MAGICAL POWER

While damage to The Gift is the ultimate violation of this provision of the Code, all situations where a magus is injured could bring charges of deprivation if it hampers mobility or spellcasting abilities. The same applies to any theft of or damage to magical property. Some situations where a magus spoils another magus' projects or plans causing him to waste vis or significant amounts of time could also be covered by deprivation. Examples are Soterists who demand restitution for vis and wasted time if the village is foiled. Of course, the Soterist may have been breaking the Code himself.

Unless The Gift of a magus is damaged or something as important and valuable as a Familiar or Talisman is lost, the consequence of this Code breach is most likely a vis fine or some other minor penalty, and should be settled out of court. Only the gravest, or most controversial, cases find their way to Tribunal.

## SLAYING A MAGUS

This is a most heinous crime, and even attempting to kill a magus is punished, most likely with a Wizard's March. If the situation escalates and the player magi come to blows with either Soterists or Wächter, charges are brought against them; they may also bring their own charges. This sort of case goes to Tribunal unless it is impossible to prove what happened. If the defendant is seen to be guilty of negligence or questionable behavior, rather than outright and premeditated murder, the punishment could be the loss of apprentice, Familiar, or Talisman rather than death.

## ABIDE BY TRIBUNAL DECISIONS

If this story goes on for many years and a Tribunal passes, there might be rulings either allowing the Wächter to protect the wild lands or deciding that support of Willehad-im-Wald is legal. Player magi might disagree with this and act against the decisions, and therefore be in violation of this provision. Penalties are likely to be much more severe than they would be for the actions themselves, as the player magi have directly challenged the authority of the Tribunal; the Quaesitores, in particular, take a very dim view of this.

## ENDANGERING THE ORDER

If Willehad-im-Wald is razed, killing many innocents, the Bishop is none too pleased, and investigates. Such an investigation poses a real threat to the Order in that area, and, if the threat is averted, charges are very likely to be brought against the magi who are seen to be responsible. As the actions of the Wächter might lead to the destruction of the player covenant, the player magi could be the ones bringing the charges. Punishment can include Wizard's March, particularly if any magi actually suffered serious damage.

## MUNDANE INTERFERENCE

This provision serves to prevent magi dragging the Order into the disputes of Mythic Europe by taking the side of one noble or clergyman over another. The situation with Willehad-im-Wald is certainly about furthering artificial growth, and that indirectly increases the power of the bishop, as the village is on his land. However, the bishop does not know that the growth is magically assisted, so the actions are unlikely to lead to more demands for magical help. This case could be argued either way, and even on a con-

viction the penalty could be anything from a nominal fine to a March, depending on how the Tribunal chose to interpret the crime.

## MOLESTING THE FEY

The player magi may well come to blows with the Faerie Huntsmen used by the Wächter, which might open them to this charge. Bear in mind that a magus has the right to defend himself and retaliate, so it matters greatly who struck the first blow. The same charge could also be brought against the Wächter for their manipulation of the fay.

## Hidden Enemies

No matter how the story ends, at least one of the two factions is nursing a significant loss. That faction retreats from the area to lick their wounds, but they bear a grudge for a long time. The player magi feel their enemies acting against them from the shadows.

A losing Soterist faction avoids such ambitious plans as Willehad-im-Wald in the future, and instead focuses on internal matters. They act politically against the player magi as and when they can. Supporters of this cause are loath to work or deal with their political enemies.

Should the Wächter lose, they retreat to their remaining wild areas and fortify themselves there. They focus on keeping what they still have rather than striking out at mundane settlements. All the while they look for and point out situations where they see magical resources lost to the Dominion in order to gain more followers. These situations could lead to a multitude of stories for the player magi during the coming years.



## Chapter Five

# Eustace the Monk

Eustace the Monk is a pirate and diabolist who controls a small island in the English Channel. His fleet is so powerful that the kings of England and France bid for his services during their wars. The characters need to disperse Eustace's forces. They may do this with a naval battle, followed by a siege of his harbor, or by raiding his island base. A surprise invasion of Sark circumvents a battle with Eustace's fleet, but makes the fight for the island more ferocious.

### Changing the Story

Eustace's role as a pirate prince controlling the waters between two kingdoms can be easily moved to many other parts of Mythic Europe. His name needs to be altered to suit regional cultures.

The story comes down to one or two set piece battles. Characters lacking direct skill in combat can use their magic to reduce the difficulty faced by mundane forces fighting these battles.

The historical Eustace died in 1215, and some troupes who prefer strongly historical games may need a reasonable explanation to return Eustace to the saga. The options given below alter the primary antagonist, and may suit some player character groups better than the version of Eustace given later in the text.

- Eustace's brothers attempt to keep his pirate empire together after his death, and the lead character

is simply one of them. This allows the storyguide to run the scenario given here with minimal change.

- Eustace's nephew, William le Moine (or Guillaume in French-speaking areas) takes control of the remnants of his uncle's fleet. William is not a diabolist, so his fleet lacks many of the supernatural surprises discussed later in the chapter. Eustace's successors take le Moine ("the Monk") as their title, to mark their inheritance of his power, even if the name is not literally correct, in that none of them have been monks.
- Eustace's daughter, described later, was not successfully executed by King John, and she takes control of the remnants of her father's fleet. Eustace's daughter survived incineration, so she has magical abilities, but they may not match his.
- An impostor may take Eustace's name, since it strikes dread into nearby noblemen, and uses it to add cachet to his own operation. This impostor may be a simple pirate, another diabolist of Eustace's type, or a faerie.
- After his defeat, Eustace's head was struck from his body and taken to Canterbury. His body was cut into tiny pieces, and these flung from his ship as it was sailed to England. This sort of ritual is identical to that used to defeat certain types of vampire. Eustace may have the Infernal ability to regenerate his body from fragments

of his corpse. One of his followers may have stolen his head from Canterbury, or retained one of the pieces of his flesh.

- Eustace may have died, but has been returned to the world by his Infernal masters as the lord of a fleet of undead pirates.

## Dramatis Personae: The Forces of Evil

Eustace, his associates, and his servants are the most significant characters in this story.

### Eustace le Moine

Eustace's history is given here in detail because it contains elements that indicate weaknesses players may exploit. His history is divided into strata, each corresponding to what a character knows Storyguides using a revived Eustace should include the information marked with an asterisk (\*) and present all information in the past tense.

All of the results below assume that the information learned on lower rolls is also known. If a player rolls sufficiently high, they will learn most of Eustace's history with the possible exception of that linked to specific Abilities.

EUSTACE'S HISTORY

Intelligence + (appropriate Lore) +  
stress die

Roll: 3+

**Result:** Eustace the Monk is the lord of a band of pirates who control the English Channel. They are based on a tiny island called Sark. Eustace has taken the French side against the English, and the English side against the French, as bribery and whim direct him. He is rumored to have magical powers, granted by the Devil.

Roll: 6+

**Result:** Eustace the Monk was born in 1170, in Course, Normandy. He was the son of a baron of Boulonnais. Eustace was raised as a knight, but was promised to the Church. His father died in an ambush set by Hainfrois de Heresinghen, a powerful nobleman of the Count's court. Judicial combat of champions was permitted, but Eustace's man lost. Eustace worked for the Count for a time, as one of his treasurers, and then fell out with him. He took to the forests of Boulonnais, using disguises, robbery, magic and arson to harass the court. Eventually he was driven off and fled to England.

Roll: 9+

**Result:** King John welcomed Eustace to his court and gifted him 30 galleys, taking Eustace's daughter as hostage to the brigand's good behavior. Eustace used this fleet to ravage the coasts of Normandy from 1204 to 1211, seizing Sark as an advanced base for resupply. John rewarded Eustace with substantial lands near Whichelsea, and with a great palace in London, costing just less than 500 pounds. Eustace thought the palace in London insufficiently grand, so he pulled it down and built a more ostentatious one, to John's annoyance. The two later fell out, and Eustace now works for the French king instead.

## A Note on The Powers of Demons

Many demons have powers which are variants of those gathered in this insert.

**Coagulation**, 1 point, Init -1, Corpus: Allows demons to manufacture a solid body from the ambient, unformed matter of the universe. They may only take the form described in their Appearance. Manifesting takes ( Might ) rounds, but dissolving again requires only one round of concentration. A demon in spiritual form may not use its physical Characteristics. Demons are forced to abandon this form on Holy Saturday.

**Contagious Obsession**: 1 point per victim, Init 0, Mentem: If a person succumbs to the Obsession power, described later, then that person becomes a carrier. If they frighten another person, that person must make the same Personality roll given in the Obsession power or become afraid and also become a carrier. Each new victim costs the demon a Might point, and the contagiousness ceases when the demon runs out of Might, or when a day passes in which no new victim is infected.

**Envisioning**, 1 point, Init +0, Mentem: The demon uses this power to appear in, and distort, the dreams of mortals.

**Form of Wickedness**, 2 points, Init -1, Mentem: This power allows the demon to manufacture a form of pure sin. The demon can only hold this form for a single round, and then must either fade into its spiritual form, or take a host body. This shadowy body is indescribable and terrible, and forces the ten closest people, if they lack sufficient Magic Resistance, to succumb to the sin that the demon represents.

**Obsession**, 1 to 3 points, Init -5, Vim: When a person is committing a sinful thought or deed, the demon may impose its Obsession Trait if this Power defeats Magic Resistance. This gives the person a temporary Personality trait of equal to the number of points spent, and at the next opportunity they must make a roll, opposed by any suitable Personality trait, to prevent them doing something self-degrading. If the Obsession fails, the temporary trait is lost. If it succeeds, the trait is acquired permanently.

## A Note on the Weaknesses of Demons

Each demon in this chapter has a Weakness listed. Characters know this weakness if they are aware the demon exists, consult a relevant source, and make an Intelligence + Infernal Lore roll against an Ease factor of 9 + ( Might / 5 ).

If the weakness is a material, then in the presence of their weakness these demons must flee. They cannot regain Might while their weakness is present. If the weakness is a protected group, the demon cannot harm members of that group.

## A Note on Tainted Vis

Detailed information on tainted vis can be found in *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, on pages 18 and 19. Those troupes not using that set of rules might instead assume that all tainted vis:

- Adds 5 instead of 2 to casting totals.
- Adds three botch dice per pawn, for non-Infernally aligned users.
- Causes a temporary Personality trait of 1, in a sin appropriate to the original demon, in any person who carries the tainted vis for a year. This trait becomes permanent if the carrier successfully acts on the Trait.



## Eustace the Monk

**Characteristics:** Int +2, Per 0, Pre +1, Com 0, Str 0, Sta +1, Dex 0, Qik 0

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 50 (50)

**Decrepitude:** 0

**Warping Score:** 5 (0)

**Confidence Score:** 3 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Knight, Amorphous\*, False Powers\*\*, Wealthy, Aptitude for Piracy\*\*\*, 2 x Mentored by Demons\*\*\*\*, Second Sight, Student of the Infernal, Temporal Influence, Proud, Tainted Life, Corrupted Abilities, False Power, No Tradition, Overconfident, Tainted With Evil, Witch Marks.

\* Character can change shape to any single human form at midnight, so long as the form does not belong to a specified individual.

\*\* See Powers, below

\*\*\* +3 on all Profession: Pirate rolls, so long as they are used for sinful ends. -3 if used for neutral or good reasons.

\*\*\*\* Character has 100 additional XP. He knows he was taught by demons.

**Personality Traits:** Proud +5, Ruthless +3, Derogatory +1

**Reputations:** Pirate lord 6 (everyone who uses the English Channel), Infernal wizard 2 (just about everybody), Hero of the peasantry 3 (Brittany).

**Combat:**

*Short sword:* Init +1, Attack +12, Defense +10, Damage +5

**Soak:** +5, lightly armored.

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5. Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-50), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Area Lore: Breton Forest 5\* (guerilla warfare), Athletics 1 (in forests), Awareness 2 (am-

bushes), Brawl 4 (with drunkards), Civil and Canon Law 3 (as relating to Bretons), Etiquette 3 (Breton court), French 5 (nobles), Hunt 1 (forest), Infernal Lore 4+2 (servile demons)\*, Intrigue 4 (Breton court), Leadership 6\* (pirates), Music 1 (monastic singing), Organization Lore: Fleet 4 (governance), Profession: Piracy 7+3\*\*\* (planning raids), Ride 3 (in battle), Single Weapon 8 (short sword)\*, Survival 4 (forest)\*, Carouse 5 (pirates), Charm 3 (people he hates), (False) Second Sight 3 (demons)\*\*, Swim 3 (sea), Theology (monastic duties) 2

\* Corrupted: -3 if used for neutral or virtuous causes.

\*\* Infernally tainted Second Sight. No mechanical effect, but changes what he sees so that he is more likely to sin.

\*\*\* Provided use is sinful, -3 if neutral or virtuous.

**Powers:**

*Death prophecy*, 0 points, Init 0, Vim:

Eustace must die at sea. He's simply unable to die on land. Regardless of how much he suffers on land, his servants can eventually put him back together.

*Honest liar*, 0 points, Init -4, Mentem

Eustace can tell the truth in ways which cause his victims to misunderstand him, and suffer for it. For example he was once stopped by his enemy, who stopped him on the road and asked "Have you seen Eustace the Monk today?" and Eustace answered "I saw him on this highway, my lord, but you'll never catch him." The deluded nobleman then spurred away at speed, mistakenly believing the reply to mean the Eustace was far away. Mechanically, this power grants a Personality Trait, Gullible +3, for the rest of the day, but this cloud-

ed thinking only affects what Eustace has said.

(Base 15 (Debauchery/Psychomachia, *Realms of Power: The Infernal* page 112) +2 Voice, +2 Sun)

*Invisible Raiders*, 0 points\*, Init -4, Imaginem.

Eustace can make his ship undetectable. It is invisible, the sounds of his crew do not carry, and it leaves no displacement on the waves to mark its passage. Eustace can also use this power to make any group being carried in something invisible, so a wagon load of pirates, or the wearer of a shoe, are equally plausible targets. He can, however, only make himself invisible while at sea. This limit has been placed on him as a form of torture by his mistress, since it has been prophesied that he will die at sea.

(Base 5 (Debauchery/Phantasm, *Realms of Power: The Infernal* page 110) +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +3 Structure)

Eustace has no Might so spends a Fatigue level to activate this power.

**Equipment:** Lightly armored if expecting battle. Uses a short sword, as it is more useful in the confined spaces aboard ship than a long sword.

**Appearance:** An elderly pirate, once charming but now debauched and menacing.

Eustace is a skilled warrior, and has some magical talents granted by his Infernal masters, but is less mystically formidable than his reputation might lead characters to believe. Storyguides wishing to make him more formidable could, for example, give him Magic Resistance and increase his combat scores.



Roll: 12+

**Result:** Before joining the Church, Eustace spent some time in Italy, then in Toledo, where he developed skills useful to his current career of sin. In Northern Italy he learned the ways of Mediterranean piracy. These techniques were novel in the English Channel. He studied the black arts in Toledo.

Roll: 15+

**Result:** Returning from his studies, he took vows as a monk at the monastery of Samer, eight miles south east of the city of Boulogne. He cast spells in the kitchen of the monastery. His initial curses were experiments, which forced the monks to curse when they should pray, fast when they should eat, and go barefoot in snow. Later he took complete control of the monks, stole all of their valuables, and then gambled them away against an innkeeper. The monastery was abandoned, and is in ruins.

Roll: 18+

**Result:** Eustace was approached by representatives of the French, who bought his allegiance. King John

responded by torturing Eustace's daughter, then burning her alive. Eustace fled England with his wife, and five galleys of loyal or desper-

## Human Pirates

**Characteristics:** Int 0, Per 0, Pre 0, Com 0, Str +2, Sta 0, Dex +2, Qik +1

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 25 (25)

**Confidence Score:** 2 (2)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Outlaw

**Personality Traits:** Pirate (Cruel) +2, Debauched +1

**Combat:**

**Axe:** Init +2, Attack +12, Defense +7, Damage +8

or

**Axe:** Init +2, Attack +10, Defense +5, Damage +8

**Bow:** Init 0, Attack +8\*, Defense +3\*, Damage +8

\* +1 shipboard

**Soak:** +2 (heavy clothing)

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-50), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Area Lore: Sark 2 (places of vice), Athletics 2 (while pillaging), Awareness 2 (ships), Brawl 4 (other pirates), Carouse 2 (drunken sin), Craft or Profession 4 (varies), French 5 (pirate slang), Single Weapon 5 (axe) or Single Weapon 3 (axe) and Bow 3 (shipboard), Swim 2 (sea)

**Equipment:** Worn clothes, weapons, alcohol

**Encumbrance:** 0

**Appearance:** Eustace's pirates are ill-groomed, badly dressed, and often drunk. They live in fear of their lord and his demons, and take that out on the Sarcees.



ate men. The vast invasion fleet, led by Eustace, failed to defeat the English defenders. It was scattered by a miraculous hurricane, produced by Saint Bartholomew. Eustace retreated to his base in Sark.

#### Infernal Lore only:

**Roll: 12+**

**Result:** For a year Eustace studied in Toledo, in a great cave beneath the Earth He communed daily with Satan, learning necromancy. A subsidiary Intelligence + Infernal Lore roll of 6 or more indicates that this is a very brief period to learn the Infernal arts, but that direct tuition from a powerful demon may have granted unusual powers.

**Roll: 15+**

**Result:** Eustace's future was foretold by the demon he communed with. He is blessed and cursed: he will terrify and battle kings, and can only truly die at sea.

**If using a reanimated Eustace, or a substitute pirate king, only:**

**Roll: 9+\***

**Result:** When King John died, and his barons invited the Prince of France to be their king, William the Marshall took charge of John's infant son, and guided the loyalists to a surprising series of victories. Prince Louis kept losing ground and followers. His wife, who has more spine than he does, arranged a fleet of mercenaries and siege weapons, giving them to Eustace the Monk to deliver. William the Marshall prepared to lead an inferior fleet against him, but he was persuaded to allow a younger and less essential man to take his place.

**Roll: 12+\***

**Result:** Phillip d'Aubigny, the new English admiral, was able to defeat Eu-

stace for a mixture of reasons. He was able to get the advantage of the wind over Eustace, and defeat him in many small engagements. He was aided by Stephen Crabbe, a diabolic rival of Eustace's, who could see through Eustace's illusions. Phillip used pots of ground lime to blind Eustace's men. When he captured Eustace, Phillip was offered a ransom of 10 000 marks (3 333 pounds) but instead struck off Eustace's head, and cut him into small pieces, dropping them every so often while he sailing to port. He sent Eustace's pike-skewered head on a tour of the country, ending in Canterbury.

## Human Pirates

Mortal criminals are one option for the basic follower in Eustace's fleet. For a more challenging scenario, replace these pirates with the Briny Dead, described later, or resurrect them as Briny Dead if the player characters kill them.

Some of the pirates who use the statistics below have made deals with demons to receive Minor Virtues. These add either +3 on one Ability provided it is used for sin, +2 Soak, or the ability to do a single minor, Infernal working. This is usually a spell-like effect of level 15 or less, and costs a level of Fatigue to activate. These workings cannot be used for virtuous purposes.

## Stephen Crabbe

Crabbe is an associate, some say apprentice, of Eustace. He has turned against the Monk, and uses his powers to aid Eustace's enemies. He has many of Eustace's abilities, and can neutralize several of the others. In one historical version of this story, Crabbe leaps aboard Eustace's invisible flagship, appearing to float in midair. He stabs the Monk, but is torn to pieces by Eustace's crew.

Stephen is not designed as an adversary to the player characters: he is a re-

source, if a corrupt one. To flesh him out further, or use him as a later antagonist, assume Stephen is sponsored by a powerful demon that seeks to spread greed through the wealth that trade brings. If he is attacked and needs demonic aides, use the statistics for the mockery demons, given below, but describe them as nimble, toadlike demons dressed in rich fabrics, and don't use the layered combat trick of resurrecting the bodies, then coalescing new forms.

## Demons

The demons that appear over the next few pages can be found in many of the sites which the characters visit during the story, and so are described here. Other demons, specific to sites, are detailed in the descriptions of those locations.

## Expected Sequence of Play

This scenario is, structurally, an excuse for a set-piece naval battle followed by a siege. These provide combat-orientated characters with environments filled with morally-uncomplicated targets on which to use their most devastating spells.

Once the necessity of battle is clear to the player characters, the story revolves around the strategies they use to reduce Eustace's capacity to resist destruction at their hands. The suggested course of events, after the hook, is that the player characters visit sites important in Eustace's life to gain more information and Arcane Connections. Each investigation includes the possibility of combat, but the foes are weaker than in the two large battles. This allows characters strongest in spells that gather information to contribute by facing these obstacles on behalf of the covenant.

## Possible Hooks

The characters need a reason to meet Eustace in battle, and this should vary to suit each saga. Some suggestions follow.

### AIDING A SLIGHTED KING

The Order doesn't take sides in the mundane wars, but Eustace does. He is known to be a magician, and auctions his services in the most public way. He terrifies rulers, extorts noblemen, and

pillages commoners. Eustace is such a villain that even other Satanists hate him. It's clearly to the Order's benefit for him to be removed.

Eustace again auctions his services. The losing side (as suits your saga) instead sends messages to the covenant, pointing out that they know that magi exist, that Eustace is clearly their problem, and that the Code doesn't protect him. An element of threat is added: if Eustace is not bought under control, then clearly the Crown needs to take some action to prevent

similar problems. The characters have a choice: accept an exorbitant fee and strike Eustace down, or face a kingdom-wide census of magi, to determine their powers and capacity to pay tax.

This hook allows a diplomatic scene, to include player characters not skilled in combat in the story. An excellent diplomat can frame the entire event by setting the stakes. Rewards and possible consequences for failure are negotiated by this character in advance.

## Bring Dead: Pirate Corpses Reanimated by Reveners

**Order:** Vessel of Iniquity

**Infernal Might:** 20 (Corpus)

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per +1, Pre +3, Com 0, Str +2, Sta 0, Dex +2, Qik +1

**Size:** 0

**Confidence Score:** 3 (3)

**Personality Traits:** Hateful +6, Depraved +6

**Reputations:** Hunters of the Living 3 (Infernal)

**Hierarchy:** 3

**Combat:**

The attacks of reveners are considered supernatural, and are opposed by Magic Resistance.

**Axe:** Init +2, Attack +12, Defense +7, Damage +8 or

**Axe:** Init +2, Attack +10, Defense +5, Damage +8

**Bow:** Init 0, Attack +8\*, Defense +3\*, Damage +8

\* +1 shipboard

**Soak:** +5: Leathery skin and thick clothes

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-50), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Depend on reanimated person. If they reanimate the pirates, Single Weapon 5 (axe) or Single Weapon 3 (axe) and Bow 3 (shipboard)

**Powers:**

**Contagious Obsession:** 1 point per victim, Init 0, Mentem: Reveners have this power, but prefer not to use it, using their horrible host bodies instead.

**Envisioning,** 1 point, Init +0, Mentem:

*Form of Wickedness,* 2 points, Init -1, Mentem:

Reveners rarely use this power, but might trigger it if all of their physical forms are destroyed, to provide confusion in which to escape powerful adversaries. This form radiates the sin the demon represents, which in this case is fear (which is sinful, because it denies the protective role of God). The characters flee in terror until they faint from exhaustion. Every hour the character may make a Stamina roll of 6+ to break the hold of the power, but unconsciousness also breaks it, and characters fleeing at speed are likely to collapse before the first hour is up. A botch on this roll causes temporary insanity, a Minor Personality Flaw suited to the situation in which the demon was encountered.

**Obsession,** 1 to 3 points, Init -5, Vim: Fearful

**The Dead That Walk Again,** 3 points, Init -4, Corpus: Allows the reverter to possess many corpses simultaneously, at the cost of 3 Might per body. The bodies cannot have had a proper burial. The attacks of animated bodies are supernatural and are opposed by Magic Resistance.

All of the bodies controlled by a single reverter work in perfect concert in combat. If using the group combat rules the Attack and Defense bonus provided by additional mem-

bers of the group is not limited by the reverter's Leadership score. This means that a reverter controlling 6 corpses has the following group combat statistics

**Axe specialists:** Init +2, Attack +72, Defense +42, Damage +8

**Axe and bow armed**

**Axe:** Init +2, Attack +60, Defense +30, Damage +8

**Bow :** Init 0, Attack +48\*, Defense +18\*, Damage +8

\* +6 shipboard

Powerful demons can command reveners in group combat, but since they lack the reverter ability to perfectly co-ordinate many bodies, there's usually no benefit to this.

**Weakness:** Abhorrent material (garlic): These demons must flee the presence of garlic, or spend a Confidence point every two minutes. They cannot regenerate spent Might while garlic is present.

**Vis:** None

**Appearance:** Pirate corpses pickled in brine, dressed in rags and carrying corroded weapons.

Reveners are demons that reanimate the dead, for example the pirates described earlier. They usually work in groups of three or more. Reveners lack the power to take physical shape, instead spreading horror by making the dead rise and attack the living.



## Shantymen

**Order:** Tempters

**Infernal Might:** 20 (Corpus)

**Characteristics:** Int 0, Per 0, Pre 0, Com +3, Str +3, Sta +3, Dex +3, Qik +1

**Size:** 0

**Confidence Score:** 3 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Weak-willed

**Personality Traits:** Selfish +5

**Combat:**

*Birch rod (club):* Init +2, Attack +12, Defense +19, Damage +6

**Soak:** +3

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious\*

\*Never suffers fatigue while chanting

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Athletics 5 (muscular labor), Awareness 3 (shirkers), Craft (shipboard work) 5 (new fashions), French 5 (pirates), Folk Ken 5 (pirates), Guile 5 (shirkers), Infernal Lore 2 (piracy), Music 7 (song), Single weapons 6 (birch rod).

**Powers:**

*Coagulation*, 1 point, Init -1, Corpus.

*Envisioning*, 1 point, Init +0, Mentem.

*Obsession*, 1 to 3 points, Init -5, Vim: Laziness.

*Endless Droning*, 0 points, Init 0, Corpus: So long as the demon is singing, it cannot lose Fatigue.

*Black Shanties*: 6 points, Init -11, Corpus: The demon's song grants a minor False Blessing to anyone who joins the song. Each demon knows several songs, but can only use one, and offer one Blessing, at time. Using Infernal blessings, even for good purposes, is still a sin, so characters joining the song while fighting pirates, or to attack the shantymen itself, are still morally culpable. Simple blessings include a +2 bonus on Soak, the Long-winded Virtue, +3 on a particular Ability, or the ability to create a single minor spell. A popular spell causes a gust of wind that knocks an enemy down, and, with luck, overboard.

The shantymen can always continue leading his songs while engaged in combat, but other characters must make Intelligence + Concentration rolls against an Ease Factor of 6 to sing in a round in which they are fighting.

**Equipment:** Weathered clothes, birch rod.

**Weakness:** Protected group (those singing his song)

**Vis:** 4 pawn Imaginem vis sordida in loathsome, huge tongue

**Appearance:** A tall, gaunt man, flecked in salt and bird dung, dressed in ragged sailor's clothes, with a lower jaw that gapes open in a long oval, to his solar plexus. He carries a birch rod which he uses as a whip.

Shantymen are demons whose songs provide nearby humans with False Powers. Each shantymen knows several songs, but can sing only one at a time. Eustace has one of these creatures on each of his ships.

### IN RESPONSE TO A RAID

Eustace needs supplies to keep his fleet seaworthy and he gains these, in part, by raiding shipping and port facilities. Many covenants have excellent port facilities or links to merchant houses. Eustace is proud, and chronically underestimates his opponents, so the excellent timber, spars, cordage, and provisions stored in the covenant's warehouses are not safe from him.

This hook begins the story with a raid, in which lesser characters, like grogs and companions, defend against a ship of Eustace's men, perhaps aided by a demon. The hook works best if Eustace's forces do serious damage or, when driven off, promise to return with greater force.

### IN RESPONSE TO PIRACY

In this hook, Eustace's forces capture a ship allied with the player characters. This is similar to the previous hook, but involves a different mix of characters. One interesting framing device is for the storyguide to inform the players that word has reached the characters of the loss of this ship. The storyguide then gives the players pregenerated characters, telling them they shouldn't get too attached to them. The battle is played as a flashback, narrated by a witness who is not initially identified. The better the temporary characters do, the more information they can pass to the usual player characters.

This is a survival story. These disposable player characters almost certainly won't defeat Eustace, and only one of them needs to survive. The first scene's function is to pre-warn the characters

about Eustace's powers and resources, and provide a horrific warning of what happens to their regular characters if they fail to prepare. If the characters have strong divinatory magic, that can read the history of objects or speak with ghosts, then none of the temporary characters need to survive to keep this framing element complete.

If the temporary characters do kill Eustace, say that the battle occurred two years ago, and then segue into a version of the story with an alternate but similar pirate lord. Options for alternatives are given in the Changing the Story section, earlier.

### REVENGE FOR A SLAIN REDCAP

This is a much-used hook, but an easy one to fit into most sagas. Eustace captured, tortured, and killed a Redcap.

## Sheeteaters

**Order:** Evil spirits

**Infernal Might:** 5 (Animal)

**Characteristics:** Int 0, Per +2, Pre 0, Com +3, Str +1, Sta +1, Dex +1, Qik +1

**Size:** -2

**Confidence Score:** 1 (1)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Weak-willed

**Qualities:** Accomplished Flyer, Aquatic (can breathe water), Slippery (+6 against Grapple attacks)

**Personality Traits:** Selfish +5, Contemptuous of humans +4.

**Combat:**

**Bite:** Init +1, Attack +10, Defense +2, Damage +2

**Soak:** +4, bony plates under scales

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -3, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-3), -3 (4-6), -5 (7-9), Inc (10-12), Dead (13+)

**Abilities:** Area Lore: Sark 3 (ocean), Athletics 5 (flying), Awareness 2 (food), Brawl 6 (dodging), Infernal Lore 2 (undersea secrets), Survival 3 (ocean), Swim 5 (home terrain)

**Powers:**

**Coagulation,** 1 point, Init -1, Corpus.

**Eat sheets:** 0 points, Init +0: Any rope that the sheeteater touches with its teeth snaps.

**Envisioning,** 1 point, Init +0, Mentem.

**Flight:** 0 points, Init +1, Animal: This demonic fish can fly freely. It flaps its wings, but this is not required for it to fly.

**Obsession,** 1 to 3 points, Init -5, Vim: Contempt.

**Sheeteater's Smile:** 1 point, Init +0, Mentem: If a human sees a sheeteater perform an act of vandalism, the sheeteater may use its highly expressive features to mock him with a contemptuous grin. When this occurs the human is flooded with rage, and must make an appropriate Personality trait roll of 9 or more, or be compelled to attack the sheeteater. The sheeteater flees, but not so far nor so fast that the human has no chance to catch it. While chasing the sheeteater, the human cannot mend or mitigate the damage that the sheeteater

caused. The power fails when the sheeteater clearly cannot be caught, when someone else mitigates the damage it has caused, when it uses this power on someone else, or after an hour.

**Weakness:** Cannot leave the sea, or the sky directly above the sea. The sheeteater can attack boats, but it can't go inland. Sheeteaters forced inland suffer a Light Wound every round.

**Vis:** 1 pawn Perdo vis sordia in body.

**Appearance:** Smug-looking black fish, with elegant wings and highly expressive faces.

Sheeteaters are demonic flying fish. Their name comes from their habit of sabotaging vessels by biting through "sheets" or ropes. The destruction of sheets can cause sails to fly lose, so that speed is lost. In ships moving at speed, biting through the stays can cause masts to topple over. Eustace can use his sheeteaters in naval battles, but they are unable to venture inland.

This obliges all Hermetic magi to plot revenge against him. Other covenants, worried that Eustace has deliberately sought information about their placement and power, offer resources to the player characters when they strike at him.

### STRIKING BACK AT EUSTACE'S SPONSOR

Eustace is supported by a powerful demon. If the characters have previously feuded with this creature, then destroy-

ing one of his most powerful minions is a great victory. The characters may become aware of the connection between their foe and Eustace as a reward for completing a previous story, through the intercession of Saint Bartholomew,





## Mockery Demons

**Order:** Evil spirits

**Infernal Might:** 25 (Animal)

**Characteristics:**

*Ape form:*

Int +1, Per +1, Pre 0, Com 0, Str +3, Sta +3, Dex +2, Qik +2

*Undead ape form:*

Int +1, Per +1, Pre 0, Com 0, Str +2, Sta +3, Dex +1, Qik +1

*Mockery form:*

Int +1, Per +1, Pre 0, Com 0, Str 0, Sta +1, Dex +2, Qik +3

**Size:**

*Ape forms* +1

*Mockery form* -2.

**Virtues and Flaws:** Weak-willed

**Personality Traits:** Debauchery +3

**Reputations:** Useful servants 1 (Infernal)

**Combat:**

*Ape Form*

*Brawl:* Init +2, Attack +10, Defense +13, Damage +3

*Axe:* Init +3, Attack +10, Defense +9, Damage +9

*Thrown:* Init +2, Attack +10\*, Defense +5, Damage +5\*

*Dead Ape Form*

*Brawl:* Init +1, Attack +9, Defense +10, Damage +2

*Axe:* Init +2, Attack +9, Defense +6, Damage +8

*Thrown:* Init +1, Attack +13\*, Defense +6, Damage +4\*

*Mockery Form*

*Claws:* Init +2, Attack +8, Defense +13, Damage +2

*Axe:* Init +3, Attack +10, Defense +10, Damage +6

*Thrown:* Init +3, Attack +10\*, Defense +6, Damage +2\*

\* Assumes that the thrown item is a rock. If it's a knife, the Damage is +3 higher. If it's a degrading thing, the Attack is +1 higher, but the damage is likely +0.

**Soak:**

*Ape forms* +3

*Mockery form* +6

**Fatigue Levels:**

*Ape form and Mockery form:* OK, 0, -1,

-3, -5, Unconscious

*Dead ape form:* Tireless.

**Wound Penalties:**

*Ape form:* -1 (1-6), -3 (7-12), -5 (13-19), Incapacitated (20-26), Dead (27+)

*Mockery form:* -1 (1-3), -2 (4-6), -3 (7-9), Incapacitated (10-12), Dead (13+)

**Abilities:**

*Ape Form:* Area Lore: Sark 2 (La Moinerie), Athletics 4 (climbing), Animal Handling 3 (apes), Awareness 3 (predators), Brawl 7 (fists), Hunt 2 (things apes eat), Infernal Lore 4 (demon worshippers), Single Weapon 3 (axe), Survival 5 (ape), Thrown Weapon 7 (degrading things).

*Mockery Form:* Area Lore: Sark 2 (La Moinerie), Athletics 4 (climbing), Animal Handling 3 (apes), Awareness 3 (predators), Brawl 3 (claws), Hunt 2 (things apes eat), Infernal Lore 4 (demon worshippers), Single Weapon 3 (axe), Survival 5 (ape), Thrown Weapon 2 (degrading things).

**Powers:**

*Coagulation*, 1 point, Init -1, Corpus.

*Envisioning*, 1 point, Init +0, Mentem.

*Obsession*, 1 point, Init -5, Vim: Debauched

*Possession*, variable points, Init -2, Mentem: Allows the demon to take control of human, and in this case, animal hosts. The rules for this are complex and can be found on pages 32 and 33 of *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, but for the purposes of this scenario, the demons each entirely possess a single ape, and control that ape absolutely, having worn down their Personality traits with the Obsession power. A demon that gives an ape a command which the ape feels is likely to cause it to die must spend Might to force its host

to follow the instruction. This is an opposed roll of stress die + Might spent against its Personality trait roll of stress + 3. If characters use magic to give the Ape other powerful traits, these may also be used to oppose the demon's control.

*Walking Dead*, 3 points, Init -4, Corpus or Animal. The mockery may animate any corpse not given proper burial. It can animate ape corpses since they are so perfect for mocking humans, provided they have not been dismembered. The physical attacks of the animated body reflect those of the body in life. They are blocked by Magic Resistance.

**Equipment:** Filthy clothes, rusty weapons, alcohol.

**Weakness:** Things representing cleanliness, like pure running water, soap, and powdered lime. Sea water is not considered pure for this weakness. While they are in possessed bodies, the mockery demons are resistant to gentle cleaners like water and soap. They are still affected by lime, lye, or other caustic substances.

**Vis:** 5 pawns Corpus in lips, vis sordida.

**Appearance:** Large, ill African apes, clad in soiled clothing. The mockeries, if in their demonic shape, are twisted little humans that look like caricatures of whomever they are combating.

Eustace keeps seven great African apes which have been possessed by demons. The spirits do this in mockery of the pirates. In their bestial forms they drink, brawl and otherwise act like pirates, in an exaggerated, comedic and belittling way. If their ape hosts are killed, these demons have the ability to animate the corpses, or to create new forms. This natural form looks like a twisted little human, vaguely similar to whomever they are fighting.

## Succubae and Incubi

These relatively weak demons, and the sheeteaters described earlier, are the only flying demons that Eustace commands. Wise player characters may exploit this vulnerability.

**Order:** Tempter

**Infernal Might:** 5 (Corpus).

**Characteristics:** Int 0, Per 0, Pre +3, Com 0, Str +1, Sta +3, Dex +1, Qik 0

**Size:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Improved Characteristics, Enduring Constitution, Offensive to Animals\*, Weak-willed

\* or some other Minor Flaw.

**Personality Traits:** Selfish +6, Lustful +5, Deceitful +4

**Combat:**

**Axe:** Init +1, Attack +11, Defense +6, Damage +9

**or Knife:** Init 0, Attack +8, Defense +6, Damage +3

**Soak:** +1 Clothes

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-50), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Brawl 5 (knife), Charm 3 (sexual partners), Folk Ken 3 (pirates), Intrigue 3 (pirates), Profession: varies, but in this case pirate and sex worker

are common 3, Single Weapon 5 (axe)

**Powers:**

**Coagulation,** 1 point, Init -1, Corpus; This form may be male or female, and of any race or age, but these forms bear a familial similarity.

**Envisioning,** 1 point, Init +0, Mentem.

**Harness the Wind,** 1 point, Init 0, Corpus:

This power allows the demon to fly swiftly from one place to another, and lasts until the journey ends or dawn. Most demons do not fly this way, instead dematerializing and creating a fresh body at their destination. Succubae and incubi travel using this Power instead if they have semen they do not wish to lose, but may dematerialize and coagulate if they prefer.

**Hag Ride:** 1 point, Init 0, Corpus: The demon may "ride" a victim for an evening. This power causes the victim to lie, conscious but paralyzed, while the demon rapes them. Being ridden costs a long term Fatigue level and prevents the recovery of any Fatigue during the night. A victim ridden on consecutive evenings loses another level each night. The victim regains the power to move at dawn.

**Mutable gender,** 0 point, Init +0, Corpus: The demon can switch gender at will.

**Obsession,** 1 to 3 points, Init -5, Vim: Lustful or Rapacious, varying by demon.

**Weakness:** Abhorrent material (daylight). Storyguides wanting these demons to provide Eustace with some weak air cover during the final battle may prefer to swap this for something else, for example Protected Group (chaste people).

**Vis:** 1 pawn Corpus vis sordida in the private organs.

**Appearance:** Beautiful women in skirts and bodices, or men with rippling muscles, long hair, and shirts open to the waist

These are sexual demons; wherever you have pirates, you'll have a few of these around also. Succubae and Incubi are the same type of demon. Each is able to switch genders to harvest the semen of wicked men, and then plant it in the bodies of evil women. And example is given here, but the Characteristics, Virtues, Flaws and Abilities of these creatures are variable.

or because the agents of Hell have fallen out with each other. Stephen Crabbe, Eustace's rival in the service of Hell, is described earlier, and he may advertise the connection between the demon and the pirate, for his own purposes.

### THE WINCHELSEA HOUSE, LONDON PALACE, OR MONASTERY OF SAMER.

Characters may stumble into this story by visiting one of these sites first. Once they have cleansed that site and gained resources that make Eustace vulnerable, they may begin plotting his destruction.

### WHEN YOU HAVE A HAMMER, EVERYTHING LOOKS LIKE A NAIL

Some violent magi like smashing things, and Eustace is outside Hermetic, mundane, and Divine law. That might be enough.

### Preparations For Confronting Eustace the Monk

Two strategies the players may consider are naval battle and raiding Eustace's base. Storyguides can easily engineer Eustace's escape from the naval

battle if they wish to ensure he leads his defenders in the final battle. As an alternative, the player characters may kill Eustace in the naval battle. If they do not then flush the pirates from Sark, a new leader eventually takes his place, and the problems which led to their initial involvement resume. If the characters slay Eustace and then sail directly for Sark, either an apprentice of Eustace's survived, and co-ordinates the defenders, or Argenta, a demon described later, takes personal control of the pirates. Characters planning to attack Eustace have the advantage that they can choose the time of their assault, and so can make preparations which reduce the Monk's capacity to resist.



## ACCOUNTS OF EARLIER USE OF POWERS

Eustace has been famously active in several places. Characters may travel to these seeking Arcane Connections or further information about Eustace's powers. The key places they can reconnoiter are his house in Winchelsea, his palace in London, and the ruined monastery at Samer in France. Each of these sites has a demonic guardian.

The options here are tied to the places where Eustace has been active, but a storyguide who feels one of these scenarios suits his troupe better than the others can switch the defenders and rewards.

## WINCHELSEA

Eustace's palace in Winchelsea is the least disturbed of his lairs, excepting Sark. He was driven from it by King John's men, but his servants and allies survived his expulsion, and flourish. The noble family gifted his property by the king were pruned down by assassination until a diabolist was the rightful heir.

Eustace's allies continue to worship the Infernal powers in the house's cellars. Player characters dispersing these diabolists might confront one with powers similar to Eustace. They might fight Briny Dead, encounter mockery demons, or find a hymnal to Argenta, Eustace's sponsor. This allows the characters to research the weaknesses of Eustace's demonic pirates before the larger battles.

The diabolists who aid Eustace are led by his daughter, Helen. She died under the hand of King John and was returned to the world as an infernal ghost, with fire-related powers. Her knowledge of the logistical side of her father's operation is unparalleled, and her Magic Resistance is relatively poor. The skills required to trap and interrogate her are unusual, but Stephen Crabbe can do it, if her defenders are defeated. Crabbe is active among the Infernalists of Winchelsea, and may contact the characters if an

## Helen Le Moine: Infernal Ghost

**Order:** Master of Tempters

**Infernal Might:** 25 (Ignem)

**Characteristics:** Int +2, Per 0, Pre +2, Com +2, Str +1\*, Sta 0, Dex +2, Qik 0

\* Can't take physical form, and cannot manipulate objects

**Size:** 0

**Confidence Score:** 3 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Weak-willed

**Personality Traits:** Selfish +5

**Reputations:** Mistress of Winchelsea Pirates 3 (Infernal)

**Combat:** Cannot take physical form

**Soak:** +1

**Abilities:** Area Lore: London 5 (Infernal sites), Awareness 3 (threats), Bargains 3 (merchants), Charm 5 (infernalists), Folk Ken 3 (pirates), French 5 (pirates), In-

fernal Lore 4 (pirates), Intrigue 6 (infernalists), Leadership 4 (pirates), Organization Lore: Pirate Fleet 6 (logistics).

### Powers:

*Envisioning*, 1 point, Init +0, Mentem.

*Elemental Control of Flame*, variable points, Init +1, Ignem: May create any Creo, Muto or Rego Ignem effect at the cost of one Might point per magnitude of effect. Helen cannot create effects greater than level 25, and cannot create ritual effects.

*Obsession*, 1 to 3 points, Init -5, Vim: Selfish.

**Weakness:** Protected group: just lawgivers

**Appearance:** A young woman constructed of luminous lines in orange and amber.



alliance seems profitable. Rego Mentem or Rego Vim spells can also compel her to give information.

## LONDON PALACE

The London palace was built before Eustace became a pirate. Its foundations were dedicated to Fruitio, The Whisperer of Names, an earlier demonic patron whom Eustace forsook for Argenta. This creature still manifests at the palace, but has no love for the Monk, and might steer characters toward his weaknesses in exchange for a favors.

Player characters active in London need to be careful. Magic is weaker in large cities because of the Dominion. Battles with demons in the streets of London draw the attention of the Quaesitores. Conflict, if any, needs to be contained within the palace, or witnesses need to be dealt with in some way. The demons similarly prefer to limit any conflict to the palace: the Dominion of London restricts their powers, but does not limit them within the palace's Infernal aura.

The nobleman to whom this palace was given is a servant of Fruitio. He has a great deal of mundane influence, and attacking him directly without

breaching the Code is difficult. The two have a binding agreement that Fruitio will not approach the rest of the nobleman's family, but the demon has found a way around this. It has called up a demonic ally named Ossa, a spirit of vanity, and that demon has used its powers to make most of the family, and their servants, perfectly biddable if not yet truly corrupt.

Characters who uncover the secrets of the London palace might gain the assistance of the demons here, since they are opposed to Eustace's sponsor. The demons can predict the future, in a limited way, and so they know the characters are coming. They send

## Fruitio: The Whisperer of Names

**Order:** A Master of the Spirits of Deceit  
**Infernal Might:** 25 (Corpus)

**Characteristics:** Int +3, Per +2, Pre +1,  
Com +4, Str +2, Sta +2, Dex +2, Qik +4

**Size:** 0

**Confidence Score:** 5 (5)

**Personality Traits:** Deceitful +6, Smug  
+3, Trustworthy -5

**Hierarchy:** 6

**Reputations:** Awarder of mortal offices 2  
(Infernal)

**Combat:**

**Longsword:** Init +6, Attack +14, Defense  
+13, Damage +8

**Soak:** +7, raiment of golden plates

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Un-  
conscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10),  
-5 (11-50), Incapacitated (16-20),  
Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Many Abilities, with Lores  
supplemented by its Serpent's Oracle  
power. Its Single Weapon skill is 7  
(longsword).

**Powers:**

**Bearer of Bad News,** 2 points, Init 0, Men-  
tem: If the demon tells a person a  
true, but negative, fact, he can use  
this power to make the mortal feel  
that a decision has been made to vic-  
timize him. This causes the victim to  
loathe the person responsible for the

decision. The victim takes a petty re-  
venge on the authority figure at the  
first opportunity. This loathing can  
be overcome with any Personality  
Trait roll of 9 or more, or by waiting  
for Sunday, which dispels the power.

**Change Form,** 0 points, Init 0, Corpus or  
Animal. This demon can take any  
natural form. Its human forms cannot  
replicate particular individuals.

**Coagulation,** 1 point, Init -1, Corpus.

**Envisioning,** 1 point, Init +0, Mentem.

**Obsession,** 1 to 3 points, Init -5, Vim: Un-  
rewarded.

**Trust of the Innocent,** 1 point, Init +1, Men-  
tem: The victim loses all judgment  
and believes a specific lie so long as  
proof to its contrary is not presented.  
An Intelligence roll against an Ease  
Factor of 6 is allowed to resist. This  
roll is adjusted by up to 3 points if  
the demon has set up circumstances  
to make its lie appear plausible. This  
creature often uses this power to sug-  
gest its protégés be granted offices,  
or that its victims will not be caught  
in their treasors.

**Forked Tongue of the Serpent,** 3 points, Init  
-1, Mentem. The target believes a  
single lie told to him by the demon  
until he repeats it to someone else.  
At that point he realizes that the lie

is false. An Intelligence roll against  
an Ease Factor of 9 also reveals the  
lie, with the first roll made an hour  
after the lie is told, then subsequent  
rolls every hour.

**The Serpent's Oracle,** 2 points, Init -3, Vim:  
The demon can duplicate any Intel-  
lego spell for the cost of 2 Might  
points. Using this power, and the  
ability to extrapolate the effects of  
current actions, it can seem to pre-  
dict the future.

**Equipment:** Longsword that transforms  
into scepter. Clothes that transform  
into robes with golden plates sewn  
into them.

**Weakness:** Protected group (humble  
people)

**Vis:** 5 pawns of Rego vis sordida in scepter

**Appearance:** A handsome demon,  
dressed as a courtier. In his natural  
form he has colorful feathers instead  
of hair and a parrot's beak instead of  
his mouth and nose.

This demon takes a favored mortal  
and raises him to power. It aids others in  
treason then deserts them, so that their  
offices lie vacant for its protégé. It then  
suggests its worshipper for the vacant  
office, using its Trust of the Innocent  
power.



## Ossa The Adulatrix

**Order:** Spirit of Deceit (Woman of Good Intent)

**Infernal Might:** 5 (Corpus)

**Characteristics:** Int +2, Per 0, Pre 0, Com +3, Str +1, Sta +1, Dex +3, Qik +1

**Size:** 0

**Confidence Score:** 3 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Weak-willed

**Personality Traits:** Selfish +5, Fashionable +4, Contemptuous of humans +3

**Combat:** Avoids combat, playing the victim and getting others slaughtered in her defense.

**Soak:** +1

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -2 (6-10), -3 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Area Lore: London 3 (stores), Artes Liberales 2 (oversimplifications), Athletics 3 (with children), Awareness 3 (clothes), Bargain 5 (shoes), Charm 5 (children), Craft (seamstress) 7 (new fashions), English 5 (peasants), Etiquette 3 (nobles), French 5 (nobles), Folk Ken 5 (London), Guile 7 (nobles), Intrigue 6 (servants), Infernal Lore 2 (vanities), Music 3 (harp), Teaching 5 (children), Theology 2 (heresies).

### Powers:

*Change Form*, 0 points, Init 0, Corpus or Animal. This demon can take the form of a fly, to follow its charges.

*Coagulation*, 1 point, Init -1, Corpus.

*Envisioning*, 1 point, Init +0, Mentem.

*Obsession*, 1 to 3 points, Init -5, Vim: Vain.

*Trust of the Innocent*, 1 point, Init +1, Mentem: The victim loses all judgment and believes a specific lie so long as proof to its contrary is not presented. An Intelligence roll against an Ease Factor of 6 is allowed to resist. This roll is adjusted by up to 3 points if the demon has set up circumstances to make its lie appear plausible. This creature uses this power to create spiteful feuds, or just to tell people how wonderful they are.

*Forked Tongue of the Serpent*, 3 points, Init -1, Mentem. The target believes a single lie told to him by the demon until he repeats it to someone else. At that point he realizes that the lie is false. An Intelligence roll against an Ease Factor of 9 also reveals the lie, with the first roll made an hour after the lie is told, then subsequent rolls every hour. This creature seldom uses

this power, as it stays permanently with its victim family.

*The Serpent's Oracle*, 2 points, Init -3, Vim: The demon can duplicate any Intellego spell for the cost of 2 Might points. Using this power, and the ability to extrapolate the effects of current actions, it can seem to predict the future. Its knowledge of court fashion is impeccable.

**Equipment:** A lovely dress, long hatpins, elegant shoes.

**Weakness:** Protected group (vain people)

**Vis:** 1 pawn Imaginem vis sordia in shoes.

**Appearance:** Ossa is an elegant governess and companion who accompanies the family, and indeed is believed to be a poor cousin of the mother. She is morally upright, and perfectly dedicated, with the exception of her extravagant taste for fashion.

This demon is a professional sycophant. She has been recruited to corrupt this family by Fruitio, mostly because the nobleman, who heads the family, was so careful to protect them in his agreement with the senior demon.

## Corrupted Vermin

The Corrupted Vermin of Samer are small animals that have been polluted by the aura of the place. Corrupted animals have:

- Infernal Might of 5
- Presence of -6
- A single sinful Personality Trait of +6
- The Tainted with Evil Flaw.
- They gain any one Major Virtue.

The monks call the vermin to aid them when they expect battle. The vermin usually attack in swarms.

## Abandoned By Its Saint

Saint Magloire was granted the right to proselytize these islands in 565 after healing a nobleman with a claim to the island. Stories vary: he either brought disciples with him and founded a monastery, or came as a hermit but was rapidly surrounded by followers seeking healing and spiritual guidance. He founded a monastery and his followers cultivated the surrounding land.

In 850, a Breton nobleman offered land to a group of monks on the condition that they brought the relics of a worthy saint to his domain. These

monks decided to retrieve the relics of Saint Magloire. The people of Sark attempted to prevent their removal, but the saint aided the Breton monks with various miracles, thereby demonstrating his strong desire to leave Sark.

Saint Magloire is still venerated on Sark, and considered its special protector. But even before Eustace arrived, the island was considered a haven for pirates, robbers, murderers and cannibals, so there are few who pray to him.

Particularly pious characters may find this saint willing to answer their prayers for the liberation of Sark.

## The Demonic Monks of Samer

**Order:** Tempters, Masters of Corrupted Vermin

**Infernal Might:** 10 (Animal)

**Characteristics:** Int +2, Per +1, Pre +1, Com +2, Str +2, Sta +2, Dex +1, Qik +1

**Size:** 0

**Confidence Score:** 3 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Weak-willed

**Personality Traits:** Selfish +5

**Combat:**

*Bite:* Init +1, Attack +12, Defense +9, Damage +5\*

*2 huge claws:* Init +1, Attack +14, Defense +14, Damage +6\*

These creatures release a venomous filth into wounds that necrotizes flesh. Any injury from one of these claws requires a Stamina roll against an Ease Factor of 6, or death results in (1+simple die) rounds. This filth may be drawn out and destroyed with incense, in which case it causes no damage, but costs a Fatigue level. The venom of the demons is not re-

sisted by Parma Magica.

**Soak:** +3

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -2 (6-10), -3 (11-15), Inc (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Many, including Brawl 7 (claws)

**Powers:**

*Chant of the False Monks:* 2 points, Init -2, Mentem. The chant of the false monks creates a powerful dread in a character, forcing him to make a Personality trait roll of 6 or higher before he can enter a church. If the roll succeeds, the curse is broken. If it fails, the character will not attempt to enter a church again for at least a week, and must again make the roll to enter the church. The chant affects everyone who can hear the chant if it is used by a group of monks simultaneously, but individual monks can only affect a single victim per use of the power. The group variant of the

song can cause Warping, and is used to make new Corrupted Vermin.

*Coagulation,* 1 point, Init -1, Corpus.

*Envisioning,* 1 point, Init +0, Mentem.

*Obsession,* 1 to 3 points, Init -5, Vim:

Disparaging

**Equipment:** Monastic cowl

**Weakness:** Abhorrent material (incense)

**Vis:** 1 pawn each of Rego and Animal vis sordida in cowl

**Appearance:** Superficially like black-robed monks, these demons are skeletal, and have the skulls of dogs for heads. Their hands are great scythe-like claws, usually hidden up the sleeves of their robes.

These demons take their shape to mock the piety of the original inhabitants of the monastery. They dwell in the parts of the building which have Infernal auras, and commit atrocities to spread the taint. The shadowy cowls the demons wear allows them to pass, in limited circumstances, for true monks.

## Elemental Spirit of the Channel

**Magic Might:** 35 (Aquam)

**Season:** Summer

**Characteristics:** Cun +2, Per +2, Pre -7, Com -9, Str +9, Sta +7, Dex +1, Qik 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Magic Thing; Ways of the Waters; Poor Memory; Short Attention Span; Simple Minded; and many others.

**Qualities and Inferiorities:** Greater Power (Crafter of Aquam), Greater Power (Drown), Split Attacks\*\*, 14 x Improved Attack, 14 x Improved Damage, No Fatigue; Temporary Magical Might\*; and many others.

\* Wounds decrease the Might pool of the elemental by separating part of its material form. Each wound reduces the Might pool by the Wound penalty. If the creature manages to reconnect its parts, it regains that Might. Sections chipped off like this contain vis, in proportion, which

may be used before the creature is defeated.

\*\* See note after Combat

**Combat:**

*Bludgeon*\*: Init+5, Attack +32, Defense +5, Damage +52\*\*

\* Includes Ways of the Waters (+3) Each round the elemental can split this attack into as many attacks as it chooses, retaining the same Init and Defense for each smaller pseudopod, but dividing the Attack and Damage pools as it wishes. Decide the division before the Attack roll is made.

\*\* Water elementals can only cause Scuffle damage (see ArM5, page 175)

**Soak:** +12

**Wound Penalties:** -1 & 1 Might point (1-5), -3 and 3 Might points (6-10), -5 and 5 Might points (11-15), Incapacitated & 5 Might points (16-20), Dead & all Might points (21+)

Immune to blades and piercing weapons; sources of fire that do less than +35 damage are harmlessly extinguished.

**Abilities:** Awareness 5 (surface), Brawl 7 (pseudopods), Swim 7 (ocean)

**Powers:**

*Crafter of Water,* 1-3 points, Init 4 - Might cost, Aquam. Duplicates any Creo Aquam or Rego Aquam spell of level 35 or below at the cost of 1 Might point per magnitude of the spell.

*Drown,* 0 points, Init -2, Aquam. After a successful melee attack the elemental can engulf a target smaller than Size 12, necessitating a deprivation roll (ArM5, pages 180-181). Each victim may attempt to escape each round by Grappling (ArM5, page 171).

**Vis:** 7 pawns Aquam, body

**Appearance:** A stormy stretch of belligerent sea.



## The Red Maid of Sark

**Faerie Might:** 15 (Mentem)

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per +1, Pre 0, Com +1, Str 0\*, Sta 0\*, Dex 0\*, Qik 0\*.

\* These statistics are provided by the Red Maid's host.

**Size:** (as host)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Final Girl, Focus Faerie Powers (Possession, see later); 2 x Increased Might, Loosely Material\*; Incognizant.

\* Modified to a Minor Virtue: may only take forms using possession power.

**Personality Traits:** Sadistic +3, Steadfast +3.

**Combat:**

*Domestic implement (as knife):* Init +0, Attack +9\*, Defense +7, Damage +3\*

These scores do not include the physical Characteristics of the host.

\* Once stained with someone else's blood, the Red Maid's Attack and Damage increase. See the Final Girl Virtue.

**Soak:** 0\*

\* Once bloodstained, this increases. See Final Girl Virtue.

**Wound Penalties:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious.

**Pretenses:** Brawl 5 (prey), but may use the Pretenses or abilities of the host.

**Powers:**

*Possession*, 1 or more points, Init +2, Mentem: If this power Penetrates, the victim is possessed by the Red Maid and is under her direct control. Any attempt to force the victim to act contrary to her nature, or to use any of the host's own magical powers requires that the Red Maid spends Might. A supernatural power (including spell-casting) requires 1 Might point per magnitude to produce. A questionable action that is contrary to the nature of the host requires the Red Maid to exceed the possessed being's Personality Trait roll on a stress die + Might points spent. The storyguide may give a modifier to the Personality Trait roll based on the nature of the command (see the Entrancement power,

ArM5, page 65, for suggestions).

Both Might costs must be met if the use of a supernatural power is also contrary to the victim's nature. If the Red Maid is in direct control of her host's actions, the host acquires her Magic Resistance, but is also affected by wards that would normally exclude her. If the host is acting under her own free will, then she does not benefit from the Red Maid's Magic Resistance, but may also walk through wards with impunity.

This power's costs are not based on the Hermetic system of magic: it is based on material in *Realms of Power: Magic*.

**Equipment:** Someone else's body, all of their material goods.

**Vis:** 3 Mentem, in the blood of the possessed victim.

**Appearance:** The Red Maid does not have a material body, but if seen with Faerie Sight, or Second Sight outside a body, she seems to have a catching claws and soulful eyes.

The most powerful faerie on the island is the Red Maid. The Red Maid is a possessing spirit. She enters a young woman's body after she has been abused by a pirate, and lends the girl Faerie powers. These allow the girl to murder the pirate and dispose of his body without getting caught. Argenta, the most powerful demon on the island, knows that something occasionally kills one of her men, because their souls arrive in Hell. She cares so little for her pirates that admitting to her pawns that she does not know what is causing the deaths is worse than letting some die, so she does not investigate the Maid's murders.

Magi skilled in finding faeries may recruit the maid as an ally. The Red Maid's knowledge of Eustace's forces and local terrain are valuable while planning their raid. Her ability to sabotage a key defensive site (selected by the player characters) as the magi attack increases the raid's likelihood of success.

The Maid is a revenge faerie, so she

needs to seek out conflict to feed. Once the story on Sark concludes, she may hitch a ride in the body of one of the grogs or companions so that she can be near the magi, whom she senses are beacons for trouble.

A girl who has acted as the host for the Red Maid, and survived, often retains a sliver of the Maid's glamour after the story concludes. This allows the maid to continue feeding from the vitality of her host's life, should it become dramatic. This sliver of glamour provides often provides a Virtue. Characters who survive as the host of the Red Maid provide grogs or companions with an unusual background.

**Note:** The Red Maid is not suited for use as a player character. The Final Girl Virtue is not intended for use by player characters.

### FINAL GIRL VIRTUE

The Final Girl Virtue allows the Maid to select up to six people, to whom her host has an emotional connection, and mark them with her glamour. These people are termed "victims." When a victim dies or suffers terribly at the hands of the Maid's target group (her "prey"), this provides a store of energy which the Maid may use until the current story ends.

For every victim who has been harmed by her prey, the Maid gains +1 to her Attack, Damage and Soak if her host is smeared with fresh blood from one of her prey. Some magi who have encountered the Maid claim she becomes better at combat only slowly (+1 for the blood of each of her prey injured), while others say that a single drop of blood transforms her into a terrible foe. This may indicate that several Red Maids exist.

This Virtue allows multiple combat bonuses, but only if the character with the Virtue does not prevent the abuse or death of her dependants. As such, it does not suit player characters.





a servant to attempt to parley, and to offer assistance like the location of Stephen Crabbe, the whereabouts of the sect in Winchelsea, and the state of Eustace's preparation. The demons are, however, corrupt beings, and expect assistance to further taint the family they are corrupting in exchange for their aid.

The London demons may, if the player characters seem willing to sin, pass them to a more powerful demon. If the player characters perform a terrible sin for Rahab, the Prince of the Primordial Sea, he promises to reveal the True Name of Eustace's sponsor. The sin can be anything that's personal for the player characters. If the storyguide cannot think of something better, then Rahab requests that the characters smash down a section of the defending cliffs of Sark, so that the demon can flood the island and kill all of the people there. Cunning characters might trick the demon out of its information, but if they do so, it becomes a recur-

ring enemy.

Rahab is not intended as a combatant in this scenario, so his statistics are not given here. They are found on pages 74 and 75 of *Realms of Power: The Infernal*.

If the characters confront the demons, Fruitio and Ossa do not allow themselves to be destroyed. The demons frame the battle so that the characters accidentally kill many of the members of the family the demons are corrupting, and their servants. Fruitio then takes pains to appear to be vanquished, even calling in other spirits to provide illusions. Fruitio and Ossa simply take spiritual form and hide in cavities about the palace. These boltholes are inaccessible without magic or crews of demolitionists. While waiting for the player characters to go away, the demons recover their Might swiftly, due to the palace's Infernal aura.

Victorious characters find a forged set of Eustace's diaries in the library

of the house. These give a method of contacting Stephen Crabbe, the location of the Infernal aura in Winchelsea on which Eustace's house there was built, and information about the desecration of Samer.

The library also contains an excellent work on Infernal Lore, which allows the characters to research the weaknesses of Eustace's allies. At the storyguide's discretion it may also contain the True Name of Eustace's sponsor. A True Name acts as an Arcane Connection, granting a +5 bonus on the caster's Penetration multiplier when attempting to bypass the specified creature's Magic Resistance.

## SAMER

Despite the misbehavior of the monks, this ruined monastery has — in parts — retained its Divine aura. Actions forced on people with magic are not voluntary and so are not sins. In other areas it is crumbling away, in part because the creatures that dwell here sharpen their claws on its walls and carve great scratches in the stones. Eustace placed guardians here to kill enemies who began investigating his past, but he assumed that these would be noblemen from the court of the Count of Boulogne, and so the creatures are not formidable to experienced Hermetic magi.

Characters who defeat the demons of Samer attract the thanks and attention of the local priesthood. Some senior churchmen know where the mortal monks of Samer now reside. These early victims of Eustace can describe his methods and powers, allowing the player characters to develop counter-measures. If the characters negotiate skillfully with the churchmen, they may be given assistance to determine the weaknesses of Eustace's demons, be provided blessings which aid in their eventual battle, or even be granted the use of a relic.



## Story Seeds for Starving Sark

There are several different ways in which the player characters may interfere with Eustace's operations on Sark.

### RAIDING GRANARY SHIPS

Sark's swollen population is too large for local agriculture to support over the cycle of a year, so trade ships are sent to purchase supplies in Normandy and England. These ships pretend to be merchant vessels, and require maximum cargo space, so they only have light crews. Small ships may have as few as three men aboard, and larger vessels have at most eighteen. This makes them weak, militarily, and Eustace compensates for this by hiding one of his demonic servants, described earlier, on board each vessel. These demons are only supposed to become active if the ship is attacked, but Eustace's control over his demons is far weaker than he believes, so when one of his trade ships is in port, its demon is often ashore, making mischief.

If characters destroy a vessel or kill its crew, these are removed from the pool of resources from which Eustace draws for later battles.

### DESTROYING WAREHOUSES

Eustace's fleet doesn't usually buy the grain, cordage, and similar supplies it requires in the open market: it is aided by a local merchant in each port, acting as its agent. This merchant buys supplies, particularly after harvest when prices are best, and then stores them for collection by Eustace's fleet. These stores become increasingly expensive and time-consuming to replace as winter draws near. Player characters

can seriously damage Eustace's fleet by simultaneously raiding or destroying warehouses in Winchelsea (in Britain) and Saint Malo (in Brittany) just before the final shipment preceding winter.

### SHIPPING CORRUPTED OR POISONED FOOD

Eustace's ships don't have Magic Resistance, and so a magus with sufficient preparation can damage their cargoes after they have been inspected, but before the leave for Sark. This allows player characters to damage Eustace's supplies without direct confrontation. This, in turn, makes it harder for Eustace and his demons to determine who was responsible, and prepare against future attacks.

More daring characters might poison the food shipped to Sark. This carries some risk of killing innocent Sarcees, who also eat the food that the pirates purchase or capture. Characters can avoid this by only poisoning choice items which the leading pirates reserve for themselves, such as fine wine and exotic spices.

Eustace's forces usually have three months of provisions on the island, although this amount increases as winter draws in, since it is possible for the island to be cut off for additional time by storms. To keep the stores at this level, one small ship needs to bring in supplies every two weeks. If supplies reach the point where they can only sustain the crew for a month, a quarter of Eustace's people desert. If his forces are living shipment to shipment, half of them desert. In either of these cases Eustace is tempted to make large raids to restock his warehouses.

### AMBUSHING RAIDERS

Raiding vessels seize what Eustace's fleet requires by force. To do this they need many armed men, and so the ships sacrifice some of their cargo space to stow extra pirates. The ships are not, however, completely filled with pirates, as they would be when raiding shipping, because the fleet needs some space to carry the fruits of its coastal pillaging. Small ships on a raid carry 12 men, and large ships 72. In the largest raiding fleets, most large ships carry up to 100 men, with one ship left with just a sailing crew of 12, to carry the loot.

It's possible for subtle characters to draw a raid. They need to manufacture a target for Eustace to dispatch men to capture. This can be as subtle as booking passage on a convoy of trade ships, to provide unexpected and perhaps inconspicuous aid, or as overt as seeding a cliff with magically-created gold, waiting for some lucky peasant to find it, and then watching for pirate raiders.

Storyguides or player characters who prefer to avoid naval battle can winnow Eustace's forces by convincing him to heavily commit to raids, then ambushing his pirates. This tactic is most effective if their ambush sites are spread widely around the English Channel and North Sea, so that Eustace's overconfidence blinds him, initially at least, to the pattern of failure, and the possibility that the attacks are coordinated.

Raiders defeated by the player characters are subtracted from the pool of resources available to Eustace in later battles.

### SARK: LAY OF THE LAND

In preparation for the raid on Sark, the characters may send spies to the is-

land. This can either be roleplayed or settled with dice rolls.

Sark is a small island in the English Channel, approximately 3 miles long,

and one and a half miles broad at its widest point. It is ringed by cliffs, between 100 and 320 feet in height. The island is divided into two uneven parts,

## Keeping Fleet Battles Simple

Fleet battles in 1220, in the Channel, are not like the battles of later centuries, where ships use their weapons to breach the hulls of their adversaries. In the historical Battle of Sandwich, the English ships were bearded (reinforced with iron sheets on their prows) so that they could ram more effectively, but there's no other mention of weapons that targeted the hulls of the enemy ships. The English crews threw lances, stones, pots of powdered lime, and grappling hooks, and once aboard fought much as if they were on land, although there is mention of them destroying the rigging of the ships they boarded. Historically, Eustace was defeated because he was at the head of his fleet, and his ship and the English flagship sought each other out and boarded each other. This pinned him, and he was swarmed

by a wave of English ships, boarding him from all sides, the other French vessels choosing not to commit to battle. The tactics used for shipboard combat in 1220 are so undeveloped that people who control armies are considered suitable as admirals.

If using the group combat system in ArM5 then:

- The briny dead animated by a single Revener act as a trained group, regardless of how many there are. This makes them dangerous in melee combat.
- The Attack and Defense bonus provided by additional members of the group is not limited by the Revener's Leadership score, since all of the limbs are controlled by a single mind.

If using the system given in Lords of Men, starting on page 104, then:

- In the Deployment Total use the pilot's Ability in place of Area Lore, unless there is some geographical feature the players wish to use in their plans.
- For Weight of Numbers, initially include all ships on both sides, but as the battle progresses, only include those ships which are actively engaged. The goal of many medieval admirals is to defeat part of the enemy fleet in isolation.
- Battlefield Events happen as normal, but are described in a nautical way. Again, one of the main goals of the battlefield events the player characters push for is the separation of elements of the enemy fleet so they can be defeated in detail.

## Leraje

**Order:** Master of Evil Spirit

**Infernal Might:** 15 (Corpus)

**Characteristics:** Int 0, Per +4, Pre +1, Com 0, Str +2, Sta +1, Dex +1, Qik +4

**Size:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Weak-Willed

**Personality Traits:** Selfish +5

**Combat:**

**Bow:** Init +2, Attack +15, Defense +14, Damage +10\*

\* Arrows cause leprosy, as per Powers. Leraje can also fire conventional arrows, to save Might. These cannot cause leprosy, but have the same combat characteristics listed earlier.

**Soak:** +6 (leather armor)

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious.

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Various, including Bow 9 (long)

**Powers:**

**Cause Leprosy:** 0 point, Init 0, Corpus: If one of his arrows draws blood, Leraje can use this power to possess a victim, by placing a fragment of his spiritual form into the host. This causes the host to suffer leprosy. The host must make a Stamina roll against an Ease Factor of 6 each week or suffer a Minor wound, and may only use their Stamina score on recovery rolls. Exorcism may cure the character, as does sufficient alms giving to grant the character the Personality trait Charitable, as this places the victim within the demons protected group.

While tormenting a victim in this way, Leraje has one fewer Might points than usual. He cannot regenerate the point which is embedded in his victim without dispelling the effect of this

power. This allows the human to recover normally: the wounds caused by the sickness do not vanish.

**Coagulation,** 1 point, Init -1, Corpus. **Envisioning,** 1 point, Init +0, Mentem. **Obsession,** 1 point, Init -5, Vim: Cruel to Animals.

**Weakness:** Protected group (charitable people)

**Vis:** 3 pawns Perdo vis sordida in bow

**Appearance:** A leprous archer.

This is one of the earliest demonic servants that Eustace received, back during his time as a Robin Hood figure in the forests of Brittany. Leraje is a disease spirit who takes the form of a leprous archer in green, with a black feather in his cap and arrows that drip urine. He refuses to engage in hand to hand combat, preferring to disincorporate and coagulate in a new sniper's nest.



## A More Direct Approach

Later folklore from Sark provides an alternate plan for defeating Eustace. Magi might play on his Pride and Over-confidence. In the legend, a merchant vessel, richly laden with cargo, sends a boat ashore on Sark. Its crew ask to speak to the lord of the island, and send a rich gift. The chief pirate comes and claims to be lord of the island.

The sailors say that their ship is on a voyage to Iberia, carrying expensive cargo, but their captain has died. They promised the captain that he would not be buried at sea, but in a consecrated place. They offer rich gifts to the lord if he allows them to all disembark, save a skeleton crew, and bury their leader..

The pirate king allows this. He plans to send boats to take the vessel while it is lightly crewed, during the funeral. His men then ambush the mourners as they return to their ship.

The sailors lift the coffin up the cliffs of Creux, and carry it to

a church. Once they are inside, the lid is lifted off and the weapons concealed within are distributed. The sailors massacre the pirates still ashore. The pirates boarding the merchant vessel find that it has no cargo: it is packed with armed men. The ship belongs to a prominent merchant, and the crew are a mixture of mercenaries, hired by the residents of nearby ports, and volunteers with scores to settle.

In this style of raid, the characters flatter Eustace enough that he comes to them. This means they don't need to fight through his minions. Once he is in sight, they destroy him with powerful spells, or give him magical gifts which kill him when triggered. Splitting the combat between the magi ashore and their companions on the boat allows two combats, with different levels of intensity, as suits the level of power of the characters involved.

connected by an isthmus only a few feet wide, but around 100 feet high. This isthmus, called Le Coupee, is haunted by a demonic or faerie Black Dog. The island's edges are riddled with sea caves, some of which are large and dry enough to allow supplies, or even small groups of soldiers, to be cached.

A second island, Brecqhou, is separated from Sark by a very narrow strait. The pirates do not live on this second island, although they periodically "tax" its people. This is because a powerful water spirit lives in the strait, and attacks any vessel that attempts to cross between the two when the tide is high.

Sark has only 300 inhabitants, excluding Eustace's pirates. The largest settlement is by the tiny beach of Creux. The channel to this beach is poor; it is strewn with submerged boulders. The landing is only usable at high

tide, save by flat-bottomed trade boats which can sit on the sands above the low tide mark. At Creux, the cliffs are over a hundred feet high, and treasure or provisions must be carried up rough steps, lifted by rope, or flown by demons to and from the beach and warehouses.

Eustace's pirate fleet harbors here, when its elements are not raiding or trading. From the top of the cliff the entirety of the small beach is visible, and passage from the beach to the interior is easily prevented. Magi who can hold this point can divide Eustace's forces while retaining an excellent vantage for Sight ranged spells.

Eustace's headquarters is in La Moinerie, the monastery of Saint Magloire, which he has desecrated. It has an Infernal aura of 3 with a taint of debauchery. (See Realms of Power: The

Infernal for rules regarding taints.) In a surprise raid, a strike on La Moinerie could make Eustace's pirates leaderless. It is also the place he is most likely to retreat to, if his fleet is destroyed.

## STARVING SARK

Sark provides food and water for Eustace's men, but has too small an economy to provide the skilled artisans and products needed to maintain his pirate fleet. Characters planning to engage Eustace in naval battle can weaken his fleet by patiently sabotaging his logistic chains.

The fleet is maintained in three ways. Some required equipment is simply purchased, by merchants who act as Eustace's allies in Winchelsea. Eustace's forces occasionally raid small harbors, taking supplies and craftsmen by force. Some of the ships are scuttled or stripped for parts, and new ones are seized from merchants. Characters wanting to weaken Eustace's fleet can interfere with any of these methods of acquiring supplies. This is most effective if Eustace does not realize that a concerted effort is being made to weaken his fleet. Characters who do not care if Eustace becomes alarmed may tip him off, weakening his navy gravely, by striking several of his granary ships or raiding vessels simultaneously.

## Fleet Battle

If Eustace knows that he faces powerful magical enemies, he attempts to draw them to Sark, to face all of his forces simultaneously on ground he knows well. He is, however, Proud and Over-confident. He can be provoked to divide his forces and send his war fleet against a seemingly weak foe. Player characters aware that Eustace can only truly die at sea may be eager for him to lead his fleet into battle.

## Argenta, the Mistress of Pirates

**Order:** Lady of the Furies

**Infernal Might:** 30 (Herbam)

**Characteristics:** Int +3, Per +1, Pre +2, Com +2, Str +7, Sta +2, Dex +3, Qik +2

**Size:** +3

**Confidence Score:** 5 (5)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Berserk

**Personality Traits:** Wrathful +4, Self-controlled -6.

**Reputations:** Goddess of the Wolves of the Sea 5 (Infernal)

**Combat:**

*Bite:* Init +2, Attack +16, Defense +13, Damage +13

**Soak:** +12

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, 0, -1, -1, -3, -3, -5, Unconscious.

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-8), -3 (9-16), -5 (17-24), Incapacitated (25-32), Dead (33+)

**Abilities:** Various, including Brawl 8 (bite)

**Powers:**

*Berserk Rage*, 1 point, Init 0, Mentem: Can grant anyone the Berserk virtue, which persists until the target calms.

*Coagulation*, 1 point, Init -1, Corpus.

*Endurance of the Enraged:* 0 points, Init. 0, Corpus: Argenta suffers no penalties

from wounds, excepting Defense penalties.

*Envisioning*, 1 point, Init +0, Mentem.

*Obsession*, 1 point, Init -5, Vim: Avaricious.

*Summon Demons*, Points equal Might, Init +1, Vim. This power summons lesser demons, and is the source of Eustace's daughter and minions. This power's cost is vast, and so it is used only rarely, and when Argenta can rest in powerful Infernal auras, to regain her strength quickly.

*Tools of The Ravagers*, 3 points, Init 0, varies by thing produced: This power allows Argenta to summon valuable items, which are then used by her followers in their piracy. It costs her roughly 1 Might point per pound of mortal cost to create these items. Items must be props suitable for use by her pirates. Argenta summons the apes possessed by Eustace's Mockeries using this power.

These items are summoned by her power, not created, and so are not resisted by Parma Magica. A barrel of burning pitch that suddenly appears may be mistaken for a resistible attack, and may fool player

characters into believing Argenta is unafraid of fire.

*Waxing Tide of Humors*, 3 points, Init +2, Mentem: Causes passion to overcome sense. The victim must make a stress roll against an Ease Factor of 9, modified by appropriate Personality Traits to keep the emotion in check. This power is often used immediately after a use of the *Obsession* power.

**Weakness:** Vulnerable to fire (the touch of any flame causes a Light Wound.)

**Vis:** 6 pawns Herbam vis sordida in teeth.

**Appearance:** Argenta looks like a great carved figurehead, of a woman with wind-blown hair and an exposed bosom. Her eyes shine with infernal flame, and her mouth is a vast, sharklike cavity, edged with teeth like broken planks.

This demoness patronizes mortals who engage in banditry by sea. She is a Fury, a demon of discord and battle, but she is similar to, and has many of the powers of, a False Goddess. She is the provider of the mockery demons provided to Eustace, and described later.

## Lubbers

**Order:** Mazzikim

**Infernal Might:** 10 (Aquam)

**Characteristics:** Int -1, Per 0, Pre 0, Com -5, Str +15, Sta +5, Dex -1, Qik -9

**Size:** +3

**Virtues and Flaws:** Huge, Weak-Willed, Clumsy

**Personality Traits:** Selfish +5, Lazy +4.

**Combat:**

*Fist:* Init -9, Attack +3\*, Defense -2, Damage +15

\* Includes -3 penalty for Clumsy Flaw

**Soak:** +7, Leathery skin

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious.

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-8), -3 (9-16), -5 (17-24), Incapacitated (25-32),

Dead (33+)

**Abilities:** Various, including Brawl 6 (fist) and Leadership 6 (demons)

**Powers:**

*Coagulation*, 1 point, Init -1, Corpus.

*Envisioning*, 1 point, Init +0, Mentem.

*Obsession*, 1 point, Init -5, Vim: Inattentive.

*Fear of the Wilderness*, 2 points, Init +1, Mentem: A single victim who hears the footsteps of the lubber must make a Brave roll against an Ease Factor of 7, or flee. If the character cannot flee, he is catatonically terrified until the sun rises or the lubber leaves. If the characters can see the lubber up to 10 victims are affected,

otherwise it is whomever is closest to the lubber.

**Weakness:** Abhorrent object (whips).

**Vis:** 2 pawns Perdo vis sordida in hands.

**Appearance:** Lubbers are human in form, but lack heads. They are huge, slow, and clumsy. Their hands each have four thumbs and no fingers. The flesh of the lubbers is pale blue, and greasy, and they have no body hair.

Argenta's personal guards are three lubbers. At the storyguide's discretion they can as an untrained group, as a single trained group, or lead three trained groups of reveners.



## Leakspringers

**Order:** Mazzikim

**Infernal Might:** 10 (Terram)

**Characteristics:** Int -2, Per 1, Pre -1, Com 0, Str +5, Sta +1, Dex +2, Qik 0

**Size:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Weak-Willed

**Personality Traits:** Selfish +5, Wrathful +4.

**Combat:**

**Awl:** Init 0, Attack +9, Defense +7, Damage +7

**Soak:** +1

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious.

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Various, including Brawl 6 (awl) and Swim 5 (ocean).

**Powers:**

*Coagulation*, 1 point, Init -1, Corpus.

*Envisioning*, 1 point, Init +0, Mentem.

*Obsession*, 1 point, Init -5, Vim: Saboteur.

*Fear of the Wilderness*, 2 points, Init +1,

Mentem: A single victim who hears the leakspringer tapping on the planks of the boat must make a Brave roll against an Ease Factor of 7, or flee. If the character cannot flee, for example because it is too far to swim to shore, then they become a quivering pile of terrified sailor until the sun rises or the ship anchors. If the characters can see the leakspringer up to 10 victims are affected, otherwise it is whomever is closest to the point where the awl hits the hull.

**Weakness:** Protected group (the clergy).

Note that this means that leakspringers cannot sink a boat carrying a cleric.

**Vis:** 2 pawns Perdo vis sordida in awl.

**Appearance:** Human forms made of slop and bilge, with a long spike where the left hand should be.

Leakspringers are misshapen humanoids made from the filth in the bilges of pirate ships. They cause shipwrecks by coagulating in the hulls of vessels, then striking their fists through hull planking. Eustace has only two leakspringers, and deploys them as his enemies are preparing to land. This buys him time to prepare for an assault.

### TEMPTING EUSTACE TO BATTLE

Eustace has a fear-inspiring pirate fleet, and so, on some level, he is always thinking of ways to use it. He can be tempted to naval battle in a variety of ways. He does not, however, engage in land based battles larger than raids, or personally lead raiding parties ashore. This seems strange, since he knows he is destined to die at sea, but his invisibility power only works while he is aboard ship. He counts on it to preserve him in most conflicts, should circumstances turn bad.

**Treasure ships:** Eustace concentrates his forces and strikes if a large and valuable convoy is assembled. Several Venetian merchants have discussed the idea of sending a fleet to England, although they have never been able to pass the Muslims blocking the mouth of the Mediterranean. On a smaller level, the wool clip of England is exported to the Continent, and a sufficiently large convoy of wool ships could attract Eustace. If being aided by a king, this can be inconspicuously forced: in Scotland, for example, all wool is exported from a single town, all about the same time. A similar monopoly can be created to encourage the formation of a convoy of sufficient value and size to

tempt Eustace to commit all of his forces.

**English raid:** The kings of England have wished to take Sark for some time, and they, or their nobles, are likely willing to raid the island, if the player characters can present a plan which makes victory seem likely. Given the option of confronting the English fleet at sea or waiting until the men on board land, Eustace would prefer a naval battle. This is because troop transports may have orders to drop their men and retreat, awaiting a signal to come and evacuate their marines after the island has been subdued. If Eustace instead bests the fleet before it disgorges its men, he can claim the ships for his pirate armada.

**Direct challenge:** The simplest way to force Eustace to battle is to anchor a small fleet near Sark and deliver messages indicating that his presence is required. Eustace maintains his control over his followers through a mixture of reward and intimidation. He cannot retain his place if he acts like a coward, or fails to confront a fleet which is sapping his income by picking off his vessels, or protecting merchants. He really has no choice but to accept battle, if the challenges sent to him are worded in a way that makes Eustace appear weak if he fails to answer them.

### EXTENT OF EUSTACE'S FORCES

Eustace's entire fleet is comprised of 16 large and 20 small vessels. Each large vessel can carry between 12 and 90 pirates, and each small vessel between 3 and 15. If Eustace draws all of his forces together he has:

- Just under 500 men or briny demons
- 36 sheeteaters
- 12 incubi, (who fly away if the battle seems to be in the balance)
- Seven mockery demons
- One shantyman per ship he actually crews
- Two leakspringers, described in the Siege of Sark section, which Eustace prefers to keep there.
- One or more copies of Leraje, described in the Siege of Sark section, which Eustace prefers not to use shipboard.

Naval battles in this part of the world have no artillery component, so Eustace gains no advantage from spreading his pirates through as many bottoms as possible. He instead concentrates his men into fewer vessels.

His large ships are slow, but they have higher sides than most small ships, and their larger crews can swarm over smaller vessels. Eustace also packs some small, swift ships with men. These intercept the enemy, forcing them to stop and fight, which allows his large ships to pull alongside the entangled foe.

If the characters have successfully attacked Eustace's forces before this battle, the number of hulls and pirates he commands are reduced. If his patroness is worried by the actions of the player characters, she provides Eustace with naptha bombs for his demonic apes to throw. These clay pots are filled with a substance like Greek fire, which can effectively only be extinguished by magic. If Eustace has naptha bombs, he uses all of his light ships, with minimal crews, since his goal is to sink, rather than board, the enemy vessels.

A naptha bomb does +5 damage, ignites the ship, and cannot be extinguished with water. Sand, in large quantities, extinguishes the flame.

## PLOYS FOR FLEET BATTLES

Eustace can make his flagship invisible, but if the battle turns against him, he must dispel the effect. He controls his fleet using signals flown from his mainmast, and his captains need to be able to see his ship to co-ordinate. Player characters can force Eustace to make his ship visible by making an unexpected manoeuvre, outside the commands and contingencies given in advance to Eustace's captains, so that he must give them new instructions. Defectors from Eustace's fleet, and Stephen Crabbe, know this.

Signalling flags are Eustace's only means of giving orders to his captains while in battle. One way to shatter the coherence of Eustace's fleet is to incinerate or splinter his mainmast, so

it cannot be used to fly signals. Eustace's signals can be transferred to another mast, but it takes him several minutes to run a new line for the flags.

Eustace's ships are pirate vessels, which mean they need to be swift. The characters can gain some advantage by "bearding" their vessels, a technique unavailable to Eustace. Bearded vessels have metal plates nailed to their bows to provide armor and extra reinforcement if ships collide. Bearding a ship slows it appreciably, but makes it more resistant to damage.

## The Siege of Sark

Characters besieging Sark face many obstacles, which can be overcome with appropriate magic.

### LANDING POINTS

There are no good harbors in Sark, and none of the handful of poor ones are sufficiently large to allow a force to swiftly land and muster. This can be resolved in several ways. Magic which removes the boulders from the channels approaching the beaches makes navigation safer, and allows invading ships to moor in formation. A sea wall that provides a breakwater makes landing easier. Spells that extend the beaches of Sark, either by adding material or carving into the mountainous shell of the island, might be helpful. Creating jetties makes it unnecessary to use lighters, small landing boats, speeding disembarkation considerably.

There is a beach of sorts on the island of Brecqhou. The pirates have only a weak presence on that island. It could serve as an unobserved landing, if the straight between this island and Sark can be crossed without disturbing the elemental.

When enemies attempt to land on Sark, Eustace dispatches his leakspringers.

## CREUX CLIFFS

The cliffs at the most likely landing site on the island, Creux, provide the defenders with many advantages, particularly if they have time to install ballistae, cauldrons of boiling water, pyramids of heavy stones, or other siege equipment. The cliffs are, however, only a few hundred feet thick. A magus could make the defensive advantages of the Creux Cliffs irrelevant simply by forcing a tunnel through them, and into the heart of the island. Characters can also reduce the advantages of the defenders by creating stairs or ramps up the cliffs, by reducing visibility, and by providing protection against the boiling water, stones and shafts that the defenders employ.

To stiffen the defence at this point, Eustace might order the demon Leraje to resist the invaders. Particularly formidable player characters might face several copies of this demon, sniping from protected points on the cliff face.

## LA MOINERIE

This small monastery is the center of Eustace's little empire. He lives here with his trusted lieutenants and some of his demons. The monastery has a low wall with a sheltered walkway and two lookout towers surrounding it. This allows Eustace's men to fire on approaching invaders. The aura of the monastery's grounds is tainted, making magic more dangerous.

If the battle is obviously going badly, Eustace attempts to stretch it out so that midnight comes. This allows him to use his Amorphous Virtue to shift shape, and attempt to blend into the mass of pirates and Sarcees.

The rooms within the monastery provide opportunities for skirmish battles against pirates, undead, corrupted beasts, and mockery demons. In a cave beneath the monastery, artificially en-



larged, is a shrine to the demoness that patronizes Eustace. Argenta manifests for the battle if her prize pawn seems likely to be taken from her. She also offers Eustace resources he has not previously controlled: her personal servants, the Lubbers.

### WAREHOUSES

Just past the cliffs are eight warehouses in which supplies for the fleet are kept. A few pirates sleep here as watchmen. The warehouses are made of stone, but are not built as fortifications.

Destroying these warehouses compromises Eustace's ability to maintain

his fleet at its current size. Characters who are, for some reason, unable to defeat Eustace can console themselves by wrecking his stores. This gives them time to recoup their forces, while making it difficult for Eustace to do the same. Half of his men desert if the warehouses are destroyed and Eustace cannot recruit replacements for them until he has resupplied.

## Rewards

Eustace's pirate fleet lacks trustworthy crews, but if it was repurposed it

could be the germ of a powerful trading empire. Sark is not really suitable as a trade base, because its ports are too poor, and it lacks many of the resources that shipyards require. Winchelsea is a major port, and the facilities owned by the diabolic merchants, once purified and repurposed, could provide logistical support to the fleet.

Sark is an excellent site for a secluded covenant. The island has few resources, although small amounts of silver and lead lie undiscovered on Little Sark. It is, however, on an almost direct line between Winchelsea and Coutances, two of the busiest ports in the Channel, so the purchase of needed supplies should not prove difficult.

## Chapter Six

# A Gathering Storm

*"Then we are agreed. In this place, at this time, we shall each swear this covenant. We shall not quietly petition this Tribunal, neither shall we meekly ask. For we shall take by force of arms, and we shall demand by right of conquest. We risk everything we have and we will not stop until such land as we see fit is ours. This then is our vow."*

— Avedutus Fabri of House Verditius

The Order of Hermes has at its heart the Hermetic Oath that binds all magi together in common understanding. When upheld, it ensures the safety and security of both the Order and the mundane world in which it exists. But for some magi, the Oath and its Code are restrictions they feel no longer apply. These magi see a world ripe for the taking, and for them, ambition and strength

determine right from wrong.

This story sets your covenant and its magi in stark opposition to Hermetic rivals who have chosen to cast aside the Hermetic Code and use mundane nobles to wage war against their enemies and claim territory for themselves. Your magi need to employ not only their political influence, but also their magic in resisting the march of a bewitched noble and his Hermetic allies. The future of your covenant is by no means certain, as these determined aggressors may eventually wield enough power and influence to protect themselves against even the will of the Tribunal.

## Précis

With the Order growing in size, and magical resources apparently limited, conquest is seen as a viable way for some magi to get what they need. In this case, a band of magi have formed a covenant under the persuasive and seductive maga Lucia, with the intention of claiming magical auras, sources of income, and vis sources by force of arms.

Lucia first attempts to elevate a local noble beyond his station, a situation into which the player covenant is drawn. Then, declaring Wizard's War on Lucia's former covenant, now inhabited only by her aged parents, Lucia's covenant kills its target and takes his resources.

As the refugees from the assault begin arriving at the player covenant, Lucia's intentions become clear. Now

threatened as the next target, the player covenant faces the choice of either defending their covenant from both magical and mundane assault, or breaking the Oath themselves by allying with a nearby city for mutual defense against the young noble's army.

## Background

Lucia was apprenticed to a magus in the turbulent Lombardy region. She watched as the cities around her fought to gain influence, to protect resources, and most importantly to secure freedom and self-determination. This intrigued her, and she began to compare these struggles to those going on within the Order of Hermes. She found the Order lacking: why, she wondered, is the Order content to live in contrived awkward peace? Why should the resources of a weak covenant be protected from those who have the might to claim them? It is not so in the mundane world, so why should it be within the Order?

She first tried to bring her Calliclean philosophy to a cabal of Tylalus magi, but her extreme aims met with disapproval, not because the idea was unattractive to certain like-minded individuals but because the risks and dangers were considered too great. Ironically, given the events to come, Lucia's parents, Maximus Severis, the last member of Castello del Selvaggio (Castle of the Selvaggio Family), was present. He and Lucia recognized each other, and he was

### The Calliclean Philosophy

Lucia shares her philosophy with many in her House. It holds that laws and a belief in justice are merely artificial devices imposed by a society to keep the strong, and therefore worthy, from attaining their rightful place; the betterment of the self is considered the foremost aim at the cost of the weak. It does not profess that laws should be broken, only that they be ignored where they would limit the attainment of those things the self wants. Nor does it say anything about the manner in which actions should be conducted. *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, page 76, provides more detail on this philosophy.



particularly outspoken against the plan. So Lucia resolved to find other allies and to repay her parents for his failure to support her.

Avedutus' rejection of his House's traditional role attracted her, and he soon saw the potential in her plan: if they succeeded they would rewrite the Order's creed, and if they failed they would achieve a glorious end. The Verditius then found Al-'Aqrab, a magus largely ostracized due to his spiteful nature and the repeated conflicts he brought upon himself. Without a covenant and forced to eke out his magical existence in the deserts of North Africa, Al-'Aqrab saw the chance to change his circumstances. Patronus was the last to join. Attracted to trouble like a crow to carrion, Patronus had been watching Lucia for some time and he sensed that something big was about to happen. On the verge of becoming a faerie and leaving his mortal life behind him, the prospect of bringing a shift to the Order seemed to him the perfect symbol of change that he needed.

The four came together at Casa-Immagiore in the Roman Tribunal, in a hunting lodge owned by Federico Estensi. There they determined to use violence and the threat of violence to force other magi to submit to their will.

## Adapting the Story for Your Saga

This scenario assumes that the events take place in the Lombardy region of the Roman Tribunal, but the events of the story can be relocated with a little adaptation.

The Hibernian Tribunal presents another ideal setting given the existing tensions between the native Irish magi and magi recently arrived from the continent, and the culture of a rough and robust life provides Lucia with a justification for her actions. Hibernia has other qualities that help support the story too,

in that the kings of Breifne, like others in Ireland, are selected by the elders of the prominent families; the election scene early in this scenario would find a natural home. And finally, the prevalence of supernatural powers in the lives of the Irish presents the threatened city later in the story with a reason to approach magi for protection.

Beyond Hibernia, sagas set near the Levant present multiple kingdoms, claimed by Western nobles, being taken back by a reconquering Muslim population. In Iberia, the situation is reversed, with Islamic rulers being driven back to North Africa by reconquering Christian knights. The Byzantine Empire in the east is still falling in upon itself and loyalties change seemingly with the wind. Aquitaine and the surrounding areas in the Normandy Tribunal were, until recently, in English hands and loyalties still run deep on both sides. In England itself, John is dead and a new king wears the crown. But he is young and inexpe-

## Primogeniture and Election

Most areas of Mythic Europe have a well-developed body of inheritance law, but these statutes are open to interpretation. In most cases the succession for noble title and influence is clear, for instance where an eldest son is the only viable successor to a dying father. But when a noble dies with no immediate heir these laws provide guidance to his councillors on selecting the closest relative, or the individual with the strongest claim.

The selection process itself is governed by local law or custom, which may give greater weight to male heirs over female, pass title to brothers rather than nephews, or bar the female line from succession altogether. And in cases where these laws must be relied upon, the candidates have their supporters vying for future influence.



## Expected Timeline of Events

Before the story starts, Lucia makes passing contact with the player covenant, sending letters enquiring as to whether she might trade vis in exchange for access to the library, or asking after ownership of some invented vis source or other. She is trying to get hold of an Arcane Connection, in the form of a letter, to at least one of the covenant's magi. She ensures that her own letters bear no Arcane Connection to her, but she has Al-'Aqrab waiting to fix any that she receives.

The following time line provides gaps between the major story events, which allow time for the player magi to prepare for the conflict with Lucia and her followers.

Season One Giuliano asks the covenant for help against his brother

Season Three The Trattato cast their Fate of Carthage ritual against Selvaggio lands

Season Five The magi of Trattato, excluding Lucia, declare Wizard War and then attack Castello del Selvaggio

Season Seven Verona approaches the covenant for mutual protection

Season Ten The Trattato cast their Fate of Carthage ritual against covenant lands

Season Twelve The magi of Trattato, excluding Lucia, declare Wizard War and then attack both Verona and the covenant

The time between events can be reduced where the players take a more pro-active route through the story, perhaps by confronting the Trattato over the attack on Castello del Selvaggio.

rienced, and the barons who hold land from him vie for power and influence.

If Verona is too large a city, it can be scaled down to a town or castle, and the same can be done with Casalmaggiore. The key is simply that the duke gains the power to challenge a larger force, and in doing so Lucia gains the power to challenge another covenant.

Storyguides may want to change the nature of the duke's election if this story is played in areas with strict laws of primogeniture. This can be done by changing an outright election to a council gathered to rule on points of inheritance law and by weakening the relationship between Federico and Giuliano to more distant cousins rather than brothers.

A key location is the small covenant of Castello del Selvaggio. There's a degree of leeway in this, so long as your telling of this story makes Castello del Selvaggio a valuable site for launching an attack on either Verona or the player covenant. This dwindling covenant should be introduced prior to this story being run. Alternatively, storyguides could consider one of their saga's existing covenants as the target of the Trat-

tato's first action. This brings the danger home in a very clear manner, but at the cost of sacrificing saga NPCs.

## Opportunities for Magic

As one of the *Tales of Power*, this scenario provides opportunities for the player magi to invent and use powerful magic. The climax of the story sees the magi defending their covenant, the city of Verona, or both against spells capable of tearing down an Aegis of the Hearth and devices able to breach city walls with a single touch. Having learned of these effects earlier in the story, the magi should be given time to plan and work together on magic to counter them. They also have the option to defend against a siege, which presents other challenges that magic can be used to overcome, such as resupplying a city under siege, or staving off disease.

Magi brave enough to engage in direct magical combat meet a decent match in Avedutus, and seasons could easily be spent in crafting magical arms

and armor to match him. Alternatively, powerful Intellego spells may reveal the means to defeat him through cunning.

The magi have the opportunity to work together to create more powerful effects than any could accomplish alone, and they also have the chance to fill some gaps in their existing arsenal. Improving their Aegis of the Hearth may be one approach and simple spells like the *Wizard's Communion* provide a means of empowering spells.

## Dramatis Personae

The key characters who appear in this scenario are listed here. Others are described as the narrative requires.

## The Covenant of Trattato di Sangue

The Covenant of Trattato di Sangue (The Treaty of Blood) is an alliance of four magi from different Houses, brought together by a shared sense of discontent. Or rather, three of them resent the current order of things, and the fourth is simply out to cause trouble.

The pact between them was sealed shortly after they met at the last Tribunal, so you may wish to foreshadow this story by briefly introducing some or all of the magi during a Tribunal before they make their fateful decision.

Their aims are simple — to take magical resources by right of conquest and then make such a show of force that the Tribunal cannot act against them. In fact, they do not intend to stop at just the four of them; they seek converts to their cause and to further strengthen their position.



## Lucia Filia Maximus

**Characteristics:** Int 0, Per 0, Pre +3, Com +2, Str -1, Sta -1, Dex 0, Qik 0

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 74 (42)

**Decrepitude:** 0

**Warping Score:** 4 (10)

**Confidence Score:** 2 (5)

**Virtues and Flaws:** The Gift; Hermetic Magus; Gentle Gift; Minor Magical Focus (Seduction), Quiet Magic (x2), Self-Confident, Subtle Magic, Venus' Blessing; Driven (to gain power), Tormenting Master; Offensive to Animals, Weak Enchanter

**Personality Traits:** Scheming +3, Controlling +2, Cruel +1

**Reputations:** Federico's Lover 2 (Casalmaggiore court)

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init +0, Attack N/A, Defense +0, Damage N/A

**Fist:** Init +0, Attack +0, Defense +0, Damage -1

**Soak:** -1

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Artes Liberales 2 (rhetoric), Awareness 3 (alertness), Carouse 3 (courtly dances), Charm 4 (magi), Code of Hermes 3 (Tribunal procedures), Etiquette 4 (court), Finesse 3 (casting speed), Folk Ken 4 (magi), Guile 4 (misdirection), Intrigue 4 (plotting), Italian 5 (poetry), Latin 4 (Hermetic usage), Leadership 4

(magi), Magic Theory 5 (Mentem), Organization Lore: Order of Hermes 2 (personalities), Parma Magica 5 (Mentem), Penetration 4 (Mentem), Philosophiae 2 (ceremonial magic)

**Arts:** Cr 16, In 13, Mu 10, Pe 16, Re 10, An 5, Aq 5, Au 5, Co 15, He 5, Ig 11, Im 6, Me 19, Te 5, Vi 9

**Equipment:** Red dress, earring talisman

**Encumbrance:** 0

**Spells Known:**

*Disguise of the Transformed Image* (MuIm 15/+15)

*Words of the Unbroken Silence* (CrMe 10/+34)

*All Heads Turn* (CrMe 15/+54\*+)

*Defend Me* (CrMe 20/+34)

*The Subtle Burn of Desire* (CrMe 20/+54\*+)

*A Night's Passion* (CrMe 25/+54\*+)

*Revelation of a Hundred Sinful Thoughts* (InMe 30/+44\*)

*Distraction of the Weakened Mind* (PeMe 5/+34)

*All Vows Forgotten* (PeMe 20/+54\*+)

*Enchantment of Detachment* (PeMe 15/+34)

*Aura of Rightful Authority* (ReMe 20/+28)

*Extracting the False Confession* (ReMe 40/+28)

*Wizard's Communion* (MuVi 15/+18)

**Appearance:** A striking woman in her early forties with dark hair, pale skin, and lips of deep pink. Red is her color and she is always seen wearing a red dress, which makes the red sash around her middle less obvious. When meeting magi, the dress is decorated with gold brocade, the material stiff, making her appear

more like an icon of rulership than a human being, and her cap is decorated with gold and gems to resemble a crown. When within the court of Casalmaggiore, she wraps herself in her *Disguise of the Transformed Image* spell, returning the stunning beauty of her mid-twenties. Her dress is fitted close to her figure, and a little of her hair is visible, as if by accident, from under her cap. If magi spy on her in her laboratory, she wears simple, and practical, masculine clothes, although they are still red. In all cases, her talisman, a gold and emerald earring, is visible on her left ear.

**Casting Sigil:** A sense of arousal is felt by her targets or by those detecting the residues of her spells.

\* Includes her Magical Focus

+ Includes talisman bonuses

Lucia possesses a distracting beauty, especially to mundanes with little chance to resist her enchantments. Gifted with the ability to cast silently and without gestures, her preferred spells all use the Eye range. These gifts make detecting her spell-casting difficult and she commonly employs any number of minor spontaneous Mentem effects to ensure she gets her way. Among magi, she dresses and behaves so that her beauty is striking rather than alluring, and reinforces her aura of authority. She relies on her considerable social skill rather than magic, at least to begin with.

### LUCIA FILIA MAXIMUS OF HOUSE TYTALUS

The four magi of the Trattato are caught in a spiral. Their arrogance, delusions, envy, and arbitrary desire for change are reinforcing each other. They have no set lands they wish to gain, no particular vis sources to target, and no limits to their ambition. This is little more than a game to Lucia and Patronus, the fulfillment of destiny for Avedutus, and a means to strike back at the world for Al'Aqrab.

Lucia wants to control people and material wealth. She wants to rule, and as a child it was already apparent to her that Mythic Europe does not like to see women rule. Her initial delight at the openness of the Order of Hermes soon turned to contempt for its refusal to let one maga rule over another. She resolved to prove that she could rule both magi and mundanes.

Among mundanes, she is the archetypal seductress, the woman in red, the femme fatale: ambitious, manipulative, mock-vulnerable, and deadly. She is willing and able to use her sexuality to lead others astray and bend them to her will. Lucia is naturally attractive, and a mistress of subtle Mentem magic, so this form of rulership comes easily to her. She has mastered a number of spells that promote amorous desire in her targets, fascination in those around her, and ad-

## Lucia's Grimoire and Items

### ALL HEADS TURN

CrMe 15

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Room

Normally cast as Lucia enters a room, this spell subtly draws the attention of all those in the room towards the caster.

(Base 4, +1 Touch, +2 Room)

### DEFEND ME

CrMe 20

R: Eye, D: Concentration, T: Group

Plants the suggestion into the mind of the target group that Lucia must be defended from harm. In most cases this is even enough to prompt enemies to come to her defense. Those under the spell must make a Personality Check against Ease Factor 9 to take any detrimental action against Lucia. Her Venus' Blessing Virtue provides a -3 penalty to any such rolls.

(Base 4, +1 Eye, +1 Concentration, +2 Group)

### EXTRACTING THE FALSE CONFESSION

ReMe 40

R: Arcane Connection, D: Momentary, T: Ind

Through this spell Lucia implants a magical command into the mind of the target. This effect is used specifically to make the target write and send a letter. The letter's theme and recipient are decided by Lucia at the time of casting and form part of the magical suggestion.

Characters possessing appropriate Virtues may be granted a Person-

ality Roll against Ease Factor 9 to resist writing the letter, in which case they may become suspicious about the urge.

(Base 20, +4 Arcane Connection)

### ALL VOWS FORGOTTEN

PeMe 20

R: Eye, D: Sun, T: Ind

This spell diminishes the importance of whatever vow, promise, obligation, or duty should be uppermost in the target's mind at the time of casting.

(Base 5, +1 Eye, +2 Sun)

### REVELATION OF A HUNDRED SINFUL THOUGHTS

InMe 30

R: Eye, D: Mom, T: Ind

This is Lucia's reinvention of the common Peering into the Mortal Mind spell. She uses it primarily to interrogate her target for his weaknesses and indiscretions, which she can then use to gain leverage over him.

(Base 25, +1 Eye)

### DISTRACTION OF THE WEAKENED MIND

PeMe 5

R: Eye, D: Momentary, T: Ind

This spell removes a specific memory from the target's mind. Specifically, the memory is of whatever activity Lucia is engaged in when she casts the spell upon her target. So if she persuades a guard to let her into a locked room she casts this spell upon him and he remembers

sible, as her sigil is an embarrassment to her in this context, and relies on her allies far more than she is willing to admit. To compensate, Lucia often assumes an authority she does not really have, and can lose her temper when challenged. If you choose to have her develop new spells over the course of this story, she focuses on Ignem or Corpus spells that she believes will allow her to attack her foes (the player characters) directly. She makes sensible choices based on what she knows of the player characters' strengths and weaknesses.

## AVEDUTUS FABRI OF HOUSE VERDITIUS

Avedutus has long railed against a docile Order. He watches the mundane world, with its kings and conquests, and has concluded the world is all the better for it. He is blind to the suffering that wars bring, seeing only the glory of fighting for a cause.

His Formulaic magic is hampered by the pain caused by spellcasting, as a result of which he has learned very few spells. He relies instead upon the effects enchanted into his arms and armor.

His personal weaknesses are his pride, arrogance, and willingness to be led by Lucia. But he has magical vulnerabilities too. Unusually, his casting tools are too large to be used on the move. He needs an anvil and a selection of hammers and other blacksmithing tools to be able to cast his magic. He also suffers from the Weak Magic Resistance Flaw (ArM5, page 61), which applies when the caster is touching these casting tools; a rare situation, but given Avedutus' frequent separation from them this can be exploited by his enemies.

He sees his craft as a means to an end, not an end in and of itself. His thrill comes from the battlefield and his art is expressed in the arms and armor that he carries and wears. The hubris common to his House is expressed on

oration in those who follow her, and her powers are strengthened by her magical focus in seduction magic.

Among magi, on the other hand,

she wants to rule openly, respected and feared by the Order, and holding authority by her own power. She avoids using magic on magi as much as pos-



the battlefield, not in the workshop. Avedutus is in league with an armorer by the name of Alle Deudati, a merchant called upon to lend an air of Hermetic legality to any sales of enchanted items. He also trained an apprentice in earlier years, who can be found living outside the Tribunal.

## MUTATIONIS PATRONUS OF HOUSE MERINITA

Patronus is a Merinita magus taken to the edge of turning into a creature fully of the Faerie Realm. Initiated into the Inner Merinita Mystery of Becoming, he has already transformed his body and his mind with only his spirit to go, for which he needs a significant Faerie aura, and time and resources to develop a suitable laboratory.

But he is one of the two distinct weak links within the covenant. His concern is simply change for change's sake. He has no loyalty to Lucia or the other magi. Almost as a faerie might take vitality from invoking and promoting given situations, so Patronus gladly sees his companions achieve their aims while already anticipating their eventual downfall.

Unknown to Avedutus, he is fully aware of the Verditius' weaknesses regarding his casting tools, and it is information that he may be willing to part with should he need to protect himself in the future.

## AL-'AQRAB OF EX MISCELLANEA

From a lineage of Ex Miscellanea ritualists, the Tunisian Al-'Aqrab gains his true power through the magical efforts of others. This does not imply an altruistic streak. In truth, he must struggle to contain his envious and selfish nature that would otherwise see him take the spoils at the expense of his colleagues.

He has lived long enough that rumors have collected around him. He

only that they talked. He does not recall that she entered the off-limits room.

(Base 4, +1 Eye)

### THE SUBTLE BURN OF DESIRE

CrMe 20

R: Eye, D: Moon, T: Ind

This spell instills in the target a simmering physical desire for one person, most often Lucia herself. This gives the target a temporary Personality Trait "Desire for Lucia" at +2, which influences the target's behavior throughout the spell's duration.

(Base 4, +1 Eye, +3 Moon)

### A NIGHT'S PASSION

CrMe 25

R: Touch, D: Moon, T: Ind

Usually cast upon a sleeping target, often slumbering due to Lucia's Call to Slumber spell, this spell creates the lasting memory of a night-long sexual encounter with Lucia, the content of which is decided by Lucia at the time of casting, though her target is free to embellish or exaggerate upon the memory in due course. Targets who make an Intelligence roll against an Ease Factor of 9 realize the memory is false, but those already under another of Lucia's lasting enchantments have a -3 penalty to this roll. Once cast, the memory remains for Moon duration, long enough for the memory to settle and fade, making the loss of it less jarring. She has used this spell on Federico many times, and if the player characters detect, and understand, it they may come to wonder whether she has ever actually

slept with him.

One drawback to this spell is that it is an active magical effect, detectable to those using Intellego Vim spells.

(Base 5, +1 Touch, +3 Moon)

### LUCIA'S TALISMAN: AN EMERALD EARRING

Lucia wears a tiny gold and emerald earring in her left ear. It has been opened with 10 pawns of vis and has been attuned to provide a +4 bonus to spells that incite love or passion (factored into casting totals above). Using either instilled effect in the presence of magi could be construed as a breach of the Code.

### Veil of Invisibility

Pelm 16

Pen +0, 2/day

R: Personal, D: Concentration, T: Individual

Effects as per the spell described in ArM5, page 146.

(Base 4, +1 Concentration, +1 for changing image; +1 for 2 uses per day, +5 device maintains concentration)

### From Across the Room

InIm 18

Pen +0, 6/day

R: Personal, D: Concentration, T: Hearing

Enhances Lucia's hearing such that she can listen in to whispered conversations conducted across the room. She has fine control over this and is able to focus on the conversation she is interested in.

(Base 3, +1 Concentration, +3 Hearing; +3 for 6 uses per day)

seems to appear at the heart of some trouble or other and then disappear to nobody knows where, like a scorpion sinking back into the sand. If the magi

recognize this, his scorpion-like nature could be exploited to weaken his covenant.

# Expected Sequence of Play

The story begins when the player magi are approached by Giuliano, heir to the dukedom of Casalmaggiore,

asking for help against a magical force that threatens to steal his throne. This force turns out to be the first of the rogue covenant members that the magi meet across this story. The player covenant has the choice to either involve themselves in opposition to Hermetic magi, or to avoid potential interfer-

ence in mundane affairs and leave the dukedom to its fate.

Soon after this, a nearby covenant, Castello del Selvaggio, falls to Avedutus, the spoils of Wizard War, and with a number of refugee covenfolk arriving at their gates the player covenant sees the plans of their Hermetic enemies

## Avedutus Fabri

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per 0, Pre +1, Com 0, Str +1, Sta +1, Dex +3, Qik 0

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 85 (50)

**Decrepitude:** 0

**Warping Score:** 5 (10)

**Confidence Score:** 2 (5)

**Virtues and Flaws:** The Gift; Hermetic Magus; Major Magical Focus (damage); Improved Characteristics, Items of Quality, Self-Confident, Puissant Finesse, Puissant Perdo, Verditius Magic\*, Warrior; Ambitious, Painful Magic; Weak Magic Resistance (When caster has Avedutus' casting tools), Hubris, Poor Formulaic Magic, Slow Caster

**Personality Traits:** Disciplined +2, Hubris +2, Violent +2

**Reputations:** Mysterious Knight 2 (French tournament circuit)

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init -2, Attack N/A, Defense +5, Damage N/A

**Fist:** Init -2, Attack +9, Defense +6, Damage +1

**Long Sword & Heater Shield:** Init +0, Attack +18, Defense +16, Damage +7

**Soak:** +16 (+3 if Gift of Bear's Fortitude is active, and a further +3 against metal weapons due to his Form Bonus)

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Area Lore: Roman Tribunal

2 (geography), Armorer 5 (mail), Artes Liberales 4 (ligatures), Brawl 5 (fist), Code of Hermes 2 (mundane relations), Finesse 6 +2 (craft magic), Italian 5 (Lombard), Latin 5 (Hermetic usage), Leadership 4 (in battle), Magic Theory 7 (Perdo), Organization Lore: Order of Hermes 2 (items), Parma Magica 6 (Corpus), Penetration 4 (Perdo), Philosophiae 5 (items of quality), Ride 4 (battle), Single Weapon 6 (long sword), Swordsmith 5 (long swords), Verditius Cult Lore 3 (initiating others)

**Arts:** Cr 12, In 5, Mu 5, Pe 15+3, Re 10, An 5, Aq 5, Au 11, Co 16, He 5, Ig 17, Im 5, Me 5, Te 11, Vi 11

**Equipment:** Enchanted arms and armor (see later), large hammer (casting tool for Ball of Abysmal Flame)

**Encumbrance:** 2 (3)

**Spells Known:**

*Breath of the Open Sky* (CrAu 40/+44)

*Bind Wound* (CrCo 10/+29)

*Gift of the Bear's Fortitude at Touch Range* (MuCo 30/+22)

*The Hammer Falls* (PeCo 35/+51)

*Burn His Eyes Out* (PeCo 40/+51)

*Ball of Abysmal Flame* (CrIg 35/+42)

*Ward Against Heat and Flames* (Relg 25/+28)

*The Swordsmith's Art* (ReTe 10/+22), Mastery 1 (precise casting)

*The Armorer's Art* (ReTe 15/+22), Mastery 1 (precise casting)

*Spell of Wrought Iron* (ReTe 15/+22)

*Wizard's Communion* (MuVi 15/+17)

*Watching Ward* (ReVi 35/+31)

**Appearance:** A mature knight, still

young enough to fight but old enough to rule the world. He wears his graying hair savagely short and his steely eyes are lined with age. His square jaw is perpetually covered with a growth of mottled-gray stubble. He is never without his mail armor Talisman and his enchanted sword. His surcoat bears the five-ringed hand of Verditius against a red shield. He wears a red sash tied around his belt, as a knight might wear the colors of a lady.

**Casting Sigil:** The sound of hammer against anvil is heard with his spells, but the sigil manifests as the odor of red-hot iron in spell residues.

\* House Virtue

Avedutus has a number of Rego Craft Magic spells, which thanks to his well-practiced Finesse he can cast with some proficiency. His favored technique is to work his magic within a forge, where he can draw the molten iron and steel into the form he desires. He usually prepares himself by creating a ligature to provide natural resonances, and relies upon his self-confidence and belief in his own abilities. He has mastered these spells with the Precise Casting mastery ability (*Houses of Hermes: Societates*, page 34).

He also has a number of damaging spells and rituals that he is able to cast from the safety of his forge and anvil, though he now most often casts these with the aid of the *Wizard's Communion* taught him by Al'-Aqrab.



## Avedutus' Arms and Armor

Given that Avedutus would find it nearly impossible to cast magic in the heat of battle, due to the clumsiness of his casting tools and the pain his magic causes him, he relies heavily upon his enchanted devices.

### THE ARMOR OF AENEAS

Avedutus' talisman is his shirt of mail, opened with 20 pawns of Vis and enhanced as an Item of Quality as per the Verditius mystery (*Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 124). The armor has enhanced strength, with a total +15 protection bonus, and a warding effect that protects Avedutus against mundane human attacks. As a talisman, it has been attuned to the +7 bonus to protect its wearer. This may come into play should Avedutus need to use any Fast Cast Defense spells, which he can do without recourse to his casting tools.

### Ward Against Humans

ReCo 29

Pen +0, Constant Effect

R: Personal, D: Sun, T: Individual

This ward, enchanted into the armor, prevents any mundane human unprotected by Magic Resistance from taking any harmful action against the wearer. On the battlefield this essentially means that Avedutus' enemies cannot make attacks of any kind against him. He has specifically omitted a Penetration score from the design as he will test himself against those who carry some form of Magic Resistance. This effect is a means to simply drive his mundane opponents before him, ensuring he can cross the battlefield and pick his targets.

(Base 15, +2 Sun; +1 2/day, +3 trigger at sunrise/sunset)

### Gift of the Bear's Fortitude

MuCo 25

R: Personal, D: Sun, T: Individual

Pen +0, 1/day

Makes the wearer's skin tough and resistant to damage, providing a +3 to Soak, as described in *ArM5*, page 131.

(Base 15, +2 Sun)

### Bind Wound

CrCo 5

R: Personal, D: Sun, T: Individual

Pen +0, 1/day

As per the spell effect described on *ArM5*, page 129.

(Base 3, +2 Sun)

### Ward Against Heat and Flames

RelG 20

R: Personal, D: Sun, T: Individual

Pen +0, 1/day

As per the spell effect described on *ArM5*, page 143, this spell keeps heat and flames away from the wearer, which provides a +15 Soak bonus against heat or flame damage.

(Base 4, +2 for up to +15 damage, +2 Sun)

### CHIRON'S GIFT

Avedutus' sword is named in reference to the blade given to Peleus by the centaur Chiron, the magical powers of which won Peleus many victories in battle. This sword is an Item of Quality, providing a +4 bonus to harm human and animal bodies, which translates as a +4 attack bonus (already factored into Avedutus' stats). It has been opened with 15 pawns of vis and contains the following enchantments.

### They Fall Away Beneath My Stride

PeCo 40

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Group

Pen +0, unlimited use

This enchantment is triggered by Avedutus crying "Chiron" when striking a human target. That target, and up to nine other human targets composing a Group, each suffer a Heavy Wound as a resounding wave of thunder tears

through them. This is in addition to any natural damage that the initial target takes as a result of the strike.

(Base 15, +1 Touch, +2 Group; +10 unlimited use)

### A Sure and Deadly Blow

PeCo 36

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Individual

Pen +26, 6/day

Noting that knights might be protected by relics, hedge wizards by charms, and grogs by the Parma Magica, Avedutus invested his sword with a Penetrating effect. This enchantment has a Penetration of +26 and, if the effect beats the target's Magic Resistance, inflicts a Heavy Wound on the target. This is in addition to any damage arising from Avedutus' own attack.

(Base 15, +1 Touch; +13 for 26 penetration, +3 for 6 uses per day)

### THE BRIDLE OF OBEDIENCE

ReAn 34

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

Pen +0, constant effect

Triggered when the bridle is put onto a horse, the effect places the animal completely under the rider's control regardless of whether that rider has The Gift or is unknown to the horse. The horse becomes fearless on the field of battle no matter what magic it witnesses or how many men bear down upon it. Designed by Avedutus for use in battle, the bridle is large and robust, but the constant application of magic to the animal induces magical Warping, assuming the horse survives Avedutus' battles for long enough.

(Base 15, +1 Touch, +2 Sun; +1 two uses/day, +3 triggered at sunrise/set)

### BREACHING THE WALL

PeTe 25

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Part

## Avedutus' Arms and Armor (cont'd)

Pen +0, charged device

These crossbow bolts, when loosed from a crossbow, destroy a section of solid wall. The collapsed section is large enough for an armed assault to breach the wall.

### THE ANVIL

Perhaps Avedutus' biggest handicap is the makeup of his casting tools. In order to cast any Formulaic or Ritual magic Avedutus needs an anvil and his selection of hammers and other metal-working tools; as he casts, he strikes a strip of iron or bronze. He accommodates these casting tools in a tall wagon pulled by stout oxen and driven by a downtrodden grog. The sides of the wagon fold down completely, allowing Avedutus to use the wagon as a raised platform, able to cast spells at Sight and Voice range. Given that his Parma Magica is weakened by anyone holding his casting tools, the wagon is built from solid oak and straps of iron. It is kept locked and his squire has the large iron key.

Avedutus has cast a Watching Ward (ArM5, page 162) upon the wagon, which triggers a Ball of Abysmal Flame when the lock is broken or removed without using the key. The effect has a Penetration of +36 and deals +30 damage, targeting the individual who triggered the spell.

### The Hammer Falls

PeCo 35

R: Arcane Connection, D: Momentary, T: Individual

Acting through an Arcane Connection, this spell immediate causes the target to suffer a Heavy Wound.

(Base 15, +4 Arcane Connection)

### Burn His Eyes Out

PeCo 40

R: Arcane Connection, D: Momentary, T: Individual

Acting through an Arcane Connection, this spell immediate destroys the target's vision. The damage can be healed over time and is treated as a Heavy Wound.

(Base 20, +4 Arcane Connection)

### The Spell of Wrought Iron

ReTe 15

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Group

The spell transforms raw pig-iron from a furnace into plain bars of wrought iron, as if a blacksmith had worked the iron in his forge. The magus must succeed in a Perception + Finesse roll to work the bars and separate out the slag. The task is normally Easy (6) for a blacksmith, so the base Ease Factor is 9. Failure means the iron and inclusions do not separate; a botch means that the inclusions go unnoticed, and the iron is flawed and cracks under strain.

As the spell presented in *Covenants*, page 51.

(Base 2, +1 Touch, +2 Group, +2 metal)

### The Swordsmith's Art

ReTe 10

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Individual

Turns a single piece of prepared iron into a blade, the quality determined by the caster's Perception + Finesse roll. A standard quality sword requires an Ease Factor of 15.

(Base 2, +1 Touch, +2 metal, +1 complexity)

### The Armorer's Art

ReTe 15

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Individual

Turns a single piece of prepared iron into a suit of mail, the quality determined by the caster's Perception + Finesse roll. A standard quality item requires an Ease Factor of 21.

(Base 2, +1 Touch, +2 metal, +2 complexity)

becoming clear: capture and hold.

The final act sees the magi of the Trattato set their sights on the player covenant and the Duca di Casalmaggiore set his sights on the nearby city of Verona.

## Act One: Rain on the Wind

This act introduces the covenant of *Trattato* as Lucia attempts to ensure the succession of her chosen pawn to a position of wealth and influence.

## The Succession

After the death of the Duca di Casalmaggiore, his two nephews vie for his vacant throne. Federico is on the verge of succeeding in his claim, assisted by the horoscopes of the court astrologer and the wiles of his Hermetic lover. But his twin, Giuliano, is the firstborn and has the legitimate claim despite lacking political influence. And so Giuliano turns to the Order for assistance, in the knowledge that he needs to fight the magic in his brother's employ with magic of his own.

### A DUCAL REQUEST

Giuliano and his entourage arrive at the player covenant without warning and demand audience. He firmly asserts his rank and refuses to be put off, citing a matter of grave urgency. When presented to the magi, or their senior representatives, he demands their assistance in exposing his brother's lies and trickery.

He contests that his uncle's throne is his by right as he is the firstborn twin, but that the court astrologer, Hieronymus, has persuaded the court that a



great calamity will befall the dukedom unless an heir is elected by a council of nobles and princes. He believes that Hieronymous' magic is being turned to his brother's aid and wishes to prove it. He also tells of a woman who is beguiling the court in order to secure his brother's claim to the ducal throne.

Asked why the covenant should help him, Giuliano is forthright; because he asks it of them. If, as is likely, the covenant requires more convincing, he says because he believes the woman, Lucia, to be one of them and that he knows enough of the Order to know that what she is doing is wrong. And if yet more inducement is required, he offers the income of a sizable fief to them for as long as his reign should last, assuming his brother's trickery is exposed and his claim discredited.

If the magi themselves refuse to help him, he suggests that they must at least have associates, learned in magic and astrology, who could at least guide him in these matters. This presents the covenant with the opportunity to use its companions and grogs to first gather information and second earn a new source of income. Giuliano escorts any willing to help him to Casalmaggiore as members of his retinue.

At this stage, the magi may decide to decline to help Giuliano in any way. In this case Giuliano leaves vowing some ill-defined revenge at some ambiguous time in the future, Federico is elected, and his brother is exiled to some small estate where he turns to taxing his vassals hard out of frustration and spite.

## THE COURT OF CASALMAGGIORE

The heart of the Casalmaggiore region is a palace of white stonework, fortified yet elegant, and surrounded by orchards and villages. It sits on the river Po to the southwest of Verona, and there are several bridges that span the river, ensuring a steady stream of

## Mutationis Patronus

**Characteristics:** Int +2, Per 0, Pre 0, Com +2, Str -1, Sta 0, Dex 0, Qik 0

**Size:** -2

**Age:** 82 (15)

**Decrepitude:** 0

**Warping Score:** 11 (6)

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** The Gift; Hermetic Magus; Anima Magic\*, Becoming\*, Faerie Magic\*\*, Fast Caster, Luck, Minor Magical Focus (self-transformation); Dwarf, Deficient Technique (Intellego); Carefree, Clumsy Magic, Hedge Wizard

\* *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, pages 92 & 93

\*\* House Virtue

**Personality Traits:** Impish +3, Duplicitous +2, Meddlesome +1

**Reputations:** Hedge Wizard 3 (Roman magi)

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init +0, Attack N/A, Defense +0, Damage N/A

**Fist:** Init +0, Attack +0, Defense +0, Damage -1

**Kick:** Init -1, Attack +0, Defense -1, Damage +2

**Soak:** 0

**Fatigue levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-3), -3 (4-6), -5 (7-9), Incapacitated (10-12)

**Abilities:** Artes Liberales 2 (ceremonial magic), Awareness 3 (alertness), Bargain 2 (faeries), Carouse 3 (drinking songs), Charm 2 (first impressions), Concentration 2 (spell concentration), Faerie Lore 3, Faerie Magic 9 (becoming), Finesse 5 (casting speed), Folk Ken 2 (magi), Guile 2 (elaborate lies), Italian 5 (curses), Latin 4 (Hermetic usage), Magic Theory 5 (Muto), Music 3 (sing), Organisation Lore: House Merinita 3 (modifying initiation scripts), Parma Magica 4 (Corpus), Penetration 4 (Muto), Philosophiae 2 (metaphysics)

**Arts:** Cr 16, In 10, Mu 20, Pe 10, Re 12, An 0, Aq 0, Au 0, Co 5, He 10, Ig 0, Im 10, Me 8, Te 9, Vi 20

**Twilight Scars:** Patronus' shadow moves of its own accord, and his eyes glitter with flecks of silver and gold. He also finds the smell of iron nauseating, so spends as little time with Avedutus as possible, and he can tell true gold from false.

**Equipment:** Patronus carries very little with him; a simple flute and usually some vis of various forms to bolster his spontaneous casting.

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)

**Spells Known:**

*The Wooden Horde* (CrHe 35/+30)

*A Pocketful of Soldiers* (MuHe 35/+30)

*The Ear for Distant Voices* (InIm 20/+10)

*Veil of Invisibility* (PeIm 20/+20)

*Wizard's Sidestep* (ReIm 10/+22)

*The Distracted Turb* (CrMe 45/+24)

*Touch of Midas* (CrTe 20/+29)

*Bring Forth the Lord of Knives* (CrTe 35/+25)

*The Earth Split Asunder* (ReTe 30/+21)

*The Heady Rush of Magic* (CrVi 5/+36)

*Piercing the Faerie Veil* (InVi 20/+15)

*Wizard's Communion* (MuVi 20/+40)

*Dreadful Bane of the Fae* (PeVi 10/+30)

*Circular Ward Against Faeries* (ReVi 20/+32)

**Casting Sigil:** Visible strands of light and stars stream from his fingertips to the targets of his spells. His spell residues give off tiny sparkles when investigated.

**Appearance:** Since the rites of Becoming he has appeared as a juvenile boy. He is small for his apparent age and has unkempt ginger hair and a band of golden freckles across his nose. Due to warping his eyes also glitter and shimmer with gold and silver. He is dressed differently every time he is encountered, sometimes as a ragged child and sometimes like a miniature prince, but he always wears the red sash denoting his membership of the Trattato. Strikingly, he only talks through a mask that he brings to his face each time he wishes to speak.

## Patronus' Talisman and Grimoire

Patronus has created a Talisman, and knows several uncommon spells.

### THE MASK OF FALSE INTENT

Patronus' talisman is a painted leather mask in the shape of an exaggerated elderly face.

#### The Changing Expression

MuAn 11

Pen +0/Unlimited Use

R: Personal, D: Momentary, T: Individual

Triggered each time Patronus brings the mask to his own face, this effect changes the expression shown on the mask. One time elation, another horror, followed by surprise, and anger, and everything in between.

(Base 1; +10 for unlimited use)

#### The Face of Burlone

MuAn 40

Pen +0/Unlimited Use

R: Personal, D: Concentration, T: Individual

This effect, achieved through Animae Magic, gives the mask a life of its own by transforming it into a faerie. Its form remains the mask but it gains personality and independence of thought. Patronus uses this mostly to amuse himself, but also to put others off-guard.

The faerie's personality matches the mask's current expression.

(Base 15, +1 Concentration, +5 levels for Might Score, +5 Device maintains concentration, +10 unlimited use)

### THE WOODEN HORDE

CrHe 45

R: Touch, D: Moon, T: Group

This Animae Magic ritual creates ten Herbam-based faeries each

with a Faerie Might of 1. Each faerie has a general motivation decided by the caster at the time of casting. Examples might be to attack particular targets, to defend a given person, item, or place, or simply to amuse.

Patronus summons these faeries with the waxing and waning of the moon to protect the tower occupied by the Trattato. They swarm in the trees and grass around the tower and threaten any not wearing a red sash.

No larger than a human hand, these faeries pose little threat individually, but they engage in combat as a swarm of creatures. See the statistics and swarm rules in the nearby insert.

(Base 5, +1 Touch, +3 Moon, +2 Group; +10 levels for Might)

### A POCKETFUL OF SOLDIERS

MuHe 30

R: Touch, D: Diameter, T: Group

This Animae Magic spell creates a horde of ten Herbam-based faeries each with a Faerie Might of 1 by transforming a large group of wooden items. A woodcutter's pile or a thatched roof is enough. Patronus uses these faeries to sow instant confusion or to attack specified targets (anyone not wearing red, for instance). Enough of these capricious creatures stay on-task to make a decent threat, while others engage in harmless tomfoolery. The faeries only last for a diameter and then they fall to the ground, turning back into their original forms, when the spell expires.

No larger than a human hand, these faeries pose little threat individually, but they engage in combat as a swarm of creatures. See the

merchants and commerce and making Casalmaggiore an important and wealthy place. The court is covered by a level 2 Dominion aura.

With the election of the new duke due to take place tomorrow, the town of Casalmaggiore is busy with numerous knights, merchants, clerics, and others gathered to witness or participate in the election and coronation. There is nowhere left to stay in the town, but Giuliano offers the magi and companions one of several standing chambers within the palace. Their grogs join the other lower retainers and sleep in whatever space is given to them, most likely on floors or in outbuildings.

Giuliano is greeted by loyal courtiers who receive his magical guests with a degree of trepidation and distrust, with the magi overhearing some of their misgivings.

### THE EVE OF SUCCESSION

The action takes place from six in the evening onwards, during celebrations for Giuliano's return to the city and the politicking of the election. This gives the magi, or their unGifted companions, the chance to mingle and judge the mood of the room. In particular, this is the scene in which the players meet Lucia and Avedutus.

Lucia and Avedutus recognize any magi present, unless they are attempting to disguise themselves and their nature, and treat them with caution. If you introduced the magi of the Trattato at Tribunal ahead of this story the player magi automatically recognize them given their distinctive looks. Lucia is not best-pleased at being seen by magi in her seductive guise.

The evening is accompanied by music from a troupe of musicians, and the intrigues proceed amid the dancing. It seems that both factions are hard at work and characters engaging in Intrigue may learn the following:



- Giuliano's relationship with one Nanino da Bologna, a young male student in his retinue, is being called into question.
- There are suspicions that the old Duke met his end before his time (as the storyguide, you are free to decide whether there is any truth in this and by whose hand he may have died).
- Giuliano did much offend his uncle, hence his long absence from the court.
- Federico and Lucia are to be wed, though the news is to be kept secret until after the election.
- Giuliano has betrayed his brother by attempting to steal the Lady Lucia away from him.

It is here that Hieronymous and Lucia can be seen in frequent conversation with Federico. Avedutus is on constant guard and does not, without permission from Lucia, allow strangers to impose upon Lucia.

At ten in the evening, a fanfare is sounded and Hieronymous announces that the election must now take place.

### A MEETING OF HERMETIC MINDS

Lucia claims to be at court for simply social reasons, and is open that she maintains a sanctum nearby and therefore has a connection to the court. She also attempts to shift any suspicion of wrongdoing onto Hieronymous. She "suspects" him to be manipulating the election, but that she has taken care to ensure that no magic is used to influence the result one way or the other. A lie, obviously, but this is left to the magi to determine. She even offers a mock-warning that they should take care lest they be accused of meddling in mundane affairs.

If challenged on her relationship with either of the brothers, she seeds misdirection with truth and simply asks how a woman is supposed to secure land

## Patronus' Talisman and Grimoire (cont'd)

statistics and swarm rules in the nearby insert.

(Base 4, +1 Touch, +1 Diameter, +2 Group; +10 levels for Might)

### THE DISTRACTED TURB

CrMe 45

R: Voice, D: Diameter, T: Group

Using Animae Magic, this spell creates a faerie with a Might of 1 in the mind of each member of the target group. The faeries play at the edges of their host's vision, apparently hiding behind things in the external world, or running quickly away whenever their hosts try to look at them directly. They appear threatening and malicious, and act as though they are flanking their targets and getting ready for an attack.

Although the Target is the Group of Mentem faeries being created, they are created within the minds of a group of target individuals. As such, this spell must penetrate any Magic Resistance possessed by members of this group.

A Personality Check against Ease Factor 6 is required to hold firm to the physical threat at hand rather than be distracted by these faeries. Appropriate Personality Trait should be agreed with the storyguide.

(Base 10, +2 Voice, +1 Diameter, +2 Group; +10 levels for Might)

### BRING FORTH THE LORD OF KNIVES

CrTe 35

R: Touch, D: Diameter, T: Individual

This Animae Magic spell conjures a slender faerie made of black iron with rusted squeaky joints and

long knives for fingers. The menacing creature has a Faerie Might of 10. Brought forth only when Patronus has need of a bodyguard, the Lord of Knives defends its master viciously and to its own destruction.

See the nearby insert for this faerie's statistics.

Created through transient magic, although the Lord of Knives has its own Might Score, Patronus' Penetration total on conjuring this faerie needs to beat the Magic Resistance of this faerie's opponents if it is to do them harm. That being the case, it is most useful against unprotected mundanes.

(Base 15, +1 Touch, +1 Diameter; +10 levels for Might)

### THE HEADY RUSH OF MAGIC

CrVi 5

R: Personal, D: Momentary, T: Individual

Patronus has used this spell over many years to warp himself. Each casting inflicts a single Warping Point on the caster, usually not enough to risk Twilight, but enough to produce a steadily increasing Warping Score, which he needs in order to finally achieve transforming himself into a faerie.

(Base 5)

### DREADFUL BANE OF THE FAE

PeVi 10

R: Voice, D: Momentary, T: Individual

As per Demon's Eternal Oblivion (ArM5, page 160), but affects faeries. This version strips 10 from the Might Score if it penetrates Magic Resistance.

(Base effect, +2 Voice)

## Patronus' Faeries

The following faeries are summoned into existence by Patronus' spells.

### THE LORD OF KNIVES

**Faerie Might:** 10 (Terram)

**Characteristics:** Int 0, Per 0, Pre 0, Com 0, Str +1, Sta +2, Dex +2, Qik +2

**Size:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Improved Damage, Improved Soak (x3), Lesser Faerie Power (Damaging Effect); Sovereign Ward (sea water); Arthritis, Incognizant

**Personality Traits:** Loyal to Creator +3, Wicked +2

**Combat:**

*Knife:* Init +2, Atk +9, Def +8, Dam +8 (includes the bonus from Improved Damage, but not the *Damaging Effect* power)

**Soak:** +8

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Pretenses:** Athletics (running) 3, Awareness (in combat) 3, Brawl (knife) 5

**Powers:**

*Damaging Effect* 0 points, Init -2 (2 intricacy points on cost). Adds +5 to the damage for the Lord's knives, in an obviously unnatural way; for instance the knives can be seen to cause wounds while leaving armor unscathed. The bonus for this power has *not* been calculated into the combat stats above.

**Equipment:** None

**Vis:** As an impermanent thing, this faerie has no vis.

**Appearance:** A gangly skeleton of rusting black iron bars with bulbous joints and arms tipped with knives in place of fingers. It squeaks and squeals as it moves but is deceptively fast.

The Lord of Knives' creaking skeleton suffers from arthritis, which means

he is liable to seize up on any combat botch. This can be brought on immediately by the presence of sea water, which is this faerie's sovereign ward. The smallest drop of true sea water that touches the faerie's body rusts it solid within a round and it starts to fall into lifeless rusted flakes in the next round.

### THE WOODEN HORDE

The statistics here are for the horde of summoned faeries both as individuals and acting as a swarm.

**Faerie Might:** 1 (Herbam)

**Characteristics:** Int 0, Per 0, Pre 0, Com 0, Str -20, Sta -1, Dex +2, Qik +14

**Characteristics (swarm):** Int 0, Per +1, Pre +1, Com -1, Str +2, Sta -1, Dex +2, Qik +4

**Size:** -10

**Size (swarm):** +1

**Virtues and Flaws:** Improved Damage; Incognizant

**Personality Traits:** Hungry +2, Mischievous +1

**Combat:**

*Bite:* Init +14, Atk +11, Def +9, Dam -14

*Bite (swarm):* Init +4, Atk +11, Def +9, Dam +8

**Soak:** +0

**Wound Penalties:** Dead (1+)

**Wound Penalties (swarm):** -1 (1-6), -3 (7-12), -5 (13-18), Incapacitated (19-24), Dead (21+)

**Pretenses:** Athletics (running) 3, Awareness (in combat) 3, Brawl (bite) 5, Hunt (fleeing combatants) 5

**Powers:** None

**Equipment:** None

**Vis:** None

**Appearance:** A teeming jumble of tiny faeries made of sticks and leaves scrambling over each other to get to their targets or anything else that looks in any way edible.

### OPTIONAL RULE: SWARMS

A swarm is a mass of creatures of Size -3 or smaller with a combined Size of +1 or more. Given the fluid makeup of a swarm, it is almost impossible to stop one in its tracks. Shield grogs are used to holding off single or even group enemies but a swarm has the power to overwhelm defenders. Apply the following rules:

- Swarms ignore defenders and can always reach their intended target.
- Swarms may attack a number of targets equal to the swarm's size each round.
- At the storyguide's discretion, swarms may have an immunity or resistance to regular weapons; a blade passing harmlessly through a swarm of locusts, for instance.
- Being made up of many smaller individuals, a swarm is hard to destroy. Unless a swarm is destroyed outright, it can disengage and return at full strength after a number of rounds equal to its single highest wound penalty.

### A NOTE ABOUT ANIMAE MAGIC

*Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults* (pages 94-95) provides guidelines for the Merinita mystery of Animae Magic, the ability to spontaneously create faeries from the raw matter surrounding the caster. Two considerations should be applied when using this magic. Firstly, faeries created through ritual magic in this way may be permanent and may have a Might Score, but they do not contain raw vis. The vis is actively sustaining the faerie from the moment it is created. Once that faerie dies, the vis finally dissipates. Secondly, the total Might Score of all faeries summoned by the spell must be added to the level when the spell is invented. So a spell to create a single faerie with a Might Score of 5 must add 5 to the spell level. A spell to create a group of 10 similar faeries must add 50 to the spell level.



from an egotistical noble with delusions of grandeur.

Avedutus is characteristically unwilling to discuss anything pertaining to the court or their presence, but it is clear that he views Giuliano as an arrogant brat. He is not rude but he defers to Lucia on any matters pertaining to Federico. Other than that, if he is engaged in harmless conversation he is relaxed.

## INFLUENCING THE ELECTION

The storyguide should assume that Federico's faction controls ten of the votes to Giuliano's two. This means that they need to influence four votes in order to force an even split, which places the deciding vote in the hands of Hieronymous. Taking five votes away from Federico secures the election for Giuliano.

Unless the magi have already met the electors and discussed their positions, they do not know how many votes are actually controlled by each faction. Known supporters of Federico may be identified as follows, which starts to reveal the weight of support he has gained.

### Communication + Intrigue + stress die

ROLL	ASSESSMENT
Botch	Giuliano already has enough support despite Federico's efforts
0-2	Identify two known Federico supporters
3-5	Identify four known Federico supporters
6-8	Identify six known Federico supporters
9-10	Identify eight known Federico supporters
11+	Identify Giuliano's supporters

In order to secure Giuliano's election the magi must influence five votes. The magi could achieve this a number of ways:

## Al-Aqrab

**Characteristics:** Int +2, Per 0, Pre +1, Com 0, Str -1, Sta +1, Dex 0, Qik 0

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 95 (65)

**Decrepitude:** 0

**Warping Score:** 5 (10)

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** The Gift; Hermetic Magus; Mercurian Magic, Entrancement\*; Affinity with Vim\*, Enduring Constitution, Mastered Spells, Piercing Gaze, Puissant Entrancement, Tough; Outsider; Blatant Gift\*, Envious; Cabal Legacy, Disfigured

\* Free Virtues and Flaws due to his Ex Miscellanea tradition

**Personality Traits:** Envious +3, Self-Interest +2, Taciturn +1

**Reputations:** Outsider 3 (among Christians), An unpleasant and suspect magus 2 (The Roman Tribunal)

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init +0, Attack N/A, Defense +2, Damage N/A

**Dagger:** Init +0, Attack +6, Defense +3, Damage +2

**Soak:** +4

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Arabic 5 (storytelling), Area Lore: Roman Tribunal 2 (covenants), Artes Liberales 3 (Ritual magic), Brawl 2 (Dagger), Carouse 2 (games of chance), Code of Hermes 2 (tribunal procedures), Concentration 4 (spell concentration), Entrancement 4 + 2 (dangerous commands), Finesse 3 (precision), Italian 3 (storytelling), Latin 4 (Hermetic usage), Leadership 3 (magi), Magic Lore 2 (creatures), Magic Theory 6 (Vim), Organization Lore: Order of Hermes 2 (politics), Parma Magica 5 (Vim), Penetration 5 (Vim), Philosophiae 3 (Ritual magic), Stealth 3 (sneak), Survival 2 (deserts), Teaching 3 (spells)

**Arts:** Cr 6, In 7, Mu 16, Pe 16, Re 14, An 6, Aq 5, Au 5, Co 10, He 5, Ig 5, Im 5, Me 11, Te 15, Vi 19

**Twilight Scars:** His teeth have turned into small pointed scorpion stingers, the

sands of his desert home are constantly shed from his clothes before disappearing upon the wind, and he does not always enjoy normal food, preferring instead to eat insects and other small vermin.

**Equipment:** His talisman dagger, *Humat*.

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)

**Spells Known:**

*Lay to Rest the Haunting Spirit* (PeMe 30/+30), Mastery 1 (penetration)

*Coerce the Spirits of the Night* (ReMe 20/+28), Mastery 1 (penetration)

*Incantation of Summoning the Dead* (ReMe 40/+36), Mastery 1 (penetration)

*The Riches of Carthage* (CrTe 20/+32), Mastery 1 (disguised casting)

*Conjuring the Mystic Tower* (CrTe 35/+31)

*The Fate of Carthage* (PeTe 45/+44), Mastery 3 (disguised casting, penetration, stalwart casting)

*The Enigma's Gift* (CrVi 30/+27), Mastery 1 (penetration)

*Wizard's Communion* (MuVi 45/+37), Mastery 1 (stalwart casting)

*Breaking the Shield* (PeVi 35/+47), Mastery 2 (disguised casting, penetration)

*Aegis of the Hearth* (ReVi 30/+44), Mastery 1 (stalwart casting)

*Opening the Intangible Tunnel* (ReVi 30/+35), Mastery 1 (penetration)

**Casting Sigil:** His targets are slightly seared by magical venom. It has no lasting effect, but its acrid scent can be detected upon spell residues.

**Appearance:** Al-Aqrab is aged and weather-beaten and his dark skin is lined and thin. His head and face are swathed in a ragged turban and veil, a motif that extends to the rest of his clothes. He wears a sash of red tied around his middle in place of a belt, the mark of the Trattato.

Though not a member of a true Mercurian cult, Al-Aqrab possesses the Mercurian Magic Virtue, an unusual trait found in the lineage of wizards of which he is the last. Its effects ensure that he is a focus for ritual magic within the Trattato. He also masters many of his spells with the disguised casting (*Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 99) spell mastery, which makes identifying him as the caster much harder.

## Al-'Aqrab's Talisman and Grimoire

Al-'Aqrab's talisman is his knife, which he stole from the tomb of a Persian merchant who reputedly poisoned his rivals. He gave the weapon the name *Humat*, or venom.

### THE RICHES OF CARTHAGE

CrTe 20

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Individual, Ritual

As the Touch of Midas ritual (*ArM5*, page 153) but creates a lump of silver instead of gold, which is easier to slip into the local economy.

(Base 15, +1 Touch, ritual)

### THE FATE OF CARTHAGE

PeTe 45

R: Arcane Connection, D: Momentary, T: Boundary, Ritual

Over the course of a season, any crops or livestock farmed on the affected land suffer as though being starved. Deprivation checks at three-day intervals may be unwieldy for use across the season, so it is reasonable to assume that harvests fail and livestock dies unless food is brought in from outside the affected area. As a rule of thumb, assume that the income from the affected land halves each season, with the

effect being noticed after the first week. The effect is permanent and the soil cannot support life until healed in some way.

The base level of 5 is used as the spell is destroying only a single aspect of the soil, namely the ability to nourish crops and animals. The high vis cost of this ritual is compensated by the ability to strike unseen from afar.

(Base 5, +4 Arcane Connection, +4 Boundary, Ritual)

### HUMAT

This old curved dagger has been opened with 10 pawns of vis and has the following effect:

#### Humat's Gift

CrAq 50

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Individual

Pen +0, 1/day

Once per day, *Humat* can be made to give up its venom, at which point a single dose of lethal poison drips from the blade's tip. The venom has an Ease Factor of 9, as explained in *ArM5*, page 180. Failing the associated Stamina check results in death.

This effect has no Penetration, so the poison cannot affect those protected by any level of Magic Resistance from any realm or source.

When Al-'Aqrab enchanted this effect he attuned *Humat* with a +3 bonus to poisoning.

(Base 25, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +2 for potency)

### BREAKING THE SHIELD

PeVi 25

R: Sight, D: Momentary, T: Individual

This spell is designed to permanently cancel an existing *Aegis of the Hearth* ritual with a level less than 30 (i.e. the level of this spell +1 magnitude) + a Stress Die, bringing its magical protection to an abrupt end.

As this spell is cast against an *Aegis*, the effect must first penetrate the level of that *Aegis*. This version of the spell has been designed to tear down at least a sixth magnitude *Aegis*, and so must penetrate a resistance of at least 30. To help with this feat, Al-'Aqrab has taught versions of the *Wizards Communion* spell to the other magi in his new covenant, which helps them to cast their spells and Rituals at sufficiently high level and penetration.

Casting this spell requires that Al-'Aqrab be within sight of the target's boundary, though of course the *Aegis* itself does not need to be made visible.

(Base effect, +3 Sight)





## The Manner of the Election

A local candlemaker provides a number of identical balls of wax, one for each of the eligible courtiers. Twelve of these balls contain a piece of parchment onto which is written the word "elector." Hieronymous draws these balls of wax from a large velvet bag, presenting them to each of the courtiers in turn. When they have all been given, the balls are broken open and the twelve courtiers finding the parchment are the nominated electors. You can consider this to have been done during the previous week and the electors chosen unless the players want to somehow influence this aspect of the process.

Of course, Lucia has already subtly influenced the election process. She has passed the date and location of birth of the major members of the court to Hieronymous. With this information, Hieronymous has cast their nativity horoscopes and determined which of them naturally lean towards his patron Federico. By targeting those who support Giuliano, he has been able to produce false charts showing a calamity befalling them or their families should Giuliano succeed his uncle. These charts, obviously fake on a Simple Intelligence + Artes Liberales roll against Ease Factor 9, can be found in Hieronymous' laboratory should the players decide to look.

### THE ELECTORS

This insert lists the twelve courtiers selected to elect the new Duke. To keep track of the interactions between these twelve and the player characters, storyguides may want to prepare a set of cards representing the electors for use by the players. When interacting with these characters, roleplaying should be used to discover their motives. Use of the Intrigue ability is appropriate when talking *about* them with others. Assume an Ease Factor of 9 to discover the elector's basic situation. Working with or through Giuliano grants a +3 bonus to these rolls.

- **Donato Damiani** is a minor prince of Padua with little wealth of his own, which he supplements through access to Federico's coffers. Unbothered by morals, he supports Federico from the fear that his funds may dry up under another regime. He has little interest in any subject, but can always recall an anecdote about something, somewhere, or someone. His vote can be bought through promises of financial security.
- **Berto Bossi** is a wealthy and influential guild leader. Promised more control over taxes that favor Casalmaggiore merchants and discriminate against those from other cities and regions, he is a firm supporter of Federico.
- The mercenary lord **Pietro Trevison** has a grudge against Verona over monies he believes he is owed. He has a little land, but he is anticipating Federico's ambitions in the area and believes he could become a wealthy man through supporting him.
- **Piero Giudetti**, a rumbustious local landowner, supports Federico out of principle; when the old Duke was ill, Federico remained in Casalmaggiore while Giuliano wasted his time abroad.
- Cullible, brow-beaten, and politically naive, **Cola Polani** votes the same way as his overbearing neighbor Piero Giudetti and is happy to defer to his reasoning. But if he could be granted courage, suggestions that Hieronymous has been meddling in the election could shift his vote.
- **Allesandro dalle Boccole** is tantalized by the prospect of his daughter marrying into money. Hieronymous has promised him that should Federico be elected he will marry within a month. And he has cast the young woman's horoscope, which shows that she is destined for greatness. He has not heard rumors linking Federico with Lucia.
- The weasel-faced merchant **Maffeo Marano** has much to hide. He is a crook and a swindler, which Hieronymous has discovered thanks to Lucia's magic. He has been promised amnesty and pardon for his activities under Federico, but exposure and punishment under Giuliano.
- The Lady **Rosanella di Campo** speaks on behalf of her ailing husband, who Hieronymous has assured her will survive into old age should the will of the stars be done and Federico made Duke. She had no opinion before, and while she objects to the imposition she dare not cross the fates.
- **Simonetto Domenico** is a poor knight with a small fief who has fought alongside Giuliano and should, by all rights favor him. But Hieronymous has warned him of the increasing poverty foretold in the stars should Giuliano gain power.
- Genuinely undecided, the youthful **Lorenzo Di Pigli** has recently lost his father and inherited his lands. He is astute enough to recognize that Federico is apparently more popular, but he can be persuaded to either side. He is determined to back the winning side.
- **Leonardo Cobiancho** is an elderly distant uncle, a successful soldier in his day who doesn't hold with astrology. He is quite vocal about his disdain for magi supporting any faction. Favoring Giuliano, he can see the trouble that Federico might bring to Casalmaggiore. Suggestions that Giuliano is underhanded and treacherous shift his vote.
- **Monsignor d'Este** is the Bishop of Casalmaggiore and dislikes Federico. If you are using the *Realms of Power: The Divine* supplement, rules for Holy Influence are on page 38. Assume that Monsignor d'Este has a Presence of 2 and a Leadership of 4 for the purposes of these rules. He is surrounded by his own entourage and does not take kindly to strangers approaching him directly. Questions as to Giuliano's morals lessen the Bishop's support.

## Federico and Giuliano Estensi

The same statistics can be used for both brothers.

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per 0, Pre +1, Com +1, Str +1, Sta +1, Dex +1, Qik +1

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 28

**Decrepitude:** 0

**Warping Score:** 0 (0) (Federico has a Warping Score of 0 (2), due to the effects of Lucia's *A Night's Passion* spell)

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Landed Noble, Knight, Educated, Famous, Ambitious, Oath of Fealty

**Personality Traits:** Ambitious +3, Envious of his Twin +2, Humble -1

**Reputations:** Prudhomme (Lombard nobility) 4

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init -1, Attack N/A, Defense +4, Damage N/A

**Fist:** Init -1, Attack +4, Defense +4, Damage +1

**Dagger:** Init -1, Attack +7, Defense +5, Damage +4

**Long Sword & Heater Shield:** Init +1, Attack +10, Defense +10, Damage +7

**Soak:** +10

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10),

-5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Animal Handling 2 (falconry), Area Lore: Casalmaggiore 4 (politics), Artes Liberales 2 (rhetoric), Athletics 2 (running), Awareness 1 (in battle), Brawl 3 (Dagger), Carouse 3 (courtly dances), Etiquette 3 (court), Hunt 3 (stag), Intrigue 3 (plotting), Italian 5 (Casalmaggiore), Latin 3 (academic usage), Leadership 4 (armies), Organization Lore: Order of Hermes 1 (personalities), Philosophiae 1 (moral philosophy), Ride 4 (battle), Single Weapon 4 (long sword)

**Equipment:** Sword, shield, full chain armor, entourage

**Encumbrance:** 3 (4)

**Appearance:** Both brothers are handsome, with fair hair and blue eyes, and statuesque through years of military practice.

The twins share more than just their looks; brought up together, favor shown to neither, educated by the finest tutors, and both granted substantial estates, which they hold from their uncle. But somehow a great burning envy of the other twin burns within each of them. There is no accounting for it, and seemingly no settling it.

and Hieronymous claiming treachery while Hieronymous points the finger of suspicion at Giuliano's lackeys. At this, Lucia immediately casts her *Defend Me* spell to ensure that she is protected from harm. If Giuliano loses, he naturally blames his own magi and decries them as in league with his brother.

In either case, the victorious twin makes a show of magnanimity while the other storms out of the city promising a reckoning to come. If Giuliano wins, Lucia must act fast and ensnare him. She uses all the spells at her disposal to convince Giuliano that he can take the greatest prize on offer, namely her.

Once the recriminations are done and the victor is left with the spoils, the plans for the ceremony and church blessing are finalized, to be completed the next day. Depending on who wins, the player magi may be invited or not, though the gracious host invites them to stay out the evening in the palace.

### POTENTIAL OUTCOMES

There are at least two possible outcomes to this part of the scenario. The first is that Federico Estensi, Lucia's favored successor, succeeds to his uncle's lands. The second is that Giuliano proves his brother's duplicity and takes the title instead. While Giuliano himself is indebted to the player magi, Lucia switches her target, continues to work on Giuliano, and ultimately gains her mundane forces. But, crucially, her magic dulls Giuliano's leadership. He does not command the respect or loyalty that he might have done and the mundane forces the player magi face in the third act are much smaller than they otherwise might have been. In any case, the losing brother returns in Act Three.

Of course, if the player magi determine a third outcome, which manages to exclude Lucia altogether, then act three takes a very different shape.

- Use Mentem magic on Federico's supporters
- Control or replace Hieronymous
- Expose Hieronymous' false horoscopes
- Discredit Federico directly

Exposing Hieronymous' deceit may influence enough votes, but the magi are free to take their own path and the storyguide should apply the results of their actions as a gain in votes.

The electors described in the nearby

insert should be used by the storyguide to portray the election. They present roleplaying opportunities for the magi to use intrigue and persuasion or direct application of magic to discover their reasons for supporting Federico and to provide counter offers.

### ACCUSATIONS AND SUCCESSIONS

If Federico loses, fairly or unfairly, he immediately rounds upon Lucia

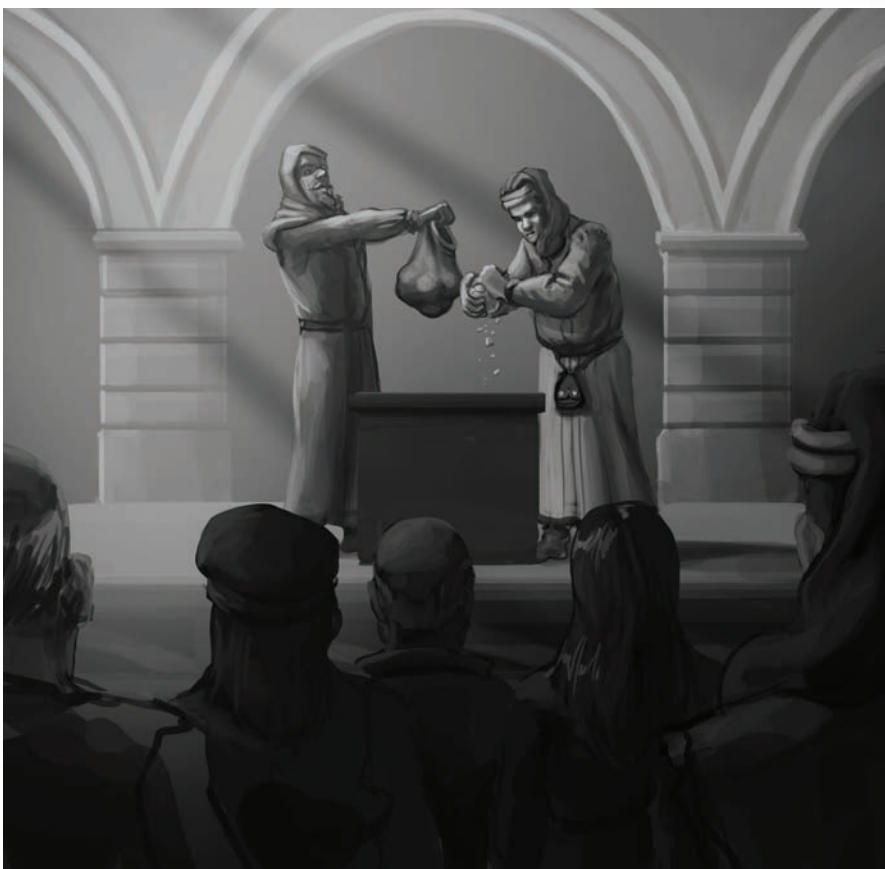


## Investigating Trattato

Ritual magic has been used to raise a tower within the Casalmaggiore estate, next to the original lodge used by the *Trattato*, and it has been outfitted with two standard laboratories. A wall has been built encircling the lodge and the tower out to the size of a standard Hermetic Boundary. The site is defended with a level 30 Aegis of the Hearth, which has been cast through a Wizards Communion and has a Penetration of 45. The site has not yet acquired a Magical aura and has no realm alignment. The wooded area beyond the lodge is also defended by a swarm of small faeries, summoned by Patronus through ritual magic, who harry any who approach the tower while not wearing a red sash tied around their middle.

The tower has three rooms of interest. The first is the library, sparsely populated with no dedicated librarian. It seems little more than somewhere to store vis, books, devices, and other materials. After the sacking of Selvaggio in act two, this room is filled with the spoils of war. The second is the council chamber, which is dominated by a large mosaic map of the Tribunal inlaid into the floor. The position of every known covenant and independent magus is marked upon the map and the walls play host to smaller maps of discrete regions. The final room is a dedicated ceremonial magic space (as described in *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, page 59). Dominated by a large marble altar within concentric circles of silver inlaid into the marble floor, the props within this room provide a bonus of +5 to ceremonial spell-casting. This dedicate space reduces the time it takes to cast ceremonial magic to one minute per magnitude.

Access to the council chamber reveals two targets, Castello del Selvaggio and the players' own covenant. The evidence comes in the form of crude maps of the covenant areas and even intelligence as to the regular movements of magi and their staff.



The tower is attended by a dozen or so servants and has a permanent guard of 12 soldiers. When at the tower, the magi normally eat, sleep, and conduct business in the adjoining houses, which are also within the bounds of the Aegis.

While not on operations, Avedutus, Patronus, and Al-'Aqrab are likely to be found at the covenant buildings. Lucia is more likely to be found with the Casalmaggiore nobility.

### WHAT THE ORDER KNOWS

Characters may already know a little about the magi of the *Trattato*. They may make Intelligence + Order of Hermes Lore simple rolls to gain the following information. Any character who studies Order of Hermes Lore for a season to learn what she can gains all of the information here in addition to the usual experience points.

### ROLL RESULT

- 3+ Lucia and Avedutus are known to be native to the Roman Tribunal  
All of the *Trattato* magi are over fifty years of age
- 6+ Avedutus is known to operate as a champion in the Normandy Tribunal and has taken part in a number of the grand Hermetic tournaments held there  
Al-'Aqrab is an Ex Miscellanea from North Africa  
Avedutus has an apprentice, now living outside the Tribunal
- 9+ Lucia has been linked with a number of covenants in the past, both in Rome and elsewhere, and has left a trail of bitterness and resentment behind her  
Mutationis had formerly been resident at a Provençal covenant where two of its magi died through Wizard War  
Lucia and her parens are now on poor terms and they have not spoken in some time

## Hieronymous the Astrologer

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per +1, Pre -1, Com +2, Str 0, Sta +1, Dex -1, Qik -1

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 60 (60)

**Decrepitude:** 1 (aging points applied to characteristics)

**Warping Score:** 0 (0)

**Confidence Score:** 0 (0)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Clerk; Arcane Lore, Cautious with Artes Liberales, Temporal Influence, Protection (Duke); Ambitious, Ability Block (Martial), Incomprehensible

**Personality Traits:** Ambitious +3, Cowardly +1, Loyal -2

**Reputations:** Scholar (court of Casalmaggiore) 3

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init -1, Attack N/A, Defense -1, Damage N/A

**Fist:** Init -1, Attack -1, Defense -1, Damage +0

**Soak:** +1

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Area Lore: Casalmaggiore 3 (politics), Artes Liberales 6 (astronomy), Awareness 3 (listening), Carouse 3 (staying sober), Charm 1 (courtly love), Civil and Canon Law 4 (laws and customs of Casalmaggiore), Concentration 4 (reading), Dominion Lore 2 (saints), Etiquette

4 (nobility), Faerie Lore 1 (faeries of the night), Folk Ken 5 (nobles), Guile 5 (false horoscopes), Infernal Lore 2 (curses), Intrigue 5 (plotting), Italian 5 (Casalmaggiore), Latin 5 (academic usage), Leadership 3 (mercenaries), Legerdemain 5 ("magic" tricks), Magic Lore 3 (creatures), Organization Lore: Order of Hermes 1 (personalities), Philosophiae 4 (natural philosophy), Teaching 3 (Artes Liberales), Theology 2 (biblical knowledge)

**Equipment:** Astrolabe, charts, books, and amulets

**Encumbrance:** 0

**Appearance:** Erect and robed in sumptuous dark velvet, Hieronymous observes the world from a head constant thrown back either in disdain or some feigned exaltation as he supposedly connects to the power of the stars. He lost his hair long ago, so he keeps his head covered with a cap and cowl, and his pointed gray-white beard is colored dark with herbal compounds.

Hieronymous is an influential coward. He is influential as he has enjoyed the ear of successive masters in his time, which has lent him a degree of protection and status, and a coward through the knowledge of how precarious his situation is should he fall from the favor of the next duke.

its survival. In all likelihood, the case would be referred to Tribunal where the actions and impact of Lucia's interference can be debated.

Taken on its own, the probable outcome is either acceptance by the Tribunal that Lucia's actions were justified or had no material effect, or the imposition of a fine or equivalent punishment. However, Lucia is careful to start her plan soon after a Tribunal meeting, extending the period she can operate before charges become an issue. She believes that by then, she'll either be dead or wield enough political power to make the problems go away.

## Act Two: The Darkening Sky

Lucia and Avedutus need time to consolidate their hold on Casalmaggiore, so the events of this act take place a few seasons after the succession. Now in Lucia's grip, the mundane forces of Casalmaggiore have assisted Avedutus in taking a nearby covenant, and they now prepare to march against Verona.

### Improving Fortunes

Given the gap between the first act and the second, it is likely that the player magi have spent some time investigating their new opponents. Assuming that the player magi and their agents keep themselves informed as to Casalmaggiore's fortunes they learn the following:

#### SUDDEN WEALTH

After the election of the new duke, the fortunes of Casalmaggiore seem to have improved. Some put it down to

12+ Mutationis Patronus has been heavily touched by the fae and some suspect that he is slowly turning from the mortal path

Al-'Aqrab the scorpion is a master of ritual magic

Al-'Aqrab had charges of depriving a magus of his magical power raised against him, but no case was brought as his accuser died in Wizard War a season before the Tribunal. The victor? Al-'Aqrab.

### QUAESITORS AND TRIBUNALS

Some magi are likely at this point to want to involve the Quaesitores and see a case brought to Tribunal. These magi are perfectly within their rights and there is a case of mundane interference at least to investigate if not prosecuted.

But so far, Lucia and the *Trattato* can easily claim to simply be protecting their investment. Federico is to all intents and purposes a companion to Lucia's covenant and important to



increased trading activity in the city brought on by lower taxes. But the truth is that the *Trattato* has created a large quantity of silver. This apparent wealth has boosted the region and given it a degree of confidence.

## PREPARATIONS FOR WAR

While some of this new money is being directed to civic works, the majority has been promised to mercenaries and prospective allies. With wealth comes military power and the Duca di Casalmaggiore is accruing both in equal measure. This growing influence is more subtle and represented through rumored meetings and treaties between the Duke and other local nobles. This preparation is clearly apparent in the tournaments held across the region and the Duke shows off his military prowess by fielding large teams of well armed and armored men. Encounters with these men would make fitting tournament-based interludes for companion characters.

## MAGICIANS AT COURT

Hieronymous still retains his position, as do Lucia and her champion. Many suspect these three to be tainted with magic. In the case of Lucia and Avedutus they would be right, but Lucia has been careful to obtain a written agreement with the new Duke that limits the involvement of the magi at court to that of simple tenants paying scutage in lieu of military service.

## TRADE DISPUTES

Importantly, a trade dispute between Verona and Casalmaggiore has been manufactured and there have been skirmishes between troops in the employ of both sides. This is the backdrop against which this act is played.

## Vis Sources and other Resources

Castello del Selvaggio is situated within a level 2 Magical aura fed by a magical spring that runs from the hillside above it, and has the right to a number of resources in the local area. As these are potentially available for your troupe to claim during the course of this story you should design them according to your game's desired power level. The suggestions can be altered to fit. The *Covenants* supplement also provides ideas for vis sources and the Aquam vis source *The Purest Stream* is particularly fitting.

- A small garden within a lacuna, a pocket of Magical aura, in the city of Verona. The white roses that grow there, if tended well, yield two pawns of Vim vis each year.
- Once a year a distant scream can be heard coming from the mountains north of Selvaggio, as though a life has been suddenly brought to

an end. If the scream can be captured it distills into three pawns of Mentem vis.

- The lake contains a gateway to a faerie court. Maximus held the faerie queen's favor, allowing him free access to the court. With Maximus gone, the queen's favor must be contested again. Whoever wins it has a seat at the faerie queen's court.
- Maximus had little use for libraries or devices in his later years. Most of the books that remain have deteriorated a little, but the storyguide may take the opportunity to introduce books and devices that the player covenant might lack.

Matias can act as a source of information on all things Selvaggio, including the strength of the Selvaggio Aegis, which should be the same as that employed by the player covenant.

## The Fallen Covenant

The first confirmed military action undertaken by the Duke and his allies is the sacking of a small castle to the west of Verona. But that castle turns out to be a Hermetic covenant and the sacking was achieved through magic.

Castello del Selvaggio is a forgotten remnant of a failed covenant that fell under pressure from jealous and aggressive Hermetic neighbors soon after it was founded. Situated near Verona in a small castle on the shores of Lake Garda, the young magi of Castello del Selvaggio became involved in plots both Hermetic and mundane, including one disastrous encounter in which a magus from another covenant was accidentally killed. The resulting pressure was intolerable and the Selvaggio magi disbanded, each going his own way.

The only magus to remain was the resolute Tylalus magus Maximus Se-

veris. He subtly extended his influence back into Verona, under the guise of the heir to the Selvaggio family fortune, using the city to protect the resources he had left. In time, he clawed back a number of minor vis sources and, careful to work through proxies, used his power to support Verona in her ventures, receiving favors in kind.

As Maximus' filia, Lucia grew up in Verona and Castello del Selvaggio at a time when Maximus had grown old and weakening. Her knowledge of Selvaggio's resources and her impatience at the continued survival of her parents undoubtedly contribute to her current ambitions.

## REFUGEES

The guards watching over the player covenant gates encounter a band of some twenty people carrying hastily clutched possessions and heading to the covenant. These are some of the former covenfolk

## Matias the Librarian

**Characteristics:** Int +2 (2), Per 0, Pre 0, Com 0, Str 0, Sta +1, Dex +2 (2), Qik 0

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 45 (45)

**Decrepitude:** 0 (4)

**Warping Score:** 0 (4)

**Confidence Score:** 0 (0)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Custos (granting Academic Abilities), Clear Thinker, Pious Librarian, Ability Block (Martial), Covenant Upbringing, Lamé

**Personality Traits:** Brave +2, Dependable +1, Humble +1

**Reputations:** Dependable 3 (Castello del Selvaggio)

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init -1, Attack N/A, Defense -3, Damage N/A

**Fist:** Init -1, Attack +1, Defense -1, Damage +0

**Soak:** +1

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Area Lore: Lombardy 3 (history), Artes Liberales 4 (grammar), Charm 2 (first impressions), Civil and Canon Law 3 (laws and customs of a specific area), Concentration 3 (reading), Etiquette 3 (Hermetic), Folk Ken 3 (magi), Greek 3 (academic usage), Illumination 4 (academic), Intrigue 3 (rumormongering), Italian 5 (expansive vocabulary), Latin 5 (Hermetic usage), Leadership 3 (junior librarians), Organization Lore: Castello del Selvaggio 3 (resources), Organization Lore: Order of Hermes 3 (covenants), Philosophiae 3 (natural philosophy), Profession: Librarian

ian 5+2 (ensuring order), Scribe 4 (copying)

**Equipment:** Nothing but the clothes he stands up in

**Encumbrance:** 0

**Appearance:** Tired and defeated. Gray hair, lined features, and a very pronounced limp.

Though good with his mind and his hands, Matias is lame and has considerable difficulty in walking any distance unaided. It is a condition that Hermetic magic is apparently unable to cure. Despite his advancing years, he has so far maintained good health, but the upheaval of being forced from his home and the rigors of his recent march means that his age may start to take its toll. Add +1 to Matias' next aging roll, should you make one.

of Castello del Selvaggio who escaped before the defenses and Maximus fell. The band is headed by Matias the librarian, and consists mainly of women, children, and men too old to fight. They have been walking for days and are hungry, exhausted, and frightened.

Trying to maintain dignity despite his condition, Matias speaks for the band and asks for sanctuary. He pleads for the protection of the Aegis and offers to throw himself upon the mercy of the magi if only they protect his charges. He does not give up his entreaty lightly and con-

tinues pleading, if only for the sake of the children. If the refugees are still refused help he asks only that they be allowed to buy bread and water before traveling to the next covenant.

If given the chance to tell his story, Matias describes the fall of Castello del Selvaggio, or at least the events that he witnessed, and his flight from the covenant. He describes how a Redcap delivered a letter on the night of the full moon, a declaration of Wizard War from three aggressors: Patronus, Al-'Aqrab, and Avedutus.

With little time to prepare a magical defense, and needing to protect his covenfolk, Maximus spent the next two weeks collecting vis from his sources and assembling such devices and casting tablets as he could. He called for help from his former apprentices and friends, but help never came. And then word reached Selvaggio that a small army of mercenaries, marching under the banner of Casalmaggiore, was headed towards Lake Garda.

A dispute had broken out between Casalmaggiore and Verona concerning Veronese taxes imposed upon Casalmaggiore merchants, and this was apparently part of the response. Faced with a fight on two fronts, the old man chose to defend his ground, close up the castle, and take his covenfolk securely inside.

The mercenaries arrived the day before the full moon and immediately set up for an assault on the small castle. The captain called for Maximus to surrender or be responsible for the coming bloodshed. The old Tytalus gave a robust response and incinerated the captain with a glance.

## The Fate of Carthage

When visiting Castello del Selvaggio, the covenant's representatives pass through some ruined farmland. The villagers ask for alms from the magi and the priest can be seen blessing the ground and sprinkling holy water before an expectant congregation. The blight was caused by Al-'Aqrab but there is little or no magical residue left

to be detected. Those enquiring after the blight, as the surrounding lands are healthy and green, discover that the lands started dying two seasons before Castello del Selvaggio fell. This is an important point for the players to hear as it is likely that the same fate befalls their covenant, giving them a final two seasons to plan their defenses.



But a moment later, as the sun finally set, the Aegis suddenly dropped. A crossbowman loosed a bolt at the wall, and the wall shattered in an instant, almost dragging Maximus down with it. With the wall breached, an unstoppable knight led a mundane force into the castle and killed all who stood in his way.

Maximus' last act — having fled the mundane assault — was to magically raise a bridge that spanned the lake, allowing Matias and some of the other covenfolk to escape. The effort taxed him greatly, and Matias never saw him again.

## TO THE VICTOR THE SPOILS

By the time the refugees reach the player covenant Avedutus has returned to Casalmaggiore and left Selvaggio in the care of Patronus and Al-'Aqrab. If and when the magi visit Castello del Selvaggio they find a small army of the duke's men camped in and around the covenant and taking advantage of the local resources. The castle walls are adorned with the bodies of its defenders, strung up on gibbets as a sign of Avedutus' victory.

The most glaring feature is the collapsed section of the outer wall, which is easily large enough for an attacking army to pass through. This detail may be important to magi looking to defend their covenant against Avedutus' assault.

Any seeking access to Castello del Selvaggio are turned away in no uncertain terms by the occupying Casalmaggiore force, though this is arguably just a slight inconvenience to magi prepared to use magic against those who might bar their way.

Should the player magi gain access to the castle, both of the *Trattato* magi, Patronus and Al-'Aqrab, can be found within the main hall of the castle discussing its ongoing defense with captains of their military force and the rebuilding of the walls with loyal engineers.



## CONFRONTATION

When confronted about Maximus, the *Trattato* magi claim right of conquest arising from Wizard War. If pushed on his fate, they offer to call him down from the council chamber and a few moments later Maximus' slain body is brought in, seated in an elaborate chair. The child-like Patronus, talking through his talisman mask, acts mockingly towards the corpse and invites the visitors to ask it what they will. He even pretends to summon Maximus' spirit into his mask, allowing the visitors to interrogate the faerie within. There is no spirit to question however, as Al-'Aqrab has already summoned and destroyed Maximus' ghost.

If challenged over the mundane forces used in the attack, Patronus refers to them as grogs and wonders whether the visitors are just envious of the size of their turb. Both magi deny any suggestion that they staged a magical as-

sault with Maximus outside the terms of Wizard War and challenge the visitors to prove it.

Al-'Aqrab is more forthcoming about what the *Trattato* hope to gain if asked directly. They want power, respect, and influence. He claims not to see a need for further violence if the Tribunal accepts this "transaction" and treats the *Trattato* with the deference it has earned. Folk Ken reveals his particular zeal for this, suggesting that his need for respect and power is greater even than the *Trattato's*.

Neither Al-'Aqrab nor Patronus accept certamen, seemingly uncaring at the potential loss of face and remind the visiting magi that they have the duke's men in residence, should they wish for any unpleasantness.

Any confrontation with Patronus and Al-'Aqrab includes Al-'Aqrab calling for guards. You can assume 15 standard soldiers (as per *ArM5*, page 22) armed with crossbows (add the following line to the standard soldier statistics):

## Councilor Migliore Bevilacqua

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per 0, Pre 0, Com +2, Str 0, Sta 0, Dex 0, Qik 0

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 43 (43)

**Decrepitude:** 0

**Warping Score:** 0 (0)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Merchant; Wealthy, Educated, Temporal Influence; Enemies (Verona Politicians), Noncombatant, Weak Characteristics

**Personality Traits:** Diplomatic +3, Honest +2, Political +2

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init +0, Attack N/A, Defense +0, Damage N/A

**Fist:** Init +0, Attack +0, Defense +0, Damage +0

**Soak:** 0

**Fatigue levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

**Abilities:** Animal Handling 1 (horses),

Area Lore: Verona 5 (politics), Artes Liberales 4 (rhetoric), Awareness 2 (alertness), Bargain 3 (city matters), Carouse 3 (staying sober), Civil and Canon Law 4 (Veronese law), Concentration 3 (council meetings), Etiquette 4 (nobility), Folk Ken 4 (townsfolk), Guile 4 (lying to the populace), Hunt 2 (with hounds), Intrigue 5 (alliances), Italian 5 (poetry), Latin 3 (legislation), Leadership 4 (inspiration), Music 1 (compose), Organization Lore: Order of Hermes 2 (magi within Verona), Organization Lore: Verona Council 5 (personalities), Profession: Councillor 5 (Veronese matters), Profession: Merchant 4 (timber), Ride 3 (distance)

**Equipment:** A retinue of notaries and advisors

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)

**Appearance:** Migliore is an impeccably dressed man, unafraid to dis-

play his wealth where others may see it. His fingers are adorned with rings of gold and gemstones and his clothes bear embroidery of gold and silver thread. He looks well for his 43 years, and his hair is still thick and lustrous, though graying at the temples. But take away the pomp and splendor and he becomes quite unassuming.

Migliore Bevilacqua is a timber merchant by trade, but he found some time ago that the best way to support his business was to enter politics and ensure that his family were best placed to receive substantial orders. He has a love of his city and trusts the strength of its walls and its citizens, but he recognizes that Verona has enemies in Lombardy and beyond. And he knows that Verona cannot afford to be held hostage by the smaller dukedom of Casalmaggiore.

**Crossbow:** Init +7, Atk +11, Def +6, Dam +8

Treat them as three untrained groups for the purposes of any combat that occurs here.

These guards menace the magi, taking up positions behind them. Neither the *Trattato* magi nor their guards initiate any violence, but once Patronus and Al-'Aqrab are done, they order the player magi to be removed. One of the combat groups attempts to manhandle the player magi from the hall and escort them from the covenant.

Given that it takes three rounds for the archers to reload, two of these groups switch to their standard weapons if they have cause to shoot their bows. Should the meeting take a violent turn, Patronus uses his array of spells to create various faerie defenders to bolster the mundane guards. Al-'Aqrab quietly and swiftly leaves the scene, quickly trying to entrance any assailants who follow him.

### SIGNS OF WEAKNESS

The *Trattato* may have made a mistake in letting Patronus and Al-'Aqrab secure Castello del Selvaggio, as they are the most likely to betray those they swore oaths with. Coming to an accommodation with these two magi is one option that has a direct influence on how events play out later. For instance, if Al-'Aqrab can be persuaded to abandon the *Trattato* then they lose the capability to bring down the Aegis of the Hearth. So what do these two magi want? In the first instance, they now have a covenant site. It has a Magical aura and access to vis sources and, crucially for Patronus, access to a strong Faerie regio. This is probably sufficient for Al-'Aqrab. If he can be guaranteed the security of this one gain, then his selfish nature takes over and he abandons Lucia's grand project.

Patronus won't leave just on a selfish whim; he'll need something more. Those with Faerie Lore or House Merinita Lore

may recognize Patronus' transformation, and he may be persuaded by offers to help with the final stage.

But neither can be turned if approached together. Such attempts can only be successful if the *Trattato* magi are approached individually, where their selfish aims have chance to express themselves.

### THE DUKE'S ARMY

The visiting magi may have to content themselves with leaving apparently empty-handed. But if they think to infiltrate the duke's garrison, they learn how Avedutus casts his spells (a description of the anvil within the strange wagon), which could be exploited in the coming conflict. This also confirms that Avedutus was part of the assault, the means by which the wall was breached, and that it was Avedutus who hunted and killed the exhausted Maximus. They also learn that while Verona is the duke's next tar-



get, there is apparently another smaller target to be taken in the coming action, which has been decided upon by the duke's consort. None present know the location of this secondary target.

They do know that the campaign is to start next spring, once the gains around Selvaggio have been secured. This should give the player magi time to undertake laboratory work.

## The City in Need

With the army of Casalmaggiore swelling in numbers, the Veronese city council reaches out to the player covenant offering money and charters in exchange for magical aid against the inevitable attack. If the player covenant hasn't seen the danger, then at least the city has.

This is the crucial event that determines whether the covenant or the city is the object of the siege. By this stage, the magi of the covenant understand that the city is a secondary objective for the magi of *Trattato* and that the mundane forces could be drawn away from the city by holding out in the covenant.

## OFFERS OF FRIENDSHIP

Assuming that the losing twin from the first act survived beyond that part of the story, he has found himself in opposition to his brother and is lending his influence to Verona. It is this exile who brings Verona's offer to the covenant.

He arrives with a high-ranking Veronese councilor, Migliore Bevilacqua, and flanked by 30 mounted soldiers and council advisors as an overt show of force. Neither Estensi nor Bevilacqua make any demands, but they do offer the friendship of Verona if the magi would reciprocate. If given the opportunity to speak frankly with the magi, they admit that Verona is concerned that the duke's magical allies would

make a mockery of the city walls and that his army could walk in with impunity. They recognize that they need advice and resources with which to counter a magical assault.

This may be the prompt that the player magi need to realize that the potential threat against their own covenant comes from a combined magical and mundane assault. And unless they have already started looking at how they might defend against such an attack, they probably start doing so now.

This meeting should also emphasize the two likely avenues of assault: pitched battle or siege. The player magi may choose to address one or both of these, and Federico/Giuliano Estensi can act as a military advisor if required.

## A POLITICAL GAME

If the magi are interested in hearing Verona out, they are invited to attend

the council convened in the Basilica di San Zeno Maggiore in the heart of Verona. Bevilacqua champions drafting a treaty with the magi, preferring to call them "philosophers."

But a rival to Bevilacqua (possibly even Ezzalino di Romano, described nearby) addresses the magi directly and cajoles them into admitting their true nature. This councilor, for purely political reasons and a desire to attack Bevilacqua, challenges the magi to prove that they can be trusted and are not in league with the duke. The Gift means that the other councilors immediately find this accusation plausible.

If the player magi, or their representatives address the councilor's baiting well, the council turns in their favor. Remember to apply The Gift's social penalty to any interpersonal rolls made by the magi, and to apply the level 5 Dominion to any spellcasting within the basilica.

Working with a city, or any mundane noble or organization, is not for-



## Verona's Government

The cities of northern Italy are generally organized as communes independent of direct royal rule. In place of a royal court, the city is governed by a council led by a *podesta*, a kind of elected mayor. Around 1220, the unscrupulous Ezzalino III di Romano is influential, becoming *podesta* 1226 and then seizing direct control of the city from 1236. He is a powerful man and much hated by his enemies. He is ruthless and potentially infernally corrupt. This at

least gives the nobles of the region reason to support the Duca di Casalmaggiore in the struggle against their more powerful neighbor. If you use Verona as the backdrop to this scenario you should bear in mind its shifting political situation. From 1226, it is Ezzalino di Romano and not Migliore Bevilacqua who approaches the covenant and he is inclined to be more persuasive in his arguments to ensure that he has his own magical support in the coming conflict.

conflict. But the city understands that this is to protect the magi in the event of any assault and ensure that they are able to safely retreat to Verona.

## Act Three: Storm Front

The final act is triggered when the *Trattato* extend an offer of friendship which, if rejected, is followed by a ritual to spoil farming lands serving the player covenant, declarations of Wizard War from Avedutus, Patronus, and Al-'Aqrab, and finally a direct attack.

With these events, the four antagonists are committed and the duke's army marches upon Verona, while a smaller force of mercenaries under Avedutus' command attacks the player covenant. It is during this part of the story that the protagonists' earlier actions pay dividends. If they succeeded in helping Giuliano attain his crown, then the army besieging Verona can more easily be turned back.

If the events described earlier have played out as described, then Lucia is in effective command of the duke's army, with Avedutus its commander on the ground. The conflict with Verona has been manipulated to the point of war, and Lucia and her companions are on the verge of taking their second covenant.

But if the player magi managed to install Giuliano as the duke, then the armies that assault their covenant and Verona are smaller and weaker, as described later.

The siege of Verona and the assault on the player covenant play out on different timescales, the siege potentially over the course of seasons while the assault in a matter of hours or days at most. The players have the choice of which to defend and which to leave to

## The Offer Described in Game Terms

If the magi take up Verona's offer, they gain the following covenant Hooks and Boons:

*Secondary Income*, Minor Resources Boon  
*Powerful Ally*, Major External Relations Boon

*Mundane Politics*, Major External Relations Hook

These Hooks and Boons are described in *Covenants*, Chapter Two.

The covenant is also granted leave to search for magical places within the city, to which they may then lay claim. If the covenant still houses Matias, he is able to direct the magi to at least one *lacuna*, large enough for two laboratories.

## The Basilica di San Zeno

Damaged in an earthquake nearly a century ago, the basilica is still being rebuilt in 1220. If history takes its course, it will not be finished until late into the 14th century. Architecturally impressive, its entrance consists of two large bronze doors flanked by marble lions. The site is dominated by the tall bell tower, which forms part of the adjoining abbey.

The basilica is the burial place of Saint Zeno, a fourth-century bishop of

Verona to whom a number of miracles are attributed. One miracle said to show his intercession occurred when the Adige broke its banks and threatened to flood Verona. But the waters could not enter the church dedicated to Zeno, no matter that the doors were wide open.

The basilica has a Dominion of 5, and provides a bonus of +1 when attempting to invoke Saint Zeno's aid, who as a local saint has a Divine Might of 25.

bidden by the Hermetic Code. The key provision of the Hermetic Oath, and most often used in Tribunal cases, is that the magus should bring no ruin upon his *sodales* through his interaction with mundanes. The Peripheral Code does, however, forbid magi from working directly for a noble (and by extension any

mundane entity) in the manner of a court wizard. This is circumvented through the use of proxies and go-betweens.

If the magi and the city of Verona can come to an understanding, then the player covenant can call upon a small garrison of Veronese infantry and archers, placed under their direct control in the coming



its fate but the sections here are presented from the perspective of troupe characters being present at both.

## An Alliance Is Offered

Emboldened by the success of the action against Castello del Selvaggio, Lucia sends word, via Redcap, that the *Trattato* are willing to extend the hand of friendship and recognize the player covenant as a chapter house of or vassal to the *Trattato*. All that is required is that this covenant signs a declaration placing it under the protection of Lucia of Tytulus as a recognized legal chapter house of *Trattato di Sangue* and that Lucia, Avedutus, Patronus, and Al-'Aqrab are added to the covenant's list of council members, each commanding a vote. This declaration is binding and in perpetuity. As a symbol of acceptance, Lucia is willing to accept 10 pawns of vis immediately in addition to the undertaking signed by a quorate covenant council.

The Redcap had no knowledge of the letter's content if it is shown to him and seems shocked that magi of the Order would show such disrespect.

## The Spoiled Ground

Two seasons before the assault on the covenant begins, Al-'Aqrab casts his *Fate of Carthage* ritual to ruin some key farming land owned by and near to the player covenant. This is done to tempt the player magi with immediate problems to distract the magi from their preparations. Al-'Aqrab casts this with his disguised casting mastery ability, which hides the wizard's sigil normally detected in spell effects and residues.

## The Siege of Verona

If the player magi have chosen not to engage with Verona, then the siege of the city occurs without them and might play

## The Means of Magical Warfare

While *Lords of Men* discusses mundane warfare, there is the likelihood of magical conflict taking place during this story. The *Hermetic Projects* supplement includes an entire chapter on the means and magic of waging Wizard War. Many of the effects and techniques detailed in that chapter may

be useful inspiration for use in this story, either as additional spells available to the antagonists or as spells and effects that the player magi may invent in order to defend themselves. The *Magi of Hermes* supplement details several magi and their own particular inventions that may provide additional inspiration.

no further part in this scenario. But the duke's army does besiege the city, using Avedutus' enchanted bolts to breach the walls. If the magi do retreat to the city, the siege plays out as described here.

On arrival outside Verona, the duke sends his herald to offer terms to the Veronese. He demands that each councilor sends his wife, sons, and daughters to his camp by way of hostages and that he be crowned duke of Verona with the Veronese nobility swearing fealty to him. The city is confident of resisting a prolonged siege and so does not accept these terms, preferring instead to see the Casalmaggiore army exhaust itself against its walls. But if the magi are within the city, they are included in the war council, and the demand for hostages presents an opportunity for subterfuge that the players may take up.

### THE CITY'S DEFENSES

Verona is a large walled city bisected by the Adige river, which enters the city in the north west, takes a sweeping s-shaped meander and then exits in the south east. With the Duke's army marching out of Caslamaggiore to the south east, this is the obvious point of contact.

Defending the city involves resisting bombardment by siege engine and Avedutus' enchanted devices. The magi should have had time to determine the appropriate defenses and prepare them. Note that Verona spans the Adige river, which means that sor-

ties and spies may find entry relatively easy.

If the magi weather the initial assault, they may still need to deal with a prolonged blockade, which would mean using magic to feed a city and protect it from illness.

### THE FIRST ENGAGEMENT

When the Casalmaggiore army arrives, the duke concentrates his force on the southern wall and attempts an escalade to scale the walls while his trebuchet is brought within range and made ready. This takes most of the day and is clearly visible from the city walls. Once the trebuchet is ready, the duke begins both mundane and magical bombardment with an archer using Avedutus' charged bolts to breach the wall. Each bolt that strikes the wall destroys one of that wall's damage levels.

The nature of the battle and siege rules puts the troupe players at the heart of the engagement. Where the troupe abandons the defending force to its fate, the defending city loses that discrete engagement. In this case, the city must defend against escalade and prevent the besieging enemy from scaling the walls. The players may place any combination of magi, companions, or grogs at the wall. Doing so allows them to influence the outcome.

This is played as a combat encounter, with the troupe characters forming one or more combat group defending the wall against twice their number of

## Describing Verona's Defenses

The *Lords of Men* supplement provides rules for running and deciding sieges. These rules take a story-based approach combined with some simple statistics used to describe castles, towns, and cities.

- **Garrison:** Verona has a +4 weight of numbers bonus, which ensures that a *significant* combat event only happens once per season. While the besieging army initiates many attacks through the season, the large resident garrison easily absorbs most of the pressure.
- **Defenses:** The city has superior defenses, provided by the strong city walls, and a +3 defense bonus. This bonus multiplied by the city's size modifier of 4 means that the walls have a total of 12 damage levels. The strength of the walls means that any checks against enemy artillery happen at a rate of one per

month, or three per season. Verona, given its frequent trouble with its neighbors, has an accomplished siege engineer with an Intelligence of 3 and a Profession: Siege Engineer Ability score of 5.

- **Supplies:** Situated on a river, Verona has a superior supply line. Under blockade it must make a supplies check only once per season and does so with a siege conditions bonus of +5. It is also allowed three failed rolls before the city is starved. At this point, troupe characters must make the standard deprivation checks against starvation as described in *ArM5*, page 180.

Once the siege digs in, the duke's strategy is to blockade the city, deploying his army to surround Verona's southern and western walls and crossing the river to stockade the east.

untrained combat groups consisting of standard soldiers (*ArM5*, page 22). The attacking soldiers take a round reaching the top of the wall, during which they are vulnerable to missile

attacks and unable to make attack rolls against the troupe characters. On reaching the top, they attempt to gain a foothold on the battlements. The troupe characters benefit from

the standard +3 bonus for fighting from higher ground during this round. The attackers cannot disengage from combat here and fight to the death. No side has higher-ground advantage during subsequent rounds but the top of the walls counts as hazardous terrain and adds +2 botch dice to any botches.

At any time before the engagement is won, the troupe may withdraw their characters from the engagement, their retreat being covered by their allies. But this concedes the section to the enemy, giving them the foothold they need to secure the wall. If this happens, the city cannot reclaim it without help from the troupe.

It is worth noting that these combat actions pose little threat to well-prepared magi, which is as it should be, but spellcasting may be hampered by the need for Concentration rolls. During battle, magi must make Concentration rolls against an Ease Factor of 9 in order to cast any spell, as described in *ArM5*, page 82, and they are always cast with stress dice.

If the magi are not able to raise the siege during this initial engagement, either through negotiating an accord, routing the army, or breaking Lucia's hold over the duke, then the siege digs in and events play out on a seasonal basis.

It is worth noting that Avedutus is *not* at the siege of Verona during the initial engagement. He instead leads the attack on the player covenant, with the events timed to coincide.

### THE SIEGE DIGS IN

There is the potential for a siege to become a significant or even central event in a saga as the events now start to play out on a seasonal basis. But this also provides the magi with the opportunity to use their time to develop magical defenses or to plan and prepare to take the battle to the *Trattato*.

In place of the normal rolls used to determine the outcome of siege events,

## Tactics of the Trattato

Lucia uses her Mentem magic and air of seduction to make any attacking grogs forget their purpose, render them insensible, or turn their swords against their own allies.

If Avedutus has any Arcane Connections to his enemies he uses his anvil and hammer casting tools in his wagon to assault them through magic. He does this before taking to the battlefield where his enchanted arms and armor let him attack mundane troops with impunity and potentially outmatch even magi whose magic may be subject to failure in stressful situations. He is acutely aware of his own magical weakness and threats to his wagon can distract him and pull

him out of the battle, which is why he leaves a trained combat group to guard it. It is worth noting that his sword has no constant magical effects, which means it can be used normally against opponents with Magic Resistance.

Al-'Aqgrab is most likely to retreat, abandoning his allies as soon as he sees the odds turn against him.

The almost-faerie Patronus rejoices in summoning/creating forest upon forest of swarming wooden faeries who surge at his enemies. However, these faeries only last a Diameter at best, which means he has little time to prepare and must cast his spells while he is in harm's way.



the troupe magi are presented with a different challenge each season, to which they must find a solution. They may take any approach they wish, including a purely magical solution, to resolving the problem. Failure at any of the events sees the city buckle under the pressure and the frequency with which events must be faced increases: season to month, month to week, and then week to day.

The following events may be presented in any order and repeated where appropriate. Storyguides are encouraged to tailor the events based on the troupe characters present or design new events that present additional challenges.

### Undermining

The enemy engineers use mines to weaken and breach the southern walls. The magi must find a way to anticipate the mines and prevent the mining, or to repair the damage already caused. Failure reduces the city's defense bonus by one and sees an increase in event frequency.

### Artillery assault

The enemy siege engines begin relentlessly pounding the walls, threatening to reduce the southern wall to rubble. The magi must destroy the enemy siege engines, prevent the missiles from striking the walls, or repair the damage already caused. Failure reduces the city's defense bonus by one and sees an increase in event frequency.

### Escalade

Focus moves to the eastern wall across the river and soldiers are committed to escalade; scaling the walls and trying to gain access to the gate houses. The troupe characters must again play the defenders and prevent the gates from being opened. Failure reduces the city's defense bonus by one and sees an increase in event frequency.

### Hunger

The blockade starts to bite as resupply becomes harder. The population are reduced to scratching around for food and are forced to make even the inedible edible. The troupe characters must ensure that a supply route is reopened or that sufficient food for the city can be magically created or brought to the city. Failure reduces the city's siege conditions bonus by one and sees an increase in event frequency.

### Illness

Months of deprivation take their toll on the population. An outbreak of flux (*Art & Academe*, page 47) drives across the city. The magi must find a way to cure or contain the disease. Failure reduces the city's siege conditions bonus by one and sees an increase in event frequency.

### Morale

After having been under siege for so long and enduring so much hardship and death, the Veronese people are ready to sue for terms with the duke. This is a dangerous time when the council may lose control of their people. Failure to restore morale or resolve likely sees the end of the siege as the people accept the duke's terms and those who ruled the city are punished by its new ruler. Unless the magi leave or avoid capture, this may well include them.

### Supernatural Interference

The presence of so much conflict attracts creatures from the four realms to the city. Demons influence the leaders on both sides to take actions which would clearly result in more death. Faeries try to incite acts of fruitless personal valor, feeding off the vitality generated as heroes die tragic deaths. Magical spirits of pain, rage, or hopelessness



start to affect the populous. Finally, divine spirits urge reconciliation in order to prevent more bloodshed. Whatever the creature and whatever the realm, the magi must prevent its plan from coming to pass.

Succeeding in as many events as the storyguide wishes to present means that the city, with the help of their magical allies, has outlasted the duke. After seasons subjecting Verona to siege, he withdraws his army from the surrounding area and returns to Casalmaggiore without his prize.

If the troupe characters helped Giuliano to attain the dukedom, Lucia's grip is not so strong, and the besieging army not so resolute. Reduce the number of siege events that they face by two, making the siege easier to weather.

## RAISING THE SIEGE

The above events cast the magi in the role of being reactive to the duke's assault and subsequent siege. But they may seek to raise the siege by taking direct action. This may not require the magi to enter combat if they have planned ahead and used their time and resources to arm or prepare their grogs, companions, or the Veronese garrison.

Use of spies or magic to gain information on the movement of key personnel in the enemy army reveals when the *Trattato* magi are present and when any of them are away, likely in Casalmaggiore or Castello del Selvaggio. The characters can use this information to time any counter attack.

The players should be free to decide their own strategy of course, but the following battlefield events may be useful:

### Lead the Sortie

The troupe characters, each within a combat group of five men, lead an attack against an equal number of lightly armed levies as they charge from the city gates and assault the earthworks destined to be used in a new mining attempt.

### Secure the Forward Line

With the levies driven away from the earthworks, the troupe characters defend their position against overwhelming odds. Heavily armed soldiers surge to replace the fleeing levies. If they succeed in defeating the attacking soldiers, they have held the line and can make a push towards the enemy command position.

### Run the Gauntlet

The troupe characters make their way through the enemy lines, either protected by a charge forcing a line through the encampment, or by magical means. If they reach the duke's command post, they attempt to take him and his magical guard down.

### Capture the Command

Unless the troupe characters timed their attack for the absence of the *Trattato* magi, the duke is defended by the four magi and a trained combat group of five knights who defend their duke until death. The attempt to take the duke should be seen as a "Heroic Gesture", that is, a troupe character dying during this event does not die in vain. His death carries narrative power and marks the moment when reinforcements arrive from the city, enough to force the retreat, surrender, or outright defeat of the *Trattato* magi and the duke.

## The Covenant Assaulted

The magi of the *Trattato* are less concerned with Verona, even if the troupe magi are all holed up within the city. Their prize is the troupe's covenant and its lands and resources, and it is here that they concentrate their own assault.

A small force of 30 mercenaries are ordered by Avedutus to engage in *chevauchee*, a general raiding and scourging of the land around the player covenant. The intention is distraction and a feint to draw out some or all of the covenant's magi. After a day or two of *chevauchee*, Avedutus brings his main force within sight of the covenant.

## THE WARNING

As the duke's mercenaries gather outside the player covenant, Lucia and Avedutus, safe as it is the eve before the Wizard War begins, request audi-

## The Proactive Course

It is quite likely that the player magi will at least discuss the option of undertaking a preemptive strike against the *Trattato*. To remain within the law, this needs to be done under the protection of Wizard's War. And it is possible for these magi to build an alliance with other covenants and magi to coordinate multiple declarations of Wizard's War. Lucia and her followers are confident... but not that confident. If there is a strong enough force opposing them, they may seek surrender and exile from the Tribunal.

This route allows the player magi to engage in politics with their neighbors, potentially bringing enemies together to fight a common foe. Importantly, it allows them to control the action and the pace of the fight with the *Trattato*.

If the players are successful in gathering a force, the storyguide should allow them to dictate the terms under which they track and confront the members of the *Trattato*. For instance, if they intend to split the four and hunt them individually, the storyguide should present encounters to suit.



ence under cover of truce. If the audience is granted, Lucia explains that the duke desires to make claim upon the land on which the covenant stands in recompense for the loss and insult caused to Casalmaggiore by the city of Verona.

But the Lady Lucia offers to make use of such little influence as she has with the duke and ensure that neither the covenant nor its lands are molested in the conflict with Verona. She urges that there is still time to accept the terms offered by the *Trattato*.

There is no mistaking the intention. This is a direct threat and ultimatum; submit or see the forces of Casalmaggiore unleashed upon the covenant. Lucia points out that her offer of friendship unfortunately expires with the rising of the full moon and commencement of Wizard War. She urges that the player magi find the strength to save the lives of their covenfolk.

## THE ASSAULT BEGINS

The magi of *Trattato* are assuming that their targets will abide by Hermetic law and not assault them until the Wizard War officially starts. They are not so noble and as the sun sets, Al-'Aqrab, in concert with the *Trattato*, casts his *Breaking the Shield* spell, utilizing the *Wizard's Communion*, to bring down the covenant's *Aegis of the Hearth*. The spell has a Sight range, which means that the attacking magi are visible from the covenant. This provides the player magi an important opportunity to disrupt the spellcasting.

As soon as the *Aegis* goes down, Avedutus gives the order, a horn is blown and the crossbowman armed with the wall-breaching bolts moves into position. If the player magi are not prepared, the first volley breaches the covenant wall.

You should use the Standard Soldier statistics from the core rulebook (page 22) for Avedutus' troops. Treat

Avedutus as both vanguard and leader of a trained group of five members.

## THE COURSE OF BATTLE

Once the wall has been breached, the fight for the covenant takes place in three key locations.

### Stop Up The Wall

The covenfolk must defend the breach in the wall against three times their number of enemy soldiers. One of the enemy combat units is led by Avedutus, another defends Al-'Aqrab, and another still defends Patronus and ensures he gets within the walls. Fighting during this event and at this location is on hazardous ground, which ensures that all rolls are stress rolls and adds an extra botch die. Troupe characters may choose to retreat from wall, in which case they move to the next event.

### Holding The Courtyard

If Avedutus and his men force their way through the wall, they achieve the courtyard. It is here, assuming he survives the first event, that Patronus unleashes a swarm of faeries to add to the weight of troops that any troupe characters must defend against.

### The Keep

In addition to any preparations made to defend the central part of the covenant, represented by the idea of a "keep," the troupe characters receive a +1 bonus to attack and defense rolls while they defend the keep. Any troupe character in any part of the covenant during this event gains the bonus. If this event is lost, by the death of one or more troupe characters, or by the surrender of the troupe characters, then the *Trattato* have taken the covenant.

## THE FALL OF THE COVENANT

If the covenant surrenders or is breached, Avedutus leads twenty soldiers in search of the magi. He does not spare them if he finds them so this is a particularly dangerous part of the scenario. He can not be held by offers to talk or to surrender, and orders his crossbowmen to loose as soon as he identifies his targets.

Any who are able to disguise themselves as companions or grogs are able to surrender so long as they make a very convincing and prompt show of laying down their arms and yielding to Avedutus. They are then be rounded up and locked away in whatever passes for a dungeon or secure prison.

During this final event, any surviving magi may choose to face the magi of the *Trattato* directly. For the purposes of these dramatic scenes, the presence of enemy soldiers or troupe grogs can be considered to cancel each other out and the focus should be put onto the magi alone and either the troupe's magi or the magi of the *Trattato* fall.

## The Morning After the Storm

There is no guarantee of a successful outcome to the Wizard's Wars fought by the player magi. The magi must fight with every weapon in their arsenal and go to places they perhaps might not wish to go. If they repel the siege and force their rival magi to capitulate then their covenant is safe and all the territory lost to the invaders is theirs to retain as the spoils of war or return to those who can show a prior claim.

But if their enemies in the *Trattato* are too strong then they may lose their covenant and the saga must take a new direction, perhaps one in which the magi renew their political efforts to claim

back what is theirs.

The magi of the *Trattato* have clearly breached the Code and the protection they enjoy by working behind and alongside Casalmaggiore cannot protect them forever from the will of the Tribunal.

## Experience Points

Each "act" is worth a minimum of five experience points to the characters who took part. Some acts take place over multiple seasons and the experience awards are made in the final season, so treat any action in previous seasons as normal distractions from any study or laboratory work the magi may be involved in.

## Other Rewards

The offer made by Verona, if accepted, is good for at least a generation before unscrupulous rulers seek to claim it back. In addition, with the fall of Castello del Selvaggio, its resources may be up for grabs. The vis sources in particular may become an ongoing source of conflict within the Tribunal, with covenants maneuvering to annex or otherwise lay claim to them. But the site of the covenant itself, within a valuable magical aura, and its connections to other auras in the nearby city, would be attractive to a group of magi out to found their own covenant. And the covenant that controls these sites could

exert strong political pressure, perhaps creating chapter houses under their influence, or agreeing a form of lease with prospective magi.

## Taking the Story Forward

As discussed above, the site of the former covenant of Castello del Selvaggio is open to claims from inside and outside the Tribunal. The site is magical in nature, sits atop a known entrance to the Faerie realm, and is close to valleys that pass through the Alps. Of course, in your own saga, where your "Castello del Selvaggio" could be situated anywhere, it is sufficient that it has an aura and easy access to at least one or two vis sources. If your magi defeat Lucia then your covenant is likely to have a considerable say over how the Selvaggio lands are disposed.

### HERMETIC RELATIONS

If the magi lose their covenant, then Lucia has taken a further step to dominance. Having shown her power, she starts to intimidate other magi into ceding their Tribunal votes to her, under the implied threat of Wizard's War or outright conquest. The magi must then find a way to rebuild elsewhere or to raise enough support to bring Lucia and her covenant down and in doing so reclaim

what they have lost.

If the player magi defeat Lucia they attain a powerful position having proven themselves strong enough to defeat a grave threat. And they potentially have effective control over the resources that belonged to Castello del Selvaggio, a site that could develop into a chapter house. This would grant the *Chapter House Covenant Hook* (*Covenants*, page 19), and the *Minor Hook, Prestige*.

### MUNDANE RELATIONS

Late in the story, the magi are given a choice to either help the city of Verona or turn away. Long memories are a way of life in the Lombard communes and the covenant is seen by Verona as either convenient allies or as treacherous enemies. If the magi helped the city to withstand the assault, they are approached on a regular basis for either advice or outright assistance. The city acknowledges the need to work through proxies and for the most part honors any restrictions placed by the magi upon the relationship.

Engagement with Verona grants the *Powerful Ally Covenant Boon* (*Covenants*, page 21) and the *Mundane Politics Hook*. Rejection of Verona's offer and failure to deal with the Duca di Casalmaggiore imposes at least the *War Zone Covenant Hook*.



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