

Peripheral Code

Writing in the Margins of Ars Magica

Issue 2, Summer 2017

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Credits

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PRESS





Around the Ars Community



Second issues are peculiar things. On the one hand, I think it's legitimately something to be proud of. On the other hand, there's still about a million ways this thing could go wrong. So instead of boasting, I'm happy to instead highlight all the amazing work being done by your fellow Ars players, both here in *Peripheral Code* and elsewhere.

In our first issue, I asked you to contribute to the community by sending me manuscripts for publication. And you did! The second issue of *Peripheral Code* includes work from regular contributors, authors I approached directly hat in hand, and also writers whom I have never met, who sent their pieces in for consideration. You have no idea how gratifying this is, because without your articles *Peripheral Code* would not exist. This is your magazine, and as editor, it's incredibly exciting to put it together.

This issue includes our first adventure, rules for playing Ars Magica solo, and an alternate method for the creation of faerie characters. Our Antagonists column launches with the faerie-themed Court of Roses. Bonisagus and Flambeau got plenty of pages last issue, so this time I turned to the Black Cloaks of House Tremere and Euryalus Koios of Tytalus, formerly of House Jerbiton.

There are two articles in this issue I especially want to highlight, because they illustrate the amazing work being done elsewhere in the Ars Magica community. There may not be any Ars Magica books in the pipeline, but there's new material being produced for this game every month. This is our second issue, but *Sub Rosa* just published its 19th issue, and it's over 80 pages long! It was in *Sub Rosa* that I first read the work of Vincent Garcia-Gomez. In an article on Magical Things, Vincent postulated that the ten rings of the Founder Verditius were each sentient objects capable of casting spells on their own, and he presented the first of these, the Ring of Vim. Excited by the possibilities, I reached out to Vincent and he agreed to design the second of the rings, the Ring of Terram, kicking off our regular column on enchanted items, Goblin Market. I'd really like to see all ten of the rings written up one day, so if you like what you see and you want Vincent to finish the run, please write to me at jason.tondro@gmail.com.

For years, Timothy Ferguson has blogged about Ars Magica (and other things) at his site, *Games from Folktales*. But over the last year, Timothy has been

conducting a long experiment in podcasting. The result is an astonishing 50 episodes, one every week, amounting to hundreds of pages of material. Every month, Timothy publishes the transcripts of the podcast, adding Ars Magica stats for demons, faeries, even entire covenants. It was episode 33, "Whaling in Mythic Europe", which led to this issue's Book of Szabo, a treatise on whales and whaling in Mythic Europe, complete with laboratory texts for spells designed to be used on the mighty leviathans. Timothy is always looking for ideas and input on future episodes; you can find Games from Folktales [here](#) or download the podcast [directly](#). His Patreon, which funds the podcast, is [here](#).

CJ Romer also ran an Ars Magica podcast, this one called Arcane Connection. He's got 17 episodes, which you can find [here](#).

CJ is also an organizer for the Ars Magica fan convention. This year's Grand Tribunal UK is scheduled for August 11-13 in Cheltenham. There used to be a US version of Grand Tribunal, but it's not been held for several years. Wouldn't it be great if someone picked that baton up and ran with it? You can find out more about Grand Tribunal [here](#).

Last year, Project Redcap got a new Head Redcap. For those who do not know it, Project Redcap is one of the oldest community resources for Ars Magica. It is a player-maintained wiki with many resources, including links to campaign websites around the world. For ten years, Project Redcap was administered by Andrew Goronsky, who also contributed to many Ars Magica books over the course of 5th edition. Walter, the new Head Redcap, volunteered for the position when Andy announced his decision to move on. Bookmark Project Redcap [here](#) and check it out.

Walter's first project as Head Redcap was "30 Pages in November", in which readers of the Atlas Forums and the Berkeley list competed to see who could add the most to Project Redcap in one month. (The winner: Team Forums!) But this was only one example of the Ars community's tradition of November projects. This tradition, based at the official Ars forums hosted by Atlas Games, grew out of NaNoWriMo, but instead of writing a novel, individual Ars players set out to write something, anything, Ars Magica related on every day of November. The results have been very interesting over the years. Here's a partial list:

[30 Solomonic Suggestions](#) and [30\(ish\) Verditius Items](#)
[For November](#) by darkwing
[30 Redcap Magic Items](#) by Jarkman
[30 Days in Hibernia](#), [30 Tribunal Cases](#), and [A Saint A](#)
[Day In November!](#) by cj.23
[A Book A Day For November](#) by Sanctaphrax
[Hooks Adventure Outline A Day For November](#) by
Gremlin44
[Vaults of the Order](#) by Timothy Ferguson et al
[The Vanilla Covenants](#) project
[The Covenant of Sabrina's Rest](#) and [The Stories of](#)
[Marco the Liar](#) by Timothy Ferguson

James Andrew

There are many more blogs, websites, and other resources for Ars Magica developed by players, far more than I can highlight here. If you are looking to contribute to Ars Magica and don't know how, I am looking for a reviewer to write a regular column highlighting books, films, games, and online content of interest to Ars players. Could you be that reviewer?

Even if you aren't, consider sending your own Ars Magica material to Peripheral Code. I want to publish your work, and the community wants to read it. You can find our submission guidelines at the end of this issue.





Solo Adventures in Ars Magica

Original rules created by Chris Quin and expanded by Ezechiel357



Perhaps you have a really cool idea for a character that you really want to try out. Perhaps you are geographically isolated and you find play-by-post games annoying. Of all the RPG systems available, I feel that Ars Magica, with its emphasis on laboratory activities and seasonal studies, is ideally suitable for solo play.

A Covenant can be built and finances organized. A character can easily be created and each season planned and played out, research undertaken, spells and items invented. However, characters do not grow in a vacuum, and there will come a point when the Covenant's starting resources have been exhausted. What is needed is a method to determine those random events that make life interesting and to provide stimulus for further studies.

This system allows you to generate these random adventures for your magus.

Solo Play

Perform each seasonal activity as per the rules in the Ars Magica Core Rulebook, Chapter 10. To familiarize yourself with the system, start with just this rule set, but you can enhance your game by considering:

- Using the Covenant Finances rules in *Sub Rosa* (Issue 15, page 14) as the random fluctuation tables and Covenant resources are excellent story generators.
- Using the Aura Variation rules (*Realms of Power: Magic*, page 10).

Step 0 – Mage and Covenant generation

Generate your character and covenant as described in the Ars Magica rules. Below is a summary of the various costs involved in covenant creation.

Specialists have a specific role in Solo Play, and to reflect this, their cost has been adapted from the core rule. Specialists cost build points equal to: (Relevant positive characteristics + Relevant abilities) x2.

Example: Darius of Flambeau (ArM5 page 34) needs a skilled bodyguard, with Str +2, Dex +1, Single Weapon +5, Great Weapon +4. It will cost him $(2+1+5+4) \times 2 = 14$. Other skills and characteristics are not relevant thus are not taken in consideration.

Once the covenant is generated, four derived characteristics are determined:

- **Attack:** potential from the covenant to support any offensive action outside its walls
- **Defense:** potential to resist any attempt to assault the covenant and its inhabitants
- **Reputation:** potential to rely on allies and positive reputation in most social or diplomatic conflicts
- **Resources:** material resources that can be leverage to ease some negotiations or pay fines & levy in case of failed challenges. If untapped for year, the covenant is building reserve that can be used later on.

Each major boon counts for a +3 bonus to the most relevant characteristic, and a minor boon counts for a +1. A boon cannot provide a bonus to more than one characteristic. Hooks do not subtract from these characteristics; instead, their effects are taken into account in the number of dice used to roll if an adventure occurs (see Step 1).

Items	Build Points Cost
Summa (Arts)	Level + Quality (level max: 20, quality max: 11 + (20-level) or 22, whichever is lower)
Summa (Skills)	Level x3 + Quality (level max: 8, quality max: 11 + 3x (8-level) or 22, whichever is lower)
Tractatus	Quality (quality max: 11)
Laboratory Text	1 point per 5 levels
Vis Sources	5 points per pawn/year
Vis Stock	1 point per 5 pawns
Enchanted Items	2 points per 5 levels of effect
Teacher	Com + Teaching + Relevant Skills

Example: Darius is on a hunting spree and did not settle in a regular covenant. His covenant is a small convoy of a few carts and tents settling where his prey leads him. It is a Constantly Mobile covenant (major hook), with a group of Veteran Fighters (minor boon), Loyal to Darius (minor boon). Darius managed to secure the Right (minor boon) to settle wherever he sees fit to hunt – probably in exchange for taking care of more mundane threats (let's hope no Quaesitor looks into the details of such an agreement with the local noble). All this grants Darius's hunting caravan: Atk +2 (Veteran and Loyal), Reputation +1 (Rights). Other characteristics are at 0.

Step 1 – Adventures!

At the beginning of each year, roll for the following:

- Covenant Finances (if applicable)
- Aura Variation (if applicable)
- Adventures!

Make a list of Character Story Flaws and Covenant Hooks and anything else you believe might generate stories. Some virtues (such as Guardian Angel or Gossip) are particularly suitable for generating adventures.

Each year:

- For each Minor Story Flaw or Covenant Hook, roll a Simple Die
- For each Major Story flaw or Hook, roll three Simple Dice

Roll	Effect
1	An adventure occurs. Go to step 2.
2-9	Nothing happens.
10	Bad omens. Add an extra botch dice to the next adventure that year and +1 to the difficulty of the next adventure.

A character may also choose to initiate his own adventure in which he selects from the various options and rewards. This is appropriate when seeking a specific reward.

Example: Darius has the Story Flaw Enemies (Renounced Magus). He also has Hermetic Prestige and Driven, which might be suitable for generating stories. The player rolls 7 Simple Dice (three for Enemies, one for Hermetic Prestige, three for Driven), resulting in 0, 2, 4, 0, 3, 1, 8. An adventure is going to happen as Darius feels compelled to investigate rumors of an infernal hedge wizard, with two bad omens which will make is adventure more complicated (+2 to adventure difficulty).

Step 2 – Adventure Difficulty

Roll a Stress Die, ignoring Botches.

Roll	Difficulty	Base Ease Factor
1-3	Easy	8
4-6	Average	11
7-10	Hard	14
11-15	Very Hard	17
16-25	Impressive	19
26-35	Remarkable	21
35+	Almost Impossible	23

Add any bad omens modifier to the base ease factor; the resulting number is the Base Difficulty of the adventure.

Period of Grace: for young magi (7 years or less after Gauntlet), the difficulty is decreased by 3 points, due to the benevolent help of nearby covenants making your life easier. This period lasts for seven years, until the next Tribunal.

Example: Darius's player rolls a 5, making this an average difficulty. The target numbers for the challenges should be 11+2 for the bad omens, so 13. And the adventure should take a little over ten days. Darius, being 87, is well past his youth and does not benefit from the Period of Grace.

Step 3 – Origin of Adventure (optional)

Roll a Simple Die to determine the origin of the adventure. This is optional as it may be self evident depending on what Story Flaw/Hook was rolled. The difficulty rolled in Step 2 should be a guide for particular options. (See the table on the following page.)

These are only suggestion to inspire creativity. Feel free to alter or come up with your own. Keep in mind that certain virtues or flaws can further impact the difficulty:

- The Gift (Blatant, regular, or Gentle) will penalize most interaction with Mundanes
- Vulnerability to... (Faerie/Infernal/Dominion) will also grant an additional penalty
- Inoffensive to Animals will offset the Gift's penalty when dealing with animals
- Ways of the Forest will provide a bonus in the right terrain





Roll	Type	Easy/Average	Hard	Impressive	Harder
1	Nobility	Knight errant	Local gentry	Greater nobles	Royalty
2	Religion	Friar	Local priest	Monastery or bishop	Militant order
3	Peasant	Local	Farmer	Merchant	City guild
4	Faerie	Knight errant	Local gentry	Greater nobles	Royalty
5	Official	Village headman	Tax collector	Agent of a noble	Papal envoy
6	Criminal	Thief	Outlaws	Murder mystery	Assassin
7	Hermetic	Mercere	Own house	Quaesitor	Archmagus
8	Covenant	Visit by a magus	Nearby covenant	Far away covenant	March
9	Natural	Storm	Wild animal	Disaster	Plague
10	Supernatural	Ghost	Monster	Monster	Dragon

There are no hard rules; use your common sense to make the story challenging and interesting.

For example, it might be possible for a legal dispute to be settled through an exchange of letters, minimizing the negative effects of the Gift.

Example: Darius's player rolls a 1, making this an adventure involving the nobility. Perhaps the local lord takes exception to the sinister Darius wandering his lands.

Step 4 – Timing

Timing	Season	Notes
1-2	Spring	
3-4	Summer	
5-6	Autumn	
7-8	Winter	+1 to all target numbers
9-10	Character choice	Not all story events have to be dealt with immediately. Sometimes a magus may wish to put off an adventure until convenient.

Roll a Simple Die to determine when the adventure will occur during the year. This may modify the difficulty of the adventure as the environment is negotiated.

Example: A 9 is rolled. Darius hears the rumors at the beginning of the year but does not fancy tramping about the countryside during the dead of winter, so he resolves to depart in the spring.

Step 5 – Complexity

Roll	Complexity	Challenges
1-3	Simple	One set of challenges
4-6	Complex	Two sets of challenges
7-9	Very Complex	Three sets of challenges
10	Roll twice on this chart, ignoring any additional 10	

Roll a Simple Die to determine the Complexity of the adventure. This will determine how many sets of challenges will be required to complete the adventure.

Example: Darius's player rolls a 4. This will be a Complex adventure with two sets of abilities being required.

Step 6 – Type of Adventure

Roll 1d6	Type of Challenge
1	Social
2	Combat
3	Magic
4	Legal/Diplomatic
5	Subtle & Sneaky
6	Character choice. There are often multiple ways to resolve a conflict.

Roll a Simple Die for each set of challenges determined in Step 5.

Example: For Darius's first set of challenges, a 1 is rolled, resulting in a Social Challenge. For the second set of challenges, a 9 is rolled, making this Darius's choice. While he would like to avoid conflict with the Local Lord, he needs to play to his strengths, so he elects to use Magic.

Step 7 – Opt Out (optional)

At this stage, having seen the challenge before him, the character may decide not to proceed with the adventure. This is because the difficulty is too high, the rewards too low, or he does not have the right abilities to complete the challenge sets.

Having decided to opt out, the character suffers whatever losses seem appropriate from the adventure's premise. Build Point loss equivalent to a quarter of the challenge's difficulty is appropriate, and these points can be paid from extra BP accrued during past adventures, or in the form of resources or vis (5 pawns for 1 BP).

Example: If Darius passed on this adventure, the only likely consequence is another possible story in a future year (adding an extra dice in Step 1), or he must find a way to pay 3 BP in penalty (13/4 rounded off). However, Darius does not back down in the face of danger!

Step 8 – Proceed with the Adventure

Resolve each set of challenges rolled up in Steps 5 and 6. Each set of challenges has a number of abilities associated with it. The character must select three of the abilities and, along with an attribute of choice, rolls a Stress die against a target Ease Factor equal to the adventure's difficulty in Step 2. (See table below.)

These are Stress Rolls. In the event of a botch, roll one Botch Die plus one extra Botch Die for each Bad Omen from step 1.

All Organization and Realm Lore rolls should be relevant to the situation. Additional skills can be used if appropriate (for example, Hunt if a wild beast is involved).

The character must select a different ability and attribute each time, and cannot repeat the selection in this adventure until each ability and attribute has been used. This means very complex missions with several sets of challenges may well involve every attribute. Sometimes it requires quite a stretch to see how a characteristic can be paired with certain skills, but this can force you to think in a creative way, and anyway, nobody is going to criticize your choices.

The character can boost any of these rolls with the use of an appropriate spell or enchanted item. The magnitude of the spell or item effect is added to the ability roll to solve the challenge. If this option is used for multiple rolls, a different spell or effect must be used each time.

You also have the possibility to use a specialist for a single test during a set of challenges. In that case, you

Social	Combat	Magic	Legal/Diplomatic	Subtle & Sneaky
Folk Ken	Awareness	Awareness	Artes Liberales	Stealth
Etiquette	Martial (any)	Supernatural	Law	Legerdemain
Charm	Brawl	Realm Lore	Organization Lore	Guile
Intrigue	Leadership	Parma	Folk Ken	Awareness
Guile	Stealth	Penetration	Intrigue	Survival
Organization Lore	Athletics	Magic Theory	Guile	
Carouse		Certamen		
		Finesse		





use his or her Characteristic + Ability instead of yours.

Finally, Covenant abilities can be tapped to increase the chance of success. It is possible to gain a bonus up to a single characteristic of a Covenant for a single roll. The bonus granted by a Covenant characteristic can even be spread over several rolls, but will only replenish at the end of the year.



As with every adventure, Confidence Points may be used to affect these rolls.

Example: Darius elects to do the Magic Challenges first, supported by three spells. He selects:



- *Infernal Lore 2 + 3 Int + 4 The Inexorable Search (InCo 20)*

- *Penetration 6 + 0 Sta + 5 Curse of the Desert (PeAq 25)*



- *Parma 5 + 2 Qik + 5 Gift of the Bear's Fortitude (MuCo 25)*

He started by tracking the diabolist through Intelligence and Infernal Lore (+9 to his roll), confronting him with Curse of the Desert to capture him alive (+11) and finally quickly bolstering his defenses to resist the diabolist's magical counter-attack (+12).



For the Social Challenge, Darius will have to cope with the side effect of his Blatant Gift: -6 to social rolls. He will be using:



- *Folk Ken 2 + 1 Per + 3 Whisper through the Black Gate (InCo(Me) 15)*



- *Guile 3 + 2 Str + 6 Twist of the Tongue (PeCo30)*
- *Etiquette 2 -1 Com + 3 Calm the Motion of the Heart (PeMe 15)*



He tried to gather some information prior to meeting the noble by talking to dead people (+6, no Blatant Gift penalty for that), then used a mixture of lies and intimidation (+11-6=+5) to prevent some of his interlocutors from opposing him, and trying to remember some social graces (+4-6= -2) along the way. Guile + Strength is usually not a combination used, but that's what Darius was left with and it could be interpreted as a clumsy attempt to power his way through with lies and a display of martial abilities. It was still better than any alternative he had.



Step 9 – Determine Results

The success of the adventure depends on the success of the three Abilities rolls in each of the sets of challenges in Step 8. For each set of challenges:



- **Three Successes:** Select a Reward plus 5 experience points

- **Two Successes:** Select a Reward

- **One Success:** Select both a Reward and a Loss (or a Story Event)

- **No Successes, or Complete Failure:** Select 2 Losses



- **Each Botch in step 9:** Select an additional Loss

For each set of challenges, the character gains one experience point and one confidence point.

Example: Darius rolls his dice against a target of 13.

First challenge:

- *Tracking of 9 + die roll of 5 = 14. Success!*

- *Penetration of 11 + die roll of 3 = 14. Success!*

- *Parma of 12 + die roll of 0, a potential botch followed by 3, 0, and 1. Two extra botch dice were rolled thanks to the 2 bad omens) = 0. Botch!*

Second challenge:

- *Folk Ken of 6 + die roll of 5 = 11. Darius's player spends a point of Confidence to get a final total of 14. Success!*

- *Guile 5 + die roll of 0, followed by 2,6,9. No botch = 5. Failure.*

- *Etiquette -2 + die roll of 8 = 6. Failure.*

The Magical challenge has two successes and a botch, so Darius will pick up a reward, a loss, one xp, and one confidence point. He was so obsessed with capturing the diabolist that he rushed into the fight without the appropriate protection. The social challenge allows him also to pick a reward, a loss, one xp, and one confidence point. He gathered good intel but was unable to put it to good use, not only because of his Gift, but also thanks to his lack of social skills (he missed two tests by more than 6, the penalty linked to the Blatant Gift).

Step 10 – Rewards

For each set of challenges determined in Step 9, determine the rewards for successfully completing each challenge. Pick from the following:

- **Build Points.** Gain a number of Build Points (Covenants page 5) equal to the Base Difficulty of the challenge divided by 2. This allows for enchanted items, books, money, vis, or the recruiting of specialists.

- **Remove a Flaw/Hook** gained on a previous adventure.

- **Covenant Boon (Minor).** The boon is temporary if the difficulty was below 10, but permanent if the difficulty was 11 or more.

- **Increase a Minor Boon to Major.** The difficulty must be 13 or more.

- **Covenant Boon (Major).** The difficulty must be 15 or more.

- **A Minor Virtue.** The difficulty must be 20 or more, and a Very Complex challenge.

- **Reduced Time.** The adventure is completed faster than expected in Step 12.

Temporary effects last a number of seasons equal to the Base Difficulty.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive. Players are urged to be imaginative.

Example: Darius could select 14 Build Points (difficulty 14 divided by 2 times two rewards). He recovers a Quality 14 tractatus on Infernal Lore. Or, this could be split into 10 pawns of vis and a tractatus of quality 12 (for example).

Since this adventure had a difficulty above 11, he could receive a permanent minor boon. Considering the adventure, Local Ally, Prestige, or Promised Favor could all be suitable -- after dispatching the diabolist, some people owe him and stories about his skills start to spread. Considering Darius's mindset and drive, it is unlikely that he would have recruited any henchmen from the diabolist (the Criminals Minor Boon), but maybe he needs to bolster his troops.

Finally, he could upgrade a minor boon into a major one; for example, his Veteran Fighters might become Heavy Cavalry. As a reward for getting rid of this evil threat that cursed his wife and daughter, a rich merchant gave Darius his best horses as reward.

Any combination of build points and minor boons are suitable.

He also gains 2 experience points and 2 Confidence points.

Step 11 – Losses

For each set of challenges determined in Step 5, determine the possible outcomes for failing each challenge.

Roll a Simple Die on the table, or pick from the following effects. It is expected that the nature of the Story Flaw/Hook being rolled in Step 1 should suggest the type of rewards and losses.

- **Story Flaw:** If the difficulty was below 13, the flaw is temporary.
- **Covenant Hook (Minor):** If the difficulty was below 13, the flaw is temporary.
- **Increase a Minor Hook to Major:** If the difficulty was below 15, the flaw is temporary.
- **Covenant Hook (Major):** Only if the difficulty was above 15.
- **New Minor Flaw:** Only if the difficulty was above 18.
- **New Major Flaw:** Only if the difficulty was above 22.

Temporary effects last a number of seasons equal to the Base Difficulty.

Damage may be soaked and healed in the usual fashion. A shield grog may take the wound in addition to his own.

Roll	Losses	Notes
1-5	Build points	Lose a number of build points (Covenants p5) equal to the base difficulty of the challenge divided by 2.
6	Warping points	Gain warping equal to the challenge difficulty divided by 5 (rounding up).
7-9	Wound	Each person on the adventure takes damage equal to the difficulty + 5 + a stress die.
10	Special	Select from the list above.

Example: Oh dear, 2 losses. Darius rolls a 2 and a 7. This costs him 7 Covenant Build Points and a wound. The Build points cost Darius 20 points of Vis and 3 Resource points. He takes a heavy wound (difficulty 13 + 5 + 2 stress dice minus 5 points for armor). He chooses the Inhospitable Local Lord Hook. This is a temporary Hook lasting 13 seasons.

Step 12 – Time

The adventure takes a number of days equal to:

- The base difficulty from step 1
- plus one day for each set of skill challenges
- plus one day for each failed ability roll
- plus one day for each botch in step 10

The time taken up in adventure, as well as the necessary healing time, should be taken into consideration when determining how much of each season is available for lab work or other study.

Example: It takes Darius 19 days in total to track down and deal with the hedge wizard. (13 for base difficulty plus 2 for both the challenges plus 1 for the botch and 3 for the fails).

Conclusion

Weaving all the results from the above process into a cohesive story is well worth the effort.

Example: In the Spring of 1232, Darius of Flambeau hunts a diabolist hiding in the manor of Baron Ramon. A battle ensues with Darius the victor, however he suffers a heavy wound and spends quite a bit of vis. He will not rush in so carelessly next time.

Unfortunately, he is heavy-handed in his dealings





with Baron Ramon, and is caught trying to stuff the body of the diabolist into a small chest. Darius manages to buy his way out of further trouble but the Baron remains aggrieved and the payment of so much silver will put Darius's little covenant into financial distress. While Darius is confident the Baron will eventually calm down, it might be worth avoiding his lands for the next few years. Perhaps Darius should do something about that.

He staggers home clutching his precious tractatus, while vowing to get better armor next time and to bring along a shield grog.

Optional Features

Acquiring Books, Tractatus and Lab Texts

As long as the magus can pay Redcap fees, he can order as many books and tractatus as he wants. Summae can only be borrowed (unless earned as the Major Boon Exceptional Book).

Tractatus are not lent, they are sold for 1 pawn and their quality is random: 7+1d6. They are usually delivered the next season, but if the covenant has a large collection of tractatus (10 or more) on one topic, it might take longer to secure a new one (1d3 seasons).

For lab texts, it is easy to find a lab text for any spell present in the core rulebook. For a spell of general level, it becomes more costly and difficult to source higher level variants (magnitude 7+). Increase the BP required by 50%.

For spells coming from other sources, their access can be more limited and might require an adventure or initiation to a Mystery Cult. (See table below for more information.)

Looking for a Teacher or Trainer

Consider this a simple adventure (one set of challenge) of social type with the possibility to use a Craft/Profession/Supernatural skill on top the usual list of skills.

Type of learning	Difficulty
Training through practice	Master's skill + 3 (level max: 9)
Teaching	Teaching source quality (level max: 9)

The teaching source quality does not take into consideration any virtues or flaws the magus might have.

Playing with Groggs and a Companion

Your magus wants to bring grogs with him? If they are generic grogs, they can be handled as a Boon providing a bonus to Attack or Defense. If they are more unique, they are handled as specialists. Each magus can always take a shield grog with him, without special skill but able to take a hit. If you would like to have a companion, pay for him as a specialist.

Keep in mind that having numerous specialists to cover every kind of situation will make challenges trivial and remove the element of risk; adventures will become an exercise in the harvesting of rewards. You should limit yourself to one specialist adventuring with a magus.

Alternatively, you could create a fully fledged companion without paying his cost as a specialist. However, he will have his own agenda and won't adventure with the magus. He can also have one specialist accompanying him. The advantage of having a companion such as this is that potentially lengthy adventures lasting more than ten days can be delegated to the companion and the magus won't lose his season in the lab.

Book	Level/Quality	Cost per year in pawns	Availability
Roots (Art)	5/15	1	1d3 seasons
Roots (Art)	6/21	2	1d3 seasons
Summa (Art)	10+1d10/15-1d6	2	1d3 seasons
Summa (Art)	17+1d6/13-1d6	3	1d6 seasons
Roots (Ability)	2/15	1	1d3 seasons
Summa (Ability)	5/12	2	1d3 seasons
Summa (Ability)	8/10	3	1d6 seasons

Final Recommendations

My recommendations, if you want to use this rule set:

- Start with a mage fresh out of Gauntlet.
- Start a Spring covenant with 300 Build Points where you are the only magus, with four to six minor hooks and boons or equivalent.

Two virtues are really powerful in this rule set: Gentle Gift and Self Confident. Consider that you have a -3

penalty from the Gift in any social challenge involving mundane folk — and four origins directly involve interaction with mundanes. The Gentle Gift is a +3 bonus in a lot of challenges.

Self Confident allows you to get a +6, converting a big failure into a success, so obviously that can really swing the result of a challenge.



Fairy characters – Quick & Easy Fairies, Fairies Everywhere

by Cathelineau

The purpose of this article is to offer a quick method for the creation of fairy creatures, whether to offer a (literally) fabulous alternative to a group of players, or to integrate fairies into meetings and events in your saga. Change your adventures; forget dungeon crawling and laboratory dwelling. Discover the amazing awkwardness of fairy tales — now you can be part of them too.

In this article, you will find a tutorial which explains how to create your own fairy character, as well as a list of hooks and tips to use this tool at your game table.

Fairy characters – Quick & Easy

This tutorial is based on general principles of Faerie as described in the *Ars Magica* rulebook. It does not rely on the rules of *Realms of Power: Faerie*. Indeed, we hope to create simple rules to quickly create fairy creatures. The mechanics are essentially those of the basic manual. All you need to know is described in the main *Ars Magica* rules — only Bonisagus magi like crawling in scriptures. Well, if you have a Bonisagus' soul, you may be able to adapt the more hard-core rules of glamour.

To get a fairy character, you will have to follow five steps :

1. Choice of nature
2. Allegiance
3. Balance of Virtues & Flaws
4. Characteristics
5. Supernatural power

1 - Choice of Nature

The nature of a creature is somehow its essence. It's a mythological or fabulous archetype encompassing a physical appearance but also predetermined behavior. Each nature is defined by a concept (a small group of sentences that summarizes the manner in which this

being interacts with the mundane), a main characteristic, a Virtue (specific to the species), a list of attributes (objects, possessions, typical elements of that nature), and finally taboos (these are Supernatural Flaws: rules that a fairy creature must not break under any circumstances; if that happened this creature would lose all its power points and three levels of fatigue).

Choose the nature of the character; write its concept, its main characteristic, its Virtue, one of the possible attributes, and at least one of its taboos. Once that is done, go to the next step.

Here you will find a few suggestions of balanced fairy natures, but feel free to invent others. There are lots of mythological creature archetypes, after all.

Dryad (STA)

Concept: I am an evergreen maid of the woods. I hunt the humans who ransack my forest, but invite in those who show respect for nature.

Attributes: A wood staff, plant necklace, flower tiara, or little bird.

Plant Fusion (Virtue): Can merge with a tree in one round, and emerge from the trunk of another on any following round.

Taboos: Cannot damage a mundane plant; may not hurt or kill a mundane animal; cannot drink the water; cannot shout or whisper.

Elf (DEX)

Concept: I descend from Norse beings, guardians of elven kingdoms where no mortal should enter. I sometimes share my music or my dances with humans, to better make fun of their awkwardness.

Attributes: A bow, hat, cap, shoes, or musical instrument.





Accuracy (Virtue): Gets a +3 bonus when attacking with a ranged weapon.

Taboos: Cannot speak other than singing; can't cry or laugh; can't apologize; cannot interrupt an artistic representation.



Folktale Animal (COM)

Concept: I am an animal (fox, boar, bear, lion, crow) with humanlike mentality, who distrust their own kind and love to play tricks on humans, or that mimic human customs, lifestyle and hierarchy.

Attributes: A particular weapon, cap, hood.

Motley humanity (Virtue): Folktale creatures are not hindered by sacramental or religious behaviours, and have no penalty when they are in the Divine aura generated by a mundane community.

Taboos: Cannot bear the company of another species of folktale animal (at the player's choice; can be selected several times); can't buy his food; cannot enter a house where he was formally invited to enter (have to be an intruder).



Fair lady (INT)

Concept: Like most of the fairy maids, I choose a mortal and will do anything to occupy all his thoughts. Some of my friends want to kill or marry their chosen one; most of us have personal goals that nobody knows, or we are very involved in the politics of the fairy courts.

Attributes: Wand, dress, crown, jewellery.

Talented Artistry (Virtue): A +2 bonus when dancing, singing, or painting.

Taboos: Can't see something spilled without picking it up and putting it away; cannot cross a circle drawn on the ground; can't draw blood; cannot succeed at a Concentration roll.



Ghosts (PRE)

Concept: I hunt the mortals of the places I live in. I pursue a specific family with my terrifying scream, from generation to generation.

Attributes: Chains, shroud.

Immaterial (Virtue): A ghost may pass through objects, walls, and characters.

Taboos: Cannot enter an inhabited place without having been invited; cannot touch mundane things or people; cannot talk, see or hear.



Giants (STR)

Concept: I protect my mountains, where I don't tolerate the presence of intruders; I live alone and hate humans (they hate me too). Some giants are also guardians of

portals to fantasy and take that role very seriously. They let pass only followers of their fairy court, which creates problems.

Attributes: Club, fur coat, ring.

Huge Body (Virtue): All giants have +3 Size, making them harder to fight and to kill (and harder to dress as well).

Taboos: Can't lie; cannot pick up rocks because his hands grind them; cannot hold objects he hasn't made himself (they fall from his hands); cannot succeed at Legerdemain or Stealth rolls.

Leprechauns (QUI)

Concept: I live away from humans, but if they want to bargain with me or cause me trouble, I love to play pranks on them and persecute them.

Attributes: Hat, shoes, pot, flower.

Tricky (Virtue): A +2 bonus for Legerdemain, Stealth, or Bargain rolls.

Taboos: Can't lie; can't hurt someone calling him by his name; can't do harm to a family of humans in particular; cannot stand a particular animal species.

Mythological beasts (PER)

Concept: I let mortal children come close and I play with them, but I run from the adults; old and noisy humans are dangerous, I attack them if they try to catch me.

Attributes: Necklace, ribbon, garland of flowers.

Tireless (Virtue): Long travel never inflicts fatigue.

Taboos: Cannot cross a river; cannot refuse food which is handed out; cannot spend a night without having howled at the moon for an hour; cannot communicate with the mundane representatives of its species, who flee or attack it on sight; can't eat in the company of other characters (they're too intimidating).

2 - Allegiance

Most fairy creatures are held accountable to one of the fairy Courts, which is interpreted as a Virtue (Social Status, major). Fairies of a given Court are well-organized and can help each other. But a fairy doesn't have to follow the same masters forever. There are four major fairy Courts, corresponding to the seasons. You must choose the Court of birth for your fairy creature, as well as which she serves today (which may be the same one).

Here is a summary of the four main fairy Courts (with their themes), but you are free to invent wild or minor Courts:

- I was born in the... Court of spring... because I am a creature... of youth and renewal, of joy and dance,

hope, life and love, from forests and lakes.

- I was born in the... Court of summer... because I'm a creature... of passion, anger, power, beauty and wealth, from the sky, the light, the Sun and the clouds, fire.

- I was born in the... Court of fall... because I am a creature... of melancholy, of the past, time, memory, from mist, seas and storms.

- I was born in the... Court of winter... because I am a creature... of revenge, fear, violence, ice, cold, sadness and death, from mountain, marshes, of the underworld.

Change of Allegiance

If the current Court of this creature is not her Court of birth, add a sentence to her concept to explain how she changed allegiance. Here are a few suggestions:

- **Fidelity:** I became friends with another fairy creature, maybe my twin brother or sister; they decided to quit our Court, and I did the same by attachment or bandwagoning.

- **Conflict:** I quarrelled with other creatures, old friends, and I have a feeling that only a new Court can help me take revenge in the most beautiful way. I asked in person to join my new allies.

- **Corruption:** Courtiers or the Queen herself made me tempting promises of power, luxury, or something that I have wanted for a long time; my current allegiance serves my interests.

- **Seduction:** I adore one of the strange creatures of a new Court; I fell under its spell and I live for it. This feeling is probably not shared. In any case, I became her devoted servant. It is probably a fairy hex, because fairy beings cannot love.

- **Change:** Something changed my essential nature, and my essence itself aligned with new sentiments. I just joined the Court that reflects my new character best.

- **Duplicity:** I still serve another Court, but I try not to talk about it; it's a known secret to me. I spy on others and I bring everything to my true masters, knowing that this double game can cost me much...

- **Versatility:** I don't really have a reason to serve these monarchs more than others, but I was tired of my old friends; I decided to change and for now, I'm having fun here.

The Nemesis

Fairy beings are rowdy, mischievous, and facetious. There are few who don't have personal enemies. To represent this, you must designate your Nemesis. In terms of rules, the Nemesis is considered a Flaw (Story, major). Choose it from the following possibilities:

- **One Fairy Nature:** Among these creatures is a single powerful opponent, or else you suffer the enmity of all these creatures in general. It can be her own species.

- **Her Fairy Court:** The leaders of this Court despise this creature and expect nothing good of her services; they reproach her and want to send her away. She serves them despite their orders, hoping to get back in their good favours.

- **Another Fairy Court:** The rulers of this Court, or all the Courtiers of this faction in general, don't like her. Maybe it's a personal hatred, or else it is due to a war between her current Court and this one.

- **The Mundane World:** Mundane animals feel a kind of wickedness coming from her; they flee her or hate her. Humans despise or attack her on sight.

- **The Divine:** The Church sees her as a servant of Satan. The servants of God and the angels do not want to deal with her, or they seek to banish her. Believers always interpret her actions as devilry.

- **The Infernal:** She has already played tricks on demons, who see her as a nuisance to their projects and seek to destroy her. A demon may even be dedicated to destroying her.

3 - Balance of Virtues and Flaws

At this point, the character is already balanced in Virtues and Flaws. If you wish, you can select up to 5 points of additional Virtues for your character from the rulebook (but no Hermetic virtues, of course, you naughty fay). You must then balance these with as many points of Flaws. Adapt them to your concept as a fairy being.

For example, you may pick up "Outsider" and interpret it as "a stranger in her own Court" or "other fairies see you as too-human". In addition to the Virtues and Flaws available, you can also choose from the following:

New Virtues

Bombast (Supernatural, major)

This creature has a +15 Supernatural power bonus (see below).

Preposterous Display (General, major)

Should you try something holding the attribute chosen by your Nature, you gain a +1 bonus to the roll.

Presence (Supernatural, minor)

This creature has a +5 bonus to Supernatural power (see below).

Inventive (General, minor)

This character has an extra charm (see below).



New Vices

Taboo (Supernatural, major)

Select one additional taboo found in those of this fairy nature.

Ban (Social Status, major)

Although almost all fairy beings belong to a fairy Court, some have chosen to leave their friends in order to live alone, or else they have been banished from their Court. They do not always find new allies. Such creatures are rare and even more unpredictable. Choose this Flaw to represent the independence of a fairy character. In this case, she loses all the benefits of her allegiance Virtue.

Lack of Confidence (Personality, major)

Should you lose the attribute of you Nature, or should it be stolen, you suffer a -1 penalty to all rolls until you get it back.

Frivolous (Personality, minor)

This character has a -5 penalty to Supernatural power (see below).

4 - Characteristics

The characteristic associated with your character's Nature is automatically set at +6. You're supernatural, aren't you? Now you know it.

To choose the values of your other characteristics, spend 7 points as in the creation of a regular character. Refer to the basic manual for more details. Note that this means that a fairy creature is superior to a mere human (since fairies don't have to spend points for the characteristic associated with their Nature).

5 – Supernatural power

In this last step, you determine your character's Faerie Might and Charms. The base Might of a fairy character is 5, possibly modified by Virtues or Flaws (Bombast, Presence, or Frivolous).

When you have calculated your character's Might, you can choose her Charms. The creature selects Charms with a combined level equal to her Might, and can have no more than Might/5 in individual Charms. Characters with Might 0 have no Charms. Might that is not used to select Charms can be allocated to Penetration. Each Charm is a power and has a Might cost when it is used, as explained in the basic manual. Below is a list of suggestions for Charms, but you are free to invent others, with the agreement of the other players (be sure not to crush entire armies with a single blink, though). You can also design new charms based on formal Hermetic spells (but not on rituals). Fairy creatures are unaware about the spell supplements, and their magic is considered in any case to be spontaneous.

List of Suggested Charms:

- **Level 1:** Get a +1 bonus when rolling a stress die for a specific ability. Turn an object into another object of the same size. Create a small object, chosen when this Charm is selected, for 1d10 rounds.
- **Level 5:** Get a +3 bonus when rolling a stress die for a specific ability. Increase a chosen characteristic by +1 until midnight. Increase or decrease the size an object. Create a small object, chosen when this Charm is selected, that lasts until midnight.
- **Level 10:** Get a +6 bonus when rolling a stress die for a specific ability. Increase a chosen characteristic by +2 until midnight. Turn an object into another object of bigger or smaller size. Create a small object that lasts for a month.
- **Level 15:** Get a +9 bonus when rolling a stress die for a specific ability. Increase a chosen characteristic by +3 until midnight. Transform a mundane animal into another animal or an object of the same size (choose what you turn things into when you select this Charm). Create a fairy animal for 1d10 rounds; it doesn't necessarily obey you. Levitate one meter from the ground. Become invisible for a round.
- **Level 20:** Get a +12 bonus when rolling a stress die for a specific ability. Increase a characteristic by +4 until midnight. Transform a human or something magical into a mundane animal or object. Create a magical object that is bound to you, allowing you to feel what it touches (if the object breaks, you suffer a minor injury). Create a fairy animal (Might 5) which serves you. Summon an intelligent fairy being, of your own Nature (Might 0) for 1d10 rounds. Take on the appearance of a living thing in sight.
- **Level 25:** Fly. Be invisible. Make somebody you touch be invisible until midnight.

Once this is done, just you more to find a name for this colourful character and send her to harass your favourite Magi!

Tips & Hooks

How to Pimp My Fay

If you don't have a clue which Charm to choose, read the concept of the character again; it may be helpful. Go out, breathe and see the sun shine. Read a book, watch a movie. Let your fantasy become reality. Ask your friends, storyteller or mom for clever advice.

Fairies, Fairies Everywhere

In a usual game of Ars Magica, players play grogs, companions or magi. But in this scenario, all players play a fairy being. Well, it's quite different, as you can guess.



Their actions can be linked to the ongoing campaign, or not. Maybe are they sent by a fairy Court to investigate a place, bring back a valuable item, or take revenge on a disrespectful mortal. Maybe they have until the full moon to save a fairy friend from a bad fate. Or let them find their own goals in the countryside, and watch them torment the poor inhabitants. Some Magi may have to clean up the mess next time... Yes, I'm talking about your, regular characters!

You don't have to be smart or cautious in a game like this, because fairy creatures aren't hungry and cannot die. If a fairy creature is harmed and (following the wound table) are incapacitated, she simply fades away and goes back to Arcadia, the Faerie realm. She may return to the mundane world in a few days, at full power. Although, being slaughtered by nervous peasants or destroyed by *Creo Ignem* spells is never a pleasant journey.

Hook: A New Star is Born

The inhabitants of a region begin to tell all sorts of stories about a creature that lives in the neighbouring woods. This thing, whose identity is unknown, will creep at nightfall to isolated houses, banging on the walls or blowing in the windows. There is no question that a new magical creature has appeared in the land. But this is your territory! She has to go bother humans elsewhere! We have to say some words to this intruder...

Casual Players as Fairy Visitors

It might be that one of your friends has heard of your sessions of *Ars Magica* and wishes to discover the roleplaying thing. In these situations, it can be tricky to integrate her into your group of players. The rules of the game can seem boring to a beginner who doesn't even know yet if the very principle of roleplaying suits her. On the other hand, it is also more difficult to interpret a character that you did not create yourself. Integrating a whole new magus or companion into a lengthy adventure is not easy, while playing a grog while the other players are masters of magic can be frustrating or give the feeling of being relegated to second place.

Other times, some of your friends are interested in *Ars Magica*, but do not have enough free time to attend each game session.

You can suggest to these curious or casual players that they play a supernatural being: they are wacky and unpredictable, so their sudden appearance can easily be explained. If they do not return for several sessions, or at all, the explanation is easy: this creature has forgotten mortals, has better things to do, or took ill for some convoluted reason, probably known only by her.

Hook: Envoy of the Queen

One of the Queens of the fairy Courts is particularly interested in one of the mages of the covenant. Maybe it's because she finds him physically pleasing, or because of how he acts during his adventures, or because of the area of his research in the laboratory. This noble lady has sent one of her agents to contact the magus. It is likely that the envoy's real mission is ultimately to abduct the target of the Queen's interest and take him to her palace, like it or not...

So Far, Much Trouble

Keep in mind that fairy beings don't gain experience points or have Abilities. When a storyteller asks players to roll a specific Ability, fairies only have their characteristic plus the roll of the die. This means they're bad at doing things, even if it may seem easy for random grog.

Fairies are only truly good at what they are (the characteristic tied to their Nature) and what they are dedicated to (Charms that grant a bonus when rolling a specific Ability). Pick Charms according to the creature's spirit. Fortunately, fairies have good values in characteristics: this can save the day.





Shield Grog for House Tremere

The Black Cloaks

by Jason Tondro



"Then we will fight in the shade."— Herodotus's *Historia*

The Black Cloaks are elite shield Grog trained by House Tremere. Their training is inspired by the Spartans of Lacadaemonia, though most are recruited from the Bulgarian or Hungarian peoples. No one outside of House Tremere is sure how many Black Cloaks there are, probably a few hundred. They must be physically excellent specimens and are drilled in obedience and martial prowess from childhood; in the winter of their 14th year they are cast naked into the mountains. Those that reach safety are given their black cloak, but their training is not over. Many do not survive the training process and others are weeded out and join the regular ranks of the Turb. Those that complete their training are masters of fighting with long spears and massive steel shields (emblazoned, naturally, with the symbol of House Tremere). They can ride, but prefer to run and fight on foot. Their back-up weapon is a short sword. All speak perfect Latin; many, in fact, speak better Latin than the magi to whom they are assigned.

Black Cloaks are trained to obey magi and doing so is a point of pride for them; this doesn't mean they agree with their orders, but they will execute those orders to perfection. Black Cloaks believe they are the best shield grogs in the Order, and they perceive any other duty as beneath them. A Black Cloak will perform manual labor if ordered by a magus, but will hate his master for it, seeing it as an intentional humiliation. However, they will tolerate this, as long as no one else is assigned the task of guarding a magus. When a Black Cloak finds out that his magus chose someone else to protect him, this is the greatest of insults. More than one shield grog has found himself kidnapped at night, tied up, and dumped in a river by a territorial Black Cloak.

Mechanics

Black Cloaks are elite shield grogs, and they violate the normal rules for grogs in three specific ways.

- First, they have a Major Personality Flaw: Proud. This is the source of their violent territoriality, but it also ensures they will always obey their magus, even if the orders are humiliating or suicidal.
- Second, they have more points in Virtues & Flaws than other grogs (+5/-5), but still half as many as a

companion level character.

- Third, their spears are unique weapons, identical to long spears except that they can be thrown and can be used in one hand by someone with Strength +1 or more. Because of their unusual characteristics, and the fact that only a few Tremere-supported craftsmen know how to make them, Black Cloak spears are Expensive and all imported from the Transylvanian Tribunal.

Give each Black Cloak an additional Personality Trait at +1 or +2, to distinguish them from their colleagues.

Black Cloak of House Tremere

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

Size 0

Age 25 (25)

Confidence Score 0

Warping Score 0

Virtues & Flaws Turb Trained; Cautious with Single Weapon, Improved Characteristics, Puissant Single Weapon, Warrior; Pack Mentality, Proud: Major, Restricted Learning: Athletics, Brawl, Single Weapon, Survival, and Thrown Weapon

Personality Traits Proud +6, Brave +3, one other at +2 or +1

Reputations Elite Shield Grog of House Tremere +2 (Order of Hermes), Territorial +3 (House Tremere)

Combat

Long Spear and Infantry Shield Init +5, Atk +13, Def +15, Dmg +9

Thrown Spear Init +2, Atk +11, Dmg +9

Short Sword and Infantry Shield Init +3, Atk +13, Def +15, Dmg +7

Brawl (Evasion + Shield - Enc) Init +2, Def +10

Soak +10 (Sta 2 + Protection 8)

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 Athletics (running) 4, Brawl (evasion) 5, House Tremere Lore 1 (military policy), Latin 5 (impeccable diction), Order of Hermes Lore 1 (Grog), Ride 1 (long distances), Single Weapon 5+2 (shield), South Slavonic 5 (swear words), Survival 3 (winter), Thrown Weapon 5 (spear)

Equipment: Full metal scale armor (load 6), gambeson (load 1.5), open helmet (load 1), infantry shield (load 3), spear (load 2), short sword (load 1), black cloak. The Black Cloak spear is as long as a boar spear but lighter; a strong man (+1) can wield it in one hand. It has Init +3, Atk +3, Def +1, Dmg +5. It can be thrown with Init 0, Atk +2, Def 0, Dmg +5. It is Load 2

Encumbrance 2 (4)

Officers

If several magi at a covenant are protected by Black Cloaks, there may be an officer assigned to them. A decimus ("leader of ten") commands all Black Cloaks at a given covenant, and his pride demands he be assigned to the covenant's princeps. The decimus is also responsible for training replacements, in the event the covenant is too far away from Transylvania to receive regular supply.

A decimus is usually three years older than his fellow Black Cloaks. He has Leadership 3 (Tremere) and Teaching 2 (soldiers); replace Survival and Brawl in his Restricted Learning Flaw with Leadership and Teaching.

There are higher-ranking officers in the Black Cloak structure. Centurions, assisted sometimes by optios, supervise Black Cloaks in tribunals other than Transylvania. Centurions are always officially attached to the highest-ranking Tremere in a tribunal, even if that magus's shield grog duties are handled by another Black Cloak. The overall commander of the Black Cloaks is a prefect based at Coeris, assisted by other officers in charge of training, assignment, supply, and so on.

Story Issues

House Tremere uses the Black Cloaks to show young covenants the benefits of alliance with the House and the wisdom of doing things the Tremere way. Young Tremere magi founding covenants in dangerous areas can be assigned a Black Cloak, making them the envy of their fellow magi. Covenants with a Tremere princeps can request a squad of Black Cloaks able to protect every magus on the council. These soldiers are given in good faith and are not spies for House Tremere; the House has plenty of ways of gathering information more effective than asking shield grogs to spy on their magus and, besides, this would place the Black Cloak in an untenable conflict of interest. Black Cloaks are absolutely discreet and will never snitch, gossip, or inform on their magus or another Black Cloak, but they also assume magi will get whatever information they need by spells. In this way, everyone's honor is assuaged.

Aged and respected Tremere can command an entire honor guard of Black Cloaks, ensuring that their arrival in any social situation is suitably impressive. Tremere visiting Coeris for regular House meetings, or Tremere-dominated covenants in other tribunals, can observe Black Cloaks in training and allow their native shield grogs to test their skills against the elite. In the event House Tremere ever went to war, all unassigned Black Cloaks would be issued magical weapons and armor out of the House's extensive stockpile and would form an elite striking arm.

Black Cloaks are issued scale armor out of tradition, but this is not the best possible option. This is intentional on the part of House Tremere, as it creates an opportunity for each magus to gift his or her Black Cloak with mail. This establishes a positive relationship between wizard and grog. Black Cloaks like to receive gifts of magical weapons and armor from their magi, particularly if they are permanent gifts and not merely on loan from the covenant stores.

Black Cloaks who see action defending their magus are honored by their fellows and rise in unofficial status, while those who are ignored by lab-rat magi are privately mocked and assigned menial chores around the barracks. As a magus rises or falls in stature and reputation, the status of his Black Cloak similarly rises and falls; there are a handful of tales about Black Cloaks whose magi have been Marched. Sometimes the Black Cloak abandons his post in shame, sometimes he remains with his magus and dies alongside him. Every possible outcome in this situation is terrible to a Black Cloak; there is no honorable choice once a magus has betrayed the Order.

Thanks to their Cautious with Single Weapon Virtue, a surprising number of Black Cloaks live long enough to retire; they are issued a pension of land and even occasionally marry, but most pine for the honor and glory of their former assignment. A retired decimus makes an excellent drill sergeant for a covenant — he will have the abilities necessary to train large numbers of soldiers, and a personality colorful enough to talk back to magi.

Author's Notes

The Black Cloaks are of course inspired by Frank Miller's graphic novel *300* and the original Spartans, but their intense pride and their willingness to murder other shield grogs to maintain their post is lifted from *A Few Good Men* and Kiefer Sutherland's infamous "Code Red" in that movie. Some may argue that a soldier willing to throw a sack over the head of a rival and hurl him into a river would never be condoned by the House Tremere of 5th edition *Ars Magica*, but this sort of



extrajudicial punishment has a long history in elite military units. Black Cloaks are so few in number and so useful that their violent eccentricities are within manageable limits. After all, if you only use them the

way they're meant to be used, you'll never have a problem. And, anyway, it makes for good stories.



An ArM5 Adventure

The Mutability of Otherworldly Fortunes

by Jim Seals

PLOT OVERVIEW

25 November 1120: The foundering of the White Ship at Barfleur, Normandy was a maritime disaster that condemned three hundred and two souls to their watery graves, including the rightful heir to the English throne. The loss of William Ætheling led to a crisis of succession upon his father's death, culminating in a long drawn-out civil war in England and France, a period of time known simply as the Anarchy. Now, a century has passed and Infernal powers have gathered round Barfleur to bear witness as four otherworldly entities — the so-called “survivors” of the White Ship, tragic figures all — find themselves at an impasse, leaving the troupe free to aid or hinder their efforts as they see fit. Be warned, however: The bid for greatness may come at the cost of their immortal souls.

“The Mutability of Otherworldly Fortunes” is a single night adventure for spring characters. It is designed to introduce demons into a beginning *Ars Magica* campaign. The adventure makes use of *Realms of Power: The Divine*, *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, *Realms of Power: Magic* and *Through the Aegis: Developed Covenants*.

MYTHIC HISTORY

“No ship ever brought such disaster to England.”

— William of Malmesbury

Thomas FitzStephen was the captain of the White Ship. At the age of 62, it was FitzStephen's own drunken pride that led to the single greatest maritime disaster to ever strike Mythic Europe. The foundering of the White Ship resulted in the immediate deaths of 302 passengers and crew. What's more, it precipitated a crisis of succession for the English throne, leading to a nineteen-year long period of civil war in the Anglo-Norman world known as the Anarchy.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

The following character summaries are provided for ease of reference:

• **William the Ætheling, Duke of Normandy:** Son of King Henry and the late Matilda, the Queen of Blessed Memory, William is the rightful heir to the English throne. A holy warrior of True Faith, he resides within the Devouring Regio, standing in the way of Richard of Lincoln's release.

• **Richard of Lincoln:** Baseborn son of King Henry and the succubus Ansfride, Richard is in the service of the demon Aborym. A Demon-Blooded human, he resides within the Devouring Regio as prisoner; he is locked in immortal combat with his half-brother, William.

• **Matilda, Countess of Perche:** Baseborn daughter of King Henry and Edith, Matilda died in the foundering of the White Ship. Now an Infernal ghost, she is charged with the haunting of Barfleur Harbor; her fate is to claim a new soul every winter, failure to do so will banish her to Hell forever.

• **Thomas FitzStephen, Captain of the White Ship:** Thomas survived the initial foundering of his ship only to drown himself shortly thereafter lest he suffer the king's wrath. Now a Drowned Man supernaturally bound to his role of captain, he has spent the last century swimming through a magical regio only to surface in time to warn the players of the coming storm.

For more in-depth write ups of each cast member see their Detailed Character Sheet; additional biographical information is provided in Mythic History.

Having won the Château de Gisors and secured his son's homage of Normandy from King Louis the Fat, a victorious King Henry gave word that after four long years of military campaigning across the Continent he and his retinue would return home to England. Chief among his retinue were his children: William the Ætheling, his rightful heir and the duke of Normandy; Richard of Lincoln, his illegitimate son; and his illegitimate daughter, Matilda, Countess of Perche. By 21 November, the retinue arrived at Barfleur and a fleet was assembled; one vessel reporting for royal service was the White Ship.

During these few days at port, Thomas son of Stephen presented himself to King Henry. Emboldened with drink supplied to him by the king's favorite, Richard, the Norman nobleman claimed that his newly refitted White Ship was the finest of all the fleet. After providing his king with a relief of one mark of gold (six Mythic Pounds), he requested his father's position. For Stephen FitzAirad had captained the Mora, which had borne the king's own father, William the Conqueror, across the English Channel in 1066. Even though he had already pledged himself to another ship, the king was so moved at these impassioned words of familial fealty that he acquiesced on behalf of his son, the newly named rex designatus ("king-designate"). With the petition granted, the retinue would soon set sail from Barfleur.

On the evening of 25 November conditions were finally right to set sail. From Barfleur, the sojourn to England should have taken 10 to 12 hours. The crossing was made easier at night as sailors, without the benefit of compasses, could maneuver using the Pole Star as their navigational landmark. Despite this advantage, the Harbor of Barfleur is a treacherous one even under the best of conditions. The Harbor is one-and-a-half miles south of the Pointe de Barfleur, with a tidal race that reaches upwards of five knots; this strong current would have driven ships southward, thus hindering ingress and egress into the port. This meant that the royal procession had to wait until high water when the race had slackened.

What followed was a night of drunken revelries as the young nobility of King Henry's retinue flocked to the White Ship en masse, indulging in their youthful pursuits of sinful excess while more and more wine was imbibed by passengers and crew alike. Holding court at the heart of this sordid affair was Richard of Lincoln.

A child of demons, Richard was born out of wedlock in 1094. When he'd been removed as the Count of the Contentin in 1090, Henry had become persona non grata within the House of Normandy against his rival brothers. Following the triumphant Siege of Mont Saint-

Michel, which ended with him fleeing Brittany for France as part of a negotiated surrender, Henry wandered the Norman countryside of Vexin, a listless nobleman without a court to call his own. In 1092, he came across the town of Domfort. There he met with the demon Aborym. (See the sidebar "Aborym" for more.) The two struck up a pact in secret that would see the Infernal duke lending aid to this beleaguered nobleman in order to best his meddlesome brothers once and for all. As a show of his "good faith," Aborym quickly delivered to Henry control of Domfort, wresting the town over from one Robert de Bellême in a bloodless coup. Over the next two years Henry would rebuild his "court in waiting" at Domfort beneath the demon's cautious guidance.

In 1094, Aborym came to his ward one last time, presenting him with Ansfride, a succubus. In exchange for all he had done, his demonic patron required of Henry a baseborn son of royal lineage. Giving into his wanton lust, the future king agreed and so consummated their Infernal compact, siring an illegitimate son: Richard.

Of Richard's character the contemporaneous historian William of Malmesbury wrote that he was a "high-spirited youth," whose devotion to King Henry won his father's love; indeed, the two were of similar temperaments: Both were brash men, given to bold, assertive — if not harsh—action and neither was a stranger to the vices of sin.

Sadly, King Henry's love for his baseborn son blinded him to the threat Richard posed to his line of succession. True to his nature as a Demon-Blooded human, Richard willingly remained under the thrall of the demon Aborym, and by 25 November his task was nearing completion. Come day's end, he would ensure that all aboard the White Ship, including his half-brother, William, would drown to their collective deaths, thus sowing the seeds of the Anarchy to come. Having maneuvered FitzStephen to petition the king by appealing to the captain's vanity, Richard saw that the appetite for liquor was quenched and then some, ensuring that neither captain nor crew were of sober mind for the passage ahead. He would use his demonic powers to inspire the crowd toward greater and greater acts of depravity as the night progressed. However, Richard could not complete this undertaking alone. Promising her eternal splendor, Richard manipulated his half-sister, Matilda, into supporting him in this endeavor. The cuckolding wife of the Count of Perche, Matilda saw to the last minute dismissal of a gathering of priests who had come to bless the vessel, potentially invoking the power of the Divine and thwarting Richard's machinations.





For his part, William the Ætheling abstained from partaking in the bacchanal above decks. Instead the son of the recently departed Matilda of Blessed Memory secluded himself within his private stateroom within the fore of the ship observing softly spoken prayers. There he was visited by an angel, Gallchobhar. The angel came with a message from God: William would know death this night, but he would live on fighting for the Lord until deliverance would come in the form of Hermetic magi. He must be brave.

As William wept alone in his cabin, the White Ship gave a tremendous shudder.

Well past midnight, FitzStephen gave the order to set sail. By now the king's vessel was far ahead of them and the revelers had taken to mocking the captain, thus wounding his pride. Overwhelmed with more liquor than sense, the captain ordered his men to launch. The captain ascended the mast, shouting down for his men below to overtake their king's ship. This was greeted with much cheering from the intoxicated revelers on deck.

It was then that the White Ship struck the Quillebœuf Rock along her port-side. With her hull now hopelessly compromised, the ill-fated vessel started to take on water and sink. In an attempt to compensate, the oarsman started to shove against the rock itself, but only managed to succeed in capsizing her instead.

Acting quickly, William the Ætheling's guards launched a skiff that would have seen their liege safely upon dryland were it not for the selfish cries of his sister, Countess Matilda. Matilda pleaded with William to return and rescue her. Remembering the angel's words, William ordered the skiff about. He would be brave; he would save his sister. However, once the skiff was within sight of Matilda, drowning men desperate to save themselves pulled the little boat over. And so the rightful heir of England and Normandy drowned, along with Richard of Lincoln and Matilda, the Countess of Perche.

However, their stories did not end there. For the White Ship had become ensnared within a Devouring Regio, consuming all three. Inside the regio, the brothers met once more. Now, their true natures revealed, the two have since been engaged in a century-long combat with one another, neither side able to one up the other. Matilda has become an Infernal ghost. Each winter she is cursed to claim another soul for the ranks of the undead legion growing beneath the harbor of Barfluer. And as for FitzStephen, he managed to survive the initial destruction of his ship by clutching onto the mast. There he clung on for dear life, soaked through and exhausted. All the while his sole

CHARACTERIZATION

While William the Ætheling, Richard of Lincoln, Matilda of Perche and Thomas FitzStephen were once real life people living in the 1100s, their characterizations in "The Mutability of Otherworldly Fortune" are entirely fictitious. Liberties were taken in order to make the most of the various systems within ArM5 in order to tell the most compelling narrative based on historical events as possible. Thus, the author fully acknowledges any historical inaccuracies present in the work in advance and apologizes accordingly.

THE DEMON ABORYM

Infernal Order: Vessel of Iniquity

Rank: Prince

Infernal Might: 50

Aborym is a newly christened prince of Hell. Commanding twenty-six legions, the former duke is the demon of burning cities and castles. He descended the ranks of Hell when he convinced King Henry I to enter into a demonic pact that would see the youngest son of William the Conqueror ascend to the English throne. However, the demon's crowning achievement came decades later, during the subsequent succession crisis and resultant civil war known as the Anarchy. His obsession is — appropriately enough — anarchy.

Should the players side against William and come to the aide of Richard of Lincoln then their covenant is granted the Boon: Powerful Ally — Aborym; this Major Boon is balanced with the Major Hook: Rival — The Church as word spreads of the players' involvement.

companion throughout the night were the wails of his passengers and crew, cast adrift in their collective death throes. As the hour passed, one into the next, those wails continued to ebb until the only sound was FitzStephen's own sobbing. It was then that the captain of the White Ship knew Prince William was dead. Fearing his king's wrath over his Maker's, FitzStephen chose death over dominicide. Releasing the waterlogged mast, Captain Thomas FitzStephen surrendered himself to the deep.

But one denizen of the deep had other plans for the captain: Aldous the Forlorn, High Vicar of the Devil's Hole. For reasons all his own, the Atlantean warlock breathed new life into the captain, transforming him into a Drowned Man and condemning him to an existence of endless servitude.

THE WHITE SHIP

In 1120, the White Ship was a newly refitted Norman longship. Crafted in the tradition of a Viking longboat, she is a single-masted, square-rigged seafaring vessel, whose primary form of propulsion is by oar. Like all longboats, she rides low on the waterline.

The White Ship was not designed for prolonged sojourns across vast distances of open sea; instead, she was built to traverse short distances, such as across the English Channel or traveling along the coastline, exceptionally quickly. Complete with a side rudder to properly navigate by, her cruising speed is 5 miles-per-hour with a maximum speed of 12 miles-per-hour. Note that this speed cannot be sustained for longer than 10 minutes before the active crew is fatigued and needs to be relieved. Although she can serve as a passenger transport, the White Ship is not a luxury vessel; the crew shares tents which are pitched right on deck. As there is no below decks, all equipment is bundled on deck, in the center of the ship around the mast or covered in tarps.

The ship's dimensions are 30 yds in length, 20' in width at its widest point, and weighing 300 tons, granting her a size of +6. In 1120, she was of Superior construction, granting her 9 Damage Levels; however, having survived through a Devouring Regio, she is now a Supernatural construct, granting her 15 Damage Levels.

To sail properly, the White Ship needs a crew of 150 oarsmen working in 3 shifts of 50, plus an officer per shift and a captain. In order to accommodate a crew of this size 30 tons of cargo has been reserved for their provisions, leaving 120 tons for either passengers or cargo.

Lastly, the White Ship has been outfitted with both a forecastle and aftcastle. The aft cabin is reserved for the captain, and the fore cabin is reserved for aristocratic passengers.

The total cost of operating the White Ship is 236 Mythic Pounds annually. For how to best use the White Ship in combat, see "Ship Combat" in City & Guild, pg. 86.

ALDOUS THE FORLORN

Though speculation abounds, presently the Order of Hermes knows little of the so-called "High Vicar of the Devil's Hole." The name of Aldous the Forlorn was first recorded in the writings of the eighth-century magus Sebastian of Flambeau. There, the former hedge wizard and founder of the Schools of Sebastian paints Aldous first as an ardent opponent then as a stalwart, if tortured, friend. Of his friend, Sebastian writes in the fondest terms, describing his life as "tragically long." References to an Aldous abound in captain's logs and much loved sea shanties throughout the remainder of the eighth-century and continue well into the eleventh. If the anecdotes of sailors are to be believed, this Aldous is a wanderer, said to endlessly roam the currents of the North Seas seeking malicious mariners who would hunt the denizens of the deep.

However, Sebastian's reference of a "tragically long life" have led some in the Order of Hermes to propose the notion that Aldous the Forlorn was, in fact, the same nameless passenger Argus of House Verditius wrote about in the 43rd volume of The Journals of Argus. This volume is dedicated to a single conversation wherein the passenger in question claims to have been alive during the foundation of the Order and that he was even approached by Trianoma herself to share his knowledge and found a house, an offer that he demurred. As tall a tale as any the Verditius ever committed to paper, some stories the passenger relayed have since been confirmed by Hermetic historians, lending a modicum of credibility to the passenger's claims.

Now, word on the North Seas is that Aldous the Forlorn has returned to continue his crusade with a renewed vigor. Whether he is the same Aldous cursed with a "tragically long life," Argus's anonymous passenger, or someone else entirely remains to be seen.

Aldous' role in the narrative is to provide players with an evocative name, to tease of other, grander stories that may yet be told elsewhere. Aside from having transformed Thomas FitzStephen in 1120, he takes no active role in this adventure.



DETAILED CHARACTER SHEETS

WILLIAM THE ÆTHELING, HEIR OF TRUE FAITH

True Faith Score: 1; **Magic Resistance:** 10 (from True Faith)

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

Size: 0

Age (upon Death): 17; Born: 1103

Decrepitude: 0 (0)

Warping Score: 0 (0)

Confidence Score: 1 (3)

Faith Points: 1 (1)

Virtues: Blood of Heroes: Second Coming of King David (0); Rex Designatus; Wealthy; True Faith; Affinity with Music, Affinity with Thrown Weapon, Arcane Lore, Famous, Improved Characteristics (x2), Privileged Upbringing, Puissant Music, Puissant Thrown Weapon, Strong-Willed, Student of the Divine; Heroes Birthright: Psalm of Protection (0);

Flaws: Flawed Heroes Birthright: Necessary Condition — Perform Music: Lyre, Martyr; Heir, Heroic Personality, **Weakness:** Married Women

Personality Traits: Martyr +5, Adulterer +3, Pious +1

Reputations: Rex Designatus +4

Combat:

- Dodge, Initiative 0, Attack N/A, Defense 0, Damage 0
- Sling, Initiative -3, Attack +10, Defense +8, Damage +5; Requires two free hands to load and fire; a sling's range is 20 paces.

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: England 1 (Westminster), Area Lore: Normandy 1 (Rouen), Artes Liberales 2 (Music), Charm 1 (Court of King Henry 1), Common Law 1 (Exchequer Laws), Dominion Lore 4+2 (Martyrs), Etiquette 3 (Court of King Henry 1), Folk Ken 2 (Court of King Henry 1), Hunt 2 (Foxes), Intrigue 1 (Court of King Henry 1), Latin 3 (Reading), Living Language: French 3 (Norman), Leadership 3 (Court of King Henry 1), Music 5+2 (Lyre), Native Language: English 5 (Cockney), Organization Lore: Court of King Henry 1 (Personalities), Organization Lore: House of Normandy 1 (History), Ride 2 (Cantor), Survival 2 (Seafaring), Swim 1 (Oceans), Thrown Weapon 5+2 (Sling)

Powers:

Psalm of Protection: This power is a variant of the Hermetic spell *Circular Ward Against Demons* (ArM5, pg. 162). As with the better known Rego Vim spell, this power's level varies. This power is bestowed to William

courtesy of his Heroes' Birthright; as a consequence, his Psalm of Protection is at Level 15. However, William play his lyre for the ward to function. If he stops playing for any reason the power is deactivated.

Encumbrance: 0 (0)

Equipment: Tied on either side of William Ætheling's leather belt is his sling and pouch filled with rocks. He also carries a lyre.

Appearance: Standing at 5' 10", William Ætheling is a dashing young man blessed with his mother's looks. There is a natural curl to his russet brown locks and his chiseled visage is decorated with a well-kept beard. However, his most striking feature is his poignant, cobalt blue stare that speaks volumes even in silence.

William Ætheling is his mother's son. Matilda of Scotland was herself the daughter of King William III and his wife, Saint Margaret. Upon her death in 1118, William organized the English court to petition Rome to see her canonized; his own death in 1120 aboard the White Ship led these overtures to a premature end.

It was William's pedigree as the son of both the Duke of Normandy and the Kings of Scotland that led many scholars to allege he was poised to unite the Anglo-Saxon and Norman worlds, shepherding in a golden age for his two peoples. Later, this claim was reaffirmed by the man himself thanks to his brief stewardship of the English court in the wake of both his mother's passing and his father's absence. However, none suspected that the deal Henry struck to ensure his ascension to the throne would prove to be his line's downfall. William Ætheling died aboard the White Ship, a victim of Infernal maneuverings.

For the past century he has been in a contest of wills against his siblings, Richard of Lincoln and Countess Matilda of Perche, within a Devouring Regio. Ever since his death in 1120, he has not once stopped playing his lyre and he is tired... so, so tired...

THE SECOND COMING OF WILLIAM

If the PCs aid William and succeeded in defeating Richard of Lincoln, William could return to Mythic Europe. He gains the major flaw "Raised from the Dead" (RoP: D, pg. 36) and the Reputation: Providence's Blessed Heir +4 (Barfleur). His Warping Score is determined by when this adventure takes place. If he returns in 1220, his Warping Score is 5 (28) — Divine. Each year earlier or later in time subtracts or adds one to this Warping score. With a Warping Score of 5, William has the following flaws: Susceptibility to Divine Power, Disfigured (Stigmata Scars), and Weeping Stigmata (See the sidebar "New Virtues & Flaws.")

NEW VIRTUES & FLAWS

Rex Designatus (Social Status Virtue, Minor)

By virtue of the tenets of male primogeniture, you are the designated king. One day you will inherit the kingdom, but not today. You may take Academic and Martial Abilities during character generation. The Wealthy Virtue and Poor Flaw affect you normally. This Virtue is only available to male characters, and is compatible with the Landed Noble Virtue. If you take this Virtue you must balance it with the Heir Minor Story Flaw.

Flawed Heroes' Birthright (Heroic Flaw, Major or Minor)

This Flaw allows Mythic Companions with the Heroes' Birthright Virtue to take a Hermetic Flaw, either Major or Minor. These Hermetic Flaws must impact the power granted to the character as it would a Gifted Magus. Not all Hermetic Flaws will be compatible with Heroes' Birthright; the exact flaw must be agreed to by the Storyguide during character creation.

Martyr (Personality Flaw, Major or Minor)

You would rather suffer harm than allow others to do so. If there is a price to be paid, you insist on paying it. If there is a vital mission which is suicidal, you volunteer. When someone needs to guard the rear while the others escape, you insist on being that person. When others try to pay these prices, accept these missions, or brave these risks, you will enter private negotiations to short-circuit them, sneak out the night before to get a head start, or just knock your ally out with a swift punch to the head so that you suffer whatever awful calamity is about to happen, instead of them.

This Flaw virtually ensures that your character will find a premature end to life, but this is something you are willing, perhaps even eager, to accept.

Selfish (Personality Flaw, Major or Minor)

You lack consideration for the wellbeing of others, even those around you. Thus, your main preoccupation in life is your own personal profit or pleasure and to hell with everyone else.

As a Major Flaw, your character cannot take any altruistic Personality Traits; as a Minor your character can take one altruistic Personality Trait (such as Compassionate) as a Minor. However, if you character tries to indulge in an altruistic act, you must first make a Personality Stress Die roll of Ease Factor 9 against your Selfishness Personality Trait.

This is not a good Flaw for a player character, as it is likely to lead to conflict with the other players in the troupe.

Sins of the Father (General Flaw, Minor)

Your Father lived a heroic life, one of unparalleled greatness that now casts a large shadow over your own. While there are a few who praise him a "hero," many more curse him a "villain." Regardless, people's expectations regarding you are strong. You have a Reputation of the appropriate type at level 3 among your peers. This Reputation is seen as good to a few, and bad to many more. Lastly, your father made many enemies during his storied lifetime, some of whom have outlived him and still bear a grudge.

Weeping Stigmata (Supernatural Flaw, Minor)

Weeping Stigmata is a new Supernatural Flaw that acts as a mystical Minor Virtue. The stigmata scars have opened and are continuously weeping blood. Though not fatal the blood loss permanently removes a level of fatigue.

If this flaw is Divine in nature, the blood, if ingested, has the power to heal the wounds of others. In exchange for long-term Fatigue levels, a character can instantly remove either a light, medium, heavy, or even incapacitating wound. Also, the person losing the wounds gains Divine Warping Points. Lastly, this flaw must be accompanied by the Disfigured (Stigmata Scars) Flaw.

Wound Level	Long-Term Fatigue	Divine Warping
Light	1	1
Medium	2	2
Heavy	3	3
Incapacitating	4	4





RICHARD OF LINCOLN, A DEVIL CHILD

Infernal Might: 5 (Corpus)

Characteristics: Intelligence -1, Perception -2, Presence 2, Communication 2, Strength 2, Stamina 2, Dexterity 1, Quickness 1

Size: 0

Age: 26 (23); Born: 1094

Virtues: Devil Child (0); Knight; Commanding, Demon Blood, Summoning, Wealthy; Enticer of Multitudes, Improved Characteristics, Mentored by Demons, Puissant Single Weapon, Warrior; Puissant Guile (0)

Flaws: Tragic Life — Destiny of Cain, Pride; Corrupted Abilities, Lesser Malediction: Demonic Weakness (Abhorrent Circumstance: Mockery), Manufactured Ignorance

Personality Traits: Vainglorious +3, High-Spirited +1, Thick-Skinned -3

Combat:

• *Sword, Long & Heater Shield: Initiative +2, Attack +14, Defense +14, Damage +8*

• *Fist: Initiative +0, Attack +4, Defense +4, Damage +2*

• *Kick: Initiative -1, Attack +5, Defense +4, Damage +5*

Soak: 9

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 (Horses), Area Lore: Normandy 2 (Domfort), Area Lore: England (Lincoln), Athletics 2 (Running), Awareness 3 (Battle), Bargain 1 (Thaphaboath) [Corrupted], Brawl 3 (Below the Belt), Charm 2 (Ladies-in-Waiting), Chirurgy 1 (Sword Wounds), Etiquette 3 (Court of King Henry I), Guile 2+2 (Court of King Henry I), Hunt 4 (Foxes), Infernal Lore 1 (Thaphaboath) [Corrupted], Intrigue 1 (Court of King Henry I), Leadership 4 (Soldiers), Living Language: English 4 (Lincolnshire), Native Language: French 5 (Norman), Organization Lore: Court of King 2 (Personalities), Penetration 1 (Thaphaboath) [Corrupted], Ride 5 (Airs Above the Ground), Single Weapon 5+2 (Long Sword), Stealth 1 (Shadowing), Survival 2 (Forests), True Name of Thaphaboath 1 [Corrupted]

Goetic Arts: Summoning 5, Albating 0, Binding 0, Commanding 5

Powers:

As the Vessels of a Potter Shall They Be Broken to Shivers, 3 points, Initiative +1. Richard of Lincoln concentrates his Infernal might upon a target, and causes it a Medium Wound, severe enough to cripple a limb until it is healed. Richard tends to weaken his opponents prior to unsheathing his own sword. *Babylon the Great is Fallen, and is Become the Habitation of Devils*, 3 points, Initiative +1. Richard of

Lincoln tarnishes an Infernal aura with a trait of his choosing +3. In 1120, Richard used this spell to grant the White Ship a +3 Bacchanal to inspire the excessive drinking of the passengers and crew.

Vis: 1 Pawn of Corpus

Encumbrance: 1

Equipment: Richard of Lincoln comes armed-and-armored with a long sword, heater shield and a complete suite of metal scale. As benefiting his Wealthy status, all of his equipment is of Superior Quality. Richard's armor is preternaturally black in appearance, granting him an aura of menace on any battlefield. He is also adorned in a single-shoulder gold cape; this is nothing more than a vain affectation. Appearance: Richard of Lincoln is a silver-haired fox of a man. Unlike his brother, he is immaculately clean shaven with a predatory smirk as if all life was a joke and he is the sole person in on the punchline. Despite his accelerated aging brought on by his Demonic Blood, Richard has weathered his aging rolls well thanks to his status as a Wealthy Knight.

The architect of the White Ship disaster, Sir Richard of Lincoln is a devil child. Bastard brother to the rightful heir of England and France, William Ætheling, Richard was conceived at the behest of the demon Aborym, who arranged the unholy union of King Henry and the succubus Ansfride, thus sealing a demonic pact.

Once the scion was of age, King Henry had him fostered to the bishop of Lincoln, Robert Bloet. Whether the king was aware of the bishop's proclivities towards diabolism remains something of a distinction without a difference as Richard soon began his training in the Goetic Arts upon his arrival at Lincoln. In addition to his duties as squire and later knight, Richard was trained in both Summoning and Commanding. The culmination of these studies came when the bishop taught him the true name of Thaphaboath. Ever since then, the mazzik demon has served as Richard's own personal shield grog.

Upon his return to court, Richard of Lincoln was knighted and took up the role of guard, serving in his father's campaign against France. Following the campaign's victorious end, Richard set to work fulfilling his demonic destiny: Richard maneuvered a drunken Captain Thomas FitzStephen into petitioning his king and later used his demonic powers to inspire the bacchanal that ultimately claimed both ship and crew.

For the past century he and his bastard sister, Countess Matilda of Perche, have been caught in a Devouring Regio in a contest of wills against William Ætheling.

COUNTESS MATILDA OF PERCHE, AN INFERNAL GHOST

Order: Evil Spirit

Infernal Might: 10 (Mentem)

Characteristics: Intelligence +1, Perception -2, Presence +2, Communication +3, Strength N/A, Stamina N/A, Dexterity N/A, Quickness N/A

Size: 0

Age (upon Death): 34; Born: 1086

Virtues and Flaws: Gentlewoman; Affinity w/ Enchanting Music, Blessing of Venus, Enchanting Music, Puissant Enchanting Music; Selfish (Major)*; Weak-Willed

Personality Traits: Obsession Trait—Selfish +8

Reputation: None

Hierarchy: 0

Abilities: Area Lore: Normandy 3 (Perche), Charm 5 (Seduction), Carouse 3 (), Enchanting Music 8+2 (Sailors), Etiquette 3 (Docks), Folk Ken 5 (Sailors), Guile 3 (Port Authorities), Intrigue 3 (Lower Decks), Native Language: French 6 (Norman), Organization Lore: House of Normandy 3 (Personalities)

Powers:

Envisioning, 1 point or 3 points, Init +0, Mentem: Matilda uses this power in order to summon her next victim to their impending death. Her victims are invariably Grog-level sailors of ill-repute. Entering their dreams over the course of three nights, the Infernal ghost strikes up a romantic relationship with her intended victim using her Enchanting Music. On the final night, she reveals to her newfound lover the site of her death. She appears to them to be drowning as she pleads desperately with the victim to come and rescue her.

Possession, variable points, Init +2, Mentem: See Chapter 4: Infernal Legions, Demonic Powers.

Obsession, 1 to 3 points, Init -5, Vim: Selfish. See Chapter 4: Infernal Legions, Demonic Powers.

Vis: None—Countess Matilda has no ability to form a body, and thus cannot leave behind a corpse.

Appearance: Countess Matilda can only be seen by those with Second Sight (and those whom she targets with her Envisioning Power). She appears as she did in life, a ravishing beauty the likes of which men would kill over. Her long locks of strawberry blonde are windswept to one side, revealing a preternaturally azure gaze and lush lips.

Countess Matilda of Perche is an Infernal ghost. By 25 November 1220, she has been haunting the harbor of Barfleur for the past century; in that time she has claimed a total of 100 lives. Her last victim occurs during the prologue of “The Mutability of Otherworldly

Fortunes” on Friday, November 13, 1220.

Each winter she is released from the Devouring Regio and she uses her Infernal power of Envisioning to lure another unsuspecting male victim to his watery demise. Motivated to rescue the drowning ghost, the victim invariably takes a boat out to the Quillebœuf Rock, where skeletal revenants await to pull the ship under. In this, Matilda of Perche is recreating the same sin of selfishness that claimed her half-brother’s life.

CAPTAIN THOMAS FITZSTEPHEN, A DROWNED MAN

Magic Might: 0

Characteristics: Intelligence -1, Perception -2, Presence 2, Communication 2, Strength 2, Stamina -1, Dexterity 0, Quickness -2

Size: 0

Season: Spring*

Age: 62 (60); Born: 1058

Decrepitude: 1 (2)

Warping Score: 0 (0)

Confidence Score: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Human (0); Landed Noble; Wealthy; Greater Immunity: Drowning, Transformed Human; Mild Aging, Vernacular Education, Well-Traveled; Oath of Fealty: House of Normandy, Servant of the Ocean: Captain of the White Ship; Proud (Major); Careless with Profession: Sea Captain, Obese, Sins of the Father; Prohibition (0)

Magical Qualities & Inferiorities: Natural Appearance; Improved Soak; Minor Virtue: Unaffected by the Gift; Monstrous Appearance; Bound to Captain of the White Ship Role, Minor Flaw: Temperate

Personality Traits: Captain of the White Ship +3 (Essential Trait), Servile to Aldous the Forlorn, High Vicar of the Devil’s Hole +2, Well-Kept +1

Reputations: Son of Stephen FitzAirad, Ferrier of William the Conqueror +3 (House of Normandy)/-3 (English)

Combat:

• *Dodge:* Initiative -3, Attack N/A, Defense +1, Damage N/A

• *Fist:* Initiative -3, Attack +4, Defense +1, Damage +2

• *Kick:* Initiative -4, Attack +4, Defense +4, Damage +5

• *Dagger:* Initiative -3, Attack +6, Defense +2, 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)

Abilities: Area Lore: England 2 (Lyme), Area Lore: Germany 1 (Husum), Area Lore: Netherlands 1 (Hoon),





Area Lore: Normandy 2 (Barfluer), Area Lore: North Seas 4 (English Channel), Artes Liberalis 3 (Astronomy), Athletics 2 (Aboard Ship), Awareness 2 (Weather), Bargain 3 (Port Authorities), Brawl 2 (Dagger), Carouse 3 (Drinking Songs), Civil & Canon Law 2 (Maritime), Charm 3 (Tavern Wench), Common Law 1 (Salvage Rights), Etiquette 1 (Court), Folk Ken 3 (The White Ship), Leadership 5 (The White Ship), Living Language: English 3 (West Country), Living Language: Low German 2 (West), Native Language: French 5 (Norman), Organization Lore: House of Normandy 2 (Personalities), Organization Lore: The White Ship 3 (Personalities), Profession: Sea Captain 4 (The White Ship), Survival 4 (Oceans), Swim 4 (Oceans)

Equipment: Quilted Armor, Excellent Quality; Dagger, Superior Quality

Encumbrance: 0

Appearance: Despite his sheer bulk, Thomas FitzStephen cuts quite a figure. A prideful man through and through, the captain of the White Ship maintains an immaculate appearance at all times. His well-trimmed silver hair is worn long and loose about his shoulders, and his weather-worn visage is kept clean shaven save for his rather imposing mustache, which is — amazingly enough — the same color as the sea at night.

L'HOMME ROUGE

"So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin."

—James 4:17

Order: Duke of the Deluders

Infernal Might: 40 (Corpus)

Characteristics: Intelligence +1, Perception +5, Presence -3, Communication -2, Strength +4, Stamina +4, Dexterity +4, Quickness +4

Size: +3

Confidence Score: 2 (6)

Virtues and Flaws: Frightful Presence, Premonitions, Puissant Guile; Disfigured, Hunchback, Missing Eye, Reclusive

Personality Traits: Apathy +6, Reclusive +5, Enigmatic +5

Reputations: Schadenfreude 7 (Infernal)
Hierarchy: 7

Combat:

• *Hooves:* Initiative +6, Attack +13, Defense +13, Damage +5

• *Dodge:* Initiative +4, Attack N/A, Defense +11, Damage 0

Soak: 4

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

TRANSFORMED HUMAN: MECHANICS

Captain Thomas FitzStephen's last recollection in his previous life was of falling into the darkness before sensing the presence of another. His next recollection is of swimming endlessly before being washed up onto the coastline of Barfleur unconscious. In essence, from our perspective, the captain of the White Ship has been swimming for a hundred years.

Mechanically, FitzStephen fell into a magical regio. There he was transformed into a Drowned Man. Now a Magic Human, FitzStephen earned the Supernatural Virtues of Transformed Human and Greater Immunity: Drowning as well as the Story Flaw Servant of the Ocean. The Personality Flaw Prohibition was included by way of this new Story Flaw, though this does not count towards his total number of Virtues and Flaws. In exchange for these new Virtues and Flaws, FitzStephen has since lost Landed Noble, Wealthy, and Oath of Fealty: House of Normandy. This represents the loss of his mundane nature.

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-8), -3 (9-16), -5 (17-24), Incapacitated (25-32), Dead 33+

Abilities: Awareness (Under Surveillance) 8, Brawl 6 (Hooves), Divine Lore 5 (Grigori), Guile 6+2 Infernal Lore 7 (Grigori), Penetration 5 (The Wordless Conversation), Premonitions 9 (Disasters), Normandy Lore 10 (Historic Locations)

Powers:

The Wordless Conversation, 0 points, Initiative 0, Mentem: L'Homme Rouge may speak directly into the mind of any creature he can see, and may choose to hear any mental or verbal response that the target may make.

Corrupted Knowledge, 2 points, Initiative -3, Mentem: When L'Homme Rouge spends a season teaching an Ability (including Supernatural), he uses this Power to corrupt the knowledge that he teaches, granting the Flaw Corrupted (Ability). The Power only inflicts the Flaw if the character being schooled acquires an increase in the Ability score because of the teaching supplied by the demon. Those affected by this Power soon learn that they get greater rewards if they use their Ability for selfish or sinful purposes.

Delusion, 1 or 5 points, Initiative +3, Imaginem:

L'Homme Rouge is a consummate deceiver, and has the ability to create elaborate illusions. A minor illusion which affects an Individual amount of material (such as the demon itself) costs one point; a larger illusion which fills a room costs five points. These visions always have a flaw, however (they smell wrong, can only be seen by one target, etc.).

Duplicate the Magi's Creation / Duplicate the Magi's Control: L'Homme Rouge can duplicate any Hermetic spell of the Techniques Creo and Rego. This costs him 1 point of Might per magnitude. L'Homme Rouge is partial to spells that create or control storms, such as Incantation of Lightning or Gathering of the Stormy Night. The demon cannot create any effect with a level greater than his Infernal Might, nor duplicate Ritual effects.

Coagulation, 4 points, Init -1, Corpus: L'Homme Rouge can assume his unspeakably hideous physical form. While this entire process takes 40 rounds to complete, the dissolution of this physical form is nigh instantaneous, taking only a round of concentration even if his concentration is interrupted.

Obsession, 1 to 3 points, Init -5, Vim: Apathy. L'Homme Rouge "blesses" others with his Apathy Obsession Trait.

Weakness: Ordering

Equipment: L'Homme Rouge carries a glass cane fashioned out of human ash. Forged in the Fire Pits of Hell, the cane is of Exceptional Quality and grants the material bonus +5 destroy human body.

Vis: 8 pawns of Corpus in left eye

Appearance: Clad in red robes, L'Homme Rouge appears as an elderly man of 13', complete with crookback. There's an exposed socket where his right eye ought to be, and his shattered jaw has been sutured together with rotting leather. The demon of tempests seldom utters a word. Beneath his robes are a pair of cloven feet.

"The Red Man" is a demon of French legend. He is said to haunt historic sites on the eve of some great disaster, then disappear into the ether as soon as his presence is detected. William of Champeaux, the eleventh-century theologian, postulated that L'Homme Rouge was a member of the Grigori, a tenth choir of angels known as the Watchers; their charter was to act as earthly shepherds of mankind. What brought the theologian to this conclusion were the reports of the demon's apparent size and his proclivities toward natural disasters. According to William, L'Homme Rouge must've been cursed by God for having spoken out of turn, hence the sutures. Whether or not there is any truth to this conjecture remains to be seen.

Regardless, it is well known that the demon values his solitude. Those daring to disrupt this solitude are fools and should be given pitied accordingly, for the wrath of the L'Homme Rouge is awesome indeed.

BARFLEUR, A HISTORY

INTRODUCTION

Of Barfleur's historical noteworthiness, The Lion and the Lily simply states the following:

The harbor town of Barfleur was where much of William the Conqueror's invasion fleet was constructed. Since then, many military and mercantile vessels have been commissioned at the Barfleur shipyards. The harbor is not without its perils — William son of Henry I (king of England) was drowned after his ship, while leaving Barfleur, hit a rock in 1120. (57)

While factually accurate, this recounting leaves much to be desired in communicating to the reader the sheer importance this port city enjoyed during the early Middle Ages, especially following the Norman Conquest of England. Under the ruling stewardship of the dukes of Normandy, then the kings of England, Barfleur was the principal contact point between the northwestern province of France and Great Britain.

ETYMOLOGY

Barbeflie... Barbeflet... Barbeflot... Barbefluctum...

Of Barfleur's founding nothing is known. Even her name remains a mystery with current medievalist discovering numerous variants, whether coming from chroniclers of the period calling the harbor anything from Barefleu to Barbaflot to historians using such Latinized alternatives as Barbefluvium or Barofluctum. (In 1220, the use of the name "Barfleur" is, actually, something of an anachronistic detail as the word is, in truth, a fourteenth-century construct, which may or may not have Scandinavian origins; however, "The Mutability of Otherworldly Fortunes" embraces this anachronism to promote clarity and remain consistent with canonical *Ars Magica* source materials.) What is known of Barfleur's prehistorical past is that it is indeed an ancient city and was once home to a stronghold.

THE COMING OF SAINT ROMPHAIRE

"He [Romphaire] greatly honored the priesthood of God."

—Venance Fortunat, Bishop of Poitiers

During the mid-500s, a British expatriate, Romphaire, found himself shipwrecked upon the beaches of Barfleur. While en route to southern Aquitaine, a violent storm had swept his vessel off course, smashing onto the rocks and shoals. Perceiving the storm as an act of Divine Intervention, Romphaire remained instead of continuing onward to Aquitaine. He took up residence near his impromptu landing two-and-a-half miles north of the harbor town, where he soon earned a reputation





as a miracle healer.

In time, this reputation caught the attention of the Bishop of Coutances, Saint Lô. Lô sent word, bidding Romphaire's come to Coutances where his healing gifts could be tested. Pleased to see that the rumors of the expatriate's divine might were true, the bishop bestowed priesthood onto Romphaire. Romphaire returned to Barfleur as pastor, becoming the second patron of the parish church of Barfleur until 570, when he was called upon to succeed Saint Lô.

Romphaire died sometime in 600 AD, and was elevated to sainthood soon thereafter.

As for Saint Romphaire's residence at what is today known as Gatteville-le-Phare, the grounds remain consecrated with a Divine Aura of 5. By 1220, a holy magus named Uriel, formerly of House Flambeau, has erected a lighthouse using Conjuring the Wizard's Tower at this location. The tower overlooks a rock which contains an imprint of a chain from the saint's ship, called the Step of Saint Romphaire.

From time to time the residents of Barfleur can catch a glimpse of the gregarious Uriel engaged in animated conversations with a robed stranger during his morning walks along the coastline; whether this is Saint Romphaire himself or a passing stranger remains to be seen.

TIMELINE: 700s—1200 AD

For five centuries, starting in 700s until 1200, Barfleur is a staging ground for several military campaigns and the site of diplomatic envoy missions between England and Normandy. For ease of reference, what follows is a quick timeline of these events.

- **Early 700s:** King Arthur is said to have met with his allies at the port of Barfleur before marching on campaign against the Romans.
- **996:** Æthelred the Unready, king of England, declared war on Richard III the Good, Duke of Normandy. Dispatching a fleet of armed soldiers to seize the province of Contentin, the English forces met unexpected resistance from the harbor's residents upon their landing. The Norman peasants were able to hold the English off long enough for reinforcements to come from the viscount of Contentin, Nigel. Ultimately, the English were unsuccessful in their bid for conquest.
- **January 1026:** Richard III, Duke of Normandy, was wed to Adela the Holy, daughter of Robert II the Pious at Barfluer.
- **1037:** In a mirror image of his father's own bid for conquest, Edward the Confessor, son of Æthelred the Unready, departed Barfleur with forty ships under his command to assert his claim to the English crown. His

bid was also unsuccessful and he was obliged to return to the harbor town.

- **1042:** Sixty ships left Barfleur under the command of the Comte de Longueville to replace the son of Cnut the Great, Harthacnut, on the throne of England. This undertaking failed. Despite this, Harthacnut's death came in June of that same year, paving the way for Edward the Confessor's succession to the English throne.
- **1066:** William the Conqueror leaves Barfleur for England onboard the Mora, captained by Stephen. This culminates in the Norman Conquest of England. During his reign, King William and Queen Matilda bestowed upon the Cartulary of the Holy Trinity of Caen a house at Barfleur.
- **1099:** William the Red, third son of William the Conqueror and his successor to the English throne, returns to Normandy via Barfleur.
- **1105:** King Henry I, successor to William the Red, lands at Barfleur with a fleet.
- **November 25, 1120:** The White Ship disaster occurs, claiming the lives of King Henry's children, including his rightful heir, William Ætheling.
- **Mid-1100s:** The Bishop of Bayeux and the Bishop of Coutances held residences in Barfleur; Radulphe Goudin resided in the former, while William of St. John, the latter.
- **1151:** Henry, Duke of Normandy—later King Henry II of England—was at Barfleur. The son of Empress Matilda, issue of King Henry I, was marshalling men to wage war against his grandfather's successor King Stephen when he was recalled to Normandy in order to rescue one of his fortresses besieged by the King of France. Later, Duke Henry issued a charter to Ranulf II, earl of Chester, giving him all of his father's heritages in England and Normandy, including the Castle of Barfleur.
- **December 1154:** Following King Stephen's death, Duke Henry departed Normandy from Barfleur to claim the English crown.
- **1154-1189:** Throughout his tenure as king of England, Henry II would make several embarkations and disembarkations at Barfleur. The most notable of which came in July 1174 when he left Barfleur for Southampton with Queen Eleonore, some cavaliers, and a troop of Barbancons, collecting a large number of ships at the harbor town that had been awaiting his arrival.
- **August 1189:** Following King Henry II's passing, his son, Richard the Lionheart, having been recognized as the Duke of Normandy departed for England from Barfleur to be crowned king.

- **May 9, 1194:** King Richard returned to Barfleur ahead of a fleet of a hundred ships to assist the Verneuil, then besieged by the King of France. Richard chose the port town as landing as he wished to court their favor.
- **December 4, 1194:** King Richard issues a charter extending tax relief to the monks of Canterbury; in the charter, the port of Barfleur is listed among his subjects.
- **February 10, 1199:** The Lionheart's successor, his brother John, was at Barfleur, where he confirmed his patronage of the port town.
- **1200:** King John went to Barfleur twice: Once in February 5-10 and again in September 15-17. It is during King John's reign that Normandy once again becomes French. As a consequence, Barfleur's importance as the principal contact point between the northwestern province in France and Great Britain comes to an end.

BARFLEUR IN 1220

By 1220, Barfleur's role in Mythic Europe is to serve as a port-of-trade and shipyard for the North Seas. Thanks to its centralized location, Carles Magnus of House Tytalus has chosen the harbor town as the homeport for his Covenant of the Northern Seas. For more on Magnus and his ambitions of creating a new tribunal on the open seas consult the *Ars Magica* sourcebook *Through the Aegis: Developed Covenants*.

Of the harbor town's approximate 250 residents most are either shipwrights or fishermen, plying their trade in relative obscurity for the last twenty years or so. The harbor town is home to a handful of notable residents, including Shimon Avraham (*Through the Aegis*, pg. 22), Nadríc the Dwarven shipwright and de facto harbormaster, and Gaëlle Annick, owner of the Hotel-Dieu.

NOTABLE LOCATIONS

Here is a breakdown of notable locations strewn throughout Barfleur proper.

- **The Abbey House of the Holy Trinity:** Bestowed to the abbey of Cartulary of the Holy Trinity of Caen by William the Conqueror, this house is still patronized by parishioners of the abbey. As a consequence, the abbey house has a Divine Aura of 3. Its location is centralized to the town.
- **The Bishops' Retreat:** Located far away from the hustle-and-bustle of the dockyards are the Bishops' Retreat. These neighboring residences are directly across the street from one another and belong to the Bishops of Bayeux and Countances respectively. Unlike the abbey house these are not frequented as often and as a consequence share a Divine Aura of 2.

- **The Church:** Built on the shoreline of Barfleur stands the same church Saint Romphaire oversaw during his lifetime. Like all buildings in Barfleur in 1220, this modest building is a wooden construct, supporting its own well and a bell tower. Presently, the harbor town is without a pastor as the previous one died rather unexpectedly in his sleep one autumn night. Despite this the church maintains a Divine Aura of 4.
- **The Counting House:** As the town's most prominent tax collector, Shimon Avraham resides in the Counting House. Standing at a towering four stories, the Counting House is quite lavish, furnished in nothing save the finest, and is easily the most ostentatious place in all Barfleur. While he is a proud member of the town's Jewish community, Shimon's propensity for showing off his wealth has left him something of a social outcast among his own.
- **The Hotel-Dieu:** Much like how the town itself remains a mystery, no one is quite certain as to the true origins of the ancient Hotel-Dieu. Most residents have long since reasoned that the hospice was established during the founding of the harbor town and may have even been the town hall. Regardless of whether or not this speculation is true, the hotel is not a royal foundation. Its continued existence is due in large part thanks to the generosity of the nobles, ecclesiastics and nuns who frequent Barfleur en transit to places elsewhere. The current proprietress is a Breton expatriate, Gaëlle Annick.
- **The Islet:** Beside the church is a granite outcropping known as the Islet. Carved onto this massive stone jutting out into the ocean is a cross. Once word of Saint Romphaire's passing reached Barfleur, this carving was made in memorial to his years of service here. Since then this cross weeps 6 pawns of Corpus Vis (Divine) each spring, and is registered in Uriel's name as per the Normandy Peripheral Code.
- **La Carcasse Brisée:** Overseen solely by the town's de facto harbormaster, Nadríc, La Carcasse Brisée (The Broken Carcass) is what passes as a house of ill-repute at Barfleur. Housed within the hull of a decommissioned cog idly floating on the waters of the bay, La Carcasse Brisée is home to all manner of vices and indulgences, including though not limited to drinking, dicing, and whoring. Patrons be warned though: as proprietor, Nadríc expects his due share or else.



THE MUTABILITY OF OTHERWORLD FORTUNES

CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER BREAKDOWN

"The Mutability of Otherworldly Fortunes" is broken down into five interconnected chapters: An introductory prologue, three chapters detailing a beginning, middle, and an end, and a concluding epilogue. Each chapter is intended to be roughly an hour in length.

As the Storyguide, you may find through the course of play that your troupe is breezing through certain chapters while stagnating in others; this is to be expected. This adventure is purposefully designed to present Storyguides with a lot of material, both historical and mechanical, to give them enough to play around with. As always, the Storyguide is encouraged to rework whatever she chooses to provide her players with the best gaming experience.

What follows is a Chapter-by-Chapter Breakdown of the story:

• **PROLOGUE:** Set on Friday the Thirteenth of November 1220, the prologue sees the players assume the roles of Grog-level sailors enjoying a night of carousing at the local tavern. As the night passes, have players make subsequent Carouse rolls; the player with the lowest roll (or better yet, a botch) is selected as the final victim of the Infernal ghost that haunts the harbor of Barfleur, Countess Matilda of Perche (for more on infernal ghosts, see *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, pg. 36).

• **CHAPTER ONE:** Set on Wednesday, November 25—twelve days after the Prologue—the principle characters find themselves visiting Barfleur. As the sun sets, a man is discovered floating like driftwood in the middle of the harbor. Once he is rescued, the players discover he is a Drowned Man, Thomas FitzStephen, captain of the ill-fated White Ship that foundered a century ago (for more on drowned men, see *Realms of Power: Magic*, pg. 96). What's more, he comes with an ominous proclamation.

• **CHAPTER TWO:** True to the captain's word, "they" have arrived: Demons from all across Mythic Europe. However, none take any overtly aggressive action toward either the player characters or the denizens of Barfleur; instead, all appear transfixed by the harbor. Their collective demonic presence is driving the entire town toward madness. Amidst all this chaos, from out of the harbor marches a brigade of animated skeletons (for more on revenants, see *RoP:M*, pg. 99). Three hundred and ninety-eight strong, the brigade is bound by shackles, hoisting the White Ship from out of the depths.

• **CHAPTER THREE:** The White Ship is revealed to be a devouring regio (see *RoP:I*, pg. 16). Upon her deck, a century-old battle between brothers rages on in stalemate. Locked in unending combat is the child of a demon, Richard of Lincoln, and his blessed rival the duke of Normandy, William the Ætheling, empowered by True Faith. Aiding Richard is their sister, Countess Matilda, and wanting to support William is Captain FitzStephen. The players must now choose who to support. Determining a side and lending aid is enough to push this battle in either's favor. The chapter ends with one side triumphant over the other.

• **EPILOGUE:** Dawn comes with either the Infernal or Divine triumphant. With the conflict resolved, the greater forces of hell have either grown bored, retiring to follow their own corrupted pursuits elsewhere, or were banished by the resurrection of William the Ætheling.

PROLOGUE

November, Friday the Thirteenth 1220: As the sun starts to set on Barfleur, the evening's adventure opens with the players assuming the roles of Grog-level sailors enjoying a night of indulgences at the local watering hole: La Carcasse Brisée. These should all be hardworking, hard drinking men of ill-repute prone to visiting dens of iniquity on their free time.

Prior to the start of play, each player should be encouraged to create their own Grog using the character creation rules detailed on either *ArM5*, pg. 17 or the more comprehensive rules seen in *Grogs*, pgs. 61-73. (Should a player come unprepared without a Grog of their own then go ahead and have them use the Sailor of the Northern Seas write-up on page 23 of *Through the Aegis: Developed Covenants*.) Lastly, each player must select a sinful personality trait, along with a corresponding negative reputation, thus ensuring their ill-reputed status.

With a supporting cast now set, the Storyguide should give some consideration to how these characters factor into the campaign's overall narrative. Keep in mind that none of these men can be native to Barfleur. Barfleur is a port city, home to craftsmen and fishermen, not sailors. Presumably, the principal magi characters have already arrived at Barfleur by November 13th; if so, then have these sailors be the crew of that transport vessel, presently caught in a holding pattern, awaiting resupply before shipping off again for ports unknown elsewhere in Mythic Europe. If your troupe happens to be running a maritime-themed campaign like the Covenant of North Seas, then merely select one of your player's vessels as their vessel.



La Carcasse Brisée is a den of iniquity with an Infernal Aura of 1; thanks to the largesse of her patron, the Hulk can more than accommodate any vice, regardless of how esoteric. It is owned and operated by Barfleur's de facto harbormaster Nadríc. Once a master shipwright in his own right, Nadríc has slowly been corrupted thanks to his prolonged exposure to La Carcasse Brisée's Infernal Aura. He is now little more than a ward boss for Barfleur's docks. At his beck-and-call is a small cadre of seasoned thugs (use the Grizzled Veteran statistics, ArM5 pg. 21) to keep the peace in his establishment and collect his protection racket. Once the players arrive by rowboat, Nadríc is present and more than willing to keep the players entertained. Also in attendance are some local color, all of whom are regulars: Archibald, a hermit; Athol, a wayward wife; Fergie, a widowed tavern keep; Kenina, an orphaned bar-maiden; Kester, a Saxon bastard, and Norm, a down-and-out herald for the duchy of Normandy. Lastly, there is a bevy of girls on hand to entertain the men's baser urges—for a price, that is.

Here the Storyguide is encouraged to indulge the players in entertaining their characters' vices. Remember there is no shortage of NPCs willing to encourage them, providing motivation to keep the players occupied, whether this is in the form of purchasing them another round of drinks or challenging them to a game of dice. With each new distraction that comes along have the players roll a Stamina + Carouse Roll against one another. Throughout the prologue call for multiple such rolls; each time taking note of the character with the lowest roll and having that person quietly removed from the scene. This can take the form of Fergie making her move on them or one of the Grizzled Veterans escorted them from the premises. (Botches should always be handled as if the character passed out right where he was standing.)

Once there is one Grog left standing, he should quickly lose interest as much of his fellows have either passed out or are nowhere to be seen. Even the NPCs seem to be fewer and farther between. Last call is given and the character is escorted to a rowboat. Upon entering the rowboat the Grog is possessed by a waking dream. This is the Infernal ghost's Envisioning Power at work, luring him to deviate in his course and rescue her.

Have the player make an appropriate Personality Roll against an Ease Factor of 15 to resist the siren's call. If he manages to resist, he will see one of the other rowboats as it peels away from the procession in the direction of where his vision ended. He watches as the boat comes to a halt. It is there one second, he blinks

and the next it is gone. There is not even a scream released. If the player cannot resist, he is lured toward where the Quilleboeuf Rock is located. Peering into the water's surface he is greeted not by the sight of a beautiful woman but by a horde of skeletal revenants rising up to drag his rowboat down.

CHAPTER ONE

November, Wednesday the Twenty-fifth, 1220: Twelve days have passed since the events of the Prologue and the magi characters find themselves at Barfleur as a confluence of otherworldly powers a hundred years in the making finally comes to an impasse.

Just as Storyguides should give some consideration as to how the Grog of the Prologue factor into the campaign's overall narrative, it must be asked why the magi find themselves in Barfleur instead of at their own covenant wherever that may be.

"The Mutability of Otherworldly Fortunes" is set in winter 1220; presumably, a minimum of three other game sessions have been held prior to this adventure. If this is the case, the Storyguide is encouraged to seed this adventure earlier into her Saga, preparing the players for travel. There are several reasons magi may want to travel to Barfleur; key among them is that this is the homeport of the rather unconventional Covenant of the North Seas. Overseen by one Carles Magnus, a Tytalus magus with ambitions to transform the Order of Hermes, the North Seas Covenant is a maritime one where each magus must be master of their own seafaring vessel before signing the charter. Founded in 1209, this impoverished springtime covenant is eager to ally themselves with fellow covenants to solidify their own tenuous standing within the Normandy Tribunal. Perhaps the troupe has a meeting with Magnus to formalize a partnership.

What's more, Barfleur is also home to Uriel. Formerly of House Flambeau, Uriel is a holy magus. He renounced the paganism inherent within the Order of Hermes so as he might share a closer relationship with the Lord. Loquacious to a fault, Uriel must live his day-to-day life as a blatantly gifted magus, leaving him with precious few opportunities to socialize with his fellow residents of Barfleur. He is more than eager (some might even say overly so) to engage with any of visiting magi and give them a tour of his extensive library. A Parma Magica expert, Uriel made several breakthroughs in the field prior to his total conversion. Presently, he serves as lighthouse keeper.

Barfleur's central export is superior quality shipbuilding; their shipwrights are known throughout the North Seas. If the troupe is seeking to expand their





sphere of influence and open new opportunities for trade across the seas then there is no better place to come.



Lastly, for the Storyguide who wishes to be less coy, if the troupe has a character (be he magi or custos) blessed with the Premonition Supernatural Virtue, simply conclude the previous session with him receiving a vision of the dastardly events to come or, for those Storyguides who wish to be even more heavy handed, simply have Gabriel, the Archangel of Prophecy (*Realms of the Power: The Divine*, pg. 29) appear before the covenant and expressly tell the player characters that their presence is required at Barfleuer. In either case impress upon the players the dire consequences of inaction.



Ultimately, this motivation will vary wildly between individual Sagas and should be tailored to the needs and expectations of the troupe gathered round the gaming table. Regardless of the motivation, the magi find themselves in mid-conversation with the appropriate NPC when a trusted Grog barges in, interrupting the discussion with word from harbor: "They've found a man adrift out in the harbor!"



If your troupe has magi prone to heroic action then this is an excellent opportunity to showcase their abilities in reeling in this unknown man. Otherwise, feel free to have the players reassume their Grog roles from the Prologue, perhaps with the erroneous expectation that this man must be their lost compatriot. Once the man is reeled onto the shore, a crowd has gathered, surrounding the principle characters. Present in this crowd is Archibald, a hermit seen in the Prologue. In short order, the rescued man regains consciousness. At first, he is delirious, rambling incoherently about how it was all his fault, that he failed his king, that he killed his prince, and that they're all going to go to hell.



It may take some Mentem magic to calm the man's hysteria or (at the very least) a Folk Ken roll or two to earn his trust. Once trust has been earned, he reveals his name to be Thomas FitzStephen, Captain of the White Ship. Archibald shouts that that's horse shite. "He can't possibly be the Thomas FitzStephen," he goes on in a rant. "I mean, look at him! He's obviously lying. That ship wrecked a hundred years ago today! I ought to know; my bon-papa died aboard the White Ship." The news that a hundred years have passed takes FitzStephen's off his guard. For him, the wreck happened hours ago; little does he realize that he's been swimming through a Magic Regio for all this time.



Magi assembled will use either spells or lore rolls to try to unravel this mystery. If they try to peer into Thomas's mind, they catch fragments of what happened



that fateful night, along with a name: Aldous the Forlorn. If they try to resolve the questions with lore, have them roll against either English or Norman lore, Ease Factor 6. A Magic Lore roll against an Ease Factor 8 will reveal that FitzStephen is most likely a "drowned man," and that Aldous is the Magical Creature responsible for his newly transformed nature.

Regardless of how much is learned, the investigation comes to a screeching halt when ominous storm clouds roll in, blocking the sun. Allow the characters a moment or two to soak in the corrupted atmosphere as an Infernal Aura of 2 descends upon all of Barfleuer. The chapter ends with Thomas FitzStephen's deflated warning: "It's too late. They've already come..."

CHAPTER TWO

Chapter Two sees the session's principal characters caught by surprise as the denizens of Hell descend upon an unsuspecting Barfleuer. Storyguides must be aware that this chapter was not designed for bombastic heroism. Instead, our protagonists are quickly swept up into a mad dash to save as the town's citizens from themselves. Mere moments after the unexpected blotting of the sun and Captain FitzStephen's proclamation, three score demons have suddenly arrived at Barfleuer.

As if on an unholy pilgrimage from all corners of Mythic Europe, they have come. First to arrive are the demons collectively known as Sabaoth. In their natural form of a singular, monstrously-sized crow, Sabaoth lazily circles overhead, making several passes, before finally exploding into A Murder of Crows and descending upon the port town. The individual crows perch along the scattered rooftops of the port town, all with a clear line of sight to the harbor. Behind them, trudging across the town's paved road, is a mobilized unit of warrior demons, Fimus. Leading this march is none other than the so-called Prince of Hell himself, Gaap. He maneuvers his column to assume a parade rest along the dockside. Lording over this procession, atop a hill overlooking the town, is the majestically terrifying L'Homme Rogue: The Red Man. This fallen Grigori, like all his demonic brethren, takes no notice of the town's residents and merely stands there, transfixed by the harbor itself.

Storyguides need to stress to their players that none of the demons present are actually actively harming the citizens. Rather, they all appear to be preoccupied with whatever is occurring out in the harbor. However, this does not mean that the citizenry is left unmolested. Indeed, the collective demonic presence, plus the sudden appearance of an Infernal Aura of 2, has driven

many to sudden bouts of madness: men and women are tearing each other apart for no apparent reason all through the town. If your players fail to take action, Captain FitzStephen, desperate for redemption, shouts, "Let's move these people out!" before wading in and separating people.

Scattered throughout the port town are various "safe houses" that the principal characters can relocate people to, each comes with its own Divine Aura. During the crisis, these Divine Auras are not only intact, but each has increased by a factor of one. However, the problem quickly becomes one of logistics as there is simply not enough room (or time) to vacate a town of 250 to these locations. The turning point of the chapter comes when, amidst all this chaos, the principal characters encounter the Countess, Matilda of Perche, an Infernal ghost. Unlike all the inactive demons around her, the Countess is laughing, soaking in the madness. Her gaze settles on the player characters as she cackles, "You will all drown. Drown in a sea of your own blood!"

The players may wish to engage the Countess in battle at this point. (Also, if Captain FitzStephen is still with the group when the Countess reveals herself, he recognizes her instantly and provides the magi with the ghost's true name, thus aiding them in casting spells against her.) If this is not the case — or if the Countess wins Initiative — she retreats back to the harbor. Regardless of how this confrontation resolves itself, draw the PC's collective attention to the harbor. The chapter concludes with the sudden rising of the White Ship. From its watery grave, a brigade of 398 animated skeletons march onto the beach and docks of Barfleur, hoisting the vessel up by infernal chains. (This count includes the original passengers and crew of the White Ship, plus all of the Countess' victims for the last one hundred years.)

Yet all hope is not lost, as the more perceptive of the principal characters can make out the faint echoes of a lyre raised in psalm coming from the quarterdeck of the White Ship.

CHAPTER THREE

If the previous chapter cast the players in the role of reactionaries scrambling to curtail violence, then this chapter casts them in the role of proactive heroes whose choices may determine the fate of Mythic Europe. Yet, before all this can come to pass, the players will need to somehow board the White Ship, preferably undetected.

With the White Ship now upon the ocean once more, a lull has descended upon the port town. All the chaos

of the previous chapter has evaporated, as if the entire world were holding its collective breath. Afford the players a moment of downtime to collect themselves and regain their bearings.

Investigative players may wish to use this opportunity to question Captain FitzStephen as to what truly happened that night one hundred years ago. A penitent man, FitzStephen will bare his sins, leaving no name unspoken, thus affording the players the True Names of all the major players involved. The captain is oblivious to Richard's demon blooded nature, but will share that the young man was particularly thin-skinned for a nobleman. Astute players may pick up on this hint and deduce Richard's demonic weakness.

Once the players have had a moment to breathe, return their attention to the immediate concern of boarding the White Ship. Now, the assumption at work here is that more seasoned *Ars Magica* players will approach this with extreme caution ("We're surrounded by hundreds of reanimated skeletons, for goodness sake! To say nothing of the assembled demon congregation all around us"), while new players might be prone towards recklessness ("I throw my sword at the nearest demon! What loot do I get?"). As Storyguide, you may need to thread the needle here. If the group is overly cautious to the point of inaction, remind them that since their arrival the demons have not made a move; if the group is overly reckless to the point of mounting a suicide run, remind them of how woefully outnumbered they are in the present situation. If the Storyguide wishes to make such friendly reminders in-character, utilize Captain FitzStephen for this purpose.

Barring spells that allow for either instantaneous travel or flight, the principle characters may be resort to the most mundane of approaches: A common rowboat. There are many such boats moored at the docks waiting to be used for such a purpose. During this sequence, the Storyguide should encourage the players to come up with a means to shroud their approach, whether that is taking an indirect route to come up on the White Ship's stern or manipulating the weather to create a shroud of fog.

For his part, Thomas FitzStephen insists on accompanying the troupe. Not only is his Essential Trait "Captain of the White Ship," he is also bound to the role. Now that the ship has resurfaced, these aspects of his personality are reasserting themselves. The final decision as to whether or not to bring the captain on this mission is up to the players. If the group consensus is that he is to remain dockside, he will. He just will not be pleased.





Fundamentally, the Storyguide wants the players to reach their destination. After all, the entire evening has culminated in the troupe arriving to break a century old stalemate. So it is inadvisable to make the approach too insurmountable by, say, drawing the ire of the entire demon congregation. In addition, the Storyguide should not also just hand wave the journey, either.



Use this passage to bring tension into the game. Have an unexpected botch Stealth roll? Then their oar winds up hitting the side of the boat and attracting the attention of the nearest reanimated skeleton, and now he's coming to investigate. (If one of the PC Groggs died in the Prologue, then go ahead and make this his reanimated corpse instead.)



Once the troupe has boarded the White Ship, they are greeted by the sight of a lone man, William the Aetheling, playing a lyre with bloodied hands. Lording over him is a demon, Thaphaboath. Thaphaboath is mindlessly pounding on an invisible barrier separating him from his prey.



Before the players are allowed to act, a voice from the crow's nest hails them. "I wouldn't do that if I were you," he says as he descends toward the deck below along a yardarm. "He can be quite testy when provoked. Can't you, my pet? Yes, yes, you can!" He introduces himself as Richard of Lincoln, and he supposes that they are the wizardry folk here to break this stalemate.



If questioned or threatened, Richard responds with mirth. He is confident of victory as it is only a matter of time before William succumbs to exhaustion. Once the lyre goes silent, William's Divine protection will fail him, Thaphaboath will bathe in his blood, and they will all finally be free of the Devouring Regio that has kept them prisoner for the past century.



"Of course, you could always help... speed the process along. I'll make it well worth your while." He smiles. If the players have not dealt with Matilda, she too appears alongside her bastard brother. "Or... Well, I suppose you could do that pedantic hero nonsense and rally to his aid instead. The choice is yours. Either way I'll be amused, at least."



The battle lines are drawn; it is now up to the troupe to decide what side to take.



SIDING WITH RICHARD OF LINCOLN

As sinning is always easier than living a righteous life, this is by far the easiest option presented. All that needs to happen is for someone without an Infernal Might score to move in close on William and make the kill. The aetheling is so exhausted at this point that he won't even put up much of a struggle in his own defense.



The task of defending the prince falls upon Captain



FitzStephen's shoulders, if he is present. Siding with Richard against William will provoke the captain, and he will do what must be done to see him protected.



SIDING WITH WILLIAM THE AETHELING

By far the more difficult of the two options presented, siding with the rightful heir of England has the potential of pitting the troupe in mortal combat against a Devil Child with Infernal Might 5, an Infernal ghost with Infernal Might 10, and a demon shield grog with an Infernal Might 15.

Of the three combatants, the easiest to turn would actually be Thaphaboath, as he has grown weary of his master's prattling. Players may be able to detect his reluctance to act with a high enough Folk Ken roll and attempt to Bargain with the demon. He may even divulge his master's demonic weakness.

Siding against Richard will bring Captain FitzStephen, if present, into the fray on their side. If he has not done so, he can provide the true name of the Countess.

CHOOSING TO SIDE WITH NO ONE

Inaction is also a choice. Choosing to side with neither brother will result in the White Ship descending into the same Devouring Regio from whence it came. This process comes suddenly, and threatens to swallow the troupe right up with the ship and all hands. The troupe will need Athletic + Quickness rolls against a Ease Factor of 12 if they are to escape with their lives.

In this case, Captain FitzStephen, if present, willingly goes down with his ship.

The chapter draws to a close when either one brother is dead or the ship has returned to the depths of Barfleur harbor.



EPILOGUE

SIDING WITH RICHARD OF LINCOLN, REDUX

If the troupe slays both William and Captain FitzStephen, Richard is triumphant and free of the Devouring Regio. Sadly, he will not live long enough to enjoy his spoils. He is in mid-monologue, applauding the troupe for their pragmatism, when his age suddenly catches up to him, exacerbated by his Demonic Blood. Richard of Lincoln turns to ash before the players.

Once the initial shock abates, the troupe is greeted by another man. Striding onto the main deck from the aftcastle, this man appears to be in his late fifties, rather hearty for a man of his years. There is a severe cast to his mirthless expression and he bares more than a passing resemblance to the late Richard of Lincoln.

“You must forgive my son,” he says. “He was always so petulant.” He looks out across the harbor at the demon hordes amassed at Barfleur. “No, that won’t do, won’t do at all.” With a wave of his hand, the spellbound demons are let loose upon Barfleur, turning the once quiet seaport into a veritable bloodbath. The church, along with the other divine auras located throughout the town, are razed and the fire of the lighthouse is snuffed out in appropriately dramatic fashion. From this point onward, Barfleur’s aura is now an infernal one. “There, that’s better.” If the troupe inquires as to who this newcomer is, he demurs graciously: “A friend.” He is, in fact, the demon Aborym.

Before he leaves, he reveals to the troupe Thaphaboath’s True Name and transfers ownership of the demon from his late son to the covenant, earning them one demonic shield grog. For ensuring that his son has, at last, completed his Tragic Life destiny, the covenant earns the boon Powerful Ally—The Demon Aborym. This Major Boon is balanced with the Major Hook: Rival—The Church once word spreads of what the players’ have done.

SIDING WITH WILLIAM THE AETHELING, REDUX

Rallying to the aethling’s cause and slaying his bastard brother has the troupe witnessing a miracle as William is resurrected, earning the Major Story Flaw: “Raised from the Dead.” (See the sidebar “The Second Coming of William.”) This miracle is seen by all in Barfleur, and is strong enough to banish all the demons back to Hell.

All those in the troupe who believe in the Divine — regardless of whether that is Christianity, Judaism or Islam — earn themselves a singular Faith Point for participating in the miracle. Those of other religious persuasions earn no such reward. However, no other material rewards are granted to the troupe.

CHOOSING TO SIDE WITH NO ONE, REDUX

If the troupe made their Athletics checks and outraced the Devouring Regio, they find themselves treading water in the bay of Barfleur. Across the way, the demon horde, having grown bored, disperses from whence they came in disappointment.

THE FATE OF THE WHITE SHIP

Provided that the White Ship survived the ordeal, she now belongs to the troupe; neither side has a vested interest in the legendary ship any longer.

If he survived, Captain FitzStephen will remain onboard to serve the covenant as the ship’s commander. He does this even if the troupe aligned with Richard against William, as he is magically bound to his role, whether he likes who he is serving or not.

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Magi of the Order

Euryalus Koios of House Tytalus

by Jason Tondro



The magus known now as Euryalus Koios was born in 1156 in the Italian countryside. Fair and charming, he was nevertheless ostracized by his Gift. As an adolescent, Euryalus was drawn to other boys, and his guilt and shame over his “unnatural” desires led him to embrace his outcast status. He was found by a Jerbiton magus who sent him to the University of Bologna, where he learned his letters and the classics. Euryalus had several male lovers among the students of Bologna, but when his master at last opened his Arts, Euryalus kept his attraction to other men a secret.

Euryalus’s apprenticeship was unusual only because of his relatively advanced age; he was Gauntleted when he was 31, and for a time he was an ideal Jerbiton. He cultivated a lifestyle of beauty and taste, pursuing his magical studies not for power or glory but for comfort and joy. His impeccable spellcasting technique and witty way with words made him a popular author and teacher, and he quickly began to produce a small library of texts on Spell Mastery, first writing on all his own spells but then branching out to master spells which were popular in the Order and for which there was a sure demand. He has sold many tractatus to Flambeau magi, to Quaesitors, and to those seeking to avoid them. Later, he joined the Cult of Mercury, at first purely to learn their Spell Mastery techniques; eventually he came to enjoy the beauty of their pagan rituals. In the pursuit of useful spells, Euryalus made himself a generalist; none of his Arts are especially high, but he knows a great many useful incantations and lives comfortably as a respected author on a specialized field.

But Euryalus was tormented by his unnatural attraction to men. As a student he had read Thomas Aquinas and other Doctors of the Church who condemned sodomy in the strongest terms. Jerbiton magi often marry, but the hypocrisy and strain of keeping his true self hidden, and thus closing off all possibility of a happy romantic life with a partner of his choosing, became unbearable. Euryalus had learned to be an excellent liar, but he was by nature an honest and compassionate man. He began to consider options. At a meeting of his regional tribunal he overheard a debate of House Tytalus, and his interest in Calliclean ethics was piqued. He began a long correspondence with a

senior Tytalus magus, seeking to learn more about the House's principles. Until now, he had always judged the House harshly, as a place for diabolists and trouble-makers. But he began to wonder if House Tytalus might be a place where his defiance of traditional Christian values would not be condemned.

Seven years later, Euryalus attended tribunal once more, and this time entered the debate for himself. He defended love between those of the same sex — men or women — as something God had made and, thus, not unnatural. In the process, he “came out” as a sodomite himself. Euryalus didn’t convince many of the Jerbiton or Flambeau in his audience, but the magi of House Tytalus were impressed at his courage and his loyalty to his own nature. They welcomed him within their House and gave him the new name of Koios, a Titan renowned for his knowledge and wisdom.

In the years since, Euryalus Koios has made peace with himself and his sexuality. Most magi have little interest in love of any sort, and don't particularly care whether Euryalus has sex with men or not, but the simple fact that he's no longer hiding his desires and lying to his sodales and covenfolk has transformed Euryalus's life. He is happier now, more at ease with himself and his future. There has been a price to pay; Euryalus's parens no longer communicates with him, and most of the covenfolk avoid him. The local priest has devoted many weekly sermons to the tale of Sodom and Gomorrah. Euryalus figures he's going to Hell, but he will go to Hell true to himself.

Several years ago, Euryalus decided to take an apprentice. His magic does not work on children (a restriction he inherited from his parens) and so to avoid any hint of scandal he chose a young woman and sent her off to school. By the time she'd attained her baccalaureate at Palermo, she was old enough for Euryalus to open her Arts. She's now 21 and a third of the way through her apprenticeship. Euryalus intends to enchant a talisman with her help.

LGBT concerns and the Order

Words like gay, queer, homosexual, and lesbian are modern inventions, and would not have been used in the 13th century. The literature on sodomy in the classical and medieval church is extensive, and the

word covers all non-procreative sex, including not only homosexuality but also masturbation and oral or anal sex between men and women. Thomas Aquinas, Peter Damien, Hildegard of Bingen and many others all wrote about these topics and they all agreed they were sins, approximately equal to adultery. The Cathars and Waldensians were especially likely to be accused of sodomy. Unnatural sex between women was (only slightly) less serious than between men, but much less reported; although there are literally thousands of accusations of male sodomy in the medieval historical record, there are only a handful of similar accusations towards women.

Sexuality is of so little interest to most magi that homosexuality probably doesn't count as a Dark Secret, though it could be one for a companion or grog in a typical Christian town. Instead, Curse of Venus can be a very useful Story Flaw for homosexual magi. Curse of Venus models a string of inappropriate, one-sided, doomed, or dangerous romances, and for most LGBT magi in Mythic Europe, that's a pretty good description of their love life.

Euryalus Koios

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

Size 0

Age 64 (52; longevity ritual with a +8 bonus)

Decrepitude 0 (3)

Warping Score 3 (10)

Confidence Score 2 (5)

Virtues & Flaws Hermetic Magus, Baccalaureus; the Gift; Arcane Lore, Flawless Caster, Good Teacher, Mastered Spells, Privileged Upbringing, Self-Confident, Skilled Parens; Creative Block, Curse of Venus, Oversensitive (Insults), Restriction (Children), Soft-Hearted

Personality Traits Kind +2, Open +3

Reputations Convert to House Tytalus +2 (Order of Hermes), Member of the Magistri Magia +1 (Order of Hermes), Sodomite +3 (covenfolk), Good Writer +2

Combat

Dodge Init +1, Defense +4

Soak +1

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

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

Abilities Area Lore: Roman Tribunal 2 (magi), Artes Liberales 2 (rituals), Awareness 2 (details), Brawl 2 (dodge), Carouse 2 (students), Charm 3 (men), Code of Hermes 1 (scrying), Concentration 2 (spells), Etiquette 2 (students), Finesse 2 (Imaginem), Folk Ken 2

(teachers), Guile 2 (teachers), Intrigue 3 (concealing things about himself), Northern Italian 5 (vocabulary), Latin 5 (Hermetic), Magic Lore 2 (Italian), Magic Theory 6 (inventing spells), Order of Hermes Lore 3 (magi), Parma Magica 3 (Mentem), Penetration 2 (Mentem), Philosophiae 3 (rituals), Profession: Scribe 5 (Hermetic), Teaching 1 (one on one), Theology 2 (sex)

Arts Cr 11, In 6, Mu 6, Pe 7, Re 10; Aq 5, An 5, Au 6, Co 10, He 5, Ig 6, Im 11, Me 10, Te 6, Vi 11

Twilight Scars All his physical motions seem supernaturally precise, Children feel safe in his presence, Never needs to shave his facial hair

Equipment Well-tailored clothing in the latest fashions, a knife for trimming quills, 12 pawns Creo vis in chess piece tokens

Spells Known

- *The Incantation of the Lightning* +21 (CrAu 35) Mastery 3 (3): Magic Resistance, Penetration, Stalwart Casting
- *Purification of the Festering Wounds* +23 (CrCo 20) Mastery 1: Penetration
- *Restoration of the Defiled Body* +30 (CrCo 25, Ritual) Mastery 1: Stalwart Casting
- *Severed Limb Made Whole* +30 (CrCo 25, Ritual) Mastery 1: Stalwart Casting
- *Incantation of the Body Made Whole* +30 (CrCo 40, Ritual) Mastery 1: Stalwart Casting
- *Revealed Flaws of the Mortal Flesh* +18 (InCo 10) Mastery 1: Penetration
- *Whispers through the Black Gate* +19 (InCo[Me] 15) Mastery 2: Ceremonial Casting, Imperturbable Casting
- *Eyes of the Cat* +13 (MuCo[An] 5) Mastery 1: Multiple Casting
- *Endurance of the Berserkers* +19 (MuCo 15) Mastery 2: Imperturbable Casting, Stalwart Casting
- *Pilum of Fire* +21 (CrIg 20) Mastery 3 (3): Magic Resistance, Multiple Casting, Penetration
- *Ball of Abyssal Flame* +20 (CrIg 35) Mastery 2: Resistance, Stalwart Casting
- *Haunt of the Living Ghost* +24 (CrIm 35) Mastery 1: Imperturbable Casting
- *Prying Eyes* +18 (InIm 5) Mastery 1: Quiet Casting
- *Summoning the Distant Image* +19 (InIm 25) Mastery 2: Disguised Casting, Penetration
- *Aura of Ennobled Presence* +20 (Mulm 10) Mastery 2: Quiet Casting, Still Casting
- *Disguise of the Transformed Image* +20 (Mulm 15) Mastery 2: Quiet Casting, Still Casting
- *Veil of Invisibility* +21 (PelM 20) Mastery 2: Disguised Casting, Fast Casting
- *Silence of the Smothered Sound* +21 (PelM 20) Mastery 2: Penetration, Magic Resistance





- *Dispel the Phantom Image* +21 (PeIm 25) Mastery 2: Fast Casting, Penetration
- *Wizard's Sidestep* +23 (ReIm 10) Mastery 2: Fast Casting, Quick Casting
- *Posing the Silent Question* +20 (InMe 20) Mastery 3: Quiet Casting x2, Still Casting
- *Loss of But a Moment's Memory* +20 (PeMe 20) Mastery 2: Quiet Casting, Still Casting
- *Aura of Rightful Authority* +24 (ReMe 20) Mastery 3: Quiet Casting x2, Still Casting
- *Incantation of Summoning the Dead* +23 (ReMe 40) Mastery 2: Imperturbable Casting, Stalwart Casting
- *The Shrouded Glen* +29 (ReMe 40, Ritual) Mastery 1: Stalwart Casting
- *The Crystal Dart* +16 (Mu[Re]Te 10) Mastery 3 (1): Magic Resistance, Multiple Casting, Penetration
- *Edge of the Razor* +15 (MuTe 20) Mastery 2: Fast Casting, Penetration
- *Sense of the Lingering Magic* +19 (InVi 30) Mastery 1: Ceremonial Casting
- *Demon's Eternal Oblivion* +22 (PeVi 10) Mastery 3 (1): Fast Casting, Multiple Casting, Penetration
- *Masking the Odor of Magic* +21 (PeVi 25) Mastery 2: Ceremonial Casting, Disguised Casting
- *Opening the Intangible Tunnel* +24 (ReVi 15) Mastery 2: Disguised Casting, Penetration
- *Maintaining the Demanding Spell* +24 (ReVi 20) Mastery 2: Imperturbable Casting, Stalwart Casting
- *Aegis of the Hearth* +31 (ReVi 25, Ritual) Mastery 2: Lab Mastery, Stalwart Casting

Euryalus Koios has prepared casting tablets for several of his spells. These can be copied for magi at a cost of 1 pawn for every 15 levels of the spell, rounded up. If the client needs the casting tablet immediately, scribes can give copies they have already made, but the price is doubled.

- *Whispers through the Black Gate* (InCo[Me] 15)
- *Purification of the Festering Wounds* (CrCo 20)
- *Restoration of the Defiled Body* (CrCo 25)
- *Severed Limb Made Whole* (CrCo 25)
- *Incantation of the Body Made Whole* (CrCo 40)
- *Haunt of the Living Ghost* (CrIm 35)
- *Posing the Silent Question* (InMe 20)
- *Incantation of Summoning the Dead* (ReMe 40)
- *The Shrouded Glen* (ReMe 40)
- *Aegis of the Hearth* (ReVi 25)

Euryalus Koios has written a tractatus on Spell Mastery for many of his spells. All these books are Quality 11 and a copy can be secured for 3 pawns (a bit higher than normal because of the rarity of high quality

books on Spell Mastery). Delivery is made after one season. If the tractatus is needed immediately, double the price. For an additional pawn and a season of delay, Euryalus's scribes can secure resonant materials from House Mercere, raising the book's Quality to 12.

- Aegis of the Hearth
- Aura of Ennobled Presence
- Aura of Rightful Authority
- Ball of Abyssal Flame
- The Crystal Dart (two volumes)
- Demon's Eternal Oblivion (two volumes)
- Disguise of the Transformed Image
- Dispel the Phantom Image
- Endurance of the Berserkers
- The Incantation of the Lightning (two volumes)
- Incantation of Summoning the Dead
- Loss of But a Moment's Memory
- Maintaining the Demanding Spell
- Masking the Odor of Magic
- Opening the Intangible Tunnel
- Pilum of Fire (two volumes)
- Posing the Silent Question
- Sense of the Lingering Magic
- Silence of the Smothered Sound
- Summoning the Distant Image
- Veil of Invisibility
- Wizard's Sidestep

Cassidy, a Partridge of Virtue

Magic Might 8 (Imaginem)

Characteristics Int 0, Per +2, Pre 0, Com +1, Str -10, Sta 0, Dex +2, Qik +7

Size -5

Season Summer

Virtues & Flaws Magic Animal, Magical Companion; Common Sense, Essential Virtue (Good Liar +3), Puissant Stealth, Sharp Ears; Fragile Constitution, Noncombatant, Reclusive

Qualities & Inferiorities Camouflage; Timid
Magic Qualities & Inferiorities Gift of Speech, Lesser Power, Personal Power

Personality Traits Lustful +3, Duplicitous +2
Reputations Lustful +3, Duplicitous +2

Combat

- *Dodge Init* +7, *Defense* +10
- *Evasion (+5 for Size) Init* +7, *Defense* +15

Soak 0

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

Wound Penalties -1 (1), -3 (2), -5 (3), Incapacitated (4), Dead (5)

Abilities Artes Liberales 1 (music), Athletics 3 (flying), Awareness 4 (predators), Brawl 2 (dodging), Folk Ken 3

(clients), Guile 4 (lying about self), Intrigue 4 (keeping secrets), Latin 5 (Hermetic), Magic Theory 6 (Imaginem), Music 3 (singing), Northern Italian 5 (vocabulary), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (magi), Stealth 4+2 (Hiding), Survival 3 (fields), Theology 1 (sexuality)

Powers

Hear the Song, Know the Singer, 2 points, Init -3, Imaginem

R Per, D Constant, T Hearing

When Cassidy hears a voice, he can identify who the speaker is and where the speaker is located. This is a constant effect, but it must penetrate.

InIm 25 (Base 3, +2 Sun, +3 Hearing, +1 Constant: Personal Power (25 levels)

The Earth that Conceals, 3 points, Init +3, Terram
R Touch, D Diam, T Ind

Cassidy avoids harm by creating a hollow cavity in the earth directly underneath himself, sinking into it, and closing it behind him. After two minutes, the cavity fills and Cassidy is deposited unharmed back onto the surface.

ReTe(An) 15 (Base 3, +1 Touch, +1 Diameter, +1 Animal, +1 Stone): Lesser Power (15 levels, 10 points spent to improve Init)

Vis 2 Imaginem in wings

Euryalus Koios's familiar is a Partridge of Virtue named Cassidy. Partridges are known for being so lustful that females can be impregnated just by the wind that passes a male. Male partridges, in their turn, sometimes try to mate with each other. Partridges have a number of tricks they use to escape prey, including covering themselves with dirt or pretending to have a broken wing, and thus luring enemies away from the nest. Cassidy is usually hiding inside his master's sleeves or hood, for he is a coward who flees all violence. However, his cautious nature has served his master well, and Euryalus Koios has learned to heed the advice of his perceptive friend.

Cassidy was bound almost twenty years ago with CrIm and a Binding Total of 30. He has a Gold Cord of 0, Silver Cord of 2, and Bronze Cord of 2. Cassidy's Essential Virtue adds +3 to any attempt to lie; his Camouflage Quality gives him a +3 bonus on all rolls to hide, so long as he is not moving.

Euryalus Koios's Laboratory

Euryalus Koios's laboratory is optimized for writing, and is dominated by a magnificent desk lit by free-standing magical lamps. A walking bookstand can position itself wherever necessary, and the magus has a habit of pacing as he reads. Note that the lab's +6 specialization

in Texts allows Euryalus Koios to add 2 to his Latin when he is writing Lab Texts and books.

Characteristics Size 0, Refinement +3, General Quality +1, Upkeep 0, Safety 0, Warping 0, Health 0, Aesthetics +3

Virtues & Flaws Highly Organized, Greater Feature: Desk, Magic Item: Bookstand of Hespera, Magical Lighting

Specializations Im +1; Texts +6

Lab Total Te + Fo + 16 (Int 1 + MT 6 + Aura 3 + GQ 1 + familiar 6) + 1 Inventing Spells + Lab Specializations

The Magistri Magia

The Magistri Magia (Masters of Magic) is a Hermetic society made up of wizards who have mastered spells, and who use that mastery to author casting tablets and books on Spell Mastery. Members are often known for their Flawless Magic, and they usually join the Cult of Mercury to gain access to that group's mastery techniques. Sometimes one of the Magistri will conduct original research to invent new Mastery special abilities.

The eldest of the Magistri is entrusted with a large library of books on Spell Mastery, copied and improved over the centuries, from which other members can borrow and contribute. This magus retains trained specialists who can copy these books for magi elsewhere in the Order. When this senior member dies or passes into Twilight, his will stipulates the next recipient of the library. The current senior member is Petrus of Bonisagus (*Tales of Power* 70).

The Magistri Magia isn't a particularly active society and doesn't formally meet; most members correspond with each other and send books back and forth through the Redcap network. These letters are eventually gathered together to form new books on Spell Mastery. Tribunal meetings are a time for Magistri to meet face-to-face and talk shop.

Magi who want to master a given spell can reach out to one of the Magistri and, if a book is already in existence on the needed spell, commission a copy. If the spell hasn't got a mastery text yet, one of the Magistri may learn it, practice it, and write a book for a client. Copies of an existing book cost 1-5 pawns, depending on the quality, and take a season or two to deliver. Hiring a member of the Magistri to research and write the book for you is a much more serious prospect, usually requiring a year and rook of vis.

The Magistri Magia are also a source for casting tablets. Tablets are especially useful to new covenants of young magi who want access to high level wards, healing magic, and information-gathering spells.





Anyone who has mastered a spell can write a casting tablet for it, and once such a tablet is written it can be copied in bulk by scribes trained in Magic Theory, so covenants looking to buy a tablet can usually find one at a reasonable price, perhaps 1 pawn for every 15 levels of the spell (rounded up). However, in the event such a tablet isn't already prepared, a member of the Magistri can learn it and write the tablet himself for a commission of 5p.

The Library of the Magistri Magia

Mastering a spell can be a challenge. While spells can be practiced over the course of a season, earning 5 XP and enough for Mastery 1, magi prefer to learn by reading books. But finding a book for the spell you want to master is hard. Over the centuries, the Order has accumulated many books on the 15 Arts and every magus reads the best ones; that's why *Covenants* describes a "sound tractatus" as having a Quality of around 10. But there are thousands of known spells and only a small fraction of those are commonly mastered. Unless you're looking for a tractatus on *Pilum of Fire*, chances are you're going to have to satisfy yourself with a book written by a magus who wasn't a Good Teacher with Communication of +3 or higher.

The following books on spell mastery are known in the Order, and are culled from published sources.

- Amadeus of Bonisagus, *Fortress of the Home*, Aegis of the Hearth Spell Mastery Tractatus, Quality 14
- Notatus, *Notes on Aegis of the Hearth*, Quality 11, also includes lab text for a level 20 version of the spell.
- Ventus Gurgis, *Master of Storm & Clouds vol I*, The Cloudless Sky Returned Spell Mastery Tractatus, Quality 8
- Ventus Gurgis, *Master of Storm & Clouds vol IV*, Clouds of Rain & Thunder Spell Mastery Tractatus, Quality 8
- Ventus Gurgis, *Master of Storm & Clouds vol II*, Clouds of Thunderous Might Spell Mastery Tractatus, Quality 8
- Felix of Tytalus, *Tenebris caeli domino*, Clouds of Thunderous Might Spell Mastery Tractatus, Quality 9
- Calvacius of Verditius, *Magister Crystallum Pilum*, The Crystal Dart Spell Mastery Tractatus, Quality 8
- Helveticus of Flambeau, *Scourge of the Infernal*, Demon's Eternal Oblivion Spell Mastery Summa, Quality 15 Level 3
- Calvacius of Tytalus, *Destruet Extremum Preiudicium*, Demon's Eternal Oblivion Spell Mastery Tractatus, Quality 8
- Ventus Gurgis, *Master of Storm & Clouds vol III*, Gathering the Stormy Might Spell Mastery Tractatus, Quality 8

- Felix of Tytalus, *Incantotione fulmineus*, Incantation of the Lightning Spell Mastery Tractatus, Quality 9
- Amadeus of Bonisagus, *Arcane Travel*, Piercing the Magical Veil Spell Mastery Tractatus, Quality 14
- Maris of Flambeau, *Flambeau's Legacy*, Pilum of Fire Spell Mastery Summa, Quality 16 Level 4
- Felix of Tytalus, *Domito hastam Ignis*, Pilum of Fire Spell Mastery Tractatus, Quality 9
- Manlius of Tytalus, *A Transparent State*, Veil of Invisibility Spell Mastery Summa, Quality 15 Level 2
- Marcus Cordo, *Multa Partum Vulnera*, The Wound that Weeps Spell Mastery Tractatus, Quality 8
- Ventus Gurgis, *Master of Storm & Clouds vol V*, Wrath of Whirling Winds and Water Spell Mastery Tractatus, Quality 8

These authors make good sources for additional books on Spell Mastery, especially in their field of specialization: Amadeus in Vim, Felix in elemental magic, and Ventus in weather. However, there are other magi, alive in 1220, who are able to author books on Spell Mastery and who might be members of the Magistri Magia. Here is a list of possible books by magi who have mastered a spell at level 2 or higher and who have Communication scores of 0 or better.

- Micheal Amhraidh (TtA 110), *Circular Ward Against Demons*, Quality 8
- Petrus (ToP 70), *The Incantation of the Lightning* (two volumes), *The Wound that Weeps*, Quality 7
- Phillipus Niger (GotF 59): *Aura of Rightful Authority*, *Clenching Grasp of the Crushed Heart*, *Demon's Eternal Oblivion*, *Wind of Mundane Silence* (two volumes), all Quality 7
- Monica Ierne, *Stone to Falling Dust* and *Wielding the Invisible Sling* (two volumes), all Quality 7
- Rotgiers de Gerberoy (L&TL), *Wind of Mundane Silence*, Quality 7
- Ferra of Bonisagus (TtA 137), *The Call to Slumber* (two volumes), *Coerce the Spirits of the Night* (two volumes), *Incantation of Summoning the Dead* (two volumes), *Lay to Rest the Haunting Spirit* (two volumes), *Pilum of Fire*, *Voices from Hollow Spaces* (two volumes), *Wings of the Soaring Wind*, all Quality 6
- Julia of Merenita, *Wizard's Sidestep* and *Demon's Eternal Oblivion*, both Quality 6
- Timian, *Haunt of the Living Ghost*, Quality 6
- Antunnos of Bjornaer, *Grip of the Choking Hand*, Quality 6
- Severin of Tytalus, *Chirurgeon's Healing Touch* (two volumes), both Quality 6
- Hugh of Flambeau, *Maintaining the Demanding Spell*, Quality 6
- Ranulf of Flambeau, *Pilum of Fire* (two volumes), both Quality 6

The expected Quality for books on Spell Mastery is simply lower than that for books on the Arts. Quality 8-9 are considered “sound”, selling for 2 pawns. Those of Quality 6-7 are “vain” but still better than simple practice, and worth 1 pawn. Books with a Quality over 9 are especially valuable (3-4p), and the best books are

Quality 15, selling for 5p. Note that Spell Mastery is an Arcane Ability, so these books can rise in Quality with resonant materials. Prices presume delivery in a season or two; if the client needs a book immediately, double the price.



The Court of Roses

by Jim Mangiameli

Love is in the air and the wine we drink. The latter is literally true in the Court of Roses, a faerie regio presided over by Lord Marance.

Quick Concept: A faerie court headed by a king who delights in all aspects of mortal love. Lovers in his court are sought-after guests, as this gives him the vitality to grow. This manifests as mystic wine consumed by his court and their guests. His regio entices lovers of all types to join him, sometimes for much longer than they realize. Story seeds abound as magi may encounter someone claiming sanctuary in the court to escape an arranged or abusive marriage, numerous couples pledging their troth, or perhaps the lost love of one of their own, stranded in the regio.

This faerie regio can exist anywhere that mortals in love are likely to spend their time—in the marketplace, on a dune overlooking the beach, in a crowded tavern, at the back rows of a church. This article places the Court of Roses in a regio within a marketplace in a city in Mythic Europe, but again, many locations can work. The area it overlays should not have an Infernal aura, but any of the others would be reasonable depending on where it is set.

Lord Marance is a faerie king who derives vitality from all types of love. Entering his regio is possible in one of several ways:

- Two people chasing one another, with the pursued person hoping to be caught
 - Buying a rose in the marketplace, and either wearing it in one's hair or presenting it to someone else.
 - Being guided by an inhabitant of the regio.
 - Saying 'I love you' to someone, and meaning it.
- (The other person does not need to be there; it could be a knight with his lady's favor, someone mumbling under their breath towards someone for whom the feelings are unrequited, and so forth).
- Perceiving the regio boundary via the Second Sight

virtue or Hermetic magic.

- Drinking anything from a glass etched with a rose.

Storyguides are encouraged to come up with similar ways to enter the regio. Notably, however, it is not possible to simply walk into the area (the regio boundary is not physical-only). The regio has a Faerie aura of 4.

On entering the regio, travelers will notice the subtle differences. Instead of a bustling marketplace, they will see a court with a feast laid out. Having pride of place is an elegant table with a high variety of wine bottles, flasks, and decanters, with equally varied-looking liquids poured within. Each has a rose inscribed upon it.

Inhabitants in the regio are also varied. Mortal visitors include couples young and old, knights trying to win their ladies' favor, true friends, and suitors trying to win their true love's freedom from the court of Roses (see later). Some are here willingly, enjoying the drink and atmosphere. Some use this as a haven to avoid pursuit. Many are bewildered to have arrived here, and are searching for the way out. A minority are captives, parted from their true loves, hoping to see them again. Likewise, a few have been here for much longer than they realize.

Lord Marance's court has an active retinue of faeries. The majority take the guise of either mortal knights who woo female visitors, or lovely ladies seeking to attract attention. Of note, there are no satyrs or nymphs in his court—Lord Marance gains no benefit from enchanted feelings, nor from lust or revelry. He has issued a ban on satyrs from attending court, which does not stop them from trying to raid it for his wines.

Lord Marance will welcome player characters and invite them to drink. He will use his ability to ensure there is a glass for each inhabitant, and then cause each glass to be filled (assuming there is suitable inspiration, which there usually is). He will invite





everyone to join for a drink and pledge a toast. Drinking the wine will not have any negative effects, unlike most faerie food consumed (as this is technically from mortals). Players may realize it is safe by succeeding at an Int + Faerie Lore roll of 9+, a roll on Lord Marance's reputation, or an Int + Area Lore roll of 6+.



If the players drink the wine, emphasize the taste and textures. Lord Marance's collection is varied, just as there are many different types of love. A glass filled from a young couple will have a spicy, heady taste. A glass filled from the love of a pair of elders will taste deep and rich. A love between a child and a favored pet will be soothing like warm milk. Unrequited love will taste bitter. These effects are not resisted, being the equivalent of Imaginem effects. The drinks are nourishing, however, and the equivalent of a good meal.



Once this business is done, Lord Marance will engage the characters in conversation, putting them ease as he feels any good host would. He will direct the conversation to any strong feelings of love they may have, such as with the True Love, True Friend, or Lost Love flaws. If they do have such a love, he will invite them to bring the person in question to the regio. If already there, he will ask if they want to 'stay.' This may result in them remaining in the regio for much longer than they intended (see Lord Marance's description). He may grant favored visitors the Unaging and No Sense of Time virtue and flaw. In his mind, this is showing respect to honored guests.



Lord Marance

Lord Marance is not designed as a player character; his virtues and flaws do not balance



Faerie Might: 30 (Mentem)

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



Virtues and Flaws: Feast of the Fae (each new drink Lord Marance consumes from lovers' energy restores 5 might points), Faerie Speech (speak and understand all human languages), Humanoid Faerie, Positive Folktales (if not using *Realms of Power: Faerie*, this can be substituted for a good reputation), Narrowly Cognizant (If not using *Realms of Power: Faerie*, this simply means that Lord Marance is aware he is a faerie, aware that he needs to drink of mortals' love, seeks ways to bring guests to his regio, and seeks to improve himself, but will not become a different type of faerie and is not aware that he may survive wounds that would kill a mortal), Hatred (Satyrs)



Personality Traits: Courtly +2, Protective +2, Hates Satyrs +4, Rambunctious -2, Hospitable +3
Reputations: Hospitable 4 (local area), Killjoy 3 (faerie courts of revelry)

Combat: Lord Marance generally does not engage in physical combat. His men will protect him (assume he has five Standard Soldiers, one Grizzled Veteran, one Tough Guy, and two Knights). Additionally, many visitors to his court will defend him. He will be permanently slain if he is stabbed through the heart, his pendant is removed, and all the drinks on the table are shattered (see below). If he would take a mortal wound but the above acts are not performed, he automatically revives at the next Sunrise or Sunset with all Incapacitating wounds improved to Heavy. He will then heal with a +8 modifier, using his drinks as nourishment. Any faeries he invites to drink will have this benefit. Mortals will only heal at an accelerated rate if they drink the liquid that their own love produced (see below). Marance does not think of himself as immortal and he would consider such a nearly-fatal blow to be a close call. He instinctively protects his pendant and drinks, since he values them, but does not realize these are the keys to his survival.

Soak: +5

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

Pretenses: [Area] Lore 5 (lovers' meeting places), Bargain 4 (leaving the regio), Carouse 4 (dignified), Charm 4 (putting people at ease), Etiquette 6 (Hosting), Finesse 8 (drinks), Folk Ken 5 (lovers), Speak [All] 5 (toasts), Intrigue 4 (Lovers' spats), Leadership 5 (subjects), Penetration 3 (Mentem), Profession [Brewer] 5 (for crowds), Theology 1 (Marriage).

Powers:

Love's Vessel (2 points, Terram, Init -3): Lord Marance can create a new container to fill with the energy of a mortals' love. He may only use this power when it is about to be filled. He also has only a limited control over what it will look like, as it is often highly dependent on the lovers in question. For example, a young couple carousing may cause him to generate a stein, a lord and lady will result in the creation of a fine decanter, etc. Any container he creates will have a rose emblazoned upon it. Each container is unique to the person or people whose love inspired it.

Lovers' Nourishment (2 points, Aquam, Init -5): Lord Marance may fill one of the containers he creates with the energy of a lover in his regio. As with Love's Vessel, he does not have direct power over the liquid therein—it may be a heady wine for newlyweds, apple cider for a child's first infatuation with a playmate, and so forth. This power is not resisted. The taste is always an excellent example of its type of beverage unless Lord Marance botches his finesse roll—even the bitter taste drawn from the feelings of a parent mourning the loss of a child will be strongly compelling. Note that this

power will fail if the feelings are feigned, are simply lusty thoughts, or are magically induced. If this occurs, Lord Marance will order the offending party to be removed from the regio and apologize to his guests. Each liquid is unique to the person or people whose love inspired it. The quantity in each container depends on how long the individual(s) in question have stayed in the regio.

Create Glasses (0 points, Terram, constant): There are always enough glasses for Lord Marance, his court, and guests to drink from. If removed from the regio, they will fade away into rose petals.

Language of Love (0 points, Mentem, constant): Lord Marance can tell if anyone in his court possesses the True Love, Lost Love, or True Friend virtues or flaws. He perceives this as smelling the scent of roses. This power needs to penetrate normally.

Toast (5 points, Aquam, Init -5) Lord Marance can cause the glass of each guest to fill with a liquid from one of his containers. He cannot create more per glass than is in the container, but he is not limited by the number of guests or retainers. For example, assume Marance has recently filled a small, crystalline goblet with amber wine from the energy given by the happy marriage of a baron and his wife. He proposes a Toast to his subjects and guests. Each guest will receive a goblet of this wine equal to the amount the container was filled with initially.

Grant Virtue: Unaging (5 points, Corpus, Init -10): Lord Marance may grant the Unaging virtue to particularly favored guests, or those who agree to stay in the Regio. This power needs to penetrate normally. Anyone in the regio who has been blessed in this way does not make aging rolls while they remain.

Grant Flaw: No Sense of Time (5 points, Mentem, Init -10): When granting his Unaging virtue, he also grants his target this new flaw as well. Similar to No Sense of Direction, recipients lose awareness of the passage of time—days or weeks seem like a few hours, years seem like a matter of weeks. Lord Marance is aware that this power exists, but in his view he's just being hospitable. He is unable to use one power without using the other. He is willing to negotiate to allow guests to leave, with persuasion. This power needs to penetrate normally.

Lovers' Lane (0 points, Imaginem, constant): Lord Marance has some control over his regio to make it suitable for lovers that want to stay. Favored guests (those who received his Unaging and No Sense of Time gifts) perceive the area as conducive to their love. It may appear as the chapel where they married, the secluded lane where they would meet during their courtship, etc. He also has minor powers to ensure that

everyone has a place to sit and be comfortable. Magi would be fascinated to learn if the changes are simply illusions, features of the regio, or exist simply in the viewer's mind. Lord Marance would take an extraordinarily dim view of magi conducting such research, however.

Equipment: A variety of decanters, steins, and goblets, described above. Each is filled with different liquids granted by the many flavors of lovers that visit his court. Each container and the drink contained therein is unique to each person or couple. He also wears a pendant shaped like a rose over his heart.

Vis: 5 pawns of Mentem in his pendant. Lord Marance occasionally will send characters off with a gift of a drink to take with them. This can be harvested as one pawn of Mentem vis. This could serve as a covenant vis source, possibly as a Contested Resource or Public Vis Source. Any drinks taken from the court without his consent will vanish into rose petals. He will be annoyed if the party absconds with drinks they were given for a toast, but utterly enraged if they make off with one of the containers from his tables. The former is poor manners for a guest, but the latter is theft. He will bar the former offenders from entering the regio again without a profuse apology, but send his guards after anyone who steals containers from the table.

Appearance: A stately man in comfortable but expensive robes. He speaks softly and courteously. He wears a pendent shaped like a rose over his heart.

Lord Marance considers it his duty to provide a haven for lovers and to be a dutiful host. He is always seeking new guests to his court. He gains vitality from sharing in lovers' emotions, as described elsewhere. This is what motivates him, and he is always delighted to find new drinks, as this translates to new forms of love. His manners are impeccable. In personality, he most often ranges from a gracious host to an encouraging counselor. As he has been around many humans, he is often able to provide advice to lovers having trouble. He gains no vitality from the more physical aspects of love or lust, nor from supernaturally induced emotions. He forbids any coercion in his court, though he does not discourage amorousness between couples. He will use the powers of his regio to give them privacy, though he expects them to rejoin and socialize eventually. Characters there unwillingly as the result of a bargain or captivity are treated with courtesy. They are not allowed to leave, but he does not allow anyone else to force their suit upon them.

Other than the presence of satyrs, succubi, or other supernatural creatures that embody lust instead of love,





the few things that make him angry are massive rudeness or disruptions by guests, theft or vandalism of his drinking containers, or attempting to coerce someone's affections (either by force or magic).

He views magi with the Gift as having the potential for a strong spice for his drinks if they are in love with someone—potentially spoiling everything, but also possibly a sublime experience.



Lord Marance himself experiences love vicariously through his drinks. He does not himself fall in love with others, so he does not attempt to woo any of his guests. Many of his retainers, particularly knights, do experience this and will attempt to court compatible visitors. In their own minds, these feelings are genuine, as they are incognizant faeries. (If you are not using Realms of Power: Faerie, this means that his retainers' feelings of love are genuine, and they do not realize that these feelings serve their master's vitality).



Generally, Lord Marance's men will not pledge their suits when they are clearly unwelcome. The only exception would be if the person's True Love is present in the regio, and that person will fight for their beloved's honor. A faerie losing the fight and bringing the lovers closer together will gain vitality, represented by the containers filling more when Marance uses his power. He will apologize profusely to the people in question and (non-fatally) discipline his retainer. In the minds of the faeries, they were acting uncharacteristically churlish due to being smitten.



While not hostile by nature, he is loath to allow any of his 'favored guests' (Those that have received the Unaging and No Sense of Time) to leave the regio. Players may encounter difficulties attempting to secure these individuals' release, particularly since anyone thusly affected has no desire to leave and does not realize they have stayed for years. The loss of time is supernatural, but the enjoyment is not and therefore not a magical effect that can be resisted or dispelled.



Other ways in which Lord Marance could prove antagonistic are detailed below.



Story Seeds

- A player's Lost Love is here! Though treated courteously, she is unable to leave. Lord Marance savors the pining lovers' vitality as a bittersweet, yet compelling, drink. He will gladly allow the player character to stay here with his love, but the players must negotiate for them to be able to leave.
- Scipio of Merinita (see Magi of Hermes) approaches the players and tells them that his beloved is trapped in Lord Marance's court. He will reward the players handsomely if they can win her freedom.



- While enjoying a pleasant visit, a satyr raiding party appears and attempts to steal some of the wine for their revelries. Lord Marance is provoked to rare outrage, and his guards draw steel. Do the magi attempt to defuse the situation, favor one side in the battle, or use the distraction for their own purposes?
- A child with an odd manner and his parents hide here, terrified but clearly protective of each other.

Questioning the child reveals that he was an apprentice to a powerful but imposing Tytalus maga. His parents, with the aid of a friendly Merinita, braved the maga's wrath to spirit their son away and are hiding here. The Tytalus maga will soon find the regio, if she hasn't already. She plans to reclaim her apprentice one way or another. If the magi side with the Tytalus, the Merinita will bring a charge of molesting the fae. If they protect the child, the maga will charge them of depriving her of her apprentice (she may suspect the Merinita's complicity, but has no proof. The charge would be much easier to prove against the characters). How will they react?

- The scribe and the head cook at the player characters' covenant have become lovers and regularly meet here. They have either started neglecting their duties, or have simply vanished from the covenant since think they have only been in the regio for an hour. Can the players persuade them to return to their home and duties without angering Lord Marance or losing their loyalty?
- The town butcher and glover have fallen deeply in love and now live in the Court of Roses. Lord Marance is fascinated by the love between two men and is highly protective of them both. This is considered a sin in Mythic Europe. Secular or canon authorities may find their way into the regio while the characters are present.
- If your saga is set near the Theban Tribunal, Lord Marance has a special request. Baucis and Philemon were one of Greek Mythology's earliest happy couples. As a reward from Zeus for their piety and fidelity, they were both transformed to trees at the same moment at the end of their long lives so neither would have to live without the other. Lord Marance asks the players to provide seeds and grapes from these trees for his court, promising great rewards if the players comply. This story can work in other areas; simply substitute another famous pair such as Tristan and Isolde or Roland and Oliver.
- Lord Marance wants to perform the sacrament of marriage for his guests. If any of the players is a priest or friar (or has contacts with one), Marance requests that he stay to educate him in Theology so that he can be ordained.

• The drinks from a toast taste utterly foul. The couple from whose feelings the drinks were made both protest their love for each other, aghast. What can have caused this? Is one of them faithless? Is there a

demon of lust perverting people's nobler feelings? Is there a magus mis-casting spells and potentially arousing the faerie's anger?



The Book of Szabo

By Jason Tondro

The Book of Szabo is a four-volume treatise on whaling in Mythic Europe. Szabo ex Miscellanea, of the lineage of Pralix, went north looking for traces of the Order of Odin. She seems to have known of the whaling exploits of the Basque, but her own adventures brought her into contact with norsemen who, while they only hunted whales in times of desperation, often fought over their corpses. The Book is filled with anecdotes which can aid a reader in hunting whales, but there is almost no specific knowledge on how to render the corpse once the whale is killed. The book does detail the many valuable ingredients in a whale corpse, however, including ambergris and spermaceti. Szabo traces the whale through Greek, Roman, and early Christian writing, where it is usually called the aspidochelone. The aspidochelone has two distinctive behaviors: first, it lures its prey into its mouth by virtue of a sweet smell; second, it is so large that it can impersonate an island and thus lure innocent travelers to drowning. Both these traits illustrate the whale's nature as a creature of the Devil.

Szabo tells many stories about Scandinavian clans who have come to blows over the vast resources presented by a beached whale, especially during times of famine when food is scarce and precious. When northmen do dare to hunt whales, they mark their spears with a distinguishing rune, register this mark with the community, and then leave the spear in a whale when it dives to escape. After the monster eventually dies and washes ashore, the hunter can be identified by the mark on his spear and he is entitled to the majority of its flesh, though the owner of the land upon which the animal beaches is also owed a share. Norse law books are filled with very specific stipulations about how a whale is to be divided, in order to minimize conflict between families who might each want a share of the spoils.

Szabo also includes many stories of Infernal whales like Hafgufa (Sea-Reek), a monstrous whale able to

swallow entire ships whole, and Lyngbakr (Heather-Back), a whale so large that it appeared to be an island, luring innocent travelers to their death. Among the many fantastic events Szabo witnessed, several suggest a particular connection between whales and the self-reliant, spellcasting women of the north. For example, Forsyth was a troll-wife who controlled the storm and could adopt the shape of a whale, while other weather-witches and troll-wives rode whales across the sea in defiance of traditional gender roles. But that's not all: the Lappish king Finn transformed into a whale in the heat of battle, so as to crush his enemies beneath his monstrous bulk. Szabo writes that a covenant of Bjornaer whale-magi travel south from the North Sea every year, returning north to mate, but she was never able to confirm this with her own eyes.

Finally, the Book of Szabo contains several laboratory texts for the hunting and use of whales, spells written in a clean and clear hand. The book itself is large and heavy, befitting its subject, and is bound with flat plates of whale bone. The pages are thin sheets of baleen, decorated with occasional illustrations of monstrous fish.

Treat the Book of Szabo as a Quality 8 tractatus on Animal Handling, Civil & Canon Law, and Infernal Lore (this last is Quality 9, thanks to resonant materials used in the book's construction). This Quality includes a bonus for professional binding, scribing, and illumination. Because the spells within the book's fourth volume are designed to affect whales, they are almost all of high level. This makes the Book of Szabo very costly, worth about 25p, far more than most covenants would be willing to pay for it. For this reason, it's never been copied, and a magus who wants to study it will have to borrow it, steal it, or loot it from a corpse.



Spells

Preservation of the Aspidochelone, CrAn 30

R Voice, D Moon, T Ind

The spell preserves the corpse of an animal (up to Size +10) against rot. This is necessary because whale corpses are so massive that they take a long time to harvest, render, and move. The preserved corpse of a whale floats, but a rotted corpse sinks. If a whale is killed at sea, this spell can be used to preserve it while it is towed to shore. The spell is also useful to necromancers, who can then animate the corpse with other magic.

(Base 2, +2 Voice, +3 Moon, +3 Size)

To Conjure the Prison of Jonah, CrAn 45

R Voice, D Sun, T Ind

Creates a Size +9 whale without Might or powers; the Sarda Whale on p66 of *Faith & Flame* serves admirably. If conjured in the air and dropped as a weapon, the whale's size grants a +18 bonus to the aiming roll. This is mostly useful against seagoing vessels, because the dropped whale must penetrate magic resistance. If you add a Rego requisite and one magnitude, the whale obeys the caster's mental commands. If you add a Corpus requisite and one magnitude, you can conjure the whale around a human target, imprisoning him in the whale as Jonah was. This last effect needs to penetrate.

(Base 10, +2 Sun, +2 Voice, +3 Size)

There She Blows, InAn 20

R Arc, D Conc, T Ind

The caster knows the location of a whale to whom the caster has an arcane connection. This spell is usually used with blood recovered from the whale, either through battle or a spell.

(Base 3 extrapolated from InCo, +1 Conc, +4 Arc)

Familiarizing the Leviathan, MuAn 50, Ritual

R Touch, D Year, T Ind

Before Szabo could bind a whale as her familiar, she had to get it inside her lab. This spell was designed for that purpose. It reduces a large animal's Size by -8 for an entire year, making a whale about the size of a large man and able to fit in a pool. Reduce its Strength by 16 and raise Quickness by 8. This inflicts 1 Warping point over the course of the year, but no more if the spell is designed for the beast which is its target. Other beasts suffer 1 Warping when the spell is cast, 1 every season, and another 1 at the end of the year, for a total of 6.

(Base 4, +1 Touch, +4 Year, +3 Size, +2 to decrease size by additional 6)

Excising the Fishy Stench, PeAn 3

R Touch, D Mom, T Ind

This spell quickly ages an object carved from whale bone. Whale bone is saturated with oil that takes 1-2 years to seep out, and all that while it stinks. But all that oil makes the bone soft and ideal for carving. Once the bone is carved into the desired shape or object, this spell is used to immediately make it dry, hard, and odorless.

(Base 2, +1 Touch)

From Hell's Heart I Stab at Thee, PeAn 45

R Voice, D Mom, T Ind

A beast of up to Size +10 is dealt an incapacitating wound.

(Base 20, +2 Voice, +3 Size)

Rendering the Ocean's Bounty, ReAn 20

R Voice, D Mom, T Ind

This spell is Rego craft magic, rendering a whale's corpse into bones, meat, oil, and other parts. It requires a Finesse roll with an Ease Factor of 15; failure ruins the entire whale. (The Ease Factor is based on an Easy task, +3 because it involves multiple stages and +3 to do in an instant what would take one man a month or more.) With a successful roll, barrels are filled with whale oil from the fish's blubber, the baleen and bones are cleaned and stacked, and meat is ready to store. Note that whale oil sells for £100 a ton, according to *City & Guild*.

(Base 3, +2 Voice, +3 Size)

An Untenable Position for a Whale, ReAn 30

R Voice, D Conc, T Ind

A beast of up to Size +10 is lifted vertically into the air. It can be moved up and down, but not sideways. The spell is designed to be used on a whale's corpse after it has been secured by lines; the caster raises the whale into the air, where it can then be pulled onto a (very large!) boat. It can also be used to lift a living whale up out of the water where it can be more easily attacked, but the whale is not immobilized and will continue to thrash about, a hazard to anything nearby.

(Base 4, +2 Voice, +1 Conc, +3 Size)

Wholly Blood, Wholly Whale, ReAn 35

R Voice, D Mom, T Part

Blood from a whale within range is pulled directly to the caster, who should have a vial or other small container prepared to receive it. While this spell can be used to pull blood from a wound or from the open sea, it can also take blood directly out of a whale's body. The



amount of blood taken is far too small to inflict a wound upon the whale, but the blood is an arcane connection.
(Base 15, +2 Part, +2 Voice)

Rendering a Hook into His Nose, ReAn 35

R Voice, D Conc, T Ind

By means of this spell, an animal of up to Size +10 is rendered immobile for as long as the caster concentrates. This spell is intended to hold a whale still for a killing blow, but it can also be used on beasts which walk the earth.

(Base 5, +2 Voice, +3 Size, +1 Conc)

The Troll-Wife's Mount, ReAn 40

R Touch, D Conc, T Ind

A spell used to control a whale so it can be ridden through the sea. Its effect is identical to *Mastering the Unruly Beast* (ArM5 p120), but the spell is three magnitudes higher to affect whales. Most whales are both cruel and hungry, and so can be difficult to control with this spell.

Base 15, +1 Touch, +1 Conc, +3 Size

Raising the Monstrous Fish, ReAn 40

R Voice, D Conc, T Ind

This spell is a variation on the well-known necromancy *Awakening the Slumbering Corpse*. It animates the corpse of a whale, which then obeys the caster's shouted commands. A level 50 version of this spell is Range Arc, allowing the fish to leave the magus's sight; in this case, commands are delivered by thought.

(Base 10, +2 Voice, +3 Size, +1 Conc)

Butchery Upon the Ocean, MuAq 30

R Voice, D Sun, T Part

It is sometimes necessary to manually render the corpse of a whale when it is found upon the ocean, far from shore. This spell makes the surface of the water firm enough to walk on. The area affected is about 15 paces in diameter, an area large enough for a crew of men to work without fear of drowning. There are many other practical applications for this spell, beyond the butchery of whale corpses.

(Base 3, +1 Part, +2 Sun, +2 Voice)

Shape of the King of Terror, MuCo(An) 45

R Pers, D Sun, T Ind

Requisite Animal

The caster places a whale bone pin between his teeth and transforms into a Size +9 whale. You may change back at will, ending the spell.

(Base 20, +2 Sun, +3 Size)

A Spell to Deter Whales, Cr(Re)He 20

R Sight, D Diam, T Group

Requisite Rego

Whales in Mythic Europe avoid garlic; this spell conjures a large amount of garlic and then disperses it upon the ocean over an area of about a hundred cubic paces, creating a barrier through which a whale will not willingly pass. Usually a whale will just swim around the obstacle. If used to deter a whale with Might, this spell must penetrate its magic resistance to have any effect. A Rego requisite is required to disperse the garlic over a large area.

(Base 1, +1 Diameter, +3 Sight, +2 Group, +1 Rego)

Whale Revenants

When the corpse of a whale is animated through magic, use stats based on the Sarda Whale from *Faith & Flame* and the Walking Corpse from *Realms of Power: Magic*. As an optional rule, the Whale Revenant has Brawl equal to the Finesse of the magus who animates it.

Characteristics Cun -5, Per -4, Pre +2, Com -2, Str +22, Sta +8, Dex +3, Qik -4

Size +9

Confidence Score 0

Virtues & Flaws Reserves of Strength, Tough; Poor Eyesight

Qualities Aquatic, Defensive Fighter, Hardy, Imposing Appearance (x3), Tireless, Tough Hide

Magic Qualities & Inferiorities Improved Soak (x4), No Fatigue

Combat

Tail Init -4, Attack +11, Defense +1, Damage +27

Soak +21

Wound Penalties -1 (1-14), -3 (15-28), -5 (29-42), -5 (43-56), Destroyed (57+)

Abilities Brawl 3 (tail)

Natural Weapons Tail (Init 0, Atk +4, Def +2, Dmg +5)





Sequenti, Verditius's Second Ring

by Vincent Garcia Gomez



Verditius was the consummate magical smith. Yet, for all his prowesses, a lot of things escaped him. Even before being introduced to Hermetic Magic, most spellcasting eluded him. While his inability to use Formulaic Magic wasn't that much of a problem, his ego couldn't stand him being inferior to other magicians in any way. More importantly, his difficulties with Spontaneous Magic meant that he was unable to react to unforeseen situations. This frustrated him immensely. His first two rings were an attempt to change that.

He thought, wrongly, that his difficulties with Formulaic Magic came from something similar to the Deficient Arts Flaw. Thus, he reasoned, if his rings could supplement his spellcasting, he'd be able to make powerful Formulaic spells so easy that even his deficiencies wouldn't matter much. To his dismay, his efforts met with failure: Although the rings could support his magic, they required him to participate in a Wizard's Communion — an effect he was unable to perform in the first place. However, the effort wasn't totally in vain; once he joined the order, and although he seldom used them this way, Verditius discovered a small benefit: the look of amazement other magi gave him when he boosted their spells through a Communion.

He had more success with spontaneous magic. Although he found out he couldn't do away with his limitations, he managed, at great cost, to instill in his second ring the ability to grant its wearer dominion over the form of Terram. And the results were impressive, too — far beyond any spontaneous casting he had seen before. Sadly, such a display of power was very draining on the ring, which needed a long time to replenish its energy, or else be fed vis to recharge.

This is why the rings of Verditius are so shrouded in mystery. The first ones were both successes, greatly increasing Verditius's power by giving him multiple magical aides that could act alongside him, yet they fell very short of his ambitions. And he didn't want to acknowledge his failures or their weaknesses. He thus spoke little of them or what they could do, using them sparingly but to great effect, which made them all the more impressive and mysterious to the few witnesses.

Born of Verditius's frustrations and magical affinities, Sequenti is not very bright, but obstinate and proud. It'll want its wielder to display its powers in the most impressive way possible, usually by shaping metal and

stone into the most strange ways. It is also direct, tending to resolve conflicts by brute force and violence, which may make cohabitation with a peaceful magus difficult. But it is also one of the last repositories of Verditius's knowledge, able to act as mystagogue on a few House mysteries and, more importantly, provide insight into the process of its own creation. A non-Verditius might convince it to give up its secrets, thus getting these mysteries out of House Verditius. The last time something even remotely like this happened was when Icilius the Traitor got the Automata mystery out of the house. This didn't end well.

Where is the ring now? What happened to it, and to its siblings? Rumors as to the ring's location may easily lead the magi to exotic locales, from the sea floor to the heart of a volcano (*Hermetic Projects* and *Legends of Hermes* are useful here) or even to another Realm. One interesting thing is that, due to its *Unseen Porter* power, Sequenti is able to move on its own should it want to. This means that, wherever it is, it is either by choice, due to captivity, or because it has been tamed.

Should House Verditius learn of it, or any of its siblings, they'll be unrelenting in their pursuit of the ring and will let no other House have it, seeing it as a legacy from the Founder. Yet, that very prize may prove the House's undoing, as magesmiths compete to win the ring and try to learn its secrets. Certamen may very well descend into Wizard's War, or even outright thievery, unless the Primus can keep a tight rein on the House or Quaesitores reign in the more covetous and violent mages. Finding the ring may be just the start of the problem for the player characters: Unless they manage (somehow? And for how long?) to keep their acquisition a secret, they may very well soon find themselves on the bad side of a House famed for its pride and eventually responsible for that same House devouring itself.

On the other hand... Verditius magi are proud of themselves and their achievements. Whatever the ring's powers, there will always be those who'll deem it a fraud, far beneath the "real" ring's abilities, or even their own prowesses. Some of them may view the characters as scammers or duped by some supernatural power.

Its interest to the order doesn't stop with magic, though. As a direct witness to the last years of its creator, the ring would be prized by historians, who

would milk it for any information, however scant, relating to the Founder. That alone makes it worth a lot to magi. And what of Verditius's last days? It seems unlikely that mere mundanes could so easily subdue the greatest artificer of his age. Was he betrayed? Did he fake his death? His heart and head were removed, his body fed to the crows... Was this part of some elaborate Mystery ritual? Whatever the truth is, Sequenti might have clues towards learning it, clues some might prefer buried forever. And even if it has no such knowledge, even if the truth is nothing special, there will always be those who think otherwise.

Last but not least, the ring may be used as a tool by some non-hermetic group: Faeries wanting to drag magi on a quest, demons willing to stroke the fires of greed, hedge magi using it as a (dangerous) bargaining ship in their negotiations, rival traditions wanting to foster trouble in the order or distract its attention... The ring is a great McGuffin.

Sequenti

Magic Might 15 (Terram)

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

Season Spring

Confidence Score 1 (3)

Size -14

Virtues and Flaws Magic Thing; Mute, No Hands

Qualities and Inferiorities Lesser Power (x8), Improved Powers (x2), No Fatigue, Ritual Power (x4); Limited Movement, Major Flaw (No Hands), Major Flaw (Mute), Temporary Might

Personality Traits: Hubris +3, Slow-witted +2, Violent +2, Loves molding metal +3

Reputations Legendary Artifact +5 (Order of Hermes)

Combat

Dodge Init 0, Defense +0 (+14 for Size if using Evasion)

Soak +1

Wound Penalties -1 (1), -3 (2), -5 (3), Incapacitated (4), Dead (5)

Abilities Area Lore: Sardaigne 2 (Magical Auras), Concentration 1 (Powers), Finesse 4 (Terram), Magic Lore 2 (Magical Smiths), Order of Hermes Lore 1 (History), Tuscan 5 (Enchantments), Verditius Cult Lore 3 (modifying initiation scripts)

Powers

Grant Crafter of Terram, 10 Points, Initiative -20, Vim R Touch, D Sun, T Ind

Sequenti grants the "Crafter of Terram" virtue to its wearer, allowing, for 1 fatigue, the casting of any Creo or Rego Terram spell of level 25 or less.

Invisible Sling of Vilano, 0 Points, Initiative -3, Terram

R Touch, D Mom, T Ind

As the spell in Houses of Hermes: Societas p38.

Wall of Protecting Stone, 0 Points, Initiative -10, Terram

R Voice, D Sun, T Ind

As the spell (ArM5 153).

Pit of the Gaping Earth, 0 Points, Initiative -5, Terram

R Voice, D Mom, T Part

As the spell (ArM5 155).

The Unseen Porter, 0 Points, Initiative -4, Terram

R Voice, D Conc, T Ind

As the spell (ArM5 156).

Wizard's Communion, 0 Points, Initiative -10, Vim

R Voice, D Mom, T Group

As the spell (ArM5 160), cast at level 50.

The Wizard's Defender, 0 Points, Initiative -4, Terram

R Touch, D Conc, T Ind

Based on the Defender Swords in Through the Aegis, this effect allows the wielder to automatically "parry" incoming blows from metal weapons. The wielder must be aware of the incoming attack, so he can still be stabbed in the back. However, in normal melee he can automatically "parry" any number of blows in a round. The effect must be sustained by concentrating, but this is normally done by Sequenti itself

Vis 3 pawns Terram

Appearance The ring's appearance is very important, historically speaking, because it tells us something about who Verditius was and the power of his magic. Was he concerned by appearances? Could he forego entirely Shape and Material bonuses? A distinctive look may serve to anchor a specific ring in the player's imagination, whereas a generic one allows you to play a "mystery" mini-game where they have to try and guess which ring they have discovered. It is thus suggested that you either Sequenti a simple, elegant, generic appearance, which harkens back to the Nibelungen Ring and the One Ring, or instead that you go all-out fantasy with, say, a ring of flowing, moving rock and silver with one or more precious stones floating or flying in it.

How to Use Sequenti

Sequenti is built around three core abilities, all under its sole control:

- It may enter a Wizard's Communion with its wielder or another magi, making Formulaic spells easier to cast and granting a Penetration boost.
- It may grant the "Crafter of Terram" virtue to its wielder, although that costs Sequenti 10 might points it can't regenerate so long as the virtue is granted. Even afterwards, it'll be severely depleted.
- It can use several powers on its own, both offensive





and defensive, whatever its wielder may be otherwise doing. To any outside observer, this may appear as if the magus is casting multiple spells at the same time. This is very useful in life-or-death situations.

Story Hooks

- The ring has become the prized possession of Polymathes the dragon (*RoP: Magic* p77), who may be willing to trade it for something of even greater value. But what could be worth more to the dragon than one of the last remnants of Verditi's secrets?
- The ring now belongs to Ihab la'ara, a merchant of the City of Brass (See *Tales of Power* p49), who is willing to sell it to the characters at an outrageous price. However, before the sale can be concluded, he is



assassinated; the ring is nowhere to be found but the magi are the primary suspects. The PCs must now find the real culprit to clear their name.

- Alternatively, he'll help them if they find a way to depose the Malik. Is this a trap? Is the merchant really who he claims to be?
- The PC either track the ring, or discover it, in the Sunken Laboratory of Hermanus (*Legends of Hermes* p95). The situation is potentially explosive. Was House Tremere aware of the ring's true nature? Even if Hermanus hid the information from his sodales, this may end up badly for the relationship between two Houses of the order. How will the PCs react? Will House Tremere try to use a patsy or deflect the blame? What if the ring was planted there by a third party?



Join The Team

Submission Guidelines

Peripheral Code cannot survive without your help. In particular, we seek submissions which go beyond the canonical *Ars Magica* setting, game rules, or traditional storylines, but manuscripts on any topic of interest to *Ars Magica* fans are welcome, both feature articles and submissions to our regular columns.

Feature Articles

Feature articles are 2,000-5,000 words.

- **Adventures:** While every covenant is different and stories will usually be custom-written, there is a long history of adventures written for *Ars Magica*. *Thrice-Told Tales*, *Tales of Mythic Europe*, *Tales of Power*, *Hooks*, and *Mythic Locations* are all good resources. In particular, the distinct single-session episodes of *Thrice-Told Tales* make excellent models for writers. Adventures win the gold medal of submissions; there is no single category more needed, and no category so seldom filled.
- **Alternate Settings:** We eagerly look for articles on alternate historical periods, wholly original worlds, or even *Ars Magica* set in recognized settings from films, fiction, and other games. This includes new Houses and alternate takes on the Founders, an always-popular topic for conversation amongst *Ars* fans.
- **Alternate Systems:** We would like to see articles adapting *Mythic Europe* and/or *Hermetic* magic to other game systems.

• **Margins of the Order:** With the official *Ars Magica* 5th Edition line having come to a close, everything those books have not covered is now fair game for us. All those blank spaces are now the margins, and we would like you to help us write in them. Example manuscripts include a rival covenant, a potential covenant site, a mythic location, new *Hermetic Societies*, *Verditi's* confraternities, *Bjornaer* septs, mystery cults, lineages, hedge magic traditions, and so on.

• **Fiction:** *Ars Magica* fiction for *Peripheral Code* should be stand-alone short stories. Alternate settings and historical periods are welcome. This is an excellent place to test out ideas, characters, and settings which you might develop further once they prove successful in *Peripheral Code*. Many established authors use anthologies and magazines to draft stories they later develop into novels. Let us do that for you.

Columns

Regular columns are a good choice for authors submitting for the first time or who do not have the time to write long feature articles. Some columns are designed to help GMs with the work of game preparation, while others are of more general interest to all *Ars Magica* players. A full column might be 1,000-2,000 words, but for columns made up of small elements (*Illuminations*, *Goblin Market*, *Reviews*, *House Rules*) an individual book, spell, or review might be as few as 250 words.

• **Magi of the Order:** This regular column presents a single Hermetic magus at a single point in his life with full game stats and spell list, talisman and familiar if appropriate, and any original spells and enchanted items. The character needs to have Story Seeds that make him useful to the GM; traditionally he either has something the players need, needs something the players have, or has goals which will conflict with the players. We discourage you from submitting your own PC; your character is never as interesting to everyone else as they are to you.

• **Goblin Market:** This column spotlights enchanted items and Magical Things. Avoid items which simply duplicate spells which are already in the game. Submissions should include complete game statistics for the item, using the format found in other *Ars Magica* books. Give the item a history and suggest how it might create or be used in stories.

• **Illuminations:** Our library column details books and spells for a covenant library. While the book needs game mechanics, it is also important that the book be interesting. Its author, history, physical details, current location, and game mechanics can all contribute. Design notes are useful when introducing new spells; explain how the spell conforms to guidelines, and address any game balance concerns. Give the spell some context: who invented it, how is it used, and how can a PC get ahold of it.

• **House Rules:** *Ars Magica* is often house ruled, and if you have some of those rules which have worked especially well for you and your table, tell us about them. House rules should be tested before you send them to us, and you must include examples in your submission illustrating how the rule works. Remember that readers will probably not be able to ask you questions later. You might include discussion about why and how you developed this house rule, and how it changed through play test. Short submissions (less than 1,000 words) are fine, but we will keep them until we can gather them together into a single column of at least 1,000 words. Larger submissions can be published alone.

• **Reviews:** *Peripheral Code* seeks a regular reviewer who would contribute a column of reviews every issue. See this issue's editorial for details. More generally, we are looking for book, film, game, and other product reviews which would be of interest to *Ars* fans. With few official *Ars* products on the horizon, this is a time for players of the game to look elsewhere for game aids and inspiration. Perhaps you have already reviewed a fantasy RPG, novel, or film on Amazon or your blog. We'd like to consider it for publication in *Peripheral Code*.

• **NPCs:** Not all NPCs need character sheets, but the ones that do are covenfolk, grogs, or other characters with whom the PCs interact regularly. Strong NPC submissions include story seeds, roleplaying advice, complete game stats, and a complete background for the character.

• **Antagonists:** *Ars Magica* has a uniquely labor-intensive process of NPC and monster creation. Authors who do this work for Storyguides around the world win the silver medal for submissions. Stat blocks and spell lists for allies (who the SG can improvise) and PCs (which players prefer to make for themselves) are less useful, but every Storyguide needs antagonists, preferably with story seeds and clear goals in opposition to the players.

• **Other Columns** (for example, on the Realms of the Divine, Infernal, and Faerie) are possible, if we receive regular submissions which merit their creation.

Format: Manuscripts should be Word documents. Do not format your manuscript with bold, italics, bullet points, or other formatting; if you are sending a document you have already formatted, remove all formatting before you submit it! Send manuscripts to jason.tondro@gmail.com

Art Submissions

Peripheral Code believes artists should be paid what the artist believes the work is worth. Peripheral Code also has no significant art budget. But we are especially interested in two things:

• **Cover Art:** Cover art needs to be magical in theme, but is not otherwise bound by the *Ars Magica* canon or setting. This is a particularly good place for us to feature art you have already created, and which you might sell in other form (as, for example, prints). If we can work with you on something like this, please reach out to us with samples of your work and your financial requirements.

• **Interior Artists:** Art for columns and feature articles should be created specific to each article. Artists working in this capacity need to be fast and modestly priced. If you are interested in contributing to Peripheral Code in this capacity, reach out to us with samples of your work and your financial requirements.

Rewards: Writers who contribute to Peripheral Code receive an electronic copy of the issue in which their work appears and 4 XP in Craft: Writing.

More seriously, writing for *Ars Magica* has been described as more of a meta-game than a business proposition. Authors in Peripheral Code participate in



the game of making the game, and they play this game for fun. If writing for Peripheral Code is not fun, we certainly understand your desire to take your writing time elsewhere. The magazine does not make a profit; income from issue sales incompletely defers the cost of

cover and interior art. Costs in excess of sales are borne by the editor.

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