

# ARTS MAGICA



Lion Rampant

Jonathan Tweet & Mark Rein-Hagen

# **Ars Magica**

## **The Art of Magic**

By  
Jonathan Tweet & Mark Rein Hagen

**Lion  
Rampant**

*Dedicated to*

C. G. Jung and Joseph Campbell,  
who remind us of the importance of myth

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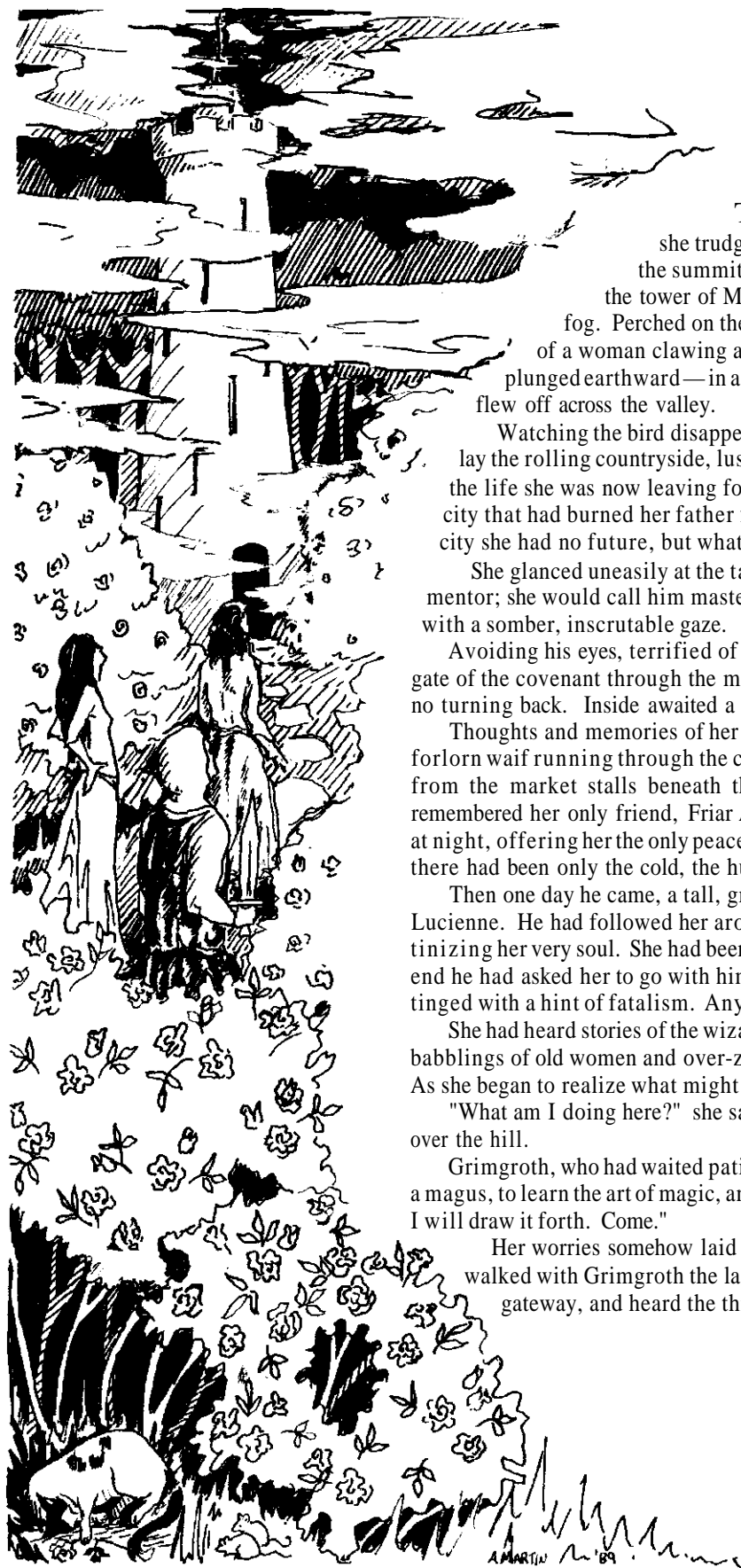
## Special Thanks to Lisa Stevens, Our Heroine

Thanks Also To: Darin "Woody" Eblom, Jayson Gralewicz, Steve Wright, Marty Dennis, Simon Robinson, Joel Wegner, Lisa Paulson, Derek Greco, Kevin Weiner, Kurt Hartwig, Josh Kronick, Bill Seurer, Stewart Wieck, John Porter, John & Diane Hagen, Kristin Hagen, David Knighton, Roser Trepata, Victor Raymond, Peter Hentges

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The magic we detail in this game is not real, but we  
hope you can use it as a metaphor to help you explore  
the very real mystery of the human experience,  
-the Authors

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The wisps of mist swirled around Lucienne as she trudged the last few yards up the hill with the others. Nearing the summit, she stopped and looked up to see the goal of her journey, the tower of Mistridge Covenant thrusting heavenward through the gray fog. Perched on the parapet at the top of the tower was the ragged silhouette of a woman clawing at the air. A screech echoed over the hill as she suddenly plunged earthward—in a mad flurry of feathers, she turned into a large raven, then flew off across the valley.

Watching the bird disappear into the distance, Lucienne looked behind her. There lay the rolling countryside, lush, green, and fertile, home of the common folk, home of the life she was now leaving forever. Somewhere just beyond the horizon lay Foix, the city that had burned her father for heresy and left her mother dead in the gutter. In that city she had no future, but what lay before her now?

She glanced uneasily at the tall, gray-robed wizard beside her, Grimgroth, her future mentor; she would call him master. He had stopped beside her and was searching her face with a somber, inscrutable gaze.

Avoiding his eyes, terrified of what she might see, Lucienne peered forward, to see the gate of the covenant through the mist. Once she passed through that portal, there would be no turning back. Inside awaited a whole new world.

Thoughts and memories of her former life rushed through her mind. Of her years as a forlorn waif running through the crowded streets with a gang of urchins. Of stealing bread from the market stalls beneath the disapproving gaze of the looming cathedral. She remembered her only friend, Friar Ambrose, who would sometimes gather her into his robes at night, offering her the only peaceful sleep she ever enjoyed. After the death of her parents, there had been only the cold, the hunger, and the loneliness.

Then one day he came, a tall, gray shadow, whose stare tugged at feelings of awe within Lucienne. He had followed her around the city for days, watching everything she did, scrutinizing her very soul. She had been terrified, but there was no one she could turn to. In the end he had asked her to go with him. And she had gone, compelled by a nagging curiosity, tinged with a hint of fatalism. Anything would be better than the streets.

She had heard stories of the wizards and their damnable deeds. The tales were mainly the babblings of old women and over-zealous priests, but what if there was some truth in them? As she began to realize what might lie before her, a feeling of panic clutched her heart.

"What am I doing here?" she said in a whisper barely audible above the wind that raced over the hill.

Grimgroth, who had waited patiently for her, said gently, "You, Lucienne, are becoming a magus, to learn the art of magic, and to learn of yourself. You have the Gift within you, and I will draw it forth. Come."

Her worries somehow laid aside, and her heart filled with new courage, Lucienne walked with Grimgroth the last steps through the mist to the tower, entered through the gateway, and heard the thick, oaken doors shut behind her. A new life had begun.

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# ☉ Introduction ☉

W

hile nobles wage their petty wars, friars preach to their forlorn flocks, and rogues scrounge for ill-gotten wealth; a mystical order of wizards dwells on the outskirts of civilization, dedicated to their arcane and esoteric pursuits. As legendary sages of great lore and unrivaled power, these sorcerers face the perils of a dark world that others dare not even dream of. Gathered together as the enigmatic Order of Hermes, these wizards struggle against internal intrigue and against persecution from those who do not care to understand their art and knowledge. Though magic pervades this medieval world, only these few gifted individuals, after years of apprenticeship, have mastered *ars magica*, the art of magic.

In *Ars Magica* you play the role of one such person: *You* are a

## The Medieval World

*Ars Magica* is set in a mythical version of thirteenth century Europe. Though the rules can be modified for any fantasy world, they were designed to bring out the flavor of the Middle Ages and are perhaps best used to this end. This setting is not merely historical; it is meant to evoke a certain flavor, a certain grandeur.

The world in *Ars Magica* is the world the way the medieval folk looked at it: It is as magical as they imagined it to be. It is a mythical setting, and poetic justice is part of daily life. Even the common folk deal with the supernatural, but more infrequently than the wizards. Charms and saints' relics protect them from the evil eye, prayers hold at bay the invisible demons that stalk their villages at night, and ancient curses haunt them. Some leave food on boulders to appease the forest spirits, and then go to church to pray for forgiveness. The world is alive with magical significance.

The medieval person sees the world magically, not logically and scientifically. They see connections in the world that we do not believe exist. Intuitable, universal principles, rather than concepts of genes, germs or gestation are what guide the world. For instance, an inclination towards evil is inheritable, and the sins of parents can cause their children to be crippled. Likewise, filth causes disease because disease, like filth, is corruption. These concepts are not merely beliefs; in this game they are world truths.

The Church is the pinnacle of Creation; all that lies outside its Dominion is dangerous, unpredictable, and profane. The dangers modern people fear, such as accidents, crime, and perhaps wild animals, may be threatening, but they are also natural and mundane. It is the *unknown* which is feared the most, and magic is perhaps the most unknown force of all.

Accepting the medieval world-view is easier to do than it may sound. Just think back to your childhood (when you used to play make-believe) and remember the magical way you looked at the

wizard. And not just a simple caster of spells and weaver of charms — you are a dedicated and educated practitioner of the magical arts. As a wizard, you stand in stark contrast to medieval society. While the rest of society is ignorant, largely illiterate, bound to a decadent hierarchy, and fearful of what lies beyond civilization, you are learned, creative, free from social constraints, and willing to dare the mysteries that surround you.

Though you study incessantly, occasionally you venture forth to gather magical ingredients for enchantments, to obtain new knowledge, and to assist those who warrant your aid. On these journeys, you are accompanied by friends and companions, and protected by mercenary guards. These perilous expeditions are the heart of **Ars Magica**, and letting you tell the stories of these journeys is the purpose of this book.

world. It was a more interesting and entertaining place when arcane mysteries lurked all about you (yes, even under the bed), back before you had figured everything out. The medieval world is filled with the same kind of mystery and romance; you will find it a vivid backdrop for the adventures of your characters.

## Magical Setting

Magic is everywhere; and its existence affects every detail of life — usually in the most subtle of ways. Magic is a mysterious and mercurial force, not a precise science that can easily be harnessed to the whims of mortals. It is the focal point of *Ars Magica*, so cultivating an appreciation of its mystery and possibility will greatly increase your enjoyment of the game.

Magic is the supernatural force, the invisible connections, that bind everything together. It is a way of thinking about the world that modern people no longer find useful. On one level, wizards are exploring these subtle connections to exploit them and gain power, much the way many scientists exploit scientific laws to develop new technology. The best wizards, however, are driven by a deeper need, the need to understand the universe, just as our best physicists today search for a unified field theory. As a wizard in **Ars Magica**, you may begin by learning better ways to put magic to use; but frequently, as wizards grow more powerful, more arcane matters will come to their attention, and curiosity overcomes ambition.

Magical pursuits will lead you beyond the safe boundaries of human society and knowledge. You will encounter enigmatic faeries in their deep forests, fierce griffins in barren wastelands, giants in their mountain fastnesses, and serpents that lurk in the dark depths of the ocean. Once you have passed out of human civilization, all manner of creatures, fair and foul, are to be found.

# What's New

If you've played other fantasy role-playing games, *Ars Magica* may seem closely related to them in theme, but it does have some fundamental differences. By understanding some of its foundations, you will learn the rules and understand the setting much more quickly. Following is an explanation of some of the basic elements of *Ars Magica*

- The wizard characters live together in a covenant, which is a fortified stronghold of some sort. They try to increase not only their own power and prestige, but that of the covenant as well, while the non-wizards provide whatever help their skills and swords can offer. Stories in *Ars Magica*, therefore, avoid the "sword for hire" tradition common to fantasy role-playing.

- By allowing wizards to be as powerful as they are in legend, *Ars Magica* rejects the assumption that all player-character types should roughly balance out in power. Magi (wizards) are clearly the strongest characters, and are more powerful than magic-users found in other games. The two other general character types, companions and grogs, have an equal role in the story and are as fun to role-play, but they are simply not as mighty as the magi. Companions are exceptional people who work with the magi, providing them with the benefit of superior ability and knowledge. Grogs are warriors who boldly risk their lives in protecting their masters and the covenant.

- To let all the players experience the various character roles, *Ars Magica* assumes that the players switch roles between stories. A player may have both a magus character and a companion, playing whichever one fits in the story, never both at once. The grogs are held in common by the players and can be played by anyone, probably while playing another character. This switching helps make each story unique and interesting, as new combinations of characters result in fresh interactions.

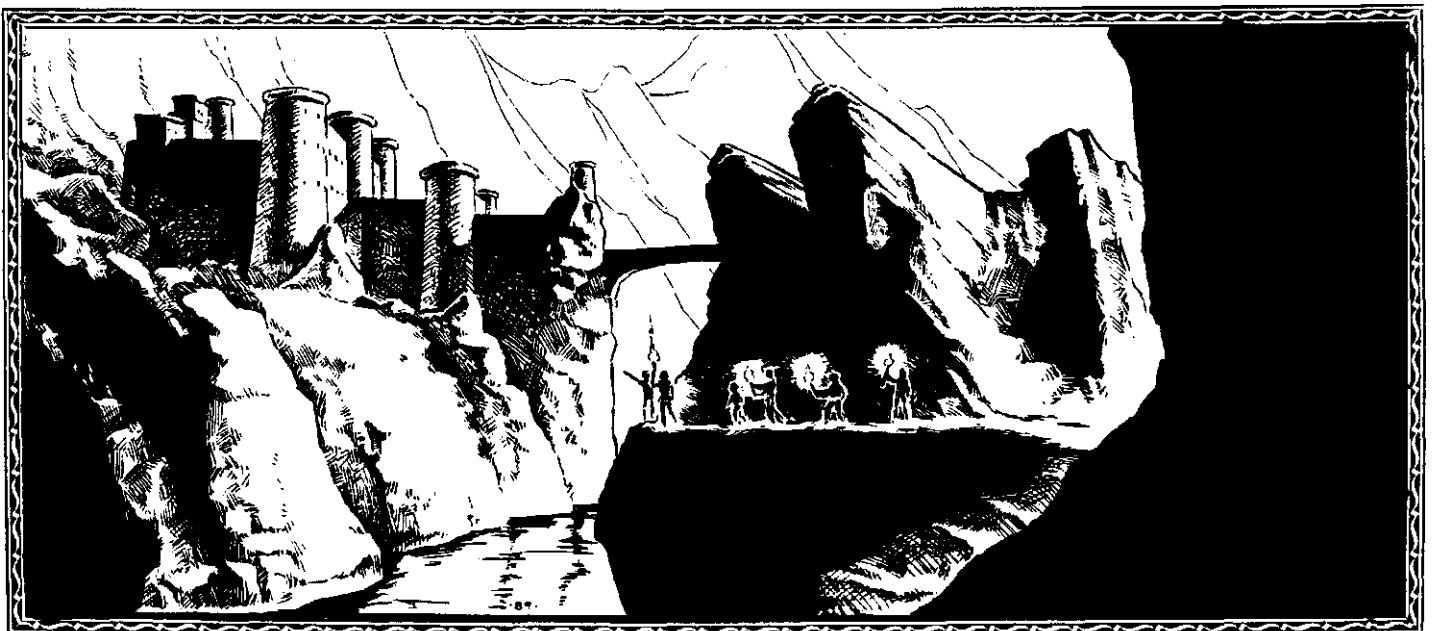
- These rules are based on the concept of a "troupe," a group of friends who work together and share responsibility in order to have a good time telling a good story. Though it is not vital to the way the rules work, different people can take the job of Storyguide for different stories (perhaps with one person loosely in charge overall).

- The basic rule system is simple and practical, yet versatile enough to adjudicate nearly any situation. The same system is used throughout the game so you don't have to learn a whole new set of rules for every chapter.

- In the Middle Ages, wealth is tied to relatively inflexible factors such as status, family, and privilege rather than to bank accounts. Thus money isn't as important in *Ars Magica* as it is in other games. The wizards value raw *vis*, the essence of magic trapped in a physical form, far more than they value gold or land.

- To add to the arcane flavor of the magical setting, *Ars Magica* makes frequent use of Latin as it relates to the art of magic. The names of the fifteen magical arts, for example, are in Latin. (If you cringe at the thought of learning a score of foreign words, just use their English equivalents.)

- A typical saga (campaign) lasts for many game years because it is based on the lives of magi, who increase their power mostly through long hours of study and extend their lives with magic potions. Unlike faster-moving games in which characters adventure full time, *Ars Magica* assumes that adventures are the exciting but infrequent events that punctuate long months of quieter pursuits. Chapter Seven describes the various tasks wizards can pursue in their laboratories: inventing spells, training apprentices, bonding familiars, and enchanting magical items.



# Mechanics

The mechanics of Ars Magica are simple, yet you can use them in a wide range of situations. Most die rolls are straightforward and employ the same basic task resolution system. The different numbers that are used to rate your character's abilities and attributes can be combined in many different combinations and manipulated to allow simulation of almost all relevant human activities. For instance, you can combine your Perception score with your Subterfuge score to see if you detect an ally's ulterior motives, or use Communication and Subterfuge to conceal your own.



Some permutations of the basic rules become involved and complicated, but in cases where they interfere with role-playing they are almost always optional. You can bother with it if you like that sort of thing, or avoid it if you don't. The more complicated rules usually deal with situations outside of the normal adventure (such as brewing potions) so they won't get in your way during active play. By strictly following the rules, you will find that they accurately reflect the medieval conception of reality; but, like us, you can choose to follow the rules when it suits the flow of the action and then fudge, simplify, and elaborate when doing so improves the story.

## The Basic System

Whenever you try to do something, be it mundane, martial, or magical, you must have some way of determining your success. The luck of the dice together with your character's various scores let you know whether you succeed or fail. Each player needs only one ten-sided die (so dice won't be getting in your way). When you attempt something that could have a number of results, the Storyguide will call for a roll. You roll your die in an attempt to get a number that equals or exceeds some other number, called an **ease** factor. This ease factor is set either by the Storyguide, by the circumstances, or by another person's roll. To the number rolled

on the die, you get to add bonuses appropriate to the actions attempted. If the task is more difficult, the number to be matched is higher, while easier tasks are accompanied by lower numbers to match. The practical range for ease factors is from 3 to about 12.

You get more bonuses if the action is something at which your character is skilled, and you suffer penalties if your character is below average in that endeavor. The average person with no training or experience in a given endeavor has a bonus of 0 when attempting that action. Zero is the "average" or "untrained" score for abilities and characteristics. Anything above 0 represents superior or trained aptitude, and anything below 0 represents a deficiency.

For instance, if you are investigating Toulouse incognito and attempting to convince a prominent gossip not to spread the word that you are in town, you will have to roll a die and attempt to match the ease factor determined by the Storyguide. The Storyguide might decide that you need to roll 9+ (9 or better) to persuade the gossip to keep quiet. Nine or better is a hard roll to make on a ten-sided die, but if you get a +2 bonus for the talent you have at persuading or intimidating people, you can add that bonus to your die roll, making 9 an easier number to achieve.

The vast majority of the rules that follow are aimed at two ends: letting you know what numbers you will need to match in different circumstances and letting you know what bonuses apply to which rolls. Keep in mind that the whole game is based on this same, basic system, so learn to use it to your best advantage.





## The Die Rolls

There are two different types of die rolls, one for casual circumstances and the other for stressful ones. Get a good idea of what each roll does, for they are found throughout the game. The chart will give you a quick reference. Remember that in nearly all cases, a higher roll is better for the character concerned.

### Simple Roll

The die is rolled and read normally, with the 0 counting as a ten. Thus there is an even spread over the 1-10 range. This roll is made in simple circumstances, when the variability of possible results is low.

### Stress Roll

The 0 on the die counts as a 0, not as a 10, and when you roll a 0, you must usually roll again to see if you botch, which would mean that some horrible failure has resulted. (Botches are explained later.) On the other hand, when a 1 is rolled, you may pick up the die and roll it again, doubling whatever number comes up. (Once you have started doubling on a specific roll, the 0 counts as a 10.) If a second 1 comes up, the die is rolled and quadrupled. A third 1 calls for rolling again and multiplying by 8, and so on. (The highest roll we've ever seen was 128, after five consecutive 1's.)

Stress rolls are used when the character is in a stressful situation and could either perform above their normal ability or fail miserably. People in stress are scared and thus give it all they've got, but they are likely to make disastrous mistakes as well. Whenever you are in dangerous circumstances, assume that you will make stress rolls. (Stress rolls can also be called for in any highly variable circumstances, even outside of stress.)

### Die Roll Summary

On a simple die, a "1" means 1, and a "0" means 10.

On a stress die, a "1" means re-roll and double, and a "0" means 0 and that you must roll for a botch.

## Ease Factors

There are three different ways to determine an ease factor, for which the Storyguide has the final responsibility. Keep in mind that ease factors are a way for the Storyguide to let the world make sense, because they make difficult tasks difficult to do, and they should not be determined casually.

- In some cases, there is a standard number that you always need to meet or beat. For instance, a character with a Poor Memory must roll a 6+ to remember something that has been memorized. Only in rare cases would the Storyguide change the ease factor from 6 to some other number.

- **More often, the number varies according to the precise task.** The Storyguide determines what the number is, based on the circumstances — sizing up the situation and making a call.

Storyguides without the inclination to calculate a precise ease factor for every circumstance can use the catch-all ease factor of 6, representing roughly even odds of success for an average person (which would be easy for most player-characters, since they are most likely competent at what they are attempting).

- The most variable way to determine the ease factor is to have that number determined by another roll, one that represents the

person or force acting against you. For instance, if your grog tries to sneak up on a guard, make a stress roll and add bonuses for your sneaking ability. At the same time, the Storyguide will make a simple roll (since the guard is not aware of any danger) and add bonuses for the guard's perceptiveness. If you beat the guard's roll, you have sneaked up to the guard without being heard.

The Storyguide can apply modifiers to either roll in exceptional circumstances, thus manipulating the odds to provide realism. For instance, if you want to sneak past the guard but never get closer than ten feet, there might be no circumstantial modifier, just the straight rolls. However if you want to sneak right up to the guard and grapple him from behind, the guard might get a bonus of +4 on the roll, since he is more likely to hear you. These "opposed rolls" are common when two people match off against one another directly, such as in chess or combat.

### Ease Factor Chart

3	Very easy
6	Not too hard
9	Difficult
12	Very tough
15	Extremely difficult

### Roll Modifiers

The numbers added to die rolls come from your native abilities, your trained skills, your book-learned knowledge, your tools or weapons, and the special circumstances of the situation. Your character sheet, when complete, will be full of these numbers. You have characteristics such as Intelligence and Quickness, which represent native aptitudes. You also have abilities, which represent specialized talents, skills, and knowledges in such areas as Charm, Riding, and Church Lore. Magi also have magic arts, representing their mastery over the different areas of magic. Whenever you make a roll, you add the scores of appropriate abilities, arts, and characteristics. Usually, you will use one characteristic plus one ability to determine the bonus. The average score is usually 0; so if you are average in a certain attempt, your roll will be unmodified. If you are superior, your score will be positive (a bonus), while a negative score (a penalty) indicates a below average aptitude. Sometimes your equipment will modify the rolls. Each weapon, for instance, has a different number that is added to damage rolls when it is being used. The Storyguide will determine when the circumstances call for further modification of a roll.

For instance, suppose you are walking along a path through the woods one night and a soft noise comes from the bushes beside you. To see if your character hears the sound, you roll a die and add Perception (a characteristic) + Alertness (an ability). If you have a -1 Perception (representing poor perceptiveness overall) and +2 Alertness (above average), your total bonus would be +1. Suppose you roll the die, add 1, and then the Storyguide tells you that you made a high enough roll to hear something, described as "a soft padding sound." Now you know something is there, so you peer into the darkness. The roll to spot something uses Perception + Scan. If you have a -2 Scan, your total will be -3 on the die that you roll to spot the thing (-1 for Perception and -2 for Scan). The Storyguide assigns an ease factor of 9, a difficult one because of the darkness. If you fail the roll (quite likely with a -3 penalty), you

might try to listen for the thing. This involves Perception + Scan as well, but the ease factor would be lower since darkness does not hamper hearing.

**Botches**

As explained in the die roll descriptions, it is possible to sink below an ordinary failure to a truly dismal showing. Whenever you roll a 0 while making a stress roll, you must roll the die again. A second 0 means you have botched; you have done something horribly wrong. Since you are rolling the second die just to see if you get another zero, all the other numbers you may get should be ignored.

In particularly tricky situations, you will have to roll more than one botch die, and the number of O's rolled indicates the depth of your failure. For instance, if you are battling in a crowded, cluttered campsite in the woods, at night, you will have plenty of roots to trip over and tents to run into. Rolling two extra botch rolls, in addition to the normal one, every time you roll a 0, would be appropriate.

Sometimes the rules detail circumstances under which extra botch rolls are needed, but more often, the Storyguide will decide.

# Starting Out

Learning a new role-playing game can be a long process, but with a little forethought and diligence, you can do so with relative ease. Familiarize yourself with the basics of character creation. You can learn a lot about the game just by rolling up a grog or two. A few mock battles will help you see how combat works. To start your saga, you can use the sample covenant, Mistridge, given in the Saga chapter until you modify it or replace it with one of your own. Find ways to use the new rules; especially those that are probably least familiar to you, such as confidence, ease factors, and spontaneous magic. With the role-switching playing theme, you can easily replace your first character with another if you make mistakes that you want to correct.

Make sure that you fully understand the combat and spell-casting rules, because these are the parts of the story that should move the fastest and suffer the most from pauses to look up rules in the middle of play. Don't worry about the more elaborate considerations until you are comfortable with the basic rules, but that shouldn't take long—once you understand the basic system everything else will fall into place.

We make a Jump-Start Kit that includes pre-designed characters, rules briefings, and a beginning adventure, so you can begin play with a novice group almost immediately, but if you are to be the Storyguide, be sure to have read most of the rules beforehand.

**Our Best Advice**

As you read *Ars Magica*, keep in mind that the only hard and fast rule is that there are no hard and fast rules. What follows are essentially several thousand suggestions, and these suggestions are now yours to use, abuse, neglect, and reject as you see fit.

We have created a game which limits you, the role-player, in myriad ways, and it is now up to you to transcend those limits, to make this game truly fit your needs.

**Botch Results Table**

**One 0, "Single Botch": bad news.**

Example: You drop your sword in a fight.

**Two 0's, "Double Botch": catastrophe.**

Example: You fall prone and break your sword, stunning yourself.

**Three 0's, "Triple Botch": no one would believe it without seeing it.**

Example: You knock over two friends while falling on your sword and disemboweling yourself.

Remember that extra botch rolls are dependent on a task being tricky, not dangerous. You would have to roll more botch rolls while juggling five balls than while juggling three knives. Though a botch with the knives would be more dangerous, it would be less likely.



## Characters' Glossary

### Words Actually used by Characters

These words are used by characters in the fantasy world, so feel free to use them when talking in character. Some characters, naturally, may be unfamiliar with the more esoteric terms.

apprentice- someone working for a magus and, in exchange, learning the art of magic. (There are also apprentices in mundane professions.)

*Certámen* [careTAHmen]- a magical, non-lethal duel between magi.

the Church- the hierarchical religious institution central to medieval society.

the Code of the Order of Hermes- the code of conduct that all apprentices must swear to obey before becoming magi; it limits destructive competition between the magi and guides magi's conduct with non-magi.

*consors* (pl. *consortis*)- (partner) A non-magus who works closely with a covenant and probably lives there; many companions are *consortis*, but not all.

covenant- a durable group of associated and ostensibly allied magi, or their headquarters. The peasant folk ignorantly call these groups "covens."

demon- an infernal, magical creature bent on the corruption of humanity.

diabolist- one who worships the Prince of Darkness and is given destructive power by him. Diabolists are common enemies of the Church and the Order of Hermes alike.

Dominion- the area under the holy influence of the Church; magic, infernal powers, and faeries all function at reduced ability within the Dominion.

faerie- a supernatural being of the wilderness, usually human-shaped.

formulaic magic- magic by use of standard gestures and words that will almost always bring about a specific effect, the same each time.

grog- a mercenary hired by magi to serve them as a bodyguard or warrior; "grog" is popular slang, and the official term is "*custos*."

Hermetic- of or relating to the Order of Hermes.

infernal- coming from or related to Hell or devils.

magus [MAHgoose], pl. magi [MAHgee]- (wizard), one trained in the magical arts of the Order of Hermes; non-Hermetic users of magic are called wizards, witches, etc., but not "magi."

Order of Hermes- the magi's organization that regulates their behavior and protects them from threats, including each other.

pace- a yard, more or less.

*parmagica* [PARmahMAHgikah], pl. *parmagicae* [PARm-eyeMAHgik-eye]- (magic shield), a spell-like ritual that protects someone from magic, usually used continuously by a magus.

pawn- a unit of raw vis, equal to 1 point in game terms.

raw vis- vis in physical form, highly prized by magi.

sigil- the unique side-effect or quality of a magus' magic, or the physical symbol representing a magus' membership in the Order of Hermes.

spell- a use of magic skills to achieve a desired supernatural effect; can be memorized or invented on the spot.

spontaneous magic- use of magic skills without a formulaic spell; the result is variable.

turb- a group of grogs, used as you would use "pride" of lions or "murder" of crows; from Latin "turba," meaning gang, turmoil, confusion, etc.

vis [wees]- (power), magical force, directed by magi with their spells; the word from which the Form "Vim" is derived.

## Players' Glossary

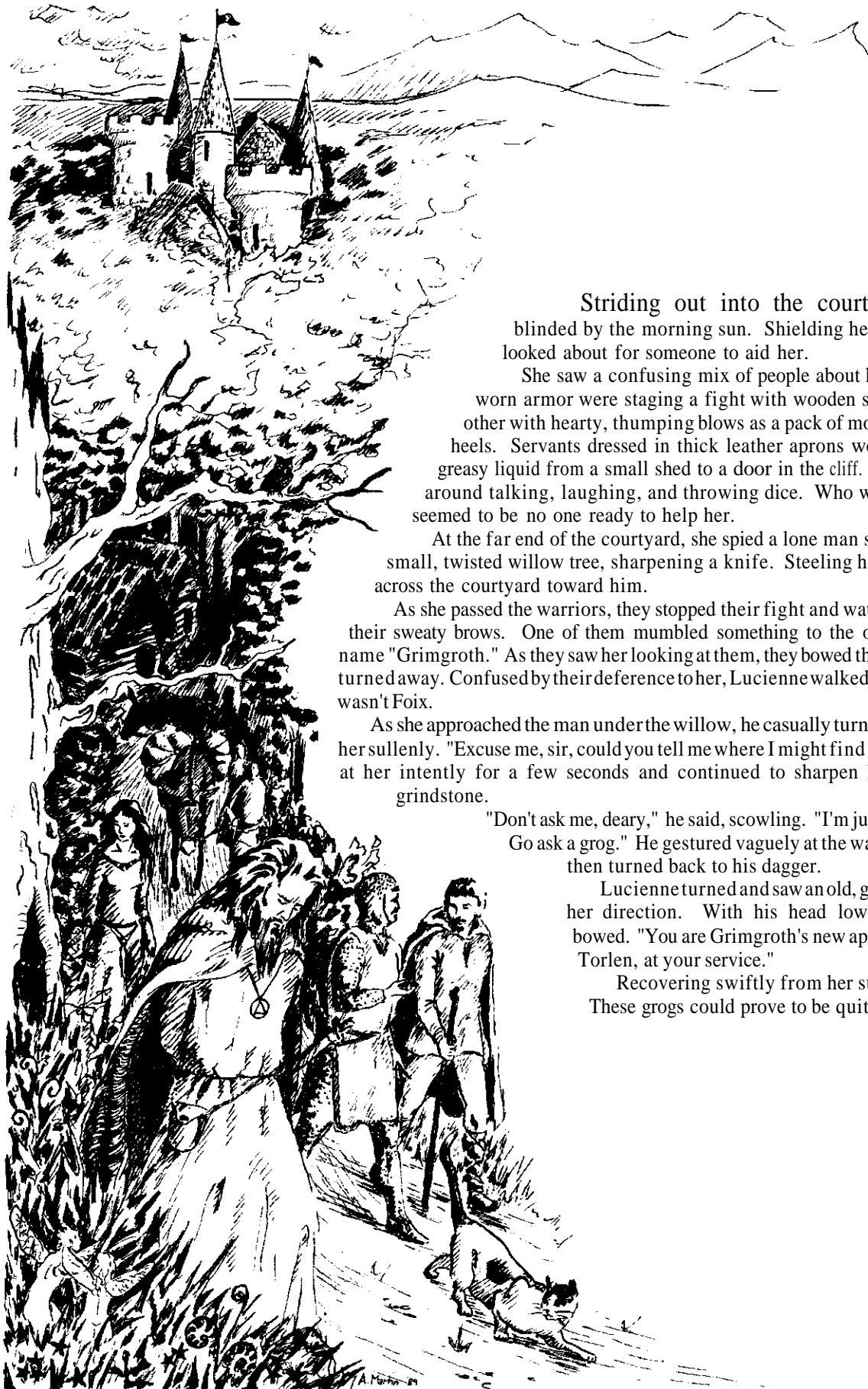
### Game Terms, Not Used by Characters

When speaking in character, do not use these terms. They are strictly to help players communicate about the rules and do not necessarily refer to anything tangible in the game world.

- botch- a disastrous failure, indicated by the roll of a second 0 after the first 0 is rolled during a stress roll.
- companion- a skilled person who aids magi but is not necessarily in their pay.
- ease factor- the number that you must match or exceed on a die roll for your attempted action to succeed.
- fast-cast spell- a hasty but dangerous spontaneous spell.
- Level- a number rating the strength of a spell or similar power.
- magic resistance- the passive, magical capacity to resist the effects of magic.
- natural resistance- resisting a spell's effects through natural means, such as one's physical or mental strength (possible with some spells only).
- saga- a campaign made up of a number of stories involving the same covenant.
- score- a single, independent number, such as a characteristic; it can be used as a die modifier by itself or combined with other scores to produce a total.
- simple roll- a die roll in which the 0 is 10 and 1's do not double.
- Soak roll- a roll to reduce or withstand damage.
- specialty- the area of an ability in which a character has a special aptitude (+1 or more on ability rolls).
- stat- any number relevant to the game mechanics, including characteristics, Soak totals, magic art scores, etc.
- story- a tale created by the troupe, an adventure.
- Storyguide- the person who sets up and leads the story, taking on the roles of all characters not taken by the players and determining all events beyond the control of the player-characters.
- stress roll- a die roll in which the 0 counts as zero and 1's double.
- total- a number derived from a selection of scores and used as a die modifier.
- troupe- a group of gamers, esp. one in which the players take different roles at different times.

## Abbreviations

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Ist- First Strike Total, a combat stat  | Im- Imagónem, the magic art of images                |
| An- Animál, the magic art of animals    | In- Intéllego, the magic art of creation             |
| Aq- Aquam, the magic art of water       | Int- Intelligence, a characteristic                  |
| Atk- Attack Total, a combat stat        | Lvl- Level, a number associated with a stat or spell |
| Au- Auram, the magic art of air         | Me- Mentem, the magic art of the mind                |
| Cnf- Confidence                         | Mu- Muto, the magic of transformation                |
| Co- Corpórem, the magic art of the body | Pe- Perdo, the magic art of destruction              |
| Com- Communication, a characteristic    | Per- Perception, a characteristic                    |
| Cr- Creo, the magic art of creation     | Prs- Presence, a characteristic                      |
| Dam- Damage total, a combat stat        | Qik- Quickness, a characteristic                     |
| Def- Defense Total, a combat stat       | Re- Rego, the magic art of control                   |
| Dex- Dexterity, a characteristic        | Rep- Reputation                                      |
| Enc- Encumbrance                        | Stm- Stamina, a characteristic                       |
| Exp- Experience                         | Str- Strength, a characteristic                      |
| Fat- Fatigue Total, a combat stat       | Te- Terram, the magic art of earth                   |
| He- Herbam, the magic art of plants     | Tech- Technique, a type of magical art               |
| Ig- Ignem, the magic art of fire        | Vi- Vim, the magic art of magic force itself         |



Striding out into the courtyard, Lucienne was blinded by the morning sun. Shielding her eyes with one hand, she looked about for someone to aid her.

She saw a confusing mix of people about her. Several men in well-worn armor were staging a fight with wooden swords, pounding on each other with hearty, thumping blows as a pack of mongrel dogs nipped at their heels. Servants dressed in thick leather aprons were carrying pots full of a greasy liquid from a small shed to a door in the cliff. Other folk were scattered around talking, laughing, and throwing dice. Who was in charge here? There seemed to be no one ready to help her.

At the far end of the courtyard, she spied a lone man squatting in the shade of a small, twisted willow tree, sharpening a knife. Steeling herself, she started to walk across the courtyard toward him.

As she passed the warriors, they stopped their fight and watched her intently, wiping their sweaty brows. One of them mumbled something to the others, and she caught the name "Grimgroth." As they saw her looking at them, they bowed their heads slightly and then turned away. Confused by their deference to her, Lucienne walked even faster. This certainly wasn't Foix.

As she approached the man under the willow, he casually turned his head to her and eyed her sullenly. "Excuse me, sir, could you tell me where I might find some charcoal?" He stared at her intently for a few seconds and continued to sharpen his long dagger with the grindstone.

"Don't ask me, deary," he said, scowling. "I'm just here for the tricky stuff. Go ask a grog." He gestured vaguely at the warriors she had passed, and then turned back to his dagger.

Lucienne turned and saw an old, grizzled warrior walking in her direction. With his head lowered, he approached and bowed. "You are Grimgroth's new apprentice, are you not? I am Torlen, at your service."

Recovering swiftly from her surprise, Lucienne smiled. These grogs could prove to be quite useful.

# Character

**D**his chapter explains how to create a unique character, starting with a general concept and translating it into numbers that can be used in the game. Creating a character requires an initial investment of time, but it prepares the character for a lifetime of role-playing.

You are given great freedom in determining who your character will be; you will pick your virtues and flaws, abilities, motivations, and personality traits. It is, however, your responsibility as a player to create characters that fit into the group. Backstabbing grogs, maniacal companions, and insane magi would not be allowed or retained in a covenant, so you must construct a character acceptable to the wizards. A covenant is a community of individu-

als and you must create a character that in some way fits into that community.

Each player creates a magus and a companion, which other players do not use. You will also create a couple of grogs, which are held in common by the troupe of players. Any player can role-play any grog, though some players will have their favorites. Players switch off playing the roles of magus, companion, and grog in different stories. You can play an individual grog, run a group of them, or take one as a secondary character when you play your companion or magus. Style of play is thoroughly discussed in the Storytelling chapter.

## Types of Characters

There are three general types of characters: grogs, companions, and magi. Each has different rules for generation (though the concepts are all the same), and each has a different place in the stories you will be telling.

### Grogs

Many warriors are retained by the covenant to protect it and to accompany the wizards on their journeys. They are commonly called grogs. Their skills usually make them competent in matters of combat and survival. The warrior's life, however, does not encourage refined manners or tastes. In some covenants, the grogs are well-disciplined, loyal, efficient soldiers; while in others they form a motley gang of thugs, criminals, loners, and misfits who serve the magi out of fear. When you create grogs, decide what prompted them to become mercenaries and how they see themselves and their role.

As a grog, it is your role in the story to protect the magi from all the dangers they get themselves into, even at the cost of your own life. The role demands little in terms of leadership, but it takes plenty of guts. The personality of a grog is often vivid and somewhat extreme. When you role-play a grog, enjoy the excitement of trusting your life to your sword arm and shield. Live and die with enthusiasm.

Playing a grog can be difficult for inexperienced players, who see their limited role in the group as limiting their role-playing opportunities as well. Play up your grog's personality, explore the role of mercenary, and you will begin to revel in playing grogs. It's a taste worth acquiring.

Mercenaries hired by magi go by many names, the most popular of which is "grog," a slang term first used in the covenant of

Doissetep. The name has spread through much of the Order — mostly because the grogs themselves use the term. Other common names are *vigil*, *custos*, and *retainer*. You may wish to make up your own unique name for your covenant.

### Companions

A few exceptional and highly skilled people are also associated with the covenant. Some work for the covenant and live there, acquiring the rank of *consors*. Others are friends of the magi and visit only occasionally. Companions provide any skills that the magi, in their pursuit of magic, have not had time to learn, and also provide a connection between the esoteric covenant and the mundane world around it. Companions can include scholars, foresters, sages, healers, thieves, spies, and leaders of the grogs.

As a companion, your role is to support the magi with your varied skills. You are that exceptional kind of person who adapts readily to many varieties of demanding circumstances. While you must obey the magi, you have much more freedom than the grogs. You are far too valuable to the magi to be denigrated or mistreated.

Working with the magi is probably the most interesting part of your life, sometimes too interesting. Others might look down on you for associating with the magi, but you've found them to be decent enough. You often find yourself mediating between a normal person and a magus, for the magi often do not mix well with society.

Each companion chooses to work with the wizards for a unique reason, but the general pattern becomes clear when you consider the society which companions come from. In the outside world, gender, nationality, religion, and the happenstance of birth greatly restrict one's freedom. In addition, many people have

backgrounds or talents that make living in society difficult. Strong-spirited women, Moors, magical people, and others whose merits are not recognized in the stratified society of the Middle Ages often find their ways to covenants, where they are given more freedom than anywhere else. Others work for wizards to gain the esoteric knowledge available at a covenant. For some, the motivation for working with magi is more straightforward: magi have wealth and power to share with those that help them. For your companion, be sure to choose a reason why you have come to work with wizards. It may have something to do with the virtues and flaws you choose to describe your character; these are the things that make you exceptional, and it may be your exceptional traits that make covenant life more inviting than staying in mundane society. For instance, if you came from a diabolic family, fearful peasants might attack you for fear that you, too, are a diabolist; the people at the covenant may be more accepting.

If you have a powerful mystic ability (chosen as a virtue), people can tell that you are somehow "different," and, like the wizards, you suffer -3 on rolls involving winning the trust and affection of normal people. This is yet another reason why some companions call the covenant home.

See p. 34 for ideas about designing a companion.

## Magi

Wizards are the focus of *Ars Magica*. They have immense magical power, even at the beginning of the game, which makes them far more powerful than the other character types, but this also makes them much more demanding to play. Magi tend to be deficient in the social skills, customs, and knowledge normal people take for granted.

## Exempli Gratia (For Example)

Throughout these rules there appear three beginning characters from the covenant of Mistridge: Grimgroth, a magus; Isabel, a companion; and Torlen, a grog. Their adventures demonstrate how the game mechanics work. Grimgroth, as he appears in the stories at the start of each chapter, has benefited from substantial experience.

Your role in the story is to direct the group. Even if a companion *is* the practical leader during a mission, you are still the one who gives the mission its meaning, and ultimately makes the most important decisions. Respect the companions and grogs, and they will respond with loyalty.

You're alone in your laboratory most of the time studying the art of magic, but you forgot how to be lonely during your apprenticeship. Your arcane pursuits are your life, and you don't miss the society you left years ago. Fifteen years of apprenticeship, most of it locked in a laboratory with your master, can leave anybody a bit strange by normal standards, and probably you are no exception. It can be annoying and sometimes even confusing dealing with normal people, even grogs and companions, but usually you get your ideas across. The loyalty and service of your grogs and companions is probably more important to you than you care to admit. They are your only friends.

The Gift of magic affects those around you. Animals are ill at ease near you, and all rolls involving a normal person trusting you (which includes many communication rolls) are at -3. The Gift is precious, but not without its price.

Selecting a House can help you design your magus; see p. 35.

# Creating the Character

When you design your companion and magus, take care to make them different. Since you will play them one at a time, they will probably never adventure together. In terms of the game-world, they should have a reason for not being together. If your magus loves the wilds, let your companion be more of a city person. That way, in wilderness stories, you can use your magus; and in city stories, you can use your companion.

Also, try not to crowd the niche that some other character already occupies. If there is a wind wizard in the covenant already, think twice before rolling up another one. The covenant benefits from diversity, and the troupe would enjoy a magus of different talents and traits.

Sometimes you might want to play a truly weird character, maybe someone who isn't even human. In this case, make special arrangements with the rest of the troupe. Even the most bizarre creature must have advantages and disadvantages that balance out so you do not overpower the other players and ruin their fun. In the process of making a non-human character, you may well sidestep many of the rules found in this chapter.

As long as the rest of the troupe does not feel like you are taking advantage of the rules' flexibility, go ahead and try something new. If your character is significantly more powerful than

a normal human, that character can take the place of your magus. Otherwise it will be considered a companion.

After selecting your character type (grog, companion, or magus), develop a general concept of what kind of character you would like to role-play: a veteran grog, a scheming thief, an honorable knight, a temperamental Ignem wizard, or possibly a wizard of transformation.

## Beginning Age

First you need to determine your age. If you are a grog, make a simple roll and add 14. If you are a magus, roll and add 22. (You have recently finished fifteen years of apprenticeship.) If you are a companion, you may choose your age freely (be reasonable). Your abilities depend on your age, so older characters have more abilities, representing greater experience. Unfortunately, they are also closer to the debilitating effects of old age. If you are around 35 years old or older, you might lose characteristics before starting the game, so see the rules for Aging near the end of this chapter.

Use your age to guide the creation of your character when you roll characteristics, choose personality traits, pick abilities and so

on. Remember that, in the Middle Ages, people reach adulthood quickly and frequently die young.

Based on your age and the year you will begin (or enter) the saga, figure your year of birth. That way, even if your character is out of play for several game-years, you will be able to determine your age when you start playing again, based on the current game-year.

## Characteristics

The next step in creating a character is to determine your basic characteristics. How strong are you? How fast are your reflexes? How good are you at persuasion? Questions such as these are answered by your characteristic scores. Each characteristic has a number associated with it, describing your native aptitude in that area. One of these numbers is used as a modifier on most die rolls. A 0 is average for any characteristic. Positive numbers indicate higher than average ability, and negative numbers indicate lower than average ability, with -5 and +5 describing the normal range. A +3 is a very good score.

First, **you and another player each make a simple roll**. Your roll is the positive roll, and you want to get as high as you can; the other player is making the negative roll (you would like them to get as low as possible). Then **subtract the other player's roll from your roll**. Record the number and repeat this process three more times. When done, you have four numbers ranging from -9 to +9.

Now assign each number to one of the four characteristic pairs: Intelligence and Perception, Strength and Stamina, Communication and Presence, and Quickness and Dexterity. Divide each number up as evenly as possible between each trait pair. Later on you will be able to change some of these characteristics by choosing appropriate Virtues and Flaws (see below).

Once the numbers are assigned to your characteristics, you may personalize them by choosing a descriptive word or phrase for each positive and negative score. These phrases help you visualize your character, and they make your characteristics tangible in the game-world as well as in the world of dice-rolling. The Storyguide may allow you a special bonus or penalty on your roll when one of these descriptive phrases applies to a situation. For instance, if you choose "Good dancer" to describe your positive

## Character Generation Outline

1. Choose type (grog, companion, or magus). Develop a character concept. Consider possible Virtues & Flaws.
2. Roll age.
  - Grog: simple die + 14
  - Companion: choose freely, within reason
  - Magus: simple die + 22
  - Calculate year of birth.
3. Roll characteristics.
  - A. Roll a simple die vs. another player's simple die. Subtract the other player's roll from yours, and record the result. Repeat three more times.
  - B. Divide each number as evenly as possible between two characteristics in a pair.
  - C. Choose Virtues & Flaws that affect your characteristics.
  - D. If you wish, choose a descriptive word or phrase for each non-average (non-0) characteristic.
4. Choose Virtues & Flaws. Companions & magi can have up to 7 positive points, which must be balanced with an equal number of negative points. Grogs may have one +1 Virtue, and must take a -1 Flaw to balance it out.
5. Describe your character mentally and physically. Record Size and Confidence. Size is 0. Cnf is 1 for Grogs, 2 for Companions, and 3 for Magi.
6. Choose Personality Traits, rating each from -3 to +3.
7. (Magi only) Determine magical abilities:
  - A. Choose magical arts (150 points)
  - B. Choose spells (150 points); Level of spell must be within 10 points of Tech + Form + Int.
8. Choose Abilities
  - Grogs: points equal to age+10 years
  - Companions: points equal to age times 2
  - Magi: points equal to age
9. Select Equipment





## Exempli Gratia: Characteristics

Grimgroth rolls the dice four times for his characteristics and gets the following:

6 minus 6 = 0            7 minus 4 = +3  
2 minus 3 = -1        1 minus 3 = -2

He wants a high Int so he can be a competent magus and a good Prs score to support the character conception. He assigns the rolls thus:

-1 on Int/Per:    Int -1        Per 0  
0 on Str/Stm:    Str 0        Stm 0  
+3 on Prs/Com:   Prs +2       Com +1  
-2 on Dex/Qik:    Dex -1       Qik -1

He takes a low Int score because he intends to take a virtue to buy a higher score anyway. He takes a +2 virtue, Superior Characteristic, and rolls the die (p. 20). His roll is 7, so he has an Int of +3 instead of -1.

For further characterization, he takes the following descriptive phrases for his positive and negative characteristics: discerning, imposing stance, reasoned speech, plodding step, slow reflexes.

Dex, the Storyguide may allow you a bonus on your Dex roll when trying a tricky dance maneuver. If you take virtues and flaws that affect your characteristics, the words and phrases you use should reflect these changes.

Your characteristics represent your inborn abilities at their optimum, so they cannot rise through normal means. You can, however, improve abilities that complement your characteristics.

## Virtues & Flaws

Once you have determined your age and characteristics, and all the die-rolling is out of the way, the next step is perhaps the most important. You choose virtues and flaws for your character. Virtues are the exceptional attributes of a person. Since magi and companions are exceptional people, they have many virtues, while a normal person might have only one, or even none at all. Flaws are the exceptional attributes that hinder or limit characters and are used to balance out the virtues they possess.

Virtues are each assigned a positive value, and flaws are each assigned a negative value. The value indicates how much the virtue or flaw affects your character. Companions and magi may have up to +7 points of virtues, and you must choose flaws whose total negative value matches the total value of the virtues you choose (so the total value of virtues and flaws chosen is 0). Grogs may have only one +1 virtue, and must balance it with a -1 Haw.

Some Virtues & Flaws have notes for magi who choose them. Some of these have different values for magi than they do for grogs and companions, and some Virtues & Flaws are not available to magi. For instance, Fast Learner is more valuable for a magus than it is for a companion, so a companion must pay +3 points for it while a magus must pay +5.

Your Virtues & Flaws are often central to your character, so choose thoughtfully. Decide what your character is like, and choose your virtues and flaws to advance that conception. Virtues

## Exempli Gratia: Virtues & Flaws

Isabel chooses her Virtues & Flaws, which will go long way toward defining her character. First, she needs strong conception of her character. She decides she is former nun with visionary ability. Based on this background, she chooses the following Virtues & Flaws. To begin with, she takes an above average characteristic pair to get rid of some bad rolls, and then she picks the Virtue & Flaws that will characterize her.

### Virtues

Good Characteristic: Presence            +1  
Strong Personality                            +1  
Exceptional Talent: Visions                +2  
Educated                                        +1  
Knack (+2) for Arguing, Debating, etc.    +1  
Clear Thinker                                  +1

### Flaws

Sensitive to Frivolity                        -1  
Social Handicap, Unable to Enjoy Herself Socially    -1  
Weakness for Being Treated with Respect            -1  
Uncommon Fear, of Being Helpless or Ineffective    -1  
Poor Eyesight                                  -1  
Small Frame                                     -2

Grimgroth's Virtues & Flaws are mostly concerned with his magic abilities:

### Virtues

Superior Characteristic: Intelligence            +2  
Affinity with Winds                            +2  
Special Magical Ability: When angered, he gains a forceful, formidable demeanor, giving him +2 on appropriate Prs rolls.    +1  
Gentle Gift                                      +1  
Self-Confident                                  +1

### Flaws

Warped Magic: spells accompanied by winds & keening whistle                        -1  
Deleterious Circumstances (Uncommon & Minor): -5 penalty when the sky is mostly clear of clouds.                        -1  
Restriction (Rare): Magic does not work within earshot of music.                -1  
Major Magic Deficiency: Terram                -3  
Cursed: Those close to him turn against him if he expects their loyalty selfishly            -1

# Characteristics

**Intelligence** (Int) represents both your memory as well as your ability to learn and think. It is important for abilities that require thought power, and it is paramount for the magical arts. A character is not necessarily stupid if they have a low intelligence; common sense, street savvy, and wisdom are not part of the intelligence score — these are facets of the character that are portrayed by the player.

Negative: *dull-witted, ponderous, forgetful, lazy, doddering, addled, asinine, stupid, slow learner, bored, decadent, immature*

Positive: *quick-witted, shrewd thinker, sharp minded, discerning, creative, level-headed, wily, bookworm, knowledgeable, clever, pragmatic*

**Perception** (Per) indicates how well you notice what is going on around you, as well as your powers of intuition. While sometimes a conscious thing, Perception more often works intuitively — you simply notice something. Besides letting you notice things, a Storyguide may have you roll Perception with various knowledge abilities to see if you have the insight to understand or know about a certain fact or concept. Perception is important for abilities such as Alertness, Track, Folk Ken, and Legend Lore.

Negative: *distracted, unobservant, absent-minded, preoccupied, inattentive, unheeding, careless*

Positive: *insightful, attentive, patient, probing, keen-eyed, perceptive, intuitive, visionary, astute, apprehensive*

**Strength** (Str) is a measure of your physical power. It is your lifting, pushing, shoving, heaving and moving ability. Strength is important when hefting a melee weapon and when using brute, physical force against something (or someone), such as when you kick open a door. People with higher strength are usually bigger than those with lower strength, assuming they are within the same size category.

Negative: *scrawny arms, weak grip, rounded shoulders, weak chest, puny, decrepit, indolent, small frame*

Positive: *broad shoulders, strong grip, bulging biceps, powerful stride, massive chest, husky build, able body, hearty, big*

**Stamina** (Stm) indicates how long you can continue to exert yourself as well as how much physical punishment you can sustain. It is your staying power, both mental and physical, and one of its most important components is simply the will to live. Some people are too mean to die. Stamina helps determine how well you carry a load, ignore fatigue and withstand wounds.

Negative: *nagging cough, frequent illness, short winded, delicate constitution, no self-discipline, weak willed, enfeebled, tremulous, slothful*

Positive: *tireless legs, strong constitution, iron willed, forceful personality, enduring, tough minded, tenacious, stalwart, durable, large hearted*

**Presence** (Prs) describes your appearance, demeanor, and charisma. Personal tastes vary, but within a culture, good looks are standard enough that what is attractive, interesting or impressive to one person is most likely the same to others as well. Presence is important for making a good impression as well as for leading people.

Negative: *carbuncles (acne), greasy hair, scarred face, timid demeanor, shifty eyes, slouching posture, despairing expression, unassuming, flighty*

Positive: *sexy, luminous eyes, alluring, straight posture, confident stride, honest face, comforting, imposing beard, dignified, captivating, regal manner, commanding stare, look of the eagles, genial*

**Communication** (Com) represents your aptitude for self-expression. It is important when you are attempting to influence or communicate with another person verbally, or through body language. Communication is the basis of most of human interactions, and a positive communication would suggest a character who is comfortable and confident in relationships with other people.

Negative: *poor diction, slurred speech, faltering voice, guttural voice, lisp, boring speaker, rambling, inconsiderate, vile manners, bland expression, heavy accent, laconic personality, no sense of humor, garrulous, foul mouthed,*

Positive: *smooth talker, glib tongue, honeyed voice, expressive hands, sophisticated sense of humor, captivating speaker, orator, eloquent*

**Dexterity** (Dex) indicates the physical ability to move with agility and to manipulate what you are holding with accuracy and grace. It includes hand-eye coordination, fine motor manipulation, and bodily grace. Dexterity helps determine how well you swing a sword or throw a knife.

Negative: *trembling hands, clumsy, awkward stance, all thumbs, graceless movements, plodding step, gawky limbs, can't dance, gangly*

Positive: *nimble fingers, smooth motioned, lithesome walk, steady hand, deft hand, graceful dancer, agile, adept athlete, cat-like grace*

**Quickness** (Qik) indicates your reaction speed and reflexes. It is simply how fast you are. Quickness helps determine who does something first when two or more people are trying to do something with great haste; it also determines how well you do something when you do it rapidly. Whenever Qik modifies a roll, Encumbrance (Enc), the measure of how loaded down you are, is applied as a penalty. In other words, you react more slowly when carrying a heavy load.

Negative: *slow reflexes, torpid, flat-footed, languid stride, un-gainly, lethargic, overweight, slothful, lumbering*

Positive: *quick reflexes, surefooted, energetic, jumpy, nimble feet, fleet-footed, fast, breakneck sprinter, swift, nervous*

# Virtues

## Virtues: +1

**Good Characteristic.** You may replace any one characteristic with a number derived by making a simple roll and referring to this chart: 1-5:+1, 6-8:+2, 9-10:+3.

**Exceptional Talent.** The following Exceptional Talents may be purchased as +1 virtues. (Exceptional Talents are available only to those who take them as virtues.) See the Abilities chapter (pp. 40-41) for details: Direction Sense, Empathy, Read Lips, Alchemy, Premonitions, Second Sight, Sense Holiness/Unholiness, Magic Sensitivity, Weather Sense, Hexing, Contortions, Mimicry, Perfect Balance, Healer.

**Ambidextrous.** You can use either hand equally well. When using two weapons in combat, you only suffer a -1 with each, rather than the standard -1 for the dominant hand and -3 for the off hand.

**Animal Companion.** You have a loyal, intelligent animal for a companion. Your relationship with it is a meaningful one; you are very close. The animal can at least obey simple commands. If it should die, you would be profoundly distraught.

**Arcane Lore.** You are privy to Hermetic knowledge, so you can choose Arcane Knowledges (which are normally restricted to magi) as beginning abilities.

**Berserk.** Any time you lose a body level or wound an enemy, you must make a stress roll and add your Angry score. If you roll a 9+, you experience battle lust and go berserk. The Storyguide can also call for a roll when you are strongly frustrated. While berserk, you get +2 on Damage, Soak, and Fatigue rolls, but suffer a -2 penalty on Def; and you cannot retreat, hesitate to attack, or give quarter. Calming down requires a Per - Angry roll of 3+, one roll per round. If you are still berserk while no more enemies are present, you attack your friends.

**Clear Thinker.** You think clearly and rationally. You get a +3 bonus on all rolls to resist lies, confusion, befuddlement, subterfuge etc., whether these attempts are magical or mundane.

**Close Family Ties.** Your family is one of the most important things in your life, and they still support and aid you whenever they can, even if it means personal risk. They will not hesitate to do you any favor that is within their power to perform, and can call out their friends and neighbors to help them. It works both ways however; they may call on you for help some day.

**Code of Honor.** You guide your life by a heartfelt code of honor, probably related to the knightly chivalric code. While it keeps you from taking unfair advantage of others, it also provides a strong moral support because it is more important than petty distractions, such as fear and greed. You get +3 on rolls to resist temptations that would sway

you from your Code, whether magical or mundane.

**Common Sense.** Whenever you are about to do something counter to common sense, the Storyguide has the task of alerting you to what you are doing. This is an excellent virtue for a beginning player, as it legitimizes any kind of help the Storyguide may give. It can also be a great source of what really is a sensible course of action in the fantasy universe.

**Educated.** You may choose Formal Knowledges as beginning abilities.

**Enduring Constitution.** You can withstand pain and fatigue. Deduct 1 point from each of the negative adjustments in both your body and fatigue levels, so Medium Wounds, for example, means only a -2 penalty. You get +3 on rolls to resist pain.

**Faerie Upbringing.** The faeries took you when you were a babe, but now you are back among the humans. You feel at home with faeries, magic, and other strange things and have +3 to all your personality rolls when you are dealing with them, but you find human society bizarre, especially religion. You cannot have Social Skills as beginning abilities.

**Free Expression.** You have the imagination and creativity needed to compose a new ballad or to paint an original painting, and have the potential to be a great artist.

**Good Armaments.** You can have any standard armament and one expensive armament. (See p. 59.)

**Higher Purpose.** Let others concern themselves with petty matters, you have a higher goal, such as freeing an occupied people or bringing peace between the Order of Hermes and society — your feelings must be altruistic. Your confidence counts double when pursuing this goal because you see beyond your momentary purposes to a higher end, plus you gain +3 on personality rolls used to pursue this goal.

**Keen Vision.** Get a +3 bonus to all rolls involving sight.

**Knack.** You have an innate knack for some specific activity which gives you a +2 on rolls dealing with that activity. Examples include: mechanics, music, bows, swords, woodlands, mountains, cities & towns, languages, noble courts, swamps, etc. Whenever in this environment or pursuing this activity, you get your bonus. A bonus on weapon type applies wherever a skill for those weapons applies; the bonus applies either to parry or to attack skill, your choice. Knacks can be no more broad than those listed here.

**Light Sleeper.** You can wake up almost immediately when disturbed, and take no penalties the first few rounds of activity. The Storyguide may also allow you to make generous Per rolls while you are asleep to see if noises wake you up.

**Lithe.** You are slightly built but agile. Your Size is -1, but you add +1 to both Dex and Qik. Cross off the "Hurt" body level and the "Winded" fatigue level from your sheet.

**Long-Winded.** You have a high endurance and gain +3 on all your Fatigue rolls. Magus: The bonus does not apply to casting spells.

**Mentor.** A person of some importance, wealth, or wisdom has taken an interest in your life, and at times provides you with material aid and advice. The mentor does not necessarily like or even know of your relationship with the covenant. At some point your mentor may have a small favor to ask of you...

**Prestigious Family.** Your family is well-known and respected. When in dire need, others may help you because of your family ties, or your family itself may provide assistance. You begin the game with a good reputation of your choice at level 2.

**Resilient Constitution.** You get a +3 bonus on all rolls to recover from wounds.

**Self-Confident.** You begin the game with 4 Cnf points.

**Sharp Ears.** Get a +3 bonus to all rolls involving hearing.

**Social Contacts.** You have a broad range of acquaintances, accumulated over years of travel and socializing. Almost everywhere you go, you meet someone you know, or you know how to get in touch with someone who can help you. Whenever you are somewhere new, you know someone who is in town or in the area if you can make a Prs roll of 10+. You must pick what kind of contacts you have: underworld, noble, merchant, town guard, church, peasants, etc. This virtue may be taken more than once, representing contacts in more than one part of society.

**Stocky.** You are short but broad and thick. Add +1 to Str.

**Strong Personality.** For any three personality traits, you may have scores from -6 to +6, instead of the usual -3 to +3.

**Strong-willed.** You cannot easily be coerced into activities, beliefs, or feelings. You get +3 on any roll which may require strength of will, such as resisting temptation, torture, or the effects of a magical ability or spell that attempts to dominate your will.

**Student.** You have access to books and possibly teachers from which you can study, and adequate time to do so. You get 1 experience point per season to apply to your knowledges.

**Temporal Power.** You wield political power in society. You influence leaders and lead common folk. The greater your power, the more responsibility you have, and the harder it is to work with magi unopposed.

**Tough.** You can take physical punishment better than most people. You get a +3 bonus on your Soak rolls.

**Venus' Blessing.** You get +3 on Com and Prs rolls with sexually compatible characters in

# Flaws

## Flaws: -1

**Bad Reputation.** People in the area know of you and hold you in ill regard. Choose a specific reputation and a location near the covenant. The beginning score of the reputation is 2. The Storyguide should be sure to bring the reputation into play; it can make things very interesting.

**Black Sheep.** You come from a prestigious family, but you have somehow estranged yourself from these relatives. They will have nothing to do with you, unless they feel the need to punish you somehow. Those who might resent your family's power can take safe revenge by beating you up. You begin the game with bad reputation of your choice at level 2.

**Compulsion.** You have an unfortunate compulsion which causes you problems. Examples: drinking, sex, perfection, bragging, gambling, eating (perhaps you could combine this one with obesity), to champion the grogs, to always get the last word, to "exaggerate" (lie), or to challenge authority.

**Criminal Brand.** The brand of a criminal has been burned into your cheek, giving a -1 penalty on all rolls involving others' positive reactions to you. You have a reputation (level 1) as a criminal in your old locale. Perhaps some old enemies are still on the watch for you. Magus: N/A. Who cares? You're a wizard.

**Cursed.** Somehow, for some reason, you are cursed, either magically, divinely, or perhaps through the influence of the dark powers or faeries.

Example -1 Curses:

- Everything you say, that you really mean, is taken in the worst possible way
- Smile, laugh, frown, and cry always in the wrong circumstances
- Can only eat living things
- A toad appears in your mouth when you speak a direct lie
- All food tastes like ashes and drink like stagnant water.
- Music causes you pain, the more beautiful, the more painful.

**Dark Secret.** You have some secret that haunts you and would lead to shame, rejection, and possibly vengeance if it were discovered. Hints about the secret continually arise, and there might be others who know the secret and could betray you. You cannot imagine that your life could continue as you know it if people knew your secret. The secret makes you avoid certain places, dislike certain people, or fear certain things. A few examples are: your parents are diabolists, you once murdered a knight (or maybe a magus), or you are fleeing from mundane or Hermetic justice.

**Deep Sleeper.** When you sleep, you don't do it half-way. You can sleep through loud noises and generally only wake up when shaken or

when you're good and ready. Even then you suffer -3 on your rolls for half an hour or so, and you're likely to head back to bed if at all possible.

**Delusion.** You believe whole-heartedly in something that just isn't so. For example, you might believe that you are a wizard (if you aren't), that round rocks are extremely valuable, that you are the long lost son of the Baron, or that your imaginary friend is actually real.

**Diabolic Upbringing.** Your parents were diabolists, and, though you have escaped their evil ways, you are still haunted by your upbringing and the memory of acts best left unspoken. The thought of demons fills you with dread and hatred. Hell might maintain a special interest in the "well-being" of your soul.

**Disfigured.** A visible disfigurement makes you ugly and easy to recognize. Subtract 3 from your Prs rolls that involve good looks, gaining respect, and so on. You doubtless have a cruel nick-name that refers to your unfortunate appearance. Magus: Your disfigurement probably comes from an accident during your apprenticeship. Let your imagination go wild.

**Driving Goal.** You have some personal goal which you feel compelled to follow, even if it gets you into trouble or jeopardizes the group's goals. Examples: to free the peasants from oppression, to harass and kill Norman warriors, to make everyone regard you as more intelligent than they are, or to amass as much personal wealth as possible. The goal is limitless in its extent, something you can never finally accomplish.

**Dutybound.** You adhere to a restrictive code of conduct, probably including prohibitions against lying, killing prisoners, stealing, and other occasionally useful actions. Unlike the "Code of Honor" above, you follow this code out of guilt or fear, so it does not provide moral support. You are more likely to spend your energy justifying your conduct than keeping your conduct pure.

**Enemies.** You have an enemy or enemies who cause you trouble, such as the local baron or bishop, a band of outlaws, or perhaps a really nasty innkeeper. The enemy must be powerful enough to endanger you; make sure you get the troupe's approval.

**Evil Eye.** One of your eyes is bloated and deformed, casting an evil look across your face. Reduce your Prs by 2 and your Com by 1. People generally regard you as evil, and hide their children's faces from your gaze. The mystic virtue of "Entrancement" would fit well with this flaw.

**Faerie Enmity.** Faeries hate you and take every opportunity to harm or pester you. Faerie forests are extremely dangerous places for you, but even in rural areas faeries often spoil your food, plague your dreams, or otherwise torment you. Luckily, they

# Virtues

appropriate situations. People are often attracted to you; the Storyguide should play this out. At times you can put this to good use; other times it's a hassle.

**Well-Known.** You have a good reputation in a particular area and are well-liked. Choose an appropriate reputation, a specific location near the covenant. You begin at Level 2.

**Well-travelled.** You have travelled extensively in this part of the world and find it easy to get along with people throughout the land. You are familiar with their dialects or can pick them up quickly (+2 to appropriate speaking rolls), and you know something of local habits and traditions. You get +1 with knowledge rolls connected to being well-traveled, such as Legend Lore.

## Virtues: +2

**Superior Characteristic.** You may replace one characteristic with a number derived by rolling on this chart: 1-5:+2, 6-8:+3, 9-10:+4.

**Exceptional Talent.** You can take Enchanting Music (p. 40) or Visions (p. 41) as a +2 virtue.

**Faerie Blood.** Somewhere in your ancestry there is a faerie, and this relation gives you an intuitive grasp of the motivations and personality of faeries. Faeries are more comfortable around you than they are with other humans and, given time, may even forget the mortal blood in your veins. Precise effects are up to the Storyguide (and the faeries). Add +1 to all your rolls to avoid losing characteristics to aging, and add +3 to all natural resistance rolls (for those spells you want to resist).

**Famous.** You have a good reputation with a score of 4 in the area. Choose the specific reputation and pick one or more noteworthy deeds that are a part of this fame.

**Knack.** As the +1 virtue, but your bonus is +4.

**Large.** Your Size is +1 instead of 0, which makes you a very large person. This extra size gives you an extra "Hurt" body level and an extra "Winded" fatigue level. (Divide the line for these levels in half with slash marks; both sides must be marked before you drop to the next lowest level.) You also get a +1 bonus to your Str. If your Prs is positive, it increases 1 point; but if it is negative, it decreases 1 point. Magus: +4 Virtue.

**Latent Mystical Ability.** You have a magical quality that has not yet manifested itself. At some point it might appear, either spontaneously or because of some relevant event, like drinking faerie wine. You have the capacity to become a magus as long as some magical talent does not manifest itself strongly first. You probably do not realize you have this capacity. You, the Storyguide, and Whimsy Cards will determine when and how the talent appears. Magus: While developing your magical ability, your master failed to identify some power hidden in you, and it

remains latent.

**Light Touch.** You have especially good hand-eye coordination and an aptitude for using your hands in precise, fast ways. Gain +3 to all rolls involving subtle use of the hands and fingers (like picking pockets) and roll one less botch roll than you otherwise would. Does not apply to archery.

**Magical Animal Companion.** You have as a companion a magical animal smart enough to follow your orders. The smaller and more innocuous the creature, the more intelligent it is. A ferret or crow is as intelligent as a human, though it cannot talk, while a wolf is merely very cunning and a horse is simply a bit smarter than normal. Subject to the troupe's approval, you may give it a mystical virtue or two, balancing them normally with flaws of your own. The creature has a Magic Might of +10 minus its Size.

**Piercing Gaze.** By staring intently at someone, you make them feel uneasy, as if you were staring into their heart and soul. Those with ulterior motives, uneasy consciences, or who are lying must make personality rolls, Guile rolls, or whatever the Storyguide deems appropriate to remain calm. Faeries and demons are unfazed by your power.

**Reserves of Strength.** Once per day, when in need, you can put forth an incredible show of strength. For the duration of the current need, add +4 to your effective strength, and afterwards you must make two Fatigue rolls. You may use this reserve while battling one enemy, lifting one boulder, wrestling one opponent, etc.

**Self-Confident.** You begin the game with 5 Cnf points.

**Superior Armaments.** You can have expensive arms and armor.

**True Love.** You have found true love. Whenever you are suffering, are in danger, or feel dejected, the thought of the one you love will give you strength to persevere (+3 to appropriate personality rolls). When you are threatened with permanent separation from your true love, Cnf used in a roll counts double. In dire need, your true love may even come to try to rescue you. On the other hand, having a true love ties you to your lover, to whom you must return frequently. If any enchantment prevents you from returning to your love, the power of love can probably break it if your true love can reach you.

**Withstand Magic.** You are innately non-magical and can resist many magic spells. You have a +6 bonus on natural resistance rolls and rolls to soak damage from spells. (See pp. 66-67) You resist good magic as well as bad, so if there is a spell in which a high roll means the magic has affected you (like a healing spell), you suffer a -6 penalty on the roll. You can have no magical powers. Magus: We don't recommend that you take this virtue, since it means you can't use any form of magic.

## Virtues: +3

**Superior Characteristic Pair.** You may replace the scores in a characteristic pair with a number rolled on this chart (roll for each characteristic): 1-5:+2, 6-8:+3, 9-10: 44.

**Fast Learner.** You get an extra experience point each story and an extra experience point per year because of your ability to learn quickly and to pick up ideas faster than normal. You begin the game with 10 extra points with which to purchase abilities. Magus: you get 1 extra point per story and +1 on rolls to study *vis*; +5 Virtue.

**Jack-of-All-Trades.** You can attempt things that would be more difficult for those who share your lack of training. You suffer no adverse penalties for making skill rolls when you have no score in that skill, provided you have some time to consider what you are about to do.

**Self-Confident.** You begin the game with 6 Cnf points.

**True Faith.** Through piety and holy devotion you have received the faith that, it is said, can move mountains. You have 1 Faith point and can gain more, but you have no Cnf points (see p. 141).

## Virtues; +4

**Extraordinary Characteristic:** You may replace one characteristic with a number rolled on this chart: 1-5: 43, 6-8: 44, 9-10: 45.

**Exceptional Talent.** You can take Entrancement (p. 41) as a 44 Virtue.

**Charmed Life.** Luck protects you from the worst of injuries and harm. Whenever you botch, you may re-roll the botch dice. Take whichever result of the two botch results is better. For example, if you have rolled three botch dice and gotten a 0 (a botch), you can re-roll all three dice. If there is no 0 in the re-roll, you have not botched, but if you get a 0 on the re-roll as well, you still botch. You must, however, describe in (possibly outrageous) detail how you managed to miss the grave fate that was almost yours. The Storyguide should also keep this trait in mind during the story and be more lenient with Whimsy Cards used to rescue or protect you. Magus: This luck does not count for spell-casting; magic is too unpredictable and powerful to be influenced in this manner.

**Destiny.** Your life is heading toward a definite culmination. Prophecies and dreams may give you clues as to the culmination's nature, but you are not yet sure what it will be. This sense of direction gives you the surety to overcome fear, depression, and discouragement caused by anything not relevant to your destination (and therefore not, in the end, relevant to you); 42 on appropriate rolls. If it ever seems your destiny will fail because of your untimely demise, something,

# Flaws

**Oath of Fealty.** You owe service to someone or some organization outside the covenant. It could be a lord, the Church, political leaders in a city, or your family. You must justify your actions to those to whom you owe fealty, and sometimes there is a conflict between your activities with the covenant and your oath.

**Obese.** You are large because of fat, not muscle. Your Size is +1, but you must subtract 2 from Quickness. You also suffer -3 on Fatigue rolls (not including casting spells). You get an extra Hurtbody level, but you get no extra fatigue level.

**Obsessed.** You are obsessed with some prized object, action, or ideal. Examples: You keep your sword with you at all times, polish it hourly, and let no one touch it; you protect the wizards from all dangers, becoming furious when they are insulted or hampered; or you keep yourself spotlessly clean and look down on those who don't do likewise.

**Offensive to Animals.** You are somehow tainted with magic, and this disturbs animals. Horses will not let you ride them, and dogs growl or cower in your presence. People may well suspect you of being a magus or a devil-worshiper. Magus: N/A, you automatically have this trait already.

**Orphan.** You have no family. You were either raised by the Church or you simply made your own way on the streets. You are a loner and have trouble working with others. You are also used to a world in which one must be selfish, sneaky, and heartless to survive.

**Poor Equipment.** You can only have inexpensive arms and armor, though you can have inexpensive equipment relevant to your occupation.

**Poor Eyesight.** Subtract 3 from rolls involving sight, including using missile weapons. New environments are disorienting and perhaps frightening for you.

**Poor Hearing.** Subtract 3 from rolls involving hearing. Speech that is hard for others because of the language, dialect, accent, etc. is very difficult for you. You often pretend to be listening to people when indeed you are not.

**Poor Memory.** You have a bad memory, especially for one thing, such as names, faces, or places. You must make a roll of 6+ to see if you remember anything related to your special difficulty, and you get a -2 on any memory rolls in general. Magus: It takes twice as long to learn spells. You begin the game with half the normal spell Levels. -6 Flaw.

**Recruit (Grog only):** You have been trained at the covenant, but you have never fought in a real battle. You cannot have a positive Brave score; increasing this score will be important for your character development.

**Sensitive.** Something that others find unpleasant you find completely intolerable. If you are a violent type, you may start fights with

those who offend you. Examples: impiety, insults to women, poor manners, lack of civilized niceties (such as a warm bed), arrogance.

**Short Attention Span.** You must earn double experience points to rise in your Knowledges and expend double points to buy them to begin With. Keeping watch, listening to complex orders, following the plot of a story, or performing other tasks that require continued attention are usually not within your ability. Magus: N/A, You'd never have survived apprenticeship.

**Simple-Minded.** You can only keep your mind on one thing at a time: guarding the bridge, hunting for a missing ring, or hiding in the trees. You become easily confused unless others give you very clear instructions. When unexpected circumstances pop up, you find them difficult to deal with.

**Social Handicap.** You have some trait that keeps you from interacting easily with other people. Possibilities include body odor, a morose temperament, unworldliness (difficulty understanding such trivial and mundane concerns as money), unclean habits, or outspoken atheism. The trait you choose must impair your social dealings with most people in society, causing penalties of -1 to -3 on appropriate rolls. Magus: N/A, being a magus is a social handicap in and of itself.

**Soft Hearted.** You cannot bear to witness suffering, and causing it can bring you days of sleepless grief. You avoid danger and try to keep your friends out of it as well. You value life and health so strongly that you would rather give up important goals than have another person risk combat for you. Even the deaths of enemies is painful to you. On the positive side, you are compassionate and easily moved by song and story.

**Uncommon Fear.** Something that others find innocuous, perhaps disturbing, or even pleasant makes you nervous, edgy, and unable to concentrate. In the presence of the object you fear, the only thing you can comfortably do is get away. The fear object is not something you're likely to meet on a daily basis. If you are prone to violence, you might respond to the thing you fear by attacking or destroying it, but only when you cannot get away. Examples: wild animals, strange sounds, clergy, enclosed spaces, the full moon, the open sea, foreigners, Jews.

**Weak Self-Confidence.** You begin the game with 1 fewer Cnf point than normal. Not available to grogs.

**Weakness.** You have a weakness for some object or kind of person. In the face of this thing, all else is unimportant. Promises are forgotten, duties neglected, and common sense defenestrated. Examples: poems & storytellers, a pretty face, alcohol, flattery.

**Weak-Willed.** Instead of looking to yourself, you look to others for guidance. Those who try to fool, intimidate, or manipulate you gain +3 to their rolls. Take -2 to your rolls to

see if you gain Cnf points. Take a positive Follower trait. What you need more than anything else is to find someone you trust to put all your faith in.

## Flaws: -2

**Clumsy.** You are not very graceful and tend to drop things. Play this up as much as you can, and reduce your Dex by 1 and make an extra botch roll with Dex-related rolls.

**Common Fear.** As "uncommon fear" above, but the thing that frightens you is common, such as dogs, night, woods, women, men, people in authority, weapons, fire, and so on.

**Cursed.** You suffer from a severe curse given you by one of the great supernatural powers. Example -2 Curses:

- Stutter uncontrollably when you try to say something important.
- If you ever tell a secret that was entrusted in you, the secret will somehow, in some way, harm you.

**Deaf.** You cannot hear and can understand speech only if you read lips.

**Decrepit.** You have 1 Decrepitude point from old wounds or a past serious illness (p. 32).

**Gangling.** You are scrawny and awkward. Subtract 1 from Str, Prs, and Dex.

**Haunted.** You are haunted by a ghost that only you can see and hear. It insults, berates, and distracts you, especially when you need to keep your cool. In addition, it often uses one of the following powers against you: take and hide small items; "chill" others and make them ill at ease; cause a buzzing in your or someone else's ears to prevent them from hearing clearly (-3 on hearing rolls); move small items, like knives, to cause them to fall on you, trip you, or otherwise hamper or endanger you; or make eerie noises, such as chains clinking. Yelling at the ghost sometimes drives it away but also confuses those around you. Unless you are exceptionally strong-willed, you sometimes do as the ghost commands to get relief from its hauntings. If you aid the ghost in completing its final purpose, you may be able to get rid of it. The ghost has no powers when more than seven yards away from you. Magus: It is a particularly powerful ghost, so you may have trouble controlling it even with spells. It can interfere with your lab work, -3 on all Lab totals.

**Hunchback.** You have a deformed body that gives you a grotesque appearance and hinders your movements. Prs is -2, Com is -1, and Dex is -1. Magus: -1 Flaw.

**Infamous.** The locals know you well and curse you in their prayers. Take a level 4 bad reputation in the local area, and decide what horrible deeds you did to gain such ill will.

**Lame.** As a cripple either from birth or through some accident, you move slowly and clumsily. Anyone can outrun you. Take -1 to -10 on rolls involving moving quickly or agilely, and -4 on Dodge rolls and -1 on other combat

# Virtues

somehow will preserve you. Whimsy Cards and Storyguide aid are musts to play this out fully. When the time is right, your destiny *will* be fulfilled, though it may cost you your life.

**Failed Apprentice.** You began apprenticeship to become a magus, but something keeps you from ever being able to continue your studies. Perhaps your master found that your Gift of magic was incomplete or some grievous mishap robbed you of it altogether. You may have Magic and Formal Knowledges as beginning abilities, and you are familiar with a wizard's life. Wizards welcome you and have compassion for you (those magi who are given to such emotions, anyhow). You may still work for your former master. If your Gift was not completely destroyed, you most likely have some mystic virtues. Magus: N/A

**Ghostly Warder.** A ghost watches over you. It might be your grandmother, a childhood friend, or anyone else who would care for you enough to stay around you after death. It is invisible and silent to all but you. It can see and hear what is going on around you, and can leave your presence once per day for up to half an hour, making an excellent spy. Each time the ghost leaves your presence, however, roll a stress die to see how well it managed. It needs to roll a 3+ to come back with anything coherent. Below that, it lost touch with the living world and found out nothing. On a botch, it has lost touch with you and never returns. (Make an extra botch roll for each point of the Dominion, infernal power, or faerie power of the area.) Death does not leave people normal, so your ghost no doubt has some quirks that make it less than dependable. The ghost has 20 points of experience in various abilities that it can use to advise you. It might be tempting for the ghost to "encourage" you to join it over on the Other Side.

**Magic Resistance.** You have an innate +20 Magic Resistance (p. 66), incompatible with a *parma magica* (they're not cumulative) Some physical sign may accompany this resistance, such as a birthmark or iron fingernails.

**Redcap.** You are a redcap, a messenger of the Order of Hermes. You may be assigned to one covenant or you may wander among the covenants delivering messages, receiving in return a moderate stipend. Strangely enough you are considered a full member of the Order of Hermes; you possess a sigil, and your representatives attend most tribunals (although, out of deference to true magi, they do not vote). Most folk will not harass or harm you, and even magi think twice before hindering your mission. Essentially this gives you a high degree of protection when you travel, even when you travel alone. You may choose Formal and Magic Knowledges as beginning abilities. Magus: +3 Virtue.

**Self-Confident.** You begin the game with 7 Cnf points.

**Ways of the Woods.** You have a deep understanding of the woodlands, feeling more natural and at home there than anywhere else. You get a +4 Knack with the woods (see the +2 Virtue). In addition, you suffer one less botch than normal in the woods (but always at least 1), and you get along well with woodland creatures, whether they are mundane or faerie. Particularly vicious creatures may still attack you, but at least they'll accord you with the proper respect.

**Wealth.** You own land and other valuable things and have a yearly excess income of about 700 silver pennies. You can have a mount of your own and Superior Armaments (a +2 virtue).

**Werewolf.** When the full moon shines in the night sky, you take the form of a wolf. While you are in your wolf form, add the characteristics listed for wolves in the Bestiary (p. 116) to your own, and add +3 to your Violent trait as well. You also get +8 on your Soak vs. all non-silver and non-magical attacks. Take an ability called Werewolf with a score purchased like any other ability. When you roll a 12+ you may voluntarily take the form of a wolf (one try per day). Your clothes do not

transform with you, and you are not healed when you change. This ability is very rare and mysterious; it is often seen as evil. Invent a good story to explain the origin of your lycanthropy: a bite, a family trait, or a curse. Muto Corporem Level 35.

## Virtue: +5

**Guardian Angel.** You have learned to hear the words of your guardian angel, who gives you practical and spiritual advice. Your angel guides and protect you, so that any time you are doing something of which the angel approves and you roll a 1 in stress, you automatically succeed in the roll (provided the ease factor is 20 or below). The angel whispers in your ear and tells you what is best for you spiritually, which might not be what is best for you materially. When you speak aloud, your angel can hear you, and so you can hold conversations. The angel is aware of your thoughts, but other than that has a limited view of the world. If you act against the angel's moral advice, it may leave you, perhaps until you correct your ways, perhaps forever. The angel approves of violence only when there is a holy reason for it, and that is hard to find.

## Instant Grogg

If you want to generate a grog quickly, use the following system.

**Age:** 20 years old.

**Characteristics:** Determine normally.

**Virtue:** Choose one of these- Good Characteristic, Enduring Constitution, +2 Knack w/ favored weapon, Long-Winded, Keen Vision, Resilient Constitution, Sharp Ears, Stocky, Tough.

**Flaw:** Choose one of these- Criminal Brand, Compulsion, Disfigured, Hired Sword, Missing Ear, Missing Eye, Orphan, Recruit, Short Attention Span, Simple-Minded, Social Handicap.

**Personality Traits:** Choose normally.

**Abilities:** Choose the following ability scores.

One ability with a score of 4

Two abilities at 3

Two abilities at 2

Two abilities at 1

# Flaws

rolls specifically. Your base speed is a *mere* one mile per hour. Decide precisely how and why you are lame.

**Missing Hand.** You can only use one hand for climbing, combat, and other activities; take a -2 to -4 penalty to any such actions. Magus: You suffer -3 on spell-casting, except for spells you invent specifically for one-handed casting (-2 on Lab Totals to invent such spells).

**Muto.** You cannot speak, perhaps your tongue was cut off. You probably use rudimentary hand gestures and grunts to get your needs across. Magus: N/A, your master would have restored your voice magically.

**Over-Confident.** You have an exaggerated and unshakable estimation of your capabilities, and you do not hesitate to try things that promise only defeat. (This is a dangerous flaw where combat is concerned.) If you are convincing in your speech, you can infect others with this over-confidence.

**Sheltered Upbringing.** You grew up completely separated from society, knowing only your parents or a mentor. Recently you have been introduced to a wondrous new world of strangers, and you are overwhelmed. You are unable to function normally because you cannot understand most human customs, motivations, and mentalities. Take -3 to most tasks involving social interaction, and you may have no Social Talents or Skills as beginning abilities. Depending on your personality, you might react to the world with contempt, fear, or wonder. Eventually you may overcome your upbringing.

**Small Frame.** Your frame is smaller than average. Size -1, subtract 1 from Str. Body and fatigue levels as for "Lithe" above. Magus: -3 Flaw.

**Tainted with Evil.** Something you/your parents, or your ancestors did has tainted you with evil. Others naturally feel very ill at ease around you, and people easily to hate you. Gaining a positive reputation is impossible. Magi do not react as strongly to this attribute as normal people. Magus: -1 Flaw, it doesn't matter much what people think of you.

**Terrors.** Some specific thing fills you with overwhelming dread. You can do nothing but scramble and fight to escape the presence of the terrible thing, and if this is impossible, you are likely to become a pile of quivering pudding. Make the object of your fear common enough that it will come into play, but rare enough that you still have a playable character. Examples: criminals, deep forests, heights, wide open spaces, storms, caves.

## Flaws: -3

**Cursed.** You have been cursed by one of the great supernatural powers.

Examples of -3 Curses:

- Pained by light, the brighter the light, the greater the pain.

- See shapes and phantoms in the night that terrify and incapacitate you.

**Fury.** A violent temper sometimes overwhelms you, sending you into a destructive, uncontrollable rage. Choose some offence that is likely to bring on your temper, such as being insulted, being hurt, or hearing the Order of Hermes disparaged. You must roll 9+ one a stress die or fly into a rage, and you can attempt a similar roll every round to try to calm yourself. While enraged, you get +3 to damage but -1 on all other rolls, and you must make a Fatigue roll every round. Such a furious temper may well be the result of a curse.

**Noncombatant.** You cannot learn any combat skills and suffer -2 on all Attack and Damage rolls. You cannot pick the Background Flaw of Poor Equipment. Magus: -2 Flaw.

**Sense of Doom.** You have gained knowledge best left uncovered, perhaps a vision of your demise or eternal fate, perhaps secrets about your true nature. At times you are listless, as no ambition could shake this sense of doom. Whenever you are defeated somehow, whether in combat or a more mundane effort, you become incapable of taking any energetic actions for up to a day. If forced to defend yourself at this time, you suffer -2 on rolls, and you are incapable of using your Cnf points.

## Flaws: -4

**Cursed.** You have been terribly cursed by one of the great supernatural powers.

Examples of -4 Curses:

- Doomed to be wounded in every battle in which you partake (and in many that you try to avoid).
- Your wounds bleed horribly, so that for each unbandaged wound you have, you lose one fatigue level per round, and then lose body levels once you are unconscious.
- Normal tools (including weapons) often break when you try to use them.
- The touch of sunlight burns painfully (lose one body level per minute).

**Demon Plagued.** You have come to the special attention of a minor demon, who is set on capturing your soul and making your life a living hell in the meantime. This demon has a specialty that it uses against you, such as rage, greed, sloth, or dishonesty. The demon can use its powers directly against you and on others to harm you. For instance, a demon of lies could make you lie or make others lie to you. The demon is too busy (or lazy) to harass you constantly, so it usually only affects you during important times in your life (like adventures). The Storyguide should keep in mind the subtle nature and sinister purpose of the demon's plans.

Secretly you wonder what evil (or good) you or your family has done to de-

serve such a fate. For overcoming magic resistance, assume the demon has +12 on its magic penetration roll, though it may grow in power or be replaced by a superior demon if it fails to carry out its plans. Magus: Hell takes a special interest in magi; the fiend's Demon Might is at least 24. Don't forget the attendant problems this might cause you in the Order.

**Feral Upbringing.** You grew up in the wilderness, either being raised by wild animals or on your own. Now that you have come to society (or the covenant), you have learned to understand some basic spoken phrases, but normal human life is still a mystery that you want no part of. As beginning abilities, you may only choose those that you could have learned in the wilds. You may have picked up a few skills at the covenant, such as how to use a mace instead of a club, but you have neither the inclination nor the capacity to learn more refined skills. You have no "Speak Own Language" ability. Magus: N/A

**Midget/Dwarf.** You are the size of a child, and though your muscles are mature, you lack the leverage that benefits larger folk. Size is -2; subtract 2 from Str. Your comfortable walking speed is two-thirds normal. Even if you are strong, leverage prevents you from using any weapons that require a positive Str. Cross off the "Hurt" and "Medium Wounds" body levels and the "Winded" and "Tired" fatigue levels from your sheet.

## Flaws: -5

**Blind.** You have no or almost no sight. Use of missile weapons is close to futile, reading is impossible, and navigation in unknown territory is difficult. Magus: N/A, your master would have restored your vision magically. It's that important.

**Enfeebled.** You cannot exert yourself for longer than a few seconds. Any need for rapid movement, such as combat or a chase, leaves you helpless. Long hikes are likewise beyond your capability. You are unable to learn combat skills, since you cannot train in them. Magus: You lose double fatigue levels from casting spells, -6 Flaw.





# Hermetic Virtues & Flaws (Magi Only)

It is a rare magus whose natural Gift for magic perfectly fits the structured theory of Hermetic magic, and almost all magi therefore have Hermetic flaws. To simulate this, at least half of your flaws should *be* Hermetic, rather than chosen from the general list. The following Virtues & Flaws are only for magi — however a magus can choose from the general list as well.

## Virtues: +1

**Book-Learner.** You have a knack for figuring out what people mean when they write about magic, for reading between the lines. Treat all magic books that you study as if they were 2 levels higher than they really are.

**The Gentle Gift.** The ability to work magic at all is called the "Gift," and it usually disturbs normal people and animals. That is why magi suffer -3 on rolls involving normal people trusting them. But yours is a "gentle Gift"; it does not bother people or animals and you do not suffer this penalty.

**Hermetic Prestige.** Because of your famous and well-respected master, other magi look up to you even if you haven't earned their respect. Some envy you, and most expect more from you than they would from other magi.

**Inventive Genius.** You receive +3 on rolls for inventing new spells, crafting magic items, and inventing your longevity potion. If you experiment, you get +6.

**Magical Affinity.** You have a talent (like an ordinary ability) in a specific kind of magic, and you may add your score in this talent to all spell rolls and lab totals involving this kind of magic. You buy this talent along with your other abilities and can gain experience in it as you can any other talent. Affinities are important because you cannot

assign experience points to your arts, but you can assign them to an affinity. Example +1 Affinities: fighting demons, water creatures, ghosts & corpses, death & aging, wind, self-transformation. Anything broader must be classified as a +2 Affinity.

**Mastered Spells.** You have 20 experience points that you can use to master spells (see p. 68).

**Special Circumstances.** You are able to perform magic better in certain circumstances, gaining a +3 bonus to your rolls to cast spells or resist them. Example circumstances: during a storm, while in the air, while touching the target.

## Virtues: +2

**Free Study.** You are better at figuring things out for yourself than you are at studying from books. You gain +1 on your rolls when studying from vis.

**Magical Affinity.** Like the +1 Virtue, but covering broader types of magic. Example +2 Affinities: healing, forests & forest animals, faeries, passions, and rock. Anything more comprehensive than these examples must be classified as at least a +3 Affinity.

## Virtue: +3

**Magical Affinity.** Like the +1 Virtue, but covering broader types of magic. You can use this affinity as a bonus on any form, such as Terram or Mentem.

## Virtue: +4

**Magical Affinity.** As the +1 Virtue, but covering broader types of magic. You can use this affinity as a bonus on any one technique, such as Creo or Perdo.

## Flaws: -1

**The Blatant Gift.** Your Gift (the ability to do magic) is easily noticed by others. You suffer -6 on rolls involving the trust of normal people, and animals are extremely disturbed, frightened, and possibly enraged by your presence. People immediately realize there is something strange about you, even if they do not realize you are a magus. (You must have led a lonely life even before becoming an apprentice.)

**Deleterious Circumstances (Uncommon & Minor).** Your magic rolls are at -5 in certain uncommon circumstances, such as being in a large city or underground.

**Infamous Master.** Your master is widely despised or held in contempt, and most magi expect little better from you. Even if you've done nothing out of the ordinary, other magi treat you as if you don't deserve to be among their number. Your master could have been a diabolist, a bumbler, or a fool. You have a bad reputation of the appropriate type. Level 2, among magi.

**Loose Magic.** You lack the concentration, will, or ability to master spells (see p. 68)

**Minor Magic Deficiency (Rare).** You have trouble with a particular art, and it is treated as one-half its true value, rounded down. (Treat the art normally when studying.) For example, if you have a score of 9, it acts as if it were 4, but you still could not learn from a book with a score of 6. Don't choose Corporem, or Vim, or a technique.

**Necessary Condition.** In order for your magic to work, you must do something that is (thankfully) relatively easy to do. For instance, maybe your magic only works if you sing or if you spin around once.

and flaws that somehow work against each other can create an interesting inner struggle for your character, such as a Compulsion to Drink that can conflict with being Dutybound. Virtues & Flaws that are directly contradictory, as well as those that deal directly with the same aspect of your character, are mutually exclusive. You cannot have Poor Eyesight and Keen Vision, or be Lithe as well as Obese. Neither can you be Large and Stocky, since they both describe your body type. Likewise, you cannot have both a Knack for picking pockets and a Light Touch, since they cover essentially the same kinds of endeavor. Some flaws are perverse versions of virtues, in which case the two are mutually exclusive. For instance, Dutybound describes those who think they have a true Code of Honor, but do not. Sometimes you will take more than one virtue or flaw that refer to the same aspect of your character. You might have a Driving Goal to overthrow a local baron, and a Hatred of that baron. In such a case, they combine effects and make you much more obsessed with killing this baron than you would be if you chose only one of these flaws.

Explaining your virtues and flaws to the other players and to the Storyguide allows them to interact with your character more appropriately.

## Size

Unless you chose an appropriate virtue or flaw, your size is 0, the adult average (remember that 0 is average for most things). Size determines the number of body and fatigue levels a creature has. It is added to your Soak total (used to absorb weapon damage) and subtracted from your Defense total (used to avoid being struck in combat). Size can also, at the Storyguide's discretion, influence such rolls as Stealth and Intimidation. The Size score is more important for comparing different types of creatures than for comparing individuals of one type. The Size Table gives some standards for Sizes.

# Hermetic Virtues & Flaws (Magi Only)

**Stingy Master.** Your master trained you less than most masters train their apprentices, so you have only 130 points with which to buy spells and 130 points with which to purchase arts.

**Warped Magic.** Your magic is accompanied by some annoying side effect, always of the same type, but with increasing intensity according to the Level of the spell you are casting. Possibilities are noises, smells, flashes of light, disturbing animals, winds, smelly slime, or a tendency to become edgy and easily annoyed after using magic. A flaw should cause trouble from time to time, but mainly, it is just annoying.

## Flaws: -2

**Deleterious Circumstances (Common & Minor).** Your magic rolls are at -5 in certain reasonably common circumstances, such as being in a town of 200 or more people, or during the night. These circumstances are difficult or impossible to avoid.

**Deleterious Circumstances (Uncommon & Severe).** Divide your magic rolls by 2 in certain uncommon circumstances, such as when cast on wild animals or when you are not standing.

**Lack of Concentration.** You cannot possess the Concentration ability and cannot cast ritual spells, due to your profound inability to focus your concentration.

**Lack of Control.** After casting a spell, you must spend a round recovering your mental faculties before casting another. If you cast a spell after casting one last round, divide your roll by 2. Magic items would probably be most useful to you.

**Restriction (Rare).** Your magic does not work under rare circumstances, such as when touching an animal, or does not work on certain targets, such as avians.

**Wild Magic.** You cannot control *vis* (the power of magic) with as much finesse and surety as other magi. You get an extra botch roll when dealing with magic. You must spend twice the normal experience to master a formulaic spell.

## Flaws: -3

**Deleterious Circumstances (Common & Severe).** Divide all your magic rolls by 2 in reasonably common circumstances, such as under clouds or in a building.

**Major Magic Deficiency (Rare).** You have great trouble with any one art besides Corporem, Vim, or the techniques. Any sum that includes the art (including any rolls or Lab Totals and the score when considered alone) is divided by 2. For example, if you have a Major Deficiency with Terram and you are trying a Rego Terram spell, you must divide the total of Rego + Terram + Stm by 2 before rolling for the spell. With a Minor Magic Deficiency, you would only divide the Terram score.

**Unimaginative Learner.** You have trouble figuring things out for yourself, so subtract 2 from your rolls when you are studying *pis*.

## Flaws: -4

**Minor Magic Deficiency (Common).** You have trouble with an important art; it is always treated as half its true value (round down). Affects Corporem, Vim, or a technique.

**Susceptibility to Divine Power.** You are especially sensitive to the Dominion and suffer twice the normal penalties on your magic when in it.

**Susceptibility to Faerie Power.** You are especially susceptible to the influence of faeries and their magic. Whenever you enter a faerie area, you must make a Stm roll equal to or greater than the faerie power of the area, or become disoriented, strongly expressing one personality trait chosen at random or according to the situation. Your magic resistance against faerie magic is divided by 2. Your *parma magica* is affected, but if someone else protects you with their *parma magica*, it is not affected.

**Susceptibility to Infernal Power.** You are especially susceptible to the dark powers. Whenever you enter an area of infernal influence, you must make a Stm roll equal to or greater than the power's strength or become ill (-1 on all rolls). Positive personality trait rolls (such as Brave) in the face of demons are at -3. You get only one-half your normal magic resistance against infernal magic, though if somebody else's *parma magica* is protecting you, it counts normally.

## Flaws: -5

**Restriction (Common).** Your magic will not work under certain common circumstances, such as underground or inside a building. The circumstances must not be more rare than these.

**Major Magic Deficiency (Common).** You have great trouble with one common art, such as Corporem, Vim, or a technique. Any sum that includes the art (including any rolls or Lab Totals and the score when considered alone) is divided by 2.

## Size Table

Size	Example
-5	mouse
-4	crow
-3	infant, cat
-2	child, dog
-1	adolescent
0	<b>adult</b>
+1	huge human
+2	horse, bear, stag
+3	ox, heavy horse
+4	elk
+5	elephant
+6 or more	dragon

## Confidence

Confidence (Cnf) is a measure of your ability to surpass your own limits, whether they be physical or mental. It is your faith in yourself, a coolness under fire, determination, and command over your full potential. Confidence points are used to modify stress rolls. Groggs begin with 1 Confidence point, companions with 2, magi with 3. A person with high self-confidence, 5 or more, is self-possessed and has a noticeable air of self-assurance (though some might see it as arrogance). Such individuals are strong enough to rely on themselves, and that simple trust in their own abilities translates into better chances of success in game terms. Most people in the world have Cnf 1. Profoundly defeated people have 0, and exceptional people have 2 or more Cnf points, with a practical maximum of 10.

## Using Confidence

Any time before you make a **stress roll**, you may put Cnf into the sum, **adding +1** to it for each point of Cnf put in. If the roll on which you put Confidence fails, the **Cnf points are lost** temporarily. If the roll succeeds, **no points are lost**, and you can use the Cnf again later. If you roll exactly what you need to make the roll (i.e., your roll exactly equals the ease factor), then you immediately make a simple roll. If the roll is higher than your current stable Cnf score (not including any temporary losses you may have suffered), you gain 1 point of Cnf permanently. Points lost temporarily return when you rest for a week or two, end the story currently being played, or succeed decisively at a vitally important task.

If you botch while using Cnf points, you **lose 1 Cnf point permanently**. You cannot drop to 0 Cnf through this loss; you will always have at least 1 point. The only way to lose all your Cnf is to suffer extended, dehumanizing treatment, such as slavery or torture, or through extreme passions that cause a person to lose the will to live (such as losing one's true love). Groggs who are neglected and abused might lose all their Cnf, if they don't desert first.

When you use Cnf on **personality rolls**, you can gain and lose points permanently, like always, but you cannot lose them temporarily. You are free to affect the way your character might react without much fear of losing your Cnf points.

Sometimes you may want to use Cnf to **decrease** the chance of making a roll, such as a Cowardly roll, instead of increasing it. In this case, add the Cnf points to the ease factor instead of to your roll. You lose Cnf temporarily if you succeed in the roll, keep it if you fail, roll for permanent gain if you roll 1 less than the ease factor, and lose a point permanently if you roll a 20+ and succeed in the roll (with a roll like that you probably will).

The actions into which you choose to put your Cnf are an expression of your personality. Putting your Cnf into a roll is, in a way, putting your heart into an effort. Some people are more likely to push themselves in combat, some in social situations, some when they are being watched by members of the opposite sex, and so on. Use your Cnf to express who your character is — doing so can give you insight into their personality.

## Personality

Ars Magica has a number system for describing a character's personality. This personality system serves several purposes. First, it provokes you to think concretely about the personality of your character. Secondly, it lets the Storyguide use the character's personality traits in the story in ways which would not be possible if only free interpretation by the players determined a character's mental and emotional status. Finally, it legitimizes acting "out of character." When the die comes up that a usually timid person becomes bold, the other players can accept that bold behavior because the die called for it. Without a concrete system, any player who started having a timid character act boldly would likely be criticized for acting "out of character," even though real people surprise us all the time.

### Choosing Your Traits

First, assign scores to the traits listed on your sheet, such as Brave. Each of your personality traits may begin the game with a score anywhere from -3 to +3, your choice. Then invent three other traits and write them down; these are the personality traits by

### Exempli Gratia: Confidence

Grimgroth and a company of grogs and companions are journeying toward the distant village of Mercille, and one night they stay in an inn. That evening Grimgroth decides to let his party relax, and he tells them he is willing to pay for drinks and good food. He hopes to raise morale before the group enters a possibly dangerous area. He tries to impress on them, however, that they are to behave themselves because any ill-mannered conduct would reflect poorly on Mistrudge. Grimgroth's player stresses that he is trying very hard to get his point across, so the Storyguide has him make a Prs roll. Grimgroth adds a point of Cnf and rolls. The Storyguide has secretly determined the ease factor to be 9. He doesn't tell Grimgroth the ease factor because only the conduct of the grogs as the evening progresses will let him know whether his little speech had the desired effect. Grimgroth rolls a 6, +3 is 9, so he succeeds, and the Storyguide circulates a slip of paper saying "You are impressed!" among those playing grogs. Grimgroth rolled the ease factor exactly, so once he sees that his talk has worked, the Storyguide tells him he may roll to increase his Cnf. His simple roll, however, is only 1, not high enough to increase his Cnf.

which you differ from others. You can select traits from the list provided on the **Personality Traits Table** or make up your own. Be sure to choose traits that make sense for the role you play in the saga. For instance, if you are a companion who works with the magi because you seek esoteric knowledge, you might want to include "Fascinated with Arcane Lore +3" as a trait.

You may add more traits later as you become more familiar with your character.

Traits can represent various aspects of the personality, such as overall attributes (e.g. Cautious), motivations (e.g. Wants Power), or attitudes (e.g. Distrustful of Foreigners). Use whatever traits describe your character best. Do not confuse personality traits with characteristics or abilities. For instance, don't take a personality trait of "Intelligent" because that is covered by the characteristic Intelligence.

For finer characterization, you can choose traits that are somehow opposed. For instance, you could choose "Leader -2" and "Follower -3." With just a negative Leader score, people might infer that you are a follower, but with these scores, it's obvious that you are distanced from the leader/follower dichotomy so common in society, and are neither a leader nor a follower. Another

### Personality Traits Table

Altruistic	Cruel to Inferiors
Honest	Curious about People
Leader	Brave in Combat
Pensive	Hot-Headed when Threatened
Easily Charmed	Distrustful of Foreigners
Gullible	Stubborn when Wrong
Kind	Respectful of Authority
Gregarious	Kind to Animals

### Exempli Gratia: Personality Traits

Especially since she is not physically impressive, Isabel could use some interesting personality traits. So far it has been determined that she is practical above all else; Isabel should have personality traits that not only support this trait but also go beyond it.

**Brave 0.** She doesn't have the experience necessary to be truly brave.

**Loyal +2.** She is unlikely to be tempted to betray her commitments to others by such distractions as fear, greed, laziness, and so on, so she is a loyal person.

**Practical +5.** Her virtue of Strong Personality lets her have a personality scores of -6 to +6 in three traits.

**Appreciates Art +2.** Her appreciation for art creates the possibility of interesting internal conflict with her practical bent. A trait like this keeps her personality from being completely one-sided.

**Frivolous -6.** She takes the lowest score possible for this trait, which represents her personal opposite for her main strength, Practical. She could have chosen other opposites, such as Foolish or simply Impractical, but her player thinks that frivolity is the truest opposite of Isabel's practical bent.

Isabel runs the risk of being almost a caricature because her practical side is so strong. Her player will have to be careful to develop other aspects of her personality. Giving your character a strongly centered, almost exaggerated personality allows you to get into character easily at first, but a fuller personality must be developed to keep the character interesting to play.

character (with a fascist-like personality) might have positive scores for both Leader and Follower, describing both a desire to be in charge and a deference to superiors. Even when personality traits are "opposites," a high score in one doesn't necessarily imply a low score in the other.

### Making Personality Rolls

You make a personality roll whenever the Storyguide calls for it and any time you are not sure how your character would react to the situation at hand. When you make a personality roll, it is against a certain trait. You roll a die, add the trait score, and add any other modifiers (such as Cnf). Usually if you get 6+, the trait in question shows itself. For instance, the Storyguide can call for a Brave roll to see if you have the courage to stand up to a particularly frightening beast. A failed roll would mean that you are so frightened that you flee.

If you ever roll a 20+ on a personality trait, you express the trait in an extreme, possibly even dangerous, way. "Brave" becomes "foolhardy," "loyal" becomes "fanatic," and so on. Role-play it out. Likewise, botching a trait can mean the expression of the extreme version of that trait's opposite. Botched reliability means uncontrolled impulsiveness or something else equally entertaining.

### Exempli Gratia: Personality Rolls

Isabel sits quietly as the others in the party enjoy themselves in the inn. She had expected them to handle themselves with reserve and dignity, but now they are drinking, joking, bragging, eating, and generally enjoying themselves. Since she is sensitive to frivolity and tends to speak her mind, Isabel feels like berating them for their undisciplined behavior, but she tries to hold back out of loyalty to Grimgroth, who gave them leave to have fun.

She decides that a personality roll is in order: Practical +5 vs. Loyal +2. Since this is her first journey with these people, she wants to make a good impression and uses her 2 Cnf points on the side of being loyal. The dice come up 9 + 5 = 14 for Practical and 6 + 2 + 2 = 10 for Loyal. Unable to restrain herself, she stalks over to the grogs and other companions, assumes a superior demeanor, and scolds them cuttingly. (The player role-plays it out.) Appeased, she returns to sit by Grimgroth, who is looking at her quizzically.

Isabel does not lose her Cnf even though she failed her roll because they were used to modify a personality roll.

Note that some penalties in the game are for "all rolls," but the Storyguide must rule on whether these penalties actually apply to the personality rolls at hand. A penalty from wounds, for instance, might apply to Brave rolls, but it could be used as a bonus on rolls the player wants to miss, such as a Despairing roll.

### Personality, Abilities, and Magic

Personality scores can also sometimes modify ability rolls, at the discretion of the Storyguide. For instance, a Skeptical score could add to your roll to disbelieve a lie. Unfortunately, it could also add to your roll to disbelieve the truth when the truth is questionable.

Likewise, personality traits can modify rolls related to magic, such as natural resistance rolls to spells that affect your mind. You might have a superior chance to resist a faerie princess's enchanting allure if you have a positive Ascetic score. This option is completely at the Storyguide's discretion.

### Changing Your Personality

After each story, you can change one personality trait by **1 point**, up or down, with a limit of -3 and +3. These changes should come only through dramatic, stressful, or dangerous behavior. You can raise a trait above +3 or below -3 only by some extraordinary action or experience, some event that truly stands out in your character's life. You have the responsibility of judging when events have been challenging enough to warrant a change in your personality traits.

### Personality Explanations

**Brave-** Able to take action despite the risks.

**Loyal-** Willing to do what your superiors have ordered you to do, and to do even more when possible.

**Reliable-** Likely to do what is expected of you and what others would like you to do.

# Reputation

Reputation is the social aspect of your personality. Your personality traits describe how you act, and your reputation describes how others expect you to act and how they act towards you. It is possible to have different reputations in different areas, but in one area you usually have only one. Most of your reputation will be built up during play.

Each reputation has three components: a **locale**, the place where you have this reputation; a **type**, the nature of the reputation you have; and a **level**. See the **Reputations Table** for examples of reputations.

You only begin with a reputation if you have chosen relevant Virtues and Flaws, but it is fairly easy to gain a reputation, at least a bad one; just do something stupid and dramatic. If you have chosen good or bad reputation as a virtue or flaw, you choose a locale for this reputation (probably the surrounding area) and a type-

## Gaining a Reputation

To gain a new reputation, you must be in the presence of people with whom you have no reputation already. If you do anything exceptional, something noteworthy, you get a reputation for the notable trait at level 1 or 2. The rest of the troupe decides when you get a reputation in a new place and what the reputation is, with the Storyguide having final say. This can be judged by imagining whether the character in question is a current topic of gossip and conversation in that locale, even if only for a day or two. Decide if this conversation affects people's understanding of this person. Keep in mind that it is possible for people to gain totally undeserved reputations; such is the way of society.

Characters often gain different reputations among the grogs and the magi. For instance, the magi might view a companion as dependable while the grogs see him as a brown-noser. Other characters may have reputations that are consistent throughout the covenant.



## Reputations Table

Type		Locale
Cunning	Fair-Minded	Among the grogs
Forgiving	Tough	A Covenant
Demonic	Evil	Among the <i>Consortis</i>
Brave	Sinful	Among Woodcutters
Cowardly	Adulterous	Home Village
Violent	Saintly	Among Masons
Anxious	Chivalrous	A Town or City
Voyager	Witty	Order of Hermes
Heroic	Dishonest	An Entire Kingdom

## Increasing Your Reputation

To increase a reputation, you must do something that matches the reputation you already have in the place where you have the reputation. If the troupe deems the action noteworthy enough, you gain a point in the reputation. The action, however, must be progressively more impressive as your Reputation score rises. To get past a score of 3 requires a truly impressive performance, something that people will remember and possibly talk about for years to come.

The higher your reputation, the farther across the countryside you are known and the stronger your reputation is to those who know you.

## Losing a Reputation

If you ever do any notable deed that runs counter to your reputation, you lose **1 point** from the score. By losing a point when you have a reputation of 1, you lose that reputation altogether. From that point on, you can pick up another, different reputation for that area.

## Applying Reputation

Reputation scores can be used as bonuses whenever the Storyguide deems it appropriate. Most often, they affect personality rolls, but they can affect ability rolls as well. For example, the Storyguide might allow a bonus on Subterfuge rolls if you have a reputation for honesty; or if you have a reputation for being vengeful, the folk of a village may be hesitant to betray you, and your reputation can be used as a modifier to their personality rolls to see if they tell the Knight you are in town.

## Exempli Gratia: Reputation

Isabel has no reputation to begin with, but her scene in the inn is likely to give her one. After the journey to Mercille is over, the players decide that what the grogs remember most about Isabel is her scolding them and the other companions for enjoying themselves. They consider reputations of "shrewish," "grumpy," and "haughty," but they eventually agree on "bitter." She gets the following reputation: Among grogs, Bitter 1. The companions are a loose-knit group, so the players decide that she has no general reputation among them, and Grimgroth says he overlooks her outburst when telling the other magi about his investigation of Mercille, so they do not regard her as bitter either.

# Abilities

Abilities represent what you can do beyond the outline provided by your characteristics. All mundane skills, talents, and knowledges are covered in this area, as well as some exceptional and mystical talents.

Each ability that you have is assigned a score representing how good you are at that ability. The number is used as a bonus or penalty to die rolls when you attempt to use the ability. This section of the rules guides you in determining what abilities you have and how high or low each ability may be rated.

## Types of Abilities

Abilities are divided into several types, such as Physical Talents and Casual Knowledges. Each type has specific characteristics. Familiarity with these types, as described in the Abilities chapter, will help you choose your abilities.

## Beginning Abilities

You choose your ability scores with a point buying system. Eventually, you will raise your abilities through experience, but first you must determine your beginning levels.

Those abilities not automatically acquired must be purchased with a finite number of experience points. Groggs get their age +10 points, companions get double their age in points, and magi get just their age in points. Assigning these points represents the relative amount of time that your character has spent learning various abilities. More points means more time and a higher rating. You assign a score to each ability you choose.

You automatically get some abilities at a base level. See the Base Abilities Table.

Each score costs a certain amount, which must be paid for out of the point supply. It costs 1 point for the first point of an ability, 2 points for the second point (after already paying for the first, for a total of 3 points), three points for the third (for a total of 6), and soon. See the Ability Cost Table. If the ability already has a score in it from the Base Abilities Table, you can buy additional points. To figure the pro-rated cost for such abilities, subtract the cost of the base ability from the cost of the final ability.

A score of 3 indicates competence with an ability. Scores over 5 are remarkable.

## Reduced Abilities

If you want to take a reduced score in any ability, you gain one point for each point the score is below normal. You can reduce your scores in your basic abilities and reduce talents to below 0, though no lower than -3. A score below 0 indicates a deficiency you have in that area. (Players have the curious habit of forgetting these negative scores when it comes to making important die rolls. If this forgetfulness is a problem in your troupe, you and the other players might want to limit or eliminate negative abilities.)

### Base Abilities Table

- Grog:** Speak Own Language 4, Brawl 1
- Companion:** Speak Own Language 5
- Magus:** Speak Own Language 4, Speak Latin 5, Scribe Latin 3, Magic Theory 5, Hermes Lore 2, Hermes History 2, *Parma Magica* 2

Score	Cost	Score	Cost
-3	gain 3	7	28
-2	gain 2	8	36
-1	gain 1	9	45
0	0	10	55
1	1	11	66
2	3	12	78
3	6	13	91
4	10	14	105
5	15	15	120
6	21	16	136

Beginning abilities are rarely higher than 5 or 6; 3 is a good workable score. For magical arts (also purchased with this scale), beginning scores rarely exceed 10 to 12.

## Beginning Experience

You can use some of your purchase points to buy experience instead of abilities. Each purchase point buys 1 experience point in an ability, and you can have experience points up to the score of the ability (any more than that would actually give you the next level of ability). These experience points bring you closer to raising the ability after you begin play; see Experience (p. 32) in this chapter for details.

## Specialties

Most abilities allow you to specialize. For each ability you choose, choose a specialty as well. See the Abilities chapter for details.

## Choosing Abilities

When choosing abilities, keep in mind several guidelines based on the type of character and the story setting. First of all, make sure that you have all the abilities that make sense for your identity. Be sure to consider abilities related to your profession, background, and culture. Have the language proficiency necessary to communicate with other characters.

Certain abilities are restricted. If your background keeps you from having a certain weapon, you can't have an ability for using it. Also, Formal Knowledges are restricted, and you need to be a magus or an educated companion to learn them. Arcane Talents, Skills, and Knowledges are for magi only, though companions with the virtue Arcane Lore can take Magical Knowledges. Virtues and flaws determine much about the abilities available.

Groggs should choose the abilities they need to be good warriors and guards. A few good weapon scores and some other useful skills, such as Scan, Survival or Chirurgy, make a competent grog. Groggs' specialties relate to the role they have in the turb.

Companions have lots of points to work with, and they should take advantage of this by taking many varied and interesting abilities related to their backgrounds. Specialties are an excellent opportunity to fine-tune your companion's background or personality.

Magi should *be* sure to choose the necessary magical abilities, such as *Finesse* and *Parma Magica*, as these can be as important as spells themselves in determining one's ability as a magus. Magi often take negative scores in physical and social abilities to pay for their expansive knowledges and magical talents. These negative scores represent the price that is paid when you study in a gloomy tower for fifteen years.

Players usually consult with each other when purchasing abilities because it is easy for one person to miss something important or lose track of something when dealing with so many points and abilities.

If you need an ability that is important to your character but is not described, invent it yourself. Some troupes invent several extra abilities that fit the troupe's gaming style or the culture of the setting.

When considering what abilities an average person would have, take age in purchase points distributed among various mundane abilities, many of which are not provided in the rules, such as Brew Beer or Sew.

### Exempli Gratia: Choosing Abilities

Isabel is 26 years old, so she has 52 points with which to buy abilities. Most of her abilities come from her background as a woman of wealth and her years as a nun, but she is practical enough to have gotten some training with sword and shield at Mistrudge as well. The specialties she chooses represent the source of these abilities, her temperament, or other aspects of her personality and personal history. Note that a specialty follows each positive ability.

Ability	Score	Cost
Speak Provençal, Upper Class Diction	5	0
Visions, Love & Lovers	5	15
Concentration, Attention to Detail	2	3
Scribe Latin, Copying	3	6
Speak Latin, Ecclesiastical Terms	3	6
Church Knowledge, Monastic Orders	3	6
Diplomacy, with Clergy	2	3
Church Lore, Corruption	1	1
Occult Lore, Demons	2	3
Meditation, Praying the Rosary	2	3
Sing, Hymns	1	1
Guile, Lying to Underlings	1	1
Athletics	-2	-2
Climb	-2	-2
1 Folk Ken	-1	-1
1 Shortsword Attack, Standing Ground	2	3
\ Shield Parry, Standing Ground	3	3
<b>√Total</b>		<b>52</b>

## Magical Training <Magi only>

As a magus, your most exceptional powers are your magical ones. Your fifteen or so years of apprenticeship have taught you the use of the magical arts and many spells. You choose what your training gave you, thus forming a unique combination of magical abilities.

Choosing your magic powers wisely is only possible if you understand the magic rules. Before creating a magus character, you should be at least somewhat familiar with the magic rules found in the Magic, Spells, and Laboratory chapters.

### Magical Arts

Each magus has a rating in each of fifteen forms and techniques, as explained in the Magic chapter, and 150 **purchase points** with which to purchase levels in these arts. These levels are purchased just as abilities are, so see the **Abilities Cost Table**. Remember that your forms count as your magic resistance, so you may wish to have good ratings in arts you use infrequently but that could protect you, such as Corporem, Mentem, and Ignem. Vim is also important for many magical activities. Be sure to specialize at the beginning as it is easy to raise your lower scores during play.

### Exempli Gratia: Choosing Magical Arts

Grimgroth chooses the following magical arts:

Creo 4 (cost= 10)	Corporem 7 (cost= 28)
Intellego2 (cost= 3)	Mentem 3 (cost= 6)
Rego6 (cost= 21)	Terram 1 (cost= 1)
Auram 12 (cost= 78)	Vim 2 (cost= 3)

This selection gives him the strength of specialization, in Auram, while allowing some diversity as well.



## Spells

You can pick spells whose levels add up to 150. Only those spells that are within 10 points of your **Technique + Form + Int** total can be chosen; others are too difficult for you to learn. Be sure to count any magical deficiencies or affinities into this total. (This limit applies only when selecting beginning spells, not during play.)

When choosing spells, be sure to have the basics. A good, quick offensive spell often comes in handy. Do not waste your time with low level spells that you can do with spontaneous magic anyway, unless you want to be able to cast them without speaking or using your hands. Invent spells if the troupe will let you. Inventing spells can be tricky, but the spells listed should give you a good idea of how powerful spells are at different levels.

### Exempli Gratia: Choosing Spells

Grimgroth selects some spells. First, he wants to learn Clouds of Rain and Thunder, a Level 25 Creo Auram spell. His Auram + Creo + Int total is 19, and since that's within 10 points of the Level, he can take it. He also needs a practical offensive spell, so he takes Broom of the Winds. It's only Level 15, so taking it is no problem for an air wizard like Grimgroth. Grimgroth then looks at Whispers Through the Black Gate. He Co + In + Int total is 12, so a Level 15 spell is no problem, but he sees that it has a Mentem requisite. That means his Co score of 7 functions as if it were no larger than his Me score of 3. His total becomes  $3 + 2 + 3 = 8$ , so he can still manage it, but it won't be that easy to cast. He also considers Charge of the Angry Winds (CrAu 30). His total is only 19, not within the 10 point range, so normally he could not take this spell, but he has a Magical Affinity with Winds (a +2 virtue). He determines that the score he will have in this affinity is 4, so that can be added to his total, bringing it to 23. He can therefore take this high level spell.

## Equipment

You must decide what possessions you have, especially what you carry with you during the game. Most important are your weapons and armor, but you should also decide what incidental equipment you have. Often the covenant will provide mundane supplies, but you should keep track of your personal items, such as nice clothes or writing equipment.

Grogs' equipment is based on the resources of the covenant. When your troupe designs its covenant, you decide how well-equipped the grogs are. Players must stay within these limits when equipping grogs. Grogs are restricted to standard armaments unless your troupe has designed an exceptional covenant of some sort that has either particularly well armed grogs or very poorly armed grogs.

Companions' equipment depends on their backgrounds. If they have no virtues or flaws that determine otherwise, they can have only inexpensive and standard arms and armor. If you are dependent on the covenant, you are as well-equipped as the grogs.

Magi have special considerations in choosing their equipment. As a magus, you are nearly assured fair and respectful treatment, even by the enemy. If you dress as a magus, with magical symbols

on your cloak and such, people will recognize your status (usually) and pay you the proper respect. They will also note everything you do, and travelling without being noticed will be difficult. If you dress nicely, as a wealthy person might, you will be given some respect, but people might still attempt to assault or harass you, having no idea what they are getting themselves into. If you dress as a commoner, expect no special treatment. If you are in armor, enemies might well mistake you for a warrior and slay you unintentionally. Besides, armor weighs you down and makes you tire faster, and weariness is an important consideration for any magus.

### Encumbrance (Enc)

Total the Load values for your weapons and armor to get your total Load factor. If you carry other heavy things, the Storyguide can rule that they count as Load as well. If your Str is 0 or negative, your Load equals your Encumbrance. If your Str is positive, subtract it from your Load to get your Enc (minimum of 0). Drop all fractions.

Your Enc is a measure of how loaded down you are. It is a penalty on all rolls that require free, fast movement, including nearly all Qik rolls.

## Further Characterization

### Appearance

Your character's appearance makes your traits visible to the other characters. Turn the relevant traits of your character, such as ethnic origin, characteristics (especially Prs), background, and personality traits, into aspects of your appearance. High Int can become a clear, piercing gaze. A noble background could mean you wear stylish and expensive clothes. A light hearted disposition could mean you usually are smiling. In this way, you make your character's traits more tangible and interesting. It's better role-playing to say, "You always see me with a sneer of disdain on my face," than to say, "You can tell I'm very disdainful."

### Quirks

You may also give your character quirks, interesting personal details that add depth and interest to your character. Simply write a short paragraph or two on the back of your character sheet about the strange and possibly interesting things that define your character. A quirk could be a twisted sense of humor, a gentleness towards animals, or a habit of grunting when answering yes to a question.

### Personal History

When you create your Personal history, determine your connection to your family, the location where you grew up and what it is like, and any old enemies or friends that you might still have. Especially, make sure you determine how you managed to link yourself up with the covenant and how you got involved with it in the first place.

Your character's history is often a problem to create, especially if you do not know the world the saga is set in as well as some of the other members of the troupe might. If this is the case, work on your character's history with those more knowledgeable players, or simply take a section of the world to be your responsibility and have your character come from there, leaving you a moderate amount of freedom in determining your personal history. In general don't worry. This is a game not a history class. Do what feels right, and just have fun.



# The Character in Play

## Experience

As you participate in stories and the saga progresses, your abilities will increase. Some of this increase comes from experience gained using them during stories, and some of it comes from practice or research between stories. Increase through experience is fast for magi, who can spend endless hours in intense research, but slow for companions and grogs, who begin the game as complete, experienced characters, so further increases in their abilities comes slowly.

### Raising Abilities

Ability increases are regulated by experience points. You accumulate experience points for a specific ability, and when the experience point score exceeds the ability score by 1 point, the ability score increases 1 point. You lose your accumulated experience points in the process. You can raise the ability again when you accumulate experience points in excess of the new score.

For negative ability scores, you need a number of experience points equal to the absolute value (the number without the negative sign) of your current ability score in order to increase your score one point. Thus, if your Climb score is -3, you need three experience points to raise it to -2.

You can also use experience to master spells. You need 1 experience point for each 5 Levels of a spell to master it.

### Gaining Experience Points

At the end of a story, you get a certain number of experience points: 1 point if you are a grog, 2 if you are a companion, and 3 if you are a magus. You put these points on separate abilities; you may not put more than one on any ability for each story. Additionally, you can only put points on an ability that you used during the story, though you need not have rolled a die for the use. For instance, if you led the party through the forest, you can put an experience point in Survival for your effort, even if you never actually made a Survival roll. Magi can assign experience points to spells they have used in stress.

It is also possible to gain additional experience points during the story if you use an ability in a new, imaginative, and demanding way. For instance, if you manage to talk an ogre out of eating you by feigning a severe illness, the Storyguide may allow you to take a point in Pretend immediately, in the middle of the story.

### Exempli Gratia: Experience

After his venture to Mercille, Grimgroth gets 3 experience points. He puts 1 in Certamen, hoping it will help him next time he has a magical duel. He puts another point in Broom of the Winds. It is a combat spell, something that might save him some day, so he wants it mastered. Since it's Level 15, he'll need another 2 points before it's mastered. He puts his third point in Finesse, an Arcane Talent.

## Aging

Characters are likely to grow old as the saga progresses. Age is the great equalizer, leading eventually, inevitably, to death. Magi can brew elixirs to slow this process, but even those great sages cannot stop it entirely.

As you will see, aging is a destructive process that builds on itself. The aging rules can be cruel, inexorably draining away the vitality of your character, so you may want to retire a character from active play before aging takes a heavy toll. Better to be remembered as a stout warrior or able physician rather than an enfeebled husk or a doddering fool.

**Losing Characteristics-** You begin to age in the year in which you turn 35 plus Stamina. Thus, if you have Stamina +2, you start aging at the end of the year in which you turn 37. That year, and each year thereafter, you must roll to avoid losing a characteristic point. Each winter, first decide which one characteristic of yours you have been using the most, and then make a simple roll and compare the result to the Characteristic! Loss Chart.

When you have determined the characteristic, roll to see if it drops (unless you rolled the characteristic after rolling a 0, in which case the drop is automatic). Make a simple roll; if the characteristic you are rolling for is the one you have been using most this year, add +3 to the roll. If the roll is 6+, you do not drop in that characteristic. If the roll is 5 or less, you drop 1 point. If a characteristic drops below -6, you can assume that you are disabled in some way. If your Str is -7, you are enfeebled and probably bedridden. If your Com is -7, your faculties have decayed to the point where communication with others is not possible beyond a basic, survival level. A -7Prs represents a truly pathetic or hideous visage, one so extreme that few could stand to interact with you normally. You can determine the type of disablement if it comes up.

If your roll is 0 or below, you may die. This is possible only when you have decrepitude points, see below.

**Decrepitude-** Decrepitude measures your progressive physical decay. At age 50 and every 10 years after that you gain one Decrepitude point. You may also gain Decrepitude points from botching Soak rolls and from debilitating illnesses. Subtract your Decrepitude score from all rolls to avoid characteristic loss, and add it to the number of botch rolls you must make should you roll a 0 or lower. It also indicates the number of extra botch rolls you need to make when you roll 0 on any Soak roll, and it is subtracted from any rolls to recover from wounds.

Because Decrepitude represents the inevitable state of all mortal bodies, no earthly power (including magic) can reverse it. It takes a miracle to remove one's Decrepitude points.

### Death

If, on any roll to avoid dropping in a characteristic, you roll a 0 or lower, roll again for botch. Roll one die, plus another botch die for every negative point of Stamina you have, plus another for every point of Decrepitude. For instance, if you have a -2Stm and 1 Decrepitude point, you will have to roll a total of four botch dice. If any of your botch dice roll 0, you have died of old age (the

ultimate botch). Diseases are quick and lethal in the Middle Ages, and they can quickly kill even those who are apparently in good health.

If determining aging for a beginning character, you need not roll for death.

### Longevity Potions

Magi, never ones to let themselves fall to the same fates as mundane mortals, are able to brew potions for themselves that slow the aging process. If you are a magus, each year that you take your longevity potion, you add +5 to your roll to resist characteristic loss.

#### Characteristic Loss Chart

Roll	Characteristic
0	Roll Again, Automatic Drop
1	Intelligence
2	Perception
3	Strength
4	Stamina
5	Presence
6	Communication
7	Dexterity
8	Quickness
9	Your Highest (pick if a tie)



## Looking Ahead

Once your character is finally complete, it is ready to participate in stories. In the process of making the character, you probably have become ready to role-play that character as well. Part of the process of character creation is an attachment that develops between you and your character, enabling you to role-play him or her realistically and creatively. Nurture your empathy for your characters as you create and role-play them; if they are at all different from you, it might not come naturally.

The process of character creation has not ended with the starting of the saga, for a character never stops growing, changing, developing, and maturing. As the saga progresses, make up new personality traits and details of history, use your experience points wisely to develop your abilities, seek to build your character's self-confidence, and add more details. Most importantly, think of ways in which the personality of your characters might change through the things that occur in their lives. Have an idea of how your characters might change and then guide them in their growth

in that direction. Let them determine their own fates, however; don't "force" characters to fall into your earlier conceptions of what they should be.

Novelists often speak of characters in their books coming to life -- refusing to be manipulated or directed by the writer. This type of character stands out from the page and says "Leave me alone, I'm real," and then does exactly as they feel, regardless of the author's original intent. We role-players can learn a lot from this experience, for it speaks of what makes a truly good character.

If your characters ever bore you, it's probably because you haven't developed and changed them enough over time. Ideally, the character simply grows more and more real as you play in the saga. A character in a short story is rarely as real and complete as one in a long novel; there simply isn't enough time for proper development. Make your characters as real, complete, and interesting as you possibly can, throughout the length of the saga, not just at the start.

# Companion Templates

Here are outlines of several kinds of companions and the various attributes that best portray them. If you want a companion like one described here, look over the description, think about the things listed there, imagine how your character might be different, and then create your character with this description and your own conception as a guide.

## Grog Sergeant

Emphasis more on leadership than combat ability. An intermediary between the magi and the grogs.

Important Characteristics: Prs, Com, Stm, Str

Virtues & Flaws: Knack for Leading Grogs, Tough, Good or Superior Armaments, Strong-Willed, Enemies, Weakness, Uncommon Fear

Abilities: Leadership, Chirurgy, Brawl, many combat skills, Intimidation, Alertness

## Scholar

A mentally superior character, often quirky and socially & physically weak. Better suited to politics & mysteries than drake-bashing. Many scholar-characters are interested and even involved in the Order of Hermes.

Important Characteristics: Int, Per

Virtues & Flaws: Educated, Student, Compulsion, Social Handicap, Weakness, Poor Armaments, Obese

Abilities: Speak Latin & other tongues, Scribe Latin (and possibly Arabic), Humanities, knowledges related to area of study, Concentration, negative Folk Ken, negative Subterfuge

## Sneak

A small, stealthy character; selfish and cunning but nervous. (Imagine a mouse.) You probably "earn" a living in town and supplement it by working with the magi — who have befriended you. You serve them well through your craft.

Important Characteristics: Dex, Qik, Per

Virtues & Flaws: Read Lips, Light Touch, Lithe, Contortions, Perfect Balance, Poor Equipment, Criminal Brand, Enemies, Hatred, Common or Uncommon Fear, Weak-Willed, Social Contacts

Abilities: Stealth, Subterfuge, Alertness, Scan, Dagger Attack, Dodge, Legerdemain, Pick Locks, Climb, Pretend

## Chivalric Knight

Excellent for role-playing a variety of situations and fun in a fight to boot. You may have joined the covenant after being driven from your rightful lands by your evil uncle.

Important Characteristics: Prs, Com, Dex, Stm, Str

Virtues & Flaws: Superior Equipment, True Love or Lost Love, Code of Honor, Animal Companion (horse), Educated, Well-Known, Weakness for People in Distress, Destiny or Sense of Doom, Self-Confident or True Faith, Cursed, Enemies, Driving Goal, Dark Secret

Abilities: Leadership, Charm, Charisma, Diplomacy, Sing, Ride, Sword & Lance Attack, Shield Parry, (Area) Lore

## Twisted Witch or Hedge Wizard

You are mentally, emotionally, and physically warped. The pursuit of magic (the non-Hermetic kind) has not been kind to you. Though you learned your arts outside the Order, you have joined a Hermetic covenant to further your studies and to gain protection from those who would persecute you. Unlike the magi, you don't have techniques, forms, or Hermetic spells, just spell-like powers which you take as virtues.

Important Characteristics: Int, Per, possibly Prs

Virtues & Flaws: Arcane Lore, Educated, Hex or Entrancement or Alchemy, Second Sight, Premonitions, Ghostly Warder, Magical Animal Companion, Offensive to Animals, Evil Eye, Hunchback, Cursed, Enemies, Social Handicap, Compulsion, Sense of Doom, Demon Plagued, Infamous

Abilities: Occult Lore, Faerie Lore, Magic Theory, Scribe & Speak Latin, Medicine, Guile, negative Charm

## Lady

Educated, trained in social skills, able to get the best out of social situations, and of high enough rank to be able to do as you wish. You associate with the covenant out of curiosity and a sense of adventure, but you keep it a secret, if you can.

Important Characteristics: Prs, Com, Per

Virtues & Flaws: Venus' Blessing, Educated, Wealth, Well-Known, Sensitive, Soft-Hearted, Over-Confident, Noncombatant

Abilities: Charm, Subterfuge, Pretend, Folk Ken, Diplomacy, Speak & Scribe Latin, (Area) Lore, Humanities, Church Knowledge

## Rake

A young noble or wealthy fop, out for adventure. You are rebelling against your parents by working with magi, plus you find it to be amusing.

Important Characteristics: Prs, Com

Virtues & Flaws: Venus' Blessing, Self-Confident, Educated, Black Sheep, Weakness for Pretty Women, Over-Confident

Abilities: Charm, Pretend, Drinking, Subterfuge, Intimidation, Sword Attack, Dodge (no armor), Speak & Scribe Latin, Humanities

## Forester

You are more at home in the wilds than in the city. You guide the magi through the wilderness and try to instill in them the respect that the wilds deserve.

Important Characteristics: Per, Stm, Str

Virtues & Flaws: Way of the Woods or Knack for woods, Animal Companion (forest animal), Animal Ken, Long-Winded, Keen Vision, Sharp Ears, Light Sleeper, Direction Sense, Social Handicap (Unworldly), Uncommon or Common Fear, Sensitive to Animals in Pain

Abilities: Survival, Track, Bow Attack, Shortsword Attack, Dodge, Alertness, Search, Scan, Stealth, Athletics, Climb, Swim

## Hermit Healer

You live near the covenant in a cave, and have dedicated your life to prayer and meditation. However, you have some extraordinary gifts of healing and the magi have on occasion turned to you for help. Associating with them breaks the monotony of your solitary life, which has begun to grow tiresome.

Important Characteristics: Prs, Int, Com, Per

Virtues & Flaws: Healer, Empathy, possibly Educated, Animal Companion, Dark secret

Abilities: Chirurgy, Medicine (if Educated), Folk Ken, Charm, Meditation

## Weirdling

You are not fully human, and you have come to the covenant where your powers are accepted. You may be compelled by unknown, inhuman forces.

Important Characteristics: Prs, Qik, Per, Stm

Virtues & Flaws: Faerie Blood, Piercing Gaze, Reserves of Strength, Magic Resistance, Mute, Disfigured (strangely-shaped face), Social Handicap, Compulsion, Cursed, Offensive to Animals, Tainted with Evil

Abilities: Dodge, Faerie Lore, Stealth, Brawl, Shortsword Attack, Thrown Knife Attack, Climb, Survival, Athletics

## Friar

A clergyman who has taken a vow of poverty and dedicates his life to the common people. You work with wizards because you know that they are (or can be) good people. You want to keep them on friendly terms with the Church and give them the benefit of your wisdom.

Important Characteristics: Com, Prs, Int

Virtues & Flaws: True Faith, Educated, Well-Travelled, Well-Known, Higher Purpose, Code of Honor, Poor Equipment, Noncombatant, Soft Hearted

Abilities: Church Knowledge, Occult Lore, (Area) Lore, Folk Ken, Chirurgy, Diplomacy, Meditation, Humanities

# Wizards' Houses

After spending fifteen years with your master learning magic, you are likely to have picked up some of your master's ideals, specialties, deficiencies, philosophies, and prejudices. Masters, in turn, have picked up these things from their masters, and so on back to the original Founders of the Order. All the magi who trace their magical lineage back to a single Founder are said to be members of a House, named after the Founder. The members of a particular House meet occasionally and may work together or at least correspond with each other. Some apprentices break tradition and seek membership in Houses other than those of their masters.

Choose your magus' House and use the background to help you role-play the character.

## House Bonisagus

Bonisagus invented the Hermetic theory of magic, and his student Trianoma masterminded the Order's foundation, so this House has always enjoyed a great deal of respect from other magi. They have continued both the theoretical and political traditions, some refining and expanding Hermetic theory and others overseeing the continued political development of the Order.

**Philosophy:** You are one of the privileged, gifted few who belong to this House. Use your gifts to benefit your fellow magi.

**Magic:** Vim is common for researchers, but all types of magic are studied.

**Note:** Take the +1 virtue "Hermetic Prestige."

## House Tylalus

In their never-ending search for conflict, the leaders of House Tylalus went too far in the 10th century and were corrupted by demons. They were executed for diabolism, and House Tylalus has been mistrusted and in disgrace ever since.

**Philosophy:** Conflict, in all its well-practiced forms, promotes innovation and strength. Encourage conflict in yourself and among other magi so that you and they can learn from it.

**Magic:** Anything that can keep others and yourself in a state of struggle.

## House Jerbiton

House Jerbiton is interested in the mundane world and assumes the duty of keeping the wizards on good terms with the Church and nobility. In the last century they have translated many Arabic versions of Greek texts.

**Philosophy:** Hermetic magi have distanced themselves too much from other people, risking a bloody battle with society and the loss of their own humanity. Try to heal this rift, pursue the arts and classic knowledge, and don't let magic gain control over your life.

**Magic:** All kinds of magic are encouraged, but magic of the mind serves well those who work to understand political conflicts and reduce them.

## House Criamon

This very secretive house is known for their obscure philosophy, their disdain for simple power, and their habit of marking their faces and bodies with arcane symbols. They are an enigmatic and otherworldly group of wizards who interact little with other magi.

**Philosophy:** Only seeking experience of the Enigma (a mystical experience) is important. Use your magic and all your other faculties to pursue this experience.

**Magic:** Intellego, Mentem, and Imagonem are the favored arts. Spells that have interesting effects, rather than simply powerful ones, are popular.

## House Bjornaer

These wizards have been only partially accepted in the Order because the Founder was from a Germanic rather than Roman tradition. Their fascination with beasts and the animal side of human nature makes many uneasy.

**Philosophy:** Understand and appreciate your animal nature as well as your human nature.

**Magic:** Animal magic is popular; many have problems with Ignem.

**Note:** All Bjornaer magi learn to take the shape of one animal at will, called your "Heart-Beast"; take this ability as a +3 virtue.

## House Verditius

Though these magi depend on devices, they have achieved power by making themselves valuable to magi in "more powerful" Houses. They like to pretend they are of lesser power.

**Philosophy:** Make all things tools for your use.

**Magic:** All kinds of magic are used, but a Verditius magus cannot cast a formulaic spell without a small magical device designed when the spell is learned. (Take this restriction as a -2 flaw). Verditius magi are so skilled at crafting magic items that they often make them to sell to magi of other Houses. (Take a special skill whose score is added to magic item Lab totals; a +1 virtue.)

## House Flambeau

These aggressive and ferocious wizards often cause trouble within the Order and are known for getting the mundanes angry at wizards. Their fearlessness and destructive spells make them invaluable for Wizard's Marches and other major military operations.

**Philosophy:** The world is full of people and things that cause us trouble. Burn them.

**Magic:** While most specialize in Ignem, some have taken up Perdo as a more "subtle" alternative.

## House Merinita

This House is focused on the world of faeries, and its members tend to be just as enigmatic. They have little to do with other Houses, except

to defend faeries from the assaults of magi.

**Philosophy:** Eschew the merely mortal; seek the mystery and power of the faeries.

**Magic:** Herbam, Muto, and Imagonem are popular; also Aquam and Terram, albeit less.

## House of Quaesitoris

This tiny House investigates wrongdoing and passes sentence on those who have broken the Code. They invite magi of other Houses to become Quaesitoris (judges) as well, though they remain in their original Houses. (This is a very high honor). The Quaesitoris have gained great power over the years as they have expanded and refined the Peripheral Code of Hermes.

**Philosophy:** Uphold the Code of Hermes or the Order will collapse through internal conflict.

**Magic:** Intellego and Mentem magic are frequently used in their pursuit of justice.

## House Ex Miscellanea

Though originally founded as a rival order by a renegade from the Order of Hermes, this organization was eventually accepted into the Order as a House of its own. It accepts wizards of all kinds, many of them only nominally Hermetic. Their magic comes from many disparate non-Hermetic traditions. They are a large, diverse, and very disorganized House. Some magi call them the "hedge wizards."

**Philosophy:** Various disparate traditions.

**Magic:** Separate traditions, most of them specialized and somehow limited.

## House Tremere

This has proved to be a sensible House, providing strength and courage when it has been needed and holding back when peace has been the better alternative. They emphasize the importance of judgment, strategy, and planning. They play their own complex version of chess.

**Philosophy:** Respect your superiors, assert yourself over your lessers, and be strong. Always maintain your dignity.

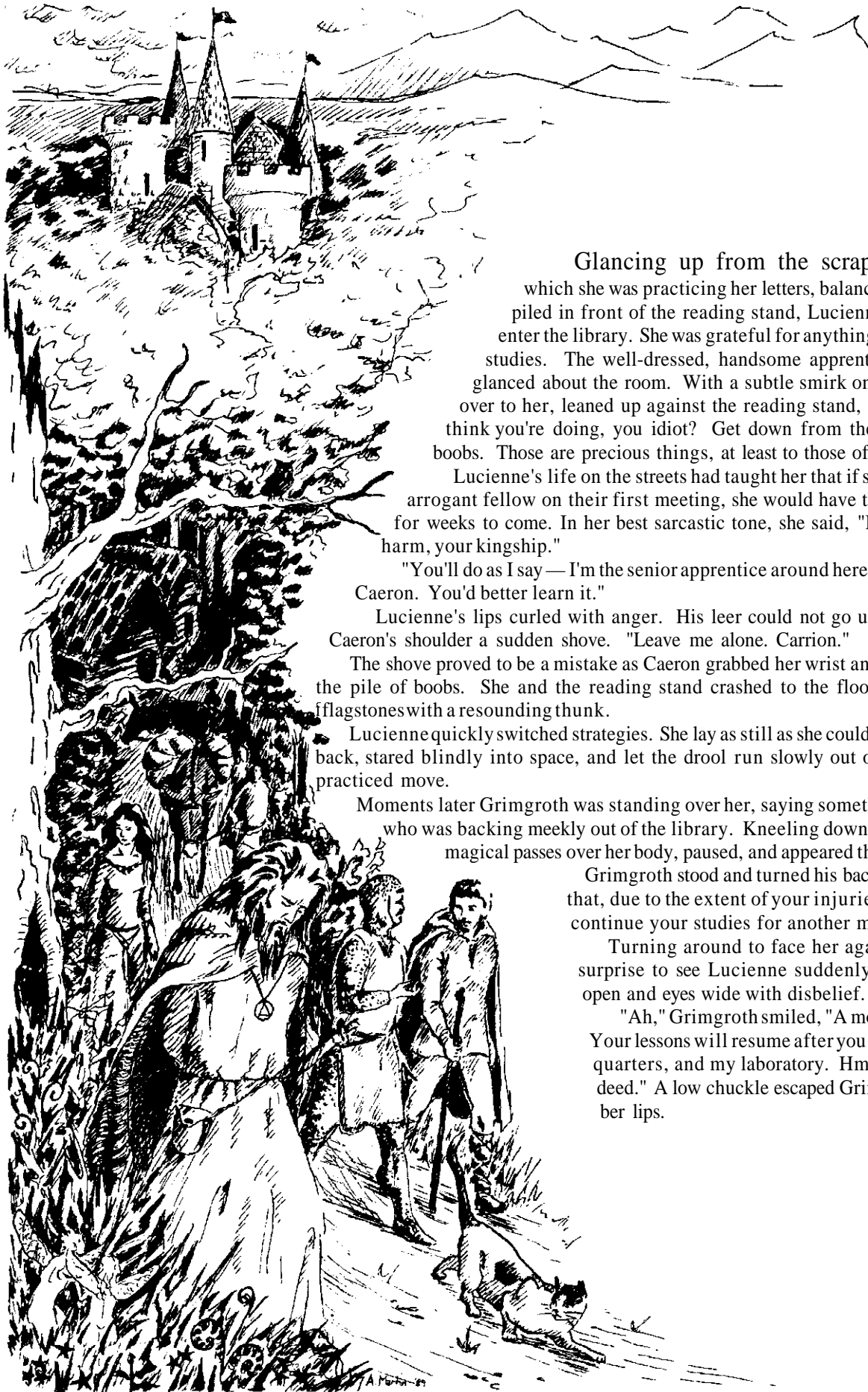
**Magic:** Any magic used powerfully is respected. They excel at *Certamen* and use it readily.

## House Mercere

The Founder of this House lost his magical powers and assumed a non-magical role valuable to the Order: carrying messages. His followers have become the redcaps, Hermetic messengers who are legally considered magi of the Order. They know the secrets of many magi, but use this information only to protect themselves. The few wizards in this House often travel as redcaps as well, collecting information.

**Philosophy:** Serve the Order and work to preserve the unity among magi. Protect the House from outsiders.

**Magic:** Most in Mercere are non-magical redcaps, and the few magi in this House create magic items for use by active redcaps.



Glancing up from the scrap of parchment on which she was practicing her letters, balanced on the boobs she had piled in front of the reading stand, Lucienne watched a young boy enter the library. She was grateful for anything to distract her from her studies. The well-dressed, handsome apprentice strode in and slyly glanced about the room. With a subtle smirk on his face, he sauntered over to her, leaned up against the reading stand, and said, "What do you think you're doing, you idiot? Get down from there; you can't stand on boobs. Those are precious things, at least to those of us who can read."

Lucienne's life on the streets had taught her that if she could intimidate this arrogant fellow on their first meeting, she would have the upper hand over him for weeks to come. In her best sarcastic tone, she said, "I'm not doing them any harm, your kingship."

"You'll do as I say — I'm the senior apprentice around here. By the way, my name's Caeron. You'd better learn it."

Lucienne's lips curled with anger. His leer could not go unchallenged. She gave Caeron's shoulder a sudden shove. "Leave me alone. Carrion."

The shove proved to be a mistake as Caeron grabbed her wrist and pulled her down from the pile of boobs. She and the reading stand crashed to the floor, her head striking the flagstones with a resounding thunk.

Lucienne quickly switched strategies. She lay as still as she could on the floor, arched her back, stared blindly into space, and let the drool run slowly out of her slack mouth — a practiced move.

Moments later Grimgroth was standing over her, saying something in Latin to Caeron, who was backing meekly out of the library. Kneeling down, Grimgroth made some magical passes over her body, paused, and appeared thoughtful for a moment.

Grimgroth stood and turned his back to her. "It would seem that, due to the extent of your injuries, you will be unable to continue your studies for another month or so."

Turning around to face her again, Grimgroth feigned surprise to see Lucienne suddenly sitting up, her mouth open and eyes wide with disbelief.

"Ah," Grimgroth smiled, "A most miraculous recovery. Your lessons will resume after you clean up the library, my quarters, and my laboratory. Hmm, most miraculous indeed." A low chuckle escaped Grimgroth's normally somber lips.

# Abilities

**A**bilities are the things you know, unlike characteristics which are things that you are. Abilities provide you with an idea of what your character can do well, for an ability is a specialized aptitude which your character has learned. This chapter lists the different abilities you can have and details the ways you will usually get things done. When combined with characteristics and added to a die roll, abilities form the framework of Ars Magica.

## Using Abilities

An ability score is used as a bonus (or sometimes a penalty) to a die roll when you attempt an action covered by that ability. For almost all ability rolls, take one characteristic and one ability, then add them to a roll to match or exceed an ease factor.

The characteristic chosen to go with the ability depends on how the ability is used. Many abilities have standard characteristics that almost always are used with them. For instance, it is hard to imagine a situation in which Int would not modify a Legend Lore roll. Other abilities are more variable. For instance, if you are trying to lie, you use Guile + Com. But if you are trying to detect someone else's lie, you will add Per instead of Com.

The Storyguide must also decide how to determine success. When you use an ability against a static force, such as picking a lock, the Storyguide assigns an ease factor that you must beat, based on the difficulty of the task. When your attempt is directly opposed to another character's action, such as when you chase someone, your roll is compared to the other character's roll. If the two of you are trying the same thing (e.g. both running at top speed), your rolls have the same characteristics and skills as the modifiers. If you are trying different but opposed tasks (e.g. one lying, the other trying to see through the lie), you may well have different characteristics and skills modifying your rolls. The Storyguide will take into account any other factors which may apply, such as Encumbrance, personality traits, or modifiers based on the circumstances.

Lastly, you and the Storyguide must determine whether the roll is stress or simple (see p. 8). If your character is feeling pressured and is likely to make mistakes or do exceptionally well because of it, the roll is stress.

Once the die is rolled and the result announced, the Storyguide determines the result in story terms.

The Storyguide need not tell you ahead of time the circumstances of the roll, its modifiers, or the results of success or failure. Indeed, the Storyguide might often make up the result without having given it much thought ahead of time. While it is more fair for a Storyguide to decide ahead of time the possible effects of the roll, including botches and exceptional rolls, doing so for every

action would slow the game down. Usually the Storyguide has a general idea of what can happen and makes a final decision once the dice have been rolled. A player can ask what kind of ease factor a certain activity requires, but the Storyguide may have them make a Per + ability roll to see if the character can figure it out. For instance, the player can ask, "Just how hard does it look to jump this chasm?" The player can make a Per + Athletics roll to see how well the character makes the estimate.

If you attempt an action covered by an ability even though you have no score in that ability, there are three possible effects. For talents, roll normally as if you have a score of 0. For skills, you receive a -2 to -8 penalty on the roll, 1 to 3 extra botch rolls, or both, depending on how out-of-the-ordinary the skill is. For formal and magical knowledges, you cannot even make a roll at a penalty if you lack the appropriate ability score. Casual knowledges, however, allow you to make a roll with a -3 to -10 penalty even if you have no score.

The Storyguide can set minimum scores that must be met even to attempt certain rolls. For instance, following a faint trail through the woods might require a Track score of 3+ no matter how good your Per is.

Ability descriptions are general because they categorize human endeavor, something that is not easily broken up into distinct units. Inevitably you will try something and not know which of your abilities apply. As a rule of thumb, if your action is covered under one ability, it is not covered by another. For example, suppose you want to know whether you can use your Charm ability to win over a large gathering of peasants. You can't because Charisma covers presentations to a group, and Charm, therefore, cannot.

## Specialties

A specialty is an area within your ability where you have superior skills, knowledge, or aptitude. When you pick an ability, choose a specialty as well. If you attempt something that falls within your specialty, you gain a +1 to your roll. Each ability has several example specialties; you can use these or invent your own if you get the troupe's approval.

## Complications

The simplicity of the basic rolls for success and failure make possible many elaborations; improvise to your heart's content. Here are some ways to manipulate the basic rolls to simulate various circumstances.

Buffers are used when a draw between contestants is likely, at least for a given roll. For instance, a character playing chess would roll a die and add Int + Chess skill. But if you win simply by out-rolling your opponent, draws would occur less than a tenth of the time. For a greater chance to draw, use a buffer, a number by which you must exceed your opponent's roll in order to win. If you have to beat your opponent's roll by 2 points instead of just 1, the chances of a draw increase greatly. If you have to beat your opponent's roll by 8, draws will be almost inevitable between well-matched players.

Multipliers represent the relative value of different strengths and weaknesses in a given endeavor. For instance, you are trying to get someone to befriend you, and you roll the die and add Charm + Prs. You have only a moment to make a good first impression, so the Storyguide says you should add double your Prs but only half your Charm. That's because you don't have time to win the person over, and the first impression is more important. But if you have a week to work on the other character, the Storyguide tells you to add double your Charm but only half your Prs. In this circumstance, you have plenty of time to lay on the charm, and the first impression isn't that important any more. Thus even if you and another character have the same Charm + Prs total, one might be better at first impressions (the one with higher Prs).

Multipliers also reduce chance by making the scores you add larger, relative to the die roll. In a weight lifting contest between you and another person, you might add 5 times your Str scores to the die rolls. Thus, just 2 points of difference in your scores becomes an overwhelming +10 on the roll. A difference in Str becomes much more important than mere chance. Remember, that multiplying a score before adding it is not always a bonus. If your Dexterity is -3, multiplying it is a tremendous burden.

Accumulated points represent your progress over a series of rolls. When using accumulated points, you get 1 point for every

point by which you exceed the ease factor on a given roll, and you succeed by accumulating enough points. Suppose, for instance, that you have been captured by diabolists, who intend to sacrifice you at the Black Mass in three days. You decide to use your Pretend talent to convince them to set you free so you can join them, when actually you want to escape. You roll a die and add your Com + Pretend scores. You can make one roll per day against an ease factor of 8. If you accumulate 10 points, you have convinced your captors to free you. Note that you can succeed with just one roll if you roll 18+.

Carryover advantage is similar to accumulated points, but the points by which you exceed the ease factor are added to your next die roll. Suppose that you and an enemy are struggling hand-to-hand on a natural stone bridge spanning a giant chasm (see Brawling in the Combat chapter), and each of you is trying to hurl the other over the edge. You each add Str and Brawl to opposing die rolls. The roll has a buffer of 5, so it is difficult to hurl your opponent over in one roll, but any points by which you exceed your opponent's roll one round are added to your roll the next round. So even if you can't throw your foe over the edge in one round, a good roll indicates that you have gained the upper hand and that you will find it easier to do so next round.

The role-playing modifier adds or subtracts 1 or 2 (or on occasion even more) to rolls for exceptional role-playing or actions. If you describe your character's actions or role-play them out unusually well or particularly poorly, you get a bonus for good ideas and a penalty for bad ones — at the Storyguide's discretion. For instance, suppose you are trying to intimidate a baron into leaving you and your party alone. If you, as a player, cannot think up a good strategy to follow, the Storyguide can give you a penalty; but if you think up an excellent strategy, you get a bonus. If you role-play out what you say in a vivid, entertaining way, the bonus will be even higher. The role-playing modifier assures that players cannot rely solely on dice rolls to get them through.



# Abilities List

## Talents

Arcane Talents  
Finesse  
Penetration

Awareness Talents  
Alertness  
Scan  
Search

### Exceptional Talents

Alchemy  
Animal Ken  
Contortions  
Direction Sense  
Empathy  
Enchanting Music  
Entrancement  
Healer  
Hex  
Magic Sensitivity  
Mimicry  
Perfect Balance  
Premonitions  
Read Lips  
Second Sight  
Sense Holiness & Unholiness  
Visions  
Weather Sense

### Physical Talents

Athletics  
Climb  
Dodge

### Social Talents

Charisma  
Charm  
Guile  
Folk Ken  
Pretend  
Subterfuge

## Skills

Arcane Skills  
*Certamen*  
*Parma Magica*

Forester Skills  
Animal Handling  
Survival  
Track

### Mental Skills

Concentration  
Meditation

### Performance Skills

Acting  
Storytelling  
Jongleur  
Sing  
Play (Specific Instrument)

### Physical Skills

Brawl  
Ride  
Swim

### Rogue Skills

Forgery  
Legerdemain  
Pick Locks  
Stealth

### Social Skills

Diplomacy  
Drinking  
Intimidation  
Intrigue  
Leadership

### Weapon Skills

(see description)

### Work Skills

Boating  
Chirurgy  
Craft (Specify)  
Evaluate (Specific Items)

## Knowledges

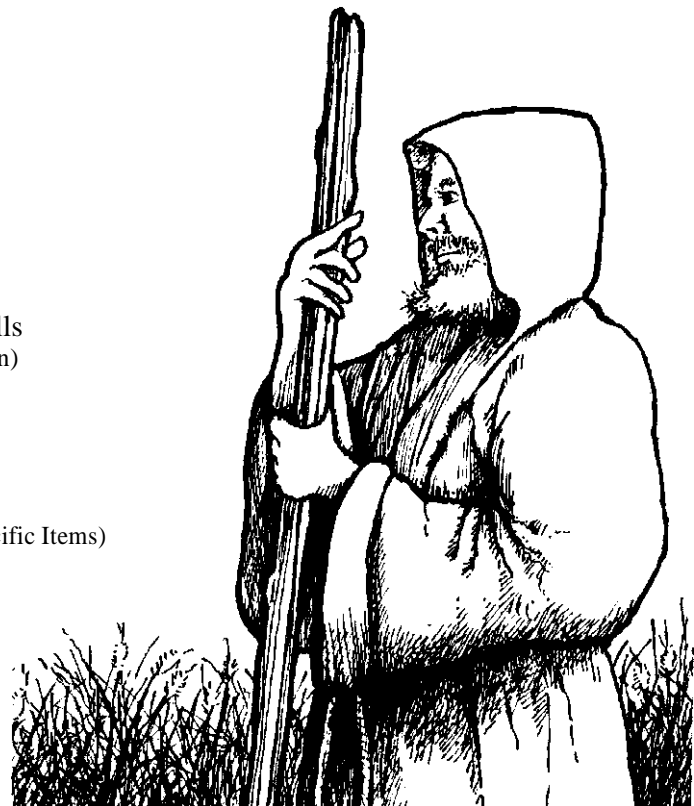
Arcane Knowledges  
Hermes History  
Hermes Lore  
Magic Theory

### Casual Knowledges

(Area) Lore  
Church Lore  
Faerie Lore  
Fantastic Beast Lore  
Legend Lore  
Occult Lore  
Speak (Specific Alphabet)

### Formal Knowledges

Church Knowledge  
Humanities  
Medicine  
Scribe (Specific Alphabet)





# Ability Descriptions

Abilities fall into three basic types: talents, skills, and knowledges. Each of these is subdivided into categories such as Arcane Talents and Social Skills. The differences between these categories are described in the category headings.

Each description shows what actions the ability covers. It is up to the Storyguide to determine just how hard a successful roll is to

make and just what the result of one is. Descriptions also list sample specialties and (in parentheses) the characteristics most often used with the abilities.

Feel free to invent your own abilities. Unique abilities, added with troupe approval, make a character distinct and help elucidate their personality.

## Talents

Talents are untrained, intuitive abilities. They can be negative, and there is no penalty for attempting an action without the appropriate talent. They can only be raised through direct experience, usually gained on adventures.

### Arcane Talents

Only magi can have these talents.

**Finesse-** Manipulating your spells and performing special feats with them. You will have to make rolls with this ability to place objects delicately with your Unseen Arm, for example. It is also useful for targeting spells and other such maneuvers described in the Magic chapter. Specialties: grace, precision, any one form (but not a technique). (Per)

**Penetration-** Getting your spell through resistance offered by the target. Add it to the number you rolled to cast your spell when comparing that number to the target's resistance roll. Specialties: any one form or technique.

### Awareness Talents

**Alertness-** Noticing something that you're not looking or listening for. Use it when you might be surprised by someone sneaking up on you or when something interesting is happening that you aren't yet aware of. It tells you something's there, but does not give the specific information that Scan does. Specialties: bodyguarding, traps, ambushes. (Per)

**Scan-** Noticing things that you are looking or listening for. Used to catch or identify faint sounds, to hear someone whispering to you, or to see the riders approaching across the moor. Specialties: keeping watch, quick scan, sea, woods. (Per)

**Search-** Looking for something in a small area, such as trying to find a ring in a castle larder or searching for concealed doors, objects, or even people. Specialties: in the dark, sounds, plants. (Per)

### Exceptional Talents

You can have an exceptional talent only if you bought it as a virtue. For the purposes of interacting with magic, some exceptional talents are given techniques, forms, and Level equivalents. When penetrating magic resistance, the Level equivalent is used as a bonus on the die roll (see pp.66-67).

**Alchemy-** Creating potions, poisons, and elixirs, and the refining of alchemical substances. You can make a potion as per the rules for magi; your Lab total is Int + Alchemy. Alchemy is especially suited for some purposes, so you get bonuses when making certain types of potions: poisons +5, antidotes +4, healing & health +3, transformations +2. You may also wish to indulge yourself in more esoteric pursuits, such as discovering the secret of the philosophers' stone. Magi with Alchemy may add it to the Lab total when creating potions, and they get the bonuses described above (such as +5 for poisons) as well. Specialties: potions related to any one technique, such as Perdo or Muto. (Int)

**Animal Ken-** A profound empathy with animals that allows you to understand their motivations and feelings. Such empathy engenders a solemn love and respect for animals of all kinds. By touching and speaking softly to a wild (but not violent) animal and rolling 12+, you can tame it to your touch within a matter of minutes. Adds to Animal Handling rolls. Specialties: horses, wolves, falcons. (Int, Per)

**Contortions-** Add your score to any roll to break free of a hold or restraint, squeeze into a small space, or get through a small opening. Specialties: ropes, breaking people's holds, crawl, squeeze. (Dex, Str)

**Direction Sense-** You can determine which way is north on a roll of 9+. Specialties: underground, in towns, in woods, at sea. (Per)

**Empathy-** You can intuitively understand the emotional needs of others and can therefore respond to them correctly. Add your score to appropriate Com, Prs, and Folk Ken rolls. Specialties: warriors, those in need, anger.

**Enchanting Music-** When you set your mind to it, you can influence others in a *specific* way by trying to enchant them with your music. After a successful roll with a musical ability, such as Sing or Play Lute, make a stress roll with Enchanting Music + Prs and compare the result to the following chart to see how well you affect the audience. The harder the effect, the higher you must roll. For a specific (as opposed to general) effect, you must sing words that people can understand. You can calm the grieving with tunes alone, but you need lyrics to convince the peasants to rise up against the local lord. If you botch, you inspire an unwanted emotion. If you, the player, actually compose and sing appropriate lyrics (and the result is somewhat

pleasant), a positive role-playing modifier should certainly be applied. (MuMe 25) Specialties: love, anger, pride, sadness.

Roll	Possible Effect
9	Calm someone who is upset
10	Rouse people in anger
11	Raise the morale of warriors
12	Win someone's love
15	Incite a riot
17	Calm a wild animal
18	Touch a wizard's heart
24	Win back a soul from the Prince of Darkness

**Entrancement-** The power to control another's will. First you must stare deeply into the other's eyes for several seconds — generally impossible in combat. Then you can command the victim verbally to perform a certain task. At that point, roll a die versus the target to see if the command will be carried out. You roll Prs + Entrancement vs. the victim's Stm roll. In addition, the victim gets a bonus according to the command, as rated by the Storyguide. (ReMe 40) Specialties: seduction, domineering, with the prideful.

Command	Example	Bonus
Innocuous	Talk to me	+3
Questionable	Meet me alone at night	+6
Dangerous	Put away your weapons	+9
Heinous	Kill your fellows	+12
Suicidal	Jump out the window	+15

**Healer-** Empathic understanding of how to aid the wounded, the sick, and the suffering. Add your score to any roll to tend wounds or disease, and to the recovery rolls of any whom you tend regularly. You can also use it to calm the grieving, to soothe pains, or to perform other similar actions. Specialties: disease, childbirth, broken bones. (Prs, Com, Dex)

**Hex-** Hexes can bring injury or ruin to your enemies. You must wish a specific calamity upon the person by cursing them aloud, and the Storyguide (based on your roll) determines how much of it comes true. The full extent of the hex will strike your victim in a day to a month. Protection of the Church or magic might prevent a hex, but a hex can often bypass magic resistance by affecting the victim indirectly. Sometimes the Church punishes those whose curses are widely known to have come to pass. Specialties: revenge, fear, crops, children. (PeMe, PcCo, PcAn, etc. 20)

Hex	Roll
Cause a calf to be born with only three legs	9
Bring a debilitating illness to a family member	15
Cause the victim to be killed in a strange accident	21

**Magic Sensitivity-** Feeling the aura of magic to identify a place or object as magical. A roll of 9+ lets you sense magic in the general area, and a roll of 15+ lets you pinpoint it on a certain object. Because you are sensitive to magic, you must subtract your score from all natural and magic resistance rolls. Specialties: any one specific technique or form. (Per)

**Mimicry-** Mimicking others' voices as well as animal sounds. Mimicry is far from perfect, and you will have to make good

rolls (usually 9+) to mimic a specific person's voice convincingly. Specialties: wolf howl, specific persons, sounds of pain. (Com)

**Perfect Balance-** Keeping your balance, especially on narrow ledges or tightropes. Add your score to any roll to avoid falling, tripping, etc. Specialties: ropes, ledges, high winds.

**Premonitions-** Sensing danger intuitively, having the feeling that something is wrong or likely to go wrong soon. For example, a roll of 12+ lets you anticipate an ambush the round before it is sprung. Specialties: cities, forest, caverns, natural disasters, intentional ambush. (Per)

**Read Lips-** You have the limited, self-taught ability to read lips. It is far from perfect, and you will get many words confused; but it is vital to a deaf, illiterate person who wants to communicate, and extremely handy for a thief. A roll of 9+ lets you catch the gist of a person's speech through lip-reading. Specialties: conversations, whispers, speeches. (Per)

**Second Sight-** Seeing ghosts, demons, and other invisible spirits, usually on rolls of 9+. Specialties: ghosts, demons, at night, while concentrating. (Per)

**Sense Holiness & Unholiness-** Feeling the auras of good and evil. A roll of 12+ lets you sense holiness or unholiness in a general area, and 18+ lets you sense it in a person or object. If you roll 20+ in a holy area, you feel safe and at peace, probably losing interest in previous concerns. If you roll 20+ in an infernal area, you are paralyzed with fright. Specialties: people, objects, holy places, unholy places. (Per)

**Visions-** Receiving visions related to emotionally or magically laden events. Whenever it is appropriate to the story and the setting, the Storyguide can have you make a roll to see if you have a vision. Roll a stress die and add the level of the magic aura; you have a Vision if you roll 12+. The Storyguide must make up the vision, which could be of the past, of a possible future, or of a related but distant event. Usually the visions are symbolic or confusing. Interpreting the vision correctly requires an Int + Visions roll of 9+ (which the Storyguide may make secretly). Visions usually come to you at quiet times when you are in a place connected with a powerful emotional or magical event, such as the site of a patricide or diabolic sacrifice. Specialties: past, future, over a distance, grief, death.

**Weather Sense-** On a roll of 9+, you can sense what the weather will be like the next day, or less if the weather is rapidly changing. Specialties: storms, sea, temperature. (Per)

## Physical Talents

**Athletics-** General athletic prowess, not as specialized as modern athletics. It includes moving smoothly and confidently, with grace, and improves most gross body movements. Specialties: grace, jump, long distance run, sprint. (Stm, Dex, Qik)

**Climb-** Climbing all manner of difficult surfaces, including trees, cliffs, mountainsides, and walls. Specialized equipment is necessary for more difficult climbs. A botch usually means a fall. (See falling rules in the Combat chapter.) Specialties: cliffs, trees, walls. (Dex, Str)

**Dodge-** Getting out of the way of attacks and other dangers. Add your Dodge + Qik - Enc to obtain your Defense total (see the Combat chapter). Specialties: reaction to surprise attack, vs. one type of attack (thrown, thrusting, unarmed, etc.)

## Social Talents

Social talents are closely tied to your personality and to aptitudes you developed when you were very young, so it is nearly impossible during play to gain a score in a social talent that you did not choose as a beginning ability. You may, through experience, raise the social talents you already have like any other talents.

**Charisma-** Possession of a certain indelible force of presence, which causes people to trust you and want to follow you. It works on audiences and groups of people the way Charm works on individuals. Specialties: demagoguery, war, politics, inspirational, religion. (Prs)

**Charm-** Enticing, fascinating, and endearing others to you, but only on a personal basis. It can be used to win someone over to you emotionally, especially those of the opposite sex. It is more a facet of your charming personality than an overt manipulation of others. Specialties: love; first impressions; being brash, sly, or witty. (Prs)

**Guile-** Telling convincing lies. If you understand the person you are lying to (such as by a Per + Folk Ken roll of 10+), you may gain a bonus to your Guile roll. Specialties: lying to authority, elaborate lies, quick lies. (Com, Per)

## Skills

Skills are trained or possibly self-taught abilities. You can increase them through training or direct experience. If you try something covered by a skill that you lack, you suffer a penalty. For relatively common skills, such as Swim, your penalty is only an extra botch roll or two. For more refined skills, such as lock picking, your penalty can be as high as -8.

### Arcane Skills

Only magi may have these skills.

**Certamen-** Fighting magic duels. Your score adds to your rolls in *Certamen*. (See the Magic chapter for details.) Specialties: any one form or technique. (Int)

**Parma Magica-** Performing a magic ritual to protect you from magic. Once performed, the ritual lets you add 5 times your score to magic resistance rolls until sunrise or sunset, whichever comes first. You may also protect one other person for each point in your score, but your score is effectively 3 points lower when protecting another person (so you need a score of 4+ to do any good at all). You may cancel the effect of the ritual at will, whether it was performed on another or on yourself. Specialties: protection from any one form or technique.

### Forester Skills

**Animal Handling-** Handling and use of animals, including raising them, tending them, grooming them, and dealing with their medical problems. Specialties: falcons, dogs, horses, veterinary. (Int, Per)

**Survival-** Finding food, water, shelter, a direct route, and relative safety in the wilderness, a very dangerous and "wild" place in the Middle Ages. It covers such mundane tasks as lighting a fire (without matches) and cooking food without implements.

**Folk Ken-** Understanding the motives, background, and personality of another person. Predictions of a person's actions, when possible, are never, ever certain. The Storyguide should secretly roll a die when this ability is used. A "0" means that it fails, despite your roll. This kind of uncertainty keeps players on their toes. Specialties: peasants, townfolk, nobles, clergy, wizards, the opposite sex. (Int, Per)

**Pretend-** Feigning an emotion, a belief, or a certain frame of mind. This ability is similar to Acting because you are pretending to be that which you are not, but unlike Acting, you are not pretending that you are someone other than yourself. Specialties: tears, anger, friendliness, passion. (Com)

**Subterfuge-** Subtly getting the upper hand in your relations with others. Subterfuge is figuring out the motivations and temperament of others and then manipulating them to gain advantage. It is never simply lying, but is rather a clever rendering of certain selected truths chosen because of their bias in your favor. Subterfuge can be used to justify conduct, to escape the full force of an argument, or to evade condemnation or censure. Because it is such a tricky and fickle art, always make an extra botch roll. Specialties: bluff, cajole, whine, con, arguments. (Prs, Com, Per)

Specialties: woodlands, grasslands, mountains, leading groups. (Per, Int)

**Track-** Following and identifying the tracks of creatures and beasts of all varieties. Also covering your own tracks or never leaving any in the first place. Specialties: woodlands, mountains, swamps, tracking humans, hiding tracks. (Per)

### Mental Skills

**Concentration-** Focusing your mental faculties on one task, especially for extended periods of time. If you are attempting a feat that demands your extended attention, especially if you have just failed the feat and are trying again, the Storyguide can call for a Concentration roll before you can make the attempt. The ease factor increases on subsequent attempts. This skill is especially important for magi because it helps them maintain concentration on a spell despite distractions. Specialties: ignoring pain, ignoring sounds, concentrating for long periods. (Stm, Int)

**Meditation-** Focusing on your mind and ignoring outside influences. It's helpful for recovering from fatigue, for certain magical activities, and for praying. Specialties: prayer, composing your thoughts, resting the body, controlling emotions. (Int)

### Performance Skills

**Acting-** Playing a role before an audience. Acting incorporates the ability to mimic gestures and accents, and allows you to change your apparent personality to create a believable character. Often as useful off stage as on. Specialties: improvisation, tragedy, soaring passions, a specific role. (Com, Prs)

**Storytelling-** Choosing an appropriate story from your repertoire (which grows with your score) and telling it well. Masters of the art can tell stories for weeks without repeating themselves. Specialties: poems, romances, tributes, improvisation. (Com)

**Jongleur-** Covers the skills it takes to be the professional, all-purpose entertainer and minstrel of the Middle Ages, the jongleur. Includes juggling, showy acrobatics, and slapstick humor. Jongleurs can be found both in the marketplace and noble courts—some even frequent the homes of the immortal wizards. This sort of amusement is often very coarse. The troubadours supply the more serious, poetic, and musical entertainments. Specialties: antics, jesting, pranks, juggling. (Com, Dex)

**Sing-** Singing well, and knowing a repertoire of songs. Everyone can sing, but this skill indicates a level of competence that allows others to enjoy listening to it. Specialties: solo, choral, ballads, lullabies, war songs. (Com)

**Play (Specific Instrument)-** Performing on a certain instrument and familiarity with a repertoire of music appropriate to it. Specialties: solos, group, improvisational, vast repertoire. (Dex, Com)

## Physical Skills

**Brawl-** Fighting unarmed and with casual weapons such as jugs and chair legs. It includes punching, kicking, grappling, throttling, throwing, gouging, and biting. See Brawling in the Combat chapter. Specialties: tackling, pinning & holding, punching, ambushing. Grog base score : 1.

**Ride-** Riding and controlling a horse, especially under stress. Specialties: performance, speed, in battle. (Dex, Str)

**Swim-** A refinement of the skill most folk already have. Specialties: rough water, diving, swimming deep, long distance, underwater. (Dex)

## Rogue Skills

**Forgery-** Forging documents and wax seals. The ability to scribe helps but is not always a requirement. A roll of 12+ would let you forge a missive from a Baron to one of his loyal vassals if you had a sample of one of his letters. Specialties: ecclesiastical documents, signatures, wax seals.

**Legerdemain-** Sleight of hand and a mind oriented towards discovering ready sources of income. It requires a delicate grace and dexterity and great hand-eye coordination. It is usually the province of petty thieves, who often have a hand cut off for their troubles. Legerdemain includes filching things from market stalls and cutting purses, as well as simple, "magical" trickery — often used in confidence games, such as the shell game, to raise money from the credulous folk who play them. Stealing is usually a tricky task, so victims often get a +2 to their Per + Legerdemain rolls to catch you. Specialties: filch, pick pockets, prestidigitation. (Dex, Qik)

**Pick Locks-** Opening locks without the convenience of a key, and usually without the permission of the owner. Certain locks are so intricate that a minimum skill level is required even to attempt to open them, but these locks are very rare. Medieval locks are much larger, bulkier, and simpler than their modern counterparts. Specialties: traps, speed, in darkness. (Dex)

**Stealth-** Sneaking about without being seen or heard. It includes following people without their noticing you. This skill may be

judged according to an ease factor, or may be rolled against another person's Perception roll. Specialties: hide, sneak, tail, forest, towns. (Dex)

## Social Skills

**Diplomacy-** Negotiating successfully and getting along with other people without putting on an act, overt manipulation, or letting your own desires fall to the wayside. It is knowledge of the informal rules of give and take, as well as the official, cultural rules of conduct and politeness. Because of the value of a player's actions and speech in Diplomacy, always try to use the role-playing modifier. Specialties: negotiation, politics, etiquette, tact. (Com)

**Drinking-** Drinking prodigious amounts of alcohol without passing out, a familiarity with expected and acceptable drinking behavior, as well as enjoying drinking without hurting yourself. With this skill, a person is able to have fun in a tavern, even in one of a different culture. A roll can be made to see how small a penalty is given to a character who has been drinking. Specialties: guzzle, drinking songs, vulgarity, keeping your head about you. (Stm, Com)

**Intimidation-** Inspiring fear in others and scaring them into submission, manipulating their own fears and weaknesses to use as weapons against them. (Folk Ken may be of help in many complimentary rolls). Specialties: overt, subtle, threats, violence, intellectual. (Prs, Str, and even Int)

**Intrigue-** Dealing and plotting, including subtle use of power in non-confrontational ways to achieve your own ends. It is also the ability to pick up important facts about those in power, separating it from the endless amounts of false and useless gossip that always exists. It is a vital talent for those who frequent themselves at a King's or Earl's court, or even at Hermes tribunals. Specialties: gossip, plotting, rumormongering, alliances. (Prs, Com, Per)

**Leadership-** Getting people to obey your orders and to follow your lead. With a successful Leadership roll, you may add your score as a modifier to another's appropriate personality trait rolls. For instance, you could encourage the grogs to be brave or cautious. Specialties: giving orders, engendering loyalty, combat, inspiring bravery. (Prs)

## Weapon Skills

When you choose a weapon skill, you pick a specific weapon. You must choose attack and parry skills separately. You cannot have parry scores with throwing weapons or missile weapons. The Storyguide may allow you to use this skill at a small penalty when you wield a weapon similar to the one with which you are trained. In a single round, you cannot both attack and parry with a single, one-handed weapon, but you can with a two-handed weapon.

The use of weapon skills is explained in the Combat chapter.

Melee Specialties: charging, tournaments, bodyguarding, fighting beasts, formation fighting, wild melees, night fighting. Missile Specialties: tournaments, moving target, still target, rapid fire.

## Work Skills

**Boating-** Handling small watercraft of all types, vital for most fishing. Specialties: directing others, handling storms, repairs. (Dex)

**Chirurgy** [kyRURjee]- This skill is surgery, Middle Ages style. It encompasses tending and binding wounds of all varieties, and the rather brutal, though necessary skill of cauterization. You can use this ability to help others recover from wounds. (See Wounds in the Combat chapter.) Cauterization is necessary any time you have failed, by normal means, to stop the flow of blood and have a fire and the proper implements. You must roll for cauterization and make two extra botch rolls if you roll a 0. A person skilled in chirurgy is called a chirurgion. Because the Church prohibits touching corpses and blood, chirurgions are looked down on, and many of them are non-Christians. Still, even good Christians find them useful. Specialties: bind wounds, cauterization, diagnose, set bones, poison. (Int, Dex)

**Craft (Specify)**- A general term for countless unrelated skills, all dealing with handiwork of some type. Choose a craft from this

list, or make up your own: baking, blacksmithing, bowery, carpentry, chandlery, clothiery, cooperage, engineering, embalming, fishing, glassworking, goldsmithing, hide-working, jewel-working, leather-crafting, locksmithing, masonry, millery, portrait painting, perfumery, pottery, sculpting, silversmithing, shipbuilding, smelting, woodcrafting, weaponry, wine making. Specialties: appropriate for the craft. (Int, Dex)

**Evaluate (Specific Items)**- Knowledge of the general worth of a certain class of items and an ability to figure the worth of an item in that category. You may evaluate items of other categories with a -3 penalty. Some common categories are Arms & Armor, Artwork, Foodstuffs, Machines, Animals, and Clothing. Specialties: appropriate ones for the category chosen. (Int, Per)

## Knowledges

Knowledges are abilities that require application of the mind, not the body, so they almost always use Int as a modifier. Many knowledges that 20th century people take for granted, such as counting and reading, are not common among medieval folk.

You usually use stress rolls for knowledges, even when you are not under stress. The variability of the stress roll simulates the variability of the facts you know. It is possible for someone with limited knowledge to know little-known facts and for someone with lots of knowledge to miss a few bits of information.

### Arcane Knowledges

Only magi, and companions with the virtue of Arcane Lore, can have these knowledges. They can all be increased through study. If you have no score in a magical knowledge, you cannot attempt to do something covered by that knowledge.

**Hermes History**- Knowledge of the Order's history, including its founders, major tomes, houses, and pre-Hermetic roots. Experience is obtained only through study. Specialties: tomes, houses, legal processes. Magus base score: 2.

**Hermes Lore**- Knowledge concerning the mystical Order of Hermes. It includes the general history of the Order of Hermes; the local, unofficial history of the magi in your specific region; the intrigues and goings on among the members of the Order of Hermes in your area; and a general idea of how the Order of Hermes functions as an organization, including its rules, hierarchy, and formal traditions. You can get 1 experience point for participating in a relevant activity, such as a tribunal. Specialties: history, politics. Magus base score: 2.

**Magic Theory**- Knowledge of what magic is and how it works, used primarily for working in the laboratory. You can sometimes gain experience through experimentation (see the Magic chapter). Specialties: potions, enchanting items, inventing spells. Magus base score: 5.

### Casual Knowledges

These can be studied, but one can also pick them up through direct experience, about 1 experience point for a month of exposure or for participation in a significant event, such as a faerie

party. If you don't have a casual knowledge, you can still make a roll, but with a penalty of -3 to -10.

**(Area) Lore**- Knowledge specific to one particular region, city, covenant, or village. Includes knowledge of where things are located in the immediate area (deer trails, good fishing holes, the "hanging oak"), of its history and legends (the saga of the local hero Dedra the Red), and of the centers of power and their organization in the region ("Sir Tarbil holds the real power here!"). Specialties: geography, history, politics, personalities.

**Church Lore**- Knowledge of Christianity, especially as expressed locally, including church politics. Specialties: saints, clergy, history, corruption.

**Faerie Lore**- Familiarity with the enigmatic faeries, partial knowledge of some of their powers and weaknesses, and understanding (understanding?) of their needs and motivations. Even with this knowledge, categorizing the faeries neatly or making sense of their behavior is difficult. Specialties: faerie forests, the unseelie court, faerie mounds, faerie festivals.

**Fantastic Beast Lore**- Familiarity with the magical creatures of the world, such as dragons, unicorns, ogres, and so on. Specialties: races of Cain, dragonkind, weaknesses, motivations, habitat.

**Legend Lore**- Familiarity with legends and folklore, some of which may even be true. Use this lore when you are trying to remember information about some mythical place, beast, or hero. It can often give vital insights into the weaknesses of a monster or the location of a mystical oak. Specialties: beasts, heroes, faeries, a particular place.

**Occult Lore**- An understanding of the sinister side of the world, of its darker aspects. It includes knowledge of demons, their habits, and their weaknesses; of the undead and their habits; or of the sinister powers of curses. Specialties: demons, undead, curses.

**Speak (Specific Language)**- Actually speaking a particular language. Your language score is not usually used as a die roll modifier. Instead, it serves as a general measure of your ability to communicate. When two people attempt to use a language, the lower ability level counts to see how well they can get their ideas across. Specialties: slang, expansive vocabulary, colorful

phrases. Base scores: grog 4 (own language), companion 5 (own language), magus 4 (own language) and 5 (Latin).

Score	Fluency
1	Basic ideas only
2	Basic ideas with grammar
3	Functional, but difficult
4	Functional, but with lapses
5	Fluent
6	Impressive, worth listening to
7+	Perfect clarity & understanding

### Formal Knowledges

Formal knowledges are available only to magi and to companions with the virtue Educated. If you have no score in a formal knowledge, you cannot attempt to do something covered by that knowledge. They can be trained or studied, but cannot be learned through direct experience.

**Church Knowledge-** Knowledge of orthodox religious teachings and interpretations, of the history of the Church, its inner workings and hierarchy (essential for working within it and manipulating it to one's own desires), of the important texts of the Church and how to interpret them, of heresy against the Church (and of the Church's methods to contain, restrain, and

punish it), and of the church's underlying theology and the ability to debate on the subject. Specialties: doctrine, history, politics, exegesis, heresy, theology.

**Humanities-** Familiarity with all the branches of higher learning, including the classics. Most are rare Latin copies and, thanks to the Arabs, some Greek texts. Specialties: arts, science, philosophy.

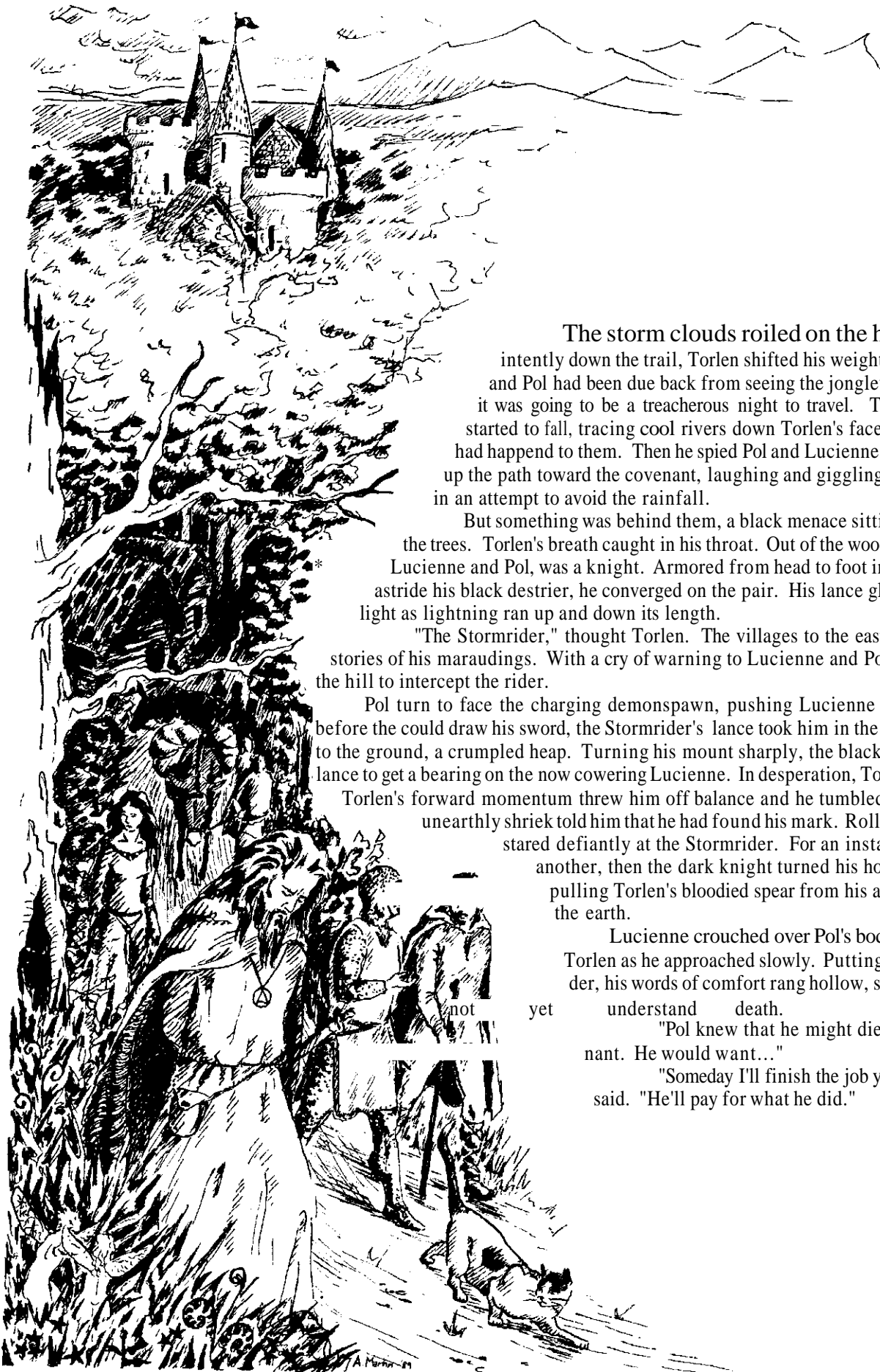
**Medicine-** The art of healing at a level not commonly found in medieval society. Includes knowledge of the structure and functions of the human body (the study of which the Church punishes by burning), the use of elixirs and herbs in healing (which can aid a magus in obtaining materials for potions and other laboratory procedures), and the diagnosis and treatment of disease. Some wounds and diseases can only be cured by a person knowledgeable in the art of medicine. The knowledge of medicine may give you a bonus on Chirurgy rolls because you know better salves and ointments to apply to the wounds. Specialties: anatomy, apothecary, physicianry.

**Scribe(Specific Alphabet)-** Reading and writing a specific alphabet. In Western Europe, Latin serves as the common alphabet for all civilized languages. Note: In the Middle Ages, reading silently is unheard of and is thought to be impossible for normal mortals, if it is considered at all. If you have a score of 6+ in Scribe, you have the option of deciding that you can read silently. Also, people usually read standing up, with the book on a reading stand. Magus base score in Latin: 3.

## Ability Activities Table

This table gives you some standards by which to rate the ease factors for various activities. Some activities require straight ease factors, while others must be compared to the indicated roll, to be made by the other character involved.

Task	Modifiers	Ease Factor
Break open a wooden door	Str + Size	9+
Track a person through woods for one day	Per + Track	9+
Identify a major demon	Int + Occult Lore	12+
Know lore about major demon	Int + Occult Lore	18+
Stand guard all night	Stm	3+
Make a good first impression	Prs + Charm	8+
Persuade a neutral person to help you	Com + Charm	7+
Tell a convincing lie	Com + Guile	Per + Guile
Sneak up within two feet of someone	Dex + Stealth	Per + Alertness + 5
Hide in thick covering	Dex + Stealth + 3	Per + Scan
Leap to safety as trap door falls away	Qik - Enc + Athletics	9+
Judge a sword-wielder's skill	Per + Sword Atk	6+
Identify distant covenant by insignia	Int + Hermes Lore	9+
Identify general effect of spell that a wizard is casting	Per + Magic Theory	6+
Running leap of 10 feet	Str + Athletics - Size - Load	6+



The storm clouds roiled on the horizon. Peering intently down the trail, Torlen shifted his weight uneasily. Lucienne and Pol had been due back from seeing the jongleurs hours before, and it was going to be a treacherous night to travel. The first drops of rain started to fall, tracing cool rivers down Torlen's face. He hoped nothing had happened to them. Then he spied Pol and Lucienne. They were hurrying up the path toward the covenant, laughing and giggling, heads bent forward in an attempt to avoid the rainfall.

But something was behind them, a black menace sitting in the shadows of the trees. Torlen's breath caught in his throat. Out of the woods, galloping towards Lucienne and Pol, was a knight. Armored from head to foot in ornate black armor, astride his black destrier, he converged on the pair. His lance glowed with an unholy light as lightning ran up and down its length.

"The Stormrider," thought Torlen. The villages to the east had been alive with stories of his maraudings. With a cry of warning to Lucienne and Pol, Torlen raced down the hill to intercept the rider.

Pol turned to face the charging demonspawn, pushing Lucienne off to one side. But before he could draw his sword, the Stormrider's lance took him in the throat and threw him to the ground, a crumpled heap. Turning his mount sharply, the black warrior swiveled his lance to get a bearing on the now cowering Lucienne. In desperation, Torlen hurled his spear.

Torlen's forward momentum threw him off balance and he tumbled down the slope. An unearthly shriek told him that he had found his mark. Rolling to his feet, Torlen stared defiantly at the Stormrider. For an instant they glared at one another, then the dark knight turned his horse and galloped off, pulling Torlen's bloodied spear from his arm and flinging it to the earth.

Lucienne crouched over Pol's body. Her sobs reached Torlen as he approached slowly. Putting a hand on her shoulder, his words of comfort rang hollow, she was young and did not yet understand death.

"Pol knew that he might die defending the covenant. He would want..."

"Someday I'll finish the job you started." Lucienne said. "He'll pay for what he did."

# Combat

**C**ombat is a focus of most role-playing systems. It is a time of teamwork and excitement, and provides a chance to achieve a definitive victory. Each battle is a story in its own right, with its own heroes, villains, and plot. Therefore the basis of our combat system is "narrative combat," which emphasizes role-playing over war-gaming-style mechanics. When playing a battle out, use the rules to strike a balance between the combat as a contest to be won and combat as a scene in the ongoing plot. It is easy to stage a nonsense, gung-ho battle, but to truly experience its drama and excitement is much more stimulating.

The Storyguide controls the battle, ruling on who gets to attack when and where, as well taking the role of non-player combatants. When you run a combat, play it by ear: Ditch the rules when they get in the way. Use miniatures only as long as players continue to imagine the setting of the melee; their imagination should go

beyond the battle map. Work especially hard at helping the players properly visualize the scene. If you do so from the start, and everyone listens, you will avoid much confusion: "Wait a minute, I never knew there was a cliff there!" Read a few novels and see how they describe a fight; borrow a few adjectives. Try to imagine exciting and varied settings for battles, and figure out how they will affect the melee. Battle is a time of peak emotions, so try to elicit every last scrap of excitement and agony.

The unit of time in combat is called a round. A combat round is usually about 6 seconds, but it can be up to 12 seconds if the action is very slow (as in a methodical duel), or as short as 3 seconds if the action is extremely fast (desperate grogs trying to break through enemy ranks). When in doubt, figure that a round is enough time for each character to perform one quick action, such as an attempt to connect with a sword or dash to another part of the battle — enough time to do something interesting.

## Battles

### Combat Sequence

There are five stages to each combat round, and they must be coordinated for a battle to run smoothly and quickly. These stages are *Between Time*, *Movement*, *Missiles*, *Melee*, and *Magic*. (These phases are described for your convenience, and you can use them very casually if they are not needed.)

#### I. Between Time

At the start of the combat round, you and the other players take care of certain aspects of the battle, including bookkeeping and any rolls that come at the ends or beginnings of rounds.

The Storyguide asks for declarations of actions for the coming round, in order to better coordinate the actions of the combatants. These declarations force players to decide quickly what their characters will do, and makes it easier to structure the confusion and chaos that a battle often becomes. At this time, all characters who switch from one physically demanding action to another, such as from fighting one opponent to fighting a different one, must make Fatigue rolls of 6+ or drop a fatigue level.

#### II. Movement

At this time, each of the characters may move. The most common form of movement in combat is hustling, moving quickly but slowly enough to keep an eye on what is happening around you (and beneath you, so you won't fall). You can move up to 12 paces (yards) per round while hustling, or less if on broken

ground, in the dark, etc. Walking cautiously moves you 6 paces per round. An all-out sprint, in a straight line, on a flat surface, takes you paces equal to  $30 + \text{Qik} + \text{Athletics} - \text{Load} - \text{Wound or Fatigue penalties}$ .

Note that if you charge to attack someone, it will usually mean that you must make a Fatigue roll because you are going from one strenuous activity (running) to another (fighting). If you do not want to make a Fatigue roll, you can stroll across the battlefield instead of running, but in that case you must take at least one round without attacking or running.

#### III. Missiles

In any given combat round, all missiles that were ready to fire do so before other melee takes place. If your crossbow is loaded and aimed, all you need to do is release the bolt. If you have to aim or load the weapon, your shot goes after the *Melee*, in the *Magic* phase.

For most missiles, rate of fire will be once per round, but the rate can vary depending on your weapon and skill. Total the Rate listed for the weapon + your skill with the weapon +  $\text{Qik} - \text{Enc}$ . Compare this number to the Missile Rate Table to determine your rate of fire. If you can fire twice per round, you can choose another target after you fire in the Missile phase. When the *Magic* phase comes, you fire at that target.

When you fire a missile, the Storyguide rates the difficulty of the shot and decides the ease factor. Sample ease factors are given on the Missile Fire Table. You then roll to attack, which is a stress die +  $\text{Attack Bonus} + \text{Skill} + \text{Per}$ . The Attack Bonus is listed on the



## Combat Sequence Chart

1. Between Time
2. Movement
3. Missiles
4. Melee
  - First strike vs. First strike
  - Attack vs Defense
  - Damage vs Soak
5. Magic and 2nd Missiles

Missile Weapon Chart later in this chapter. If your total at least equals the ease factor, you have scored a hit. If so, roll for damage, a simple die plus the Damage Bonus listed for the weapon. (Skill and Str do not apply.) The target will try to soak the damage, as explained in the insert about the Six Basic Combat Rolls.

If you try to dodge an archer's arrows, the archer's ease factor is doubled. To dodge arrows, you must be doing nothing but watching for the arrows, you must have room to dodge, and you must make a Dodge roll of 3+. If you hide behind a shield, the archer's ease factor increases by the shield's protection value (the number that is usually added to your Def). Additionally, the target's Size is normally subtracted from the archer's ease factor.

In order to have your missile weapon ready to fire at the beginning of the next round, you must spend the rest of the current round loading, selecting a target, and aiming. After loading, during the next Between Time, you must state your target for the coming round. If you do not state your next target, or if that target is no longer available at the start of the next round, you will have to wait until the end of the round (the Magic phase) to fire.

If you spend an entire round aiming your missile weapon (giving up an opportunity to fire that round), add +3 to your Attack roll.

Some possible botches for missile fire are listed in the Botch section of this chapter. If your Attack roll exceeds the ease factor by at least 10 points, you may hit a certain spot on the target, with the Storyguide determining any special results.

## IV. Melee

After the ready missiles have been released, the main part of the round comes: melee.

Because combat can be complicated, the Storyguide should divide large battles up into small units and resolve each sub-melee separately in each round. A sub-melee is one whose outcome for the round is not affected by the actions of any other characters. If you are fighting a zombie while the rest of your party is otherwise occupied, you and the zombie are one sub-melee. The faster of you (hopefully that's you, not the zombie) strikes first, and then the other returns the favor. This sequence should be played out by itself, rather than having players involved in other battles rolling their dice between your strike and the zombie's response, and confusing matters to no end. If a magus in your party is casting a spell to decompose the zombie, then that magus becomes part of your submelee, because the effects of that spell are important to the outcome of your battle this round.

**First Strike-** To determine who makes the first blow in a submelee, First Strike is rolled for each combatant. Roll a stress die and add your 1st total for that weapon (Qik + Weapon Speed + Skill - Enc). The highest roller goes first, followed by the second highest, and so on. Uninterrupted combat continues in the same order as that decided in the first round. You usually roll for first strike only when you first close with your opponent. Slow, methodical, one-on-one duels may warrant first strike rolls every round; but because this slows down combat substantially, it is not a good idea to roll first strike every round in most combat situations. If there are ties with the first strike, the blows are simultaneous, and the weapons used to attack cannot be used to parry as well; roll for first strike again next round to resolve the tie.

If you exceed your opponent's First Strike roll by 10+, then your opponent cannot strike this round. Roll again for First Strike next round and each round thereafter until your opponent manages to get a counter-swing. Then continue the melee as normal. Generally, you will prevent your opponent from striking back when you are very quick, your weapon is very long, or your opponent is very encumbered.

**Rolling to Hit-** When you strike at an opponent, make your Attack roll, a stress die plus your Attack total (which is listed on

### Missile Rate Table

Rate Total	Shots/Round	Difficulty - Ease Factor
up to -20	1/4	Free Shot - Automatic Hit
-19 to -10	1/3	Simple Shot-6+
-9 to 0	1/2	Easy Shot - 9+
+1 to +10	1	Medium Shot-12+
+11 or better	2/1	Hard Shot -15+
		Very Hard Shot-21+

### Missile Fire Table

Example Conditions
you are standing over prone, non-moving target
point-blank range, slow or non-moving target
point -blank range, target moving
standing person, 20 to 50 paces
small or quickly moving target at point-blank range
moving human-size target at 20 to 50 paces
dodging target at 20 to 50 paces
tiny, quick target nearby, like a bat
long range shot with long range weapon, such as a bow
long range shot with short range weapon, such as a sling
target obscured by darkness, underbrush, dust

### Exceptional Blow Table

Body Levels Lost	Severity	Example
One	Minor	Leg wound: movement hampered
Two	Major	Head: knocked unconscious
Three or more	Grave	Arm: maimed or severed

### Damage Effects Chart

1-5	Drop one body level
6-10	Drop two body levels
11-15	Drop three body levels
16-20	Drop four body levels
21-25	Drop five body levels
etc...	

your character sheet) with that weapon (Dex + Attack Bonus + skill). If you beat your target's Defense roll, you have made a solid hit: roll for damage. The Defense total is (Parry Bonus + Parry skill - Size) or (Dodge + Qik - Enc - Size), depending on whether the target is parrying or dodging. Some botches for Attack and Defense rolls are described in the Botches section. If you get a 20+ on a successful Attack roll, you strike in a vulnerable spot on the target. Choose a general location: the head, a limb, the chest, or the abdomen. The Soak roll only counts the armor covering that part of the body. In addition, since you have struck a vulnerable spot, you can have a greater effect. See the Exceptional Blow Table.

Note: You cannot both attack and parry with a single one-handed weapon in one round. You can attack with a one-handed weapon and parry with another (such as a shield), or attack and dodge. You can both attack and parry with a two-handed weapon in a single round.

Damage- To determine damage from a successful hit, roll a simple die plus your Damage total for the weapon (Weapon Damage + Skill + Str); and if you exceed your opponent's Soak roll (stress die + Armor Protection + Stm + Size), you have injured

your opponent, who loses one or more body levels. (If your troupe wishes you may have 1's double on the damage roll. This allows occasional exceptional damage.) A level is lost for every 5 points of damage sustained over the amount of your Soak roll. See the Damage Table. If instead the defender's Soak roll matches or exceeds the damage, the defender might suffer bruises and small cuts, but nothing significant. See the section on Wounds for more details. Typical and extraordinary botches for Soak rolls are described in the Botches section.

Thrown Weapons- Thrown weapons are treated as melee weapons, because they can be parried and are used close with the enemy in hand to hand combat. Their low Attack Bonuses represent the difficulty of hitting someone at a distance as opposed to hitting someone directly in front of you. The Storyguide may wish to rule that certain weapons might not be able to parry incoming thrown weapons, thus reducing the target's Defense roll. For instance, imagine parrying a thrown knife with a morningstar.

## The Six Basic Combat Rolls

First Strike (1st)- The First Strike roll of each combatant is compared when they enter a combat, and the character with the higher roll strikes first each round for the duration of the fight with that opponent. If the rolls tie, the two strike each other simultaneously and must make 1st rolls each round until one of them gains the initiative by rolling higher than the other. That character, then, attacks first for the rest of the combat. Your First Strike total is Weapon Speed + Qik + Attack Skill - Encumbrance. For missile weapons, use the same total (with Rate in place of Weapon Speed) to determine your rate of fire on the Missile Rate Table.

Attack (Atk)- The Attack total represents your ability to connect with a weapon. The total is added to a die roll, and the result is compared to the defender's Defense roll (see below). If the Atk roll beats the Def roll, the attacker has connected and may make a Damage roll.

**For melee and thrown weapons, the Atk total is Weapon Attack Bonus + Dex + Attack Skill. For missile weapons, the Atk total is Weapon Attack Bonus + Per + Attack Skill.**

Defense (Def)- The Def total represents your ability to avoid being struck. When you are attacked, roll a Def roll and compare the number to the attacker's Atk roll. If your Def roll at least matches the Atk roll, you have avoided the attack.

If you parry with a weapon or shield, your Def total is Weapon Parry Bonus + Parry Skill - Size. If you Dodge, your Def total is Dodge + Qik - Size - Enc. You get no Defense roll against missile weapons.

Damage (Dam)- This total indicates how much damage you do when your weapon connects. A Dam roll is compared to the Soak roll, and if the Dam roll is higher, then the defender loses body levels, representing wounds and possibly death. For each five points (or fraction thereof) by which Dam exceeds Soak, the defender drops one body level.

The Dam bonus for melee and thrown weapons is Weapon Damage + Attack Skill + Str. Missile weapons use only Weapon Damage. The Dam roll is the only combat roll that is made on a simple roll instead of a stress roll.

Soak- This total represents your ability to withstand damage without being wounded beyond negligible cuts and bruises. If your Soak roll at least matches the Dam roll, you do not drop a body level. The Soak bonus is Armor Protection + Size + Stm.

Fatigue (Fat)- This total represents your ability to exert yourself continuously without tiring. Whenever you switch actions from one strenuous activity to another without taking it easy for at least a round, you must make a Fatigue roll of 6+ or lose a fatigue level. Your Fatigue total is Stm - Enc.

**Fast Cast Spells-** Fast cast spells are part of melee. If you are casting a fast spell, it takes effect immediately. See the Magic chapter for more details.

## V.Magic

After melee and fast spells are over, missiles that were not fired in the first part of the round are resolved, followed by formulaic spells and normally cast spontaneous spells. Rules for casting spells are found in the Magic chapter.

**Miscellaneous Activity-** You might find yourself doing non-combatant things during a combat, such as looking for the axe you accidentally threw into the bushes or rummaging in your backpack for an important magic component. The Storyguide must determine how long such activities take. One activity and roll per round is a good standard, simply because it keeps players involved in the activity at hand. Normally you will have to give up your attack for a round to do anything else. Miscellaneous activities are usually taken care of in the round's Magic segment.

## Botches

The basic combat rules tell the players who wins a fight and how much each side is wounded in the process, but they do not take into consideration all the debilitating, life-threatening, anxiety-provoking, and even humorous things that can happen on a battlefield. Botches take these unpredictable possibilities into account.

Combat botches follow the same rules as normal botches, though they tend to be more dangerous. Whenever you roll a 0 for a combat roll, you must roll the die again. If you roll a second 0, a botch occurs relevant to the roll being made. Storyguides can use the standard botches from the Combat Botch Suggestions, or they can invent botches appropriate to the specific circumstances. If you are using Whimsy Cards, they can also be used to determine interesting botches.



## Exempli Gratia: Combat Stats

The following are Torlen's combat statistics:

Mace (one-handed)

$$lst = \text{Speed} + \text{Skill} + \text{Qik} - \text{Enc} = +2 + 3 + 0 - 2 = +3$$

$$Atk = \text{Atk Bonus} + \text{Skill} + \text{Dex} = +3 + 3 + 0 = +6$$

$$Dam = \text{Weapon Dam} + \text{Skill} + \text{Str} = +6 + 3 + 1 = +10$$

Defense Total (parrying with knight shield)

$$Def = \text{Parry Bonus} + \text{Skill} = +4 + 3 = +7$$

Soak Total (with hauberk of ring mail)

$$Soak = \text{Armor} + \text{Stm} + \text{Size} = 7 + 1 + 0 = +8$$

Fatigue

$$\text{Fat} = \text{Stm} - \text{Enc} = +7 - 2 = -1$$

## Brawling

Brawling is fighting unarmed or with casual weapons. It is not as deadly as fighting with weapons, but it has several interesting options. When brawling, select a maneuver, make the Atk roll, and then, if the attack roll succeeds, roll to see if the maneuver itself succeeds. First Strike total with a brawling maneuver is  $\text{Qik} + \text{Brawl} - \text{Enc}$ . The Atk total is  $\text{Dex} + \text{Brawl}$ . (Def is normal.) Specific rolls for the various maneuvers are given in the Brawling Maneuvers Table.

Striking is hitting your opponent in an attempt to cause damage, possibly with the fist, knee, foot, etc. You can increase damage by using a cestus or other weapon, at the Storyguide's option.

Brawling damage is different from standard damage. The first 10 points by which you exceed your opponent's Soak roll cause the loss of a fatigue level instead of a body level. The next ten points cause the loss of a body level as well. If your brawling damage exceeds your opponent's Soak roll by 21 points or more, the opponent is knocked unconscious.

Throwing is unbalancing and toppling your opponent while remaining standing yourself.

Tackling is knocking an opponent down while falling down yourself. If you take a running start before you tackle, you get a -1 on your Atk roll but a +4 on your tackling roll.

Wrestling for a Weapon is grabbing your opponent's weapon (or other object) and pulling it away. If your Atk roll succeeds, you have grabbed the weapon. Once you have grabbed the weapon, you and your opponent must make the rolls indicated on the Brawling Maneuvers Table to get it free from the other. You must beat your opponent's roll by 5 points or more or you are still struggling for control; roll once per round. If your opponent beats your roll by 5 points or more, he has wrested his weapon away again.

If the weapon you wish to grab does not have a long wooden haft, you suffer a -5 penalty on your initial Atk roll to grab it. It is not suggested you try this maneuver with a bladed weapon.

Immobilizing is holding or pinning, making your opponent unable to move, at least without getting injured.

Closing is coming close enough to an opponent that you can use the rules for close fighting. The indicated roll is for closing; you need not make an Atk roll. The round after you close, you will begin close fighting.

## Combat Botch Suggestions

Following are some incidents that might occur during combat, intended to give the Storyguide some ideas and information with which to work. Several botch effects may accompany each other, especially with a double or triple botch. These botches are typical representatives of their type. Worse fractures and bloodier wounds are always possible. The Storyguide should use them as they are appropriate to the story.

### First Strike Botches

**Standard First Strike Botch: Lost Control.** No attack this round.

**Over-extension.** You pushed yourself a little too fast and far, and have left yourself wide open to attack, -5 to your Defenseroll.

**Lost Grip.** In your hurry to strike a blow, you lost your grip and threw your weapon.

**Fall.**

### Attack Botches

**Standard Attack Botch: Hit Wrong Target.** Perhaps a friend, the wrong enemy (the one you wanted as a hostage), or a wagon.

**Disoriented.** You must make a Per roll of 9+ to understand what is going on before continuing the fight. Roll each round with a +2 cumulative bonus each roll. If you are attacked, you know enough to defend yourself. Appropriate for night battles, large melees, and fights in unfamiliar territory.

**Fall or Knocked Down.**

**Hit Self.** Roll damage based only on the Damage Bonus of the weapon, not on your Str or Skill.

**Movement Hampered.** You have hurt your foot or ankle in the melee, so you will be at half speed until you receive a week of rest.

**Break Weapon.**

**Drop Weapon.**

### Defense Botches

**Standard Defense Botch: Drop Shield or Parrying Weapon.** Fall down if unarmed.

**Fall or Knocked Down.**

**Parrying Weapon Broken, Dropped, or Thrown.**

**Wrenched arm.** You didn't parry that last blow quite right, and your arm was wrenched by the force of your opponent's attack. Until you get a weeks rest, this arm isn't going to be good for anything.

**Wild Stumble.** You stumbled into someone else's weapon. They lose their attack and inflict normal damage on you.

### Soak Botches

**Standard Soak Botch, Puncture Weapon: Bleeding Wound.** Every round of intense action or every five

rounds (thirty seconds) of rest, you will have to make a Stm roll of 6+ or drop a fatigue level. Once you drop to unconsciousness, you will begin losing body levels instead of fatigue levels. A Chirurgy roll of 6+ is required to stop the bleeding. A particularly bad bleeding wound requires cauterization.

**Standard Soak Botch, Cutting Weapon: Leg Disabled.** You fall to the ground and can take no more actions this round. You can fight from the ground on the following rounds, but your 1st, Atk, Dam, and Def rolls suffer a -2 penalty. You are able to hobble unaided.

**Standard Soak Botch, Smashing Weapon: Knocked Down.**

**Arm Disabled.**

**Bone(s) Fractured.** Broken bones need medical attention to assure proper healing. Recovery takes weeks or months and might leave the character unable to perform certain actions freely.

**Coma.** You are knocked into profound unconsciousness. Every week you must roll a stress Stm roll. If you roll a 0 (without modifiers), you are dead. If you roll a 9+, you have awakened and are at "Heavy Wounds." Otherwise, your condition has worsened and you get a -1 on further rolls, cumulative. The penalties will not make it more likely that you die each week, but they will make it less likely that you recover. Your friends will have to force broth down your throat to keep you alive.

**Concussion.** You have been hit in the head. You need a Stm roll of 6+ to retain consciousness, and even if you do, you are disoriented and weak. Your mental abilities, coordination, and perception are impaired for days as you recover.

**Eye Ruined-** See Missing Limb or Organ (Eye) in the Virtues & Raws section of the Character chapter for long-term effects.

**Instant Death-** Yeah, well, that's life. Appropriate for triple botches.

**Limb Maimed/Severed-** Your limb will never recover through normal means.

**Movement Hampered.**

**Old Wound Opened-** An old wound of yours has opened up as a result of the physical punishment you have just suffered. Typically this means the wound is nastier than normal, and it could result in a bleeding wound, a leg disabled, an arm disabled, and so on.

**Partially Blinded -** A head wound causes blood to pour into your eyes. Take -3 on all combat rolls except Soak.

**Shock-** You fall into shock from the wound(s). You will not be functional until you make a Stm roll of 9+, rolling once per 10 minutes. A person tending you can add their Chirurgy score to your roll. If you botch this roll, you die.

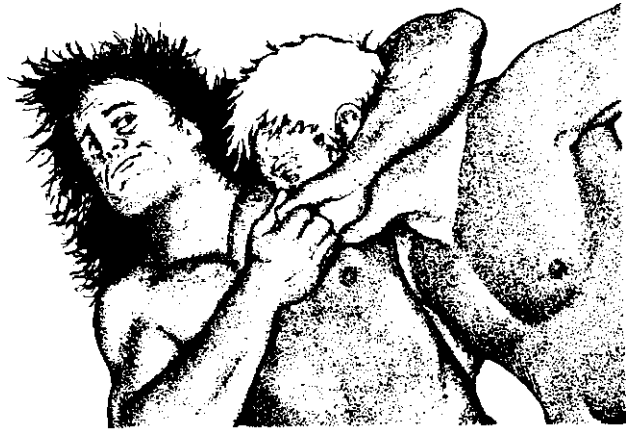
**Stunned-** The blow has knocked the sense out of you, and you must roll a Stm roll of 6+ to recover. Otherwise you are incapable of any action, except falling. Roll each round.

Breaking **Away** is getting out of a close fight.

**Close Fighting**- Sometimes you will fight in full contact with an opponent, such as when you roll around on the ground and wrestle. Each brawling maneuver has a bonus to use on rolls when the fighting is close fighting.

While close fighting, your Defroll becomes Qik + Brawl - Enc. You cannot use weapons other than knives or daggers, with which you get +3 to Atk and Dam. Animals also get this +3 bonus with their natural weapons when close fighting.

You can initiate a close fight or break away by using the rules above.



## Brawling Maneuvers Table

Maneuver	Your Roll	Opponent's Roll	Close Fighting
Strike	Str + Brawl	Soak	0
Throw	Str + Size + Brawl	Qik + Size + Brawl - Enc + 5	-4
Tackle	Str + Size + Brawl	Qik + Size + Brawl - Enc	+4
Wrest Weapon	Str + Brawl	Str + Brawl	0
Immobilize	Str + Brawl	Str + Brawl + 5	+4
Close	Qik + Brawl - Enc	Def	n/a

## Effects of Combat

### Wounds

When combatants fight, the damage they deal out and receive is kept track of in terms of body levels. After receiving a certain amount of damage (i.e. losing a certain number of body levels), a character is impaired and eventually killed. If characters are not killed, they can recover given medical attention and rest.

Each being has a certain number of body levels, with more body levels for a higher Size. The average person has one each of the following body levels: "Unhurt," "Hurt," "Light Wounds," "Medium Wounds," "Heavy Wounds," and "Incapacitated." Anyone who loses body levels beyond "Incapacitation" is dead or wounded so badly that death is imminent and inevitable.

For every Size level a creature is below 0, it has one fewer body level. A human of Size-1 has no "Hurt" body level, and a human of Size-2 has neither "Hurt" nor "Medium Wounds." It is up to the Storyguide to decide what body levels a small non-human creature does and does not have. (All creatures will have "Unhurt.") This tie to Size means that any creature with a Size of -5 or below has only one body level, "Unhurt," and any missed Soak roll will result in its death. Any creature with more than 0 Size has extra body levels. A human with Size +1 has an extra "Hurt" body level, but for other creatures, it is up to the Storyguide to assign extra body levels. If a creature has two or more of a given level, it must lose

all of those levels before dropping to the next lower level of wounds. For instance, imagine that a creature has three "Hurt" levels. From "Unhurt" it can drop one, two, or three body levels and still only be "Hurt." When it drops the fourth body level, it suffers "Light Wounds."

The typical way to lose body levels is to miss a Soak roll. Whenever you take a certain amount of damage, whether by spell, arrow, or axe, you can try to soak the damage by equalling the Damage roll on a Soak roll. If the Soak roll at least matches the damage done, no significant wounds result. You may still be bruised, scraped, singed, or whatever, depending on the type of attack, but the damage is not enough to count in game terms.

When you are "Unhurt" or just "Hurt," all abilities function normally; when you are "Incapacitated," no actions are possible.

### Hanging in There

If your character has been killed, you might (at the Storyguide's approval) hang on long enough to do one more thing, such as whisper a few last words or curse your killers. This device is simply for the purpose of drama. Don't abuse it.

Each body level in between has some penalty associated with it that is applied to rolls requiring physical or mental exertion. Soak rolls are a notable exception; body level penalties do not affect Soak rolls. Wound penalties are: "Light Wounds," -1; "Medium Wounds," -3; "Heavy Wounds," -5. These penalties will have a strong effect on combat, because they apply to Attack, Defense, First Strike, and Damage rolls. Magi beware: they also apply to all aspects of spell-casting.

**Chirurgy-** Chirurgy is the most common sort of aid for wounded people. With this skill, you can tend the wounds of another character. (You can use chirurgy on yourself as well, but at a -2 penalty.)

When tending the wounded, you roll a die and add Chirurgy + Int + Wound Penalty. For "Incapacitated" characters, the penalty is -5. If your total is 9+, the wounded character immediately rises one body level. If the total is 3+, the wounded character is bandaged and the wounds are stabilized. Now the character will receive a bonus on wound recovery rolls equal to your Chirurgy skill. If wounds are not stabilized, strenuous activity can cause the loss of more body levels.

**Healing Spells-** Certain Creo Corporem spells also aid recovery and are described in the Spells chapter. They will not have

a permanent effect unless raw *vis* is used. Note: A character will not heal at all while any of their body levels are temporarily healed, though they can recover normally after permanent healing.

**Recovery in the Field-** If you are Hurt, you will automatically recover to Unhurt in one day. More serious wounds will not recover in the field on their own. In fact, the Storyguide can rule that certain strenuous activities might aggravate your condition, especially if your wounds have not been stabilized by a surgeon.

If you are "Incapacitated," the story is grim. You are on the edge of death, and could die at any time. Each day at sunrise and sunset, you must make a stress Stm roll to see if you have died or recovered a wound level. If your wounds have been stabilized by Chirurgy, you get a bonus on your roll equal to the Surgeon's skill. A 0 or less indicates that you have died. A roll of 9+ means you are at "Heavy Wounds." A roll of 1 to 8 indicates that your condition has worsened slightly, and all subsequent recovery rolls are made at -1, cumulative, until you rise a body level or die. After recovering to "Heavy Wounds," you recover normally.

**Recovery at Home-** Recovery from serious wounds requires rest and care. When you have a suitably long time to recuperate, you can make a roll on the Wound Recovery Chart.

## Wound Recovery Chart

	Roll								
Wounds	0	1-2	3-5	6-8	9-11	12-14	15-17	18+	
Light	X	14	10	7	6	5	4	3	
Medium	X	60	40	21	18	16	14	12	
Heavy	X	X	80	45	35	28	25	21	
Incap.	X	X	X	90	45	35	28	25	

Roll a stress die plus Stm + Surgeon's Skill; compare the roll to the type of wound from which you suffer. If the result is a number, that is the number of days it takes you to recover. If the result is X, roll on the Catastrophe Sub-Chart.

### Catastrophe Sub-Chart

After you roll on this chart, roll again on the Wound Recovery Chart to determine how long it takes you to recover. It is possible for you to have to roll again on the Catastrophe Sub-Chart. Roll a stress die plus Stm + Surgeon's Skill.

0	Death.	5-6	Festering wounds, infection, gangrene. Drop a body level and roll again for recovery.
1	You fall into a coma. Re-roll for time to recover (at-2) and double the time. Then make two aging rolls.	7-10	Make an aging roll.
2	Permanently enfeebled; see the flaw "Enfeebled."	11-12	Wounds fail to heal completely; gain 1 Decrepitude point.
34	You are permanently crippled in some manner. Perhaps amputation is necessary. Choose an appropriate flaw, such as "Missing Foot."	13	Nightmares or flashbacks torment you for a long time to come. Three extra botch rolls on any kind of Brave rolls.
		14+	Slow recovery; roll again and multiply time by 1.5.

# Fatigue

Each character has the same number of fatigue levels as body levels. When at a fatigue level below "Winded," the penalty indicated applies to all rolls involving exertion, including magic but excluding Soak. These penalties are cumulative with wound penalties. That's right, cumulative; be careful.

Fatigue looks similar to body levels but works differently. First of all, there are two types of fatigue that overlap: long-term and short-term fatigue. Short-term fatigue represents temporary windedness, as one might suffer during an athletic contest or melee. It is also the fatigue that magi suffer when casting spells. Long-term fatigue represents weariness caused by long-lasting exertion, such as hiking. The major difference is that long-term fatigue affects a character longer than does short-term fatigue. (Make sense?) A character who has just hiked all day and one who has just sprinted through town might be equally tired and weak, but the one who has sprinted will recover in a few minutes, while the other will be weary until the next morning.

**Short-term Fatigue-** Before any round in which you will switch from performing one strenuous activity to performing another, you must roll for fatigue. Thus, if you spend one round resting between two activities, no Fatigue roll is required. Unless the Storyguide intervenes because of exceptional circumstances, you must make a Fatigue roll of 6+ or drop a fatigue level. (Your Fatigue total is Stm - Enc.) The Storyguide can call for extra Fatigue rolls when you exert yourself mightily even if you do not change from one form of exertion to another.

You recover from fatigue one level at a time, each level taking a certain amount of time depending on the level you are currently

## Exempli Gratia: Fatigue

After casting two spontaneous spells, Grimgroth is Weary. He makes a Stm roll of 7, so it takes him the full 10 minutes to recover to Winded. He continues to rest and rolls a 9, so he can recover to Fresh in one minute. If he had been walking around while recovering, he would have had to subtract his Enc from the roll, so he still wouldn't have been successful, and it would have taken 4 minutes to get from Winded to Fresh (the normal 2 minutes doubled).

at. Short-term fatigue recovers at the following rates: *Winded*- 2 minutes, *Weary*-10 minutes, *Tired*-30 minutes, *Dazed*-60 minutes, *Unconscious*- wake up at Winded in around 2 hours. You can recover a level in half the time by rolling a **Stm roll of 9+**. If you are active while recovering from fatigue, you must subtract your Enc from the roll, and the **time is doubled**. If you meditate, you can add your Meditation score to your roll to recover fatigue.

**Long-Term Fatigue-** Long-term fatigue results from extended activities, such as hiking and performing rituals. These special cases are covered in their respective sections. Long-term fatigue is only recovered by sleep and sufficient food. A full night's sleep will usually recover all lost fatigue levels.

**Recording Fatigue-** Use one type of symbol to record your short-term fatigue loss on the character sheet (perhaps a slash) and another for long-term (an X). Remember that these effects are cumulative, so one level lost from hiking plus one lost for sprinting equals two total levels.

# Other Considerations

## Combat Maneuvers

Though you will usually fight simply by swinging your weapon at opponents as explained in the basic combat rules, sometimes you will want to make use of special combat maneuvers.

**Two Weapon Use-** You may strike with two weapons each round. You can only use one-handed weapons in each hand, and your Str must be 2 points higher than that listed on the Melee Weapon Chart to wield a weapon in your off-hand. Unless you are Ambidextrous (a virtue), you have a -3 Atk penalty with the weapon in your off-hand and a -1 Atk penalty with the weapon in your good hand.

Your Parry and Attack skills with a weapon in your off-hand are 0, as long as you have a positive skill with the weapon in your good hand. You can raise your skill in off-hand use of a weapon just as you would raise any other skill.

If you attack with two weapons, you cannot dodge or parry. Your Def total is the Weapon Protection score for the more protective weapon minus your Size.

Roll a single die for First Strike and apply your 1st totals separately to derive two 1st rolls.

**Desperate Defense-** If you have not yet attacked this round, you may decide to forgo your attack and devote your efforts to defense, calling out "Parry" or "Dodge" to the troupe (say it aloud), giving you a +5 bonus on your Defense rolls for the rest of the round. If you declare to the troupe your intent to Parry or Dodge after an attack die has been rolled, you may not use the Parry or Dodge bonus against that attack, though you will get the bonus on any later attacks against you that round.

**Great Blow-** You can put extra force into a blow, making it more effective than normal. You must forgo your attack for one round in preparation for the blow. Damage from a great blow, if you hit, is XI.5, but you must roll a Fatigue roll immediately after the blow.

**Mounted Combat-** If you are engaged in combat while on a horse, any ability used while riding cannot be used at a level higher than your Riding score. For instance, if you had a Broadsword 5, but only a Riding 3, you could only use your Broadsword at level

3 instead of 5, while riding. (This is true for most activities while mounted.) You also gain +1 to hit opponents on foot. Always take an extra botch roll. People who have no ability to ride must take a -5 to all their rolls while mounted, and must make three additional botch rolls.

**Keeping at Bay-** When you are armed with a longer weapon than your opponent, you can forfeit your attack and gain +8 to your First Strike roll, giving you an additional chance to roll high enough to keep your opponent from attacking that round. This tactic is especially useful against animals or unarmed opponents. Alternately, you can take +4 to your 1st roll and then do one-half damage.

If you are being held at bay, you can forfeit your attack and try to close on your opponent. You will get +8 on your 1st Strike, and if you beat your opponent's roll, you have closed. On the following round, you get an attack and your opponent does not. (After that your opponent must either draw a shorter weapon or back away to get more distance between you.)

**Charging-** You can charge with any thrusting weapon by running before you strike. Take a damage bonus of +5 plus your Size, but if you miss your blow, the defender gains a +1 on Atk that round. If the defender has a thrusting weapon, it gets a damage bonus of +5 plus the attacker's Size. If you charge on a horse, add the Size of your horse to the Dam.

**Monstrous Combat-** Beasts often have special attacks best developed individually by the Storyguide. Often, unorthodox attacks affect the way the combat rolls work. For instance, imagine a fire drake that pounces on its opponents. A Defense roll with Dodge will let you evade the creature, but a Defense roll with a shield merely means that the shield is between you and it. You are still knocked to the ground, pinned and likely being crushed, but the shield might at least protect you from some of the creature's claws. Because of their special attacks, monsters are often exceedingly dangerous to combat.

**Attacking Objects-** Sometimes you will want to direct your weapon against an inanimate object, such as an enemy's magic item or even a door. If the object is held or carried by someone, you will need to make an Atk roll versus an ease-factor set by the Storyguide, but otherwise you will not need to roll to hit. The Storyguide will also assign the object a Soak total (or simply an ease factor) and a number of resistance levels (equivalent to body levels). When you beat the Soak roll a number of times equal to the number of resistance levels, you have destroyed the item. Examples: a wooden door- +10/5; the side of a large tent- +0/3.

## Combat Modifiers

The combat basic rules are designed with the assumption that the combatants are armed and able to defend themselves, that they are fighting on even ground in full daylight, that the combatants are all human or nearly so, and that they are content merely to exchange blows without trying any tricky maneuvers. Some combats fit these criteria, but luckily for the entertainment value of the melee, exceptions are the rule. The following are elaborations on the basic combat rules which will allow you to expand combat to involve more interesting circumstances.

### **Striking From Advantage**

When you can strike a foe from a superior position, such as from behind or the side, you get an advantage. It's easier to hit your opponent and easier to place the blow in a damaging spot on the body.

Striking from Above: +1 Attack

Striking from the Side: +1 Attack

Striking from Behind: +3 Attack, XI.5 damage

Surrounding Opponent: +1 to Attack and Damage for every extra person on your side attacking a single opponent

Striking Defenseless Opponent, Hurriedly: Automatic hit (unless you botch), X2 damage

Striking Defenseless Opponent, Surely: Automatic kill (barring unusual circumstances)

### **Combat Environment**

The physical environment can hamper combatants' abilities.

Heat: -1 to -4 on Fatigue rolls

Darkness: -1 to -4 to hit, one or two extra botch rolls

Complete Darkness: You must match another character's Stealth roll with a Scan roll in order to strike at or defend yourself from that opponent. Even with the roll, you will suffer -5 penalties on Attack and Defense rolls, and -2 on Damage. You cannot attack in the same round you move.

Obstacles in Battlefield (e.g. corpses, undergrowth): extra botch rolls, penalties on moving

Strong Winds: Penalties on missile fire and thrown weapon Attack rolls

## Other Ways to Get Hurt

**Illness and Disease-** Simulate the weakening effects of illness by dropping fatigue levels. A head cold might drop you one fatigue level unless you make a Stm roll of 8+. A more severe illness might force you to make four Stm rolls of 9+, with each failure meaning the loss of one fatigue level. Your energy (and fatigue levels) return when you shake the illness (which might require more Stm rolls or another character's Medicine rolls).

Illnesses can also hamper your characteristics, temporarily or permanently reducing them. These effects can be mimicked by aging rolls.

The precise effects of a disease are up to the Storyguide who puts them in a story. Just hope that none of the Storyguides are familiar with diseases, and you probably will not suffer through any of the more malignant ones.

**Fire-** Each fire has its heat rated with a Dam total, the number added to damage rolls when you are burned by the fire. The first round you are exposed to the fire, your Soak roll will include armor, but on subsequent rounds the armor is assumed to have heated up, and it no longer protects you. Furthermore, after the



last round you are in the fire, you will take damage from your armor, which is still hot. Damage is a simple die plus the protection value for your armor. If you are in a fire for an extended period of time, the Storyguide can rule that the armor has burned away. Other bad things can happen in a fire, such as disfiguring burns and the loss of valuable but flammable items, but this is best left to the devious imagination of the Storyguide.

**Falling-** If you fall, you take damage, which you can soak normally using your Soak total (with armor counting half value on Soak). For each two feet you fall, damage is +1 on the damage die. If you are falling on a hard surface, such as rock, damage is doubled. If you fall on an exceptionally soft surface, such as snow, you take half damage. If you fall into water, you take one-fourth damage. You can try to roll with a fall and thus protect yourself. If you make an Athletics roll of 6+, the first 5 feet of the fall do not count for damage.

Fire Damage		Falling Damage
Fire Size	Damage	
Candle	none	+1 per 2 feet.
Torch	+6	X2 for hard surface
Campfire	+9	one-half for soft surface
Bonfire	+12	one-fourth for water
House Fire	+15	

**Poison-** As there are a great many different poisons, there are a great many different effects. Each poison has two relevant factors: the amount of time it takes to work, and the possible effects. Typically, the possible effects depend on a Stm roll by the victim attempting to match an ease factor representing the strength of the poison. A simple poison has two effects: a powerful effect that happens when the Stm roll fails, and a weak effect that happens when the Stm roll succeeds. The Storyguide may wish to craft a more complex poison with a greater variety of results depending on how many points by which you fail your Stm roll and whether you botch.

Poison can also be handled as damage, against which the Soak roll is based solely on Stm + Size.

**Deprivation-** Inability to get the necessities of life, such as air, water, warmth, and food, can cause weakness and death. Deprivation is simulated by reducing fatigue levels until you are unconscious. This is done usually by making Stm rolls to see if you drop a level. Then, slowly or quickly, depending on the type of deprivation, you die. Stm rolls can delay the end, but not even the toughest can go without basic necessities for long. Ale does not count as a basic necessity.

For instance, if you are drowning in churning water, the Storyguide might say you must make a Str + Swim + Stm roll of 9+ or drop a fatigue level. If you can succeed twice, you have swum to safety, but if you fall unconscious from loss of fatigue, then you drown.

## Combat Hints

Combat can be very demanding on the Storyguide and risky for the characters, so here are some tips for better and more interesting battles.

### For the Storyguide:

1) As a general rule, the more you prepare for a combat the more interesting it will be and the more smoothly it will run. Having tactical maps of the battlefield and a chart listing important stats for the combatants certainly helps.

2) For simplicity, you can make most or all of your monsters in a group have identical stats. Unless the stats vary widely, the players probably wouldn't notice the difference anyway. You can distinguish monsters in a group by specific physical features such as "dark skin," "warty face," or "misshapen arm" instead of using numbers. As long as you can still keep the different opponents straight, you have added detail with no loss of playability. Plus the players can help you keep track of who's who ("I'm on Wart Face.").

3) Rolling Attack & Damage and then Defense & Soak dice simultaneously vastly speeds up combat. (Use two different colored dice.)

4) Include actions in the situation other than combat. Ability and characteristic rolls can be as tense and important as combat rolls, and in the end perhaps more satisfying.

### For the Players:

1) Magi must always be protected from physical threats, and shield grogs should never leave their sides.

2) Those involved in a battle should know their priorities: who should protect whom, what the object of the battle is (such as to capture, kill, or drive off), and what to do should the battle turn against you, forcing a retreat. Perhaps a tactical leader, an expert besides the magi, could lead the grogs.

3) Carefully planned tactics can often swing the most disastrous dilemma in your favor. Use your brains and you just might succeed — don't underestimate the value of cunning.

4) Keep in mind that combat is very risky because you can always botch. No one is invulnerable; luck can turn against the mightiest of warriors and heroes (enemies too).

5) In *large* battles, make your relevant rolls after the Storyguide has OK'd your statement of intent but before you are called on for the results. Then other players don't have to wait while you make a bunch of rolls.

6) Be sure to add up your combat totals when designing your character, not during a battle.

## Exempli Gratia: Combat

Torlen has been sent into the abandoned town of Mercille to see what he can find. While Torlen is exploring the smithy, a man who was hiding in the back room attacks him with a club. The attacker's Sneak+Dex roll is 7, and Torlen's Alertness+Per roll is only 5, so the ambusher can attack from advantage (+3 Atk, as ruled by the Storyguide). On the first round Torlen can only spin to counter the attack and call out for help while the attacker swings his club.

**Round 1-** The attacker's Atk total is +3 for the club, +1 for his skill, +0 for his Dex. Total: +4. His roll is a 3 (die roll) +4 (Atk total) +3 (bonus for surprise) = 10. Torlen's Def roll is 4 (roll) +7 (Def total) = 11. Torlen parries the club with his shield.

**Between Time-** The attacker decides to swing his club and by to dodge Torlen. Torlen tries a Per roll to realize that he is being attacked by a poorly armed civilian. The Storyguide sets the ease factor at 6, and Torlen rolls a 5, so in his confusion he responds instinctively as he would to a better armed attacker, striking back with his mace with a Cnf point in all appropriate rolls until he loses it.

**Round 2-** They roll 1 st. The attacker rolls 7 + 4 = 11. Torlen rolls 5 + 3 + 1 (Cnf) = 9, so he goes second. He loses his Cnf point for the rest of the story.

The attacker rolls a 1 on his die, rolls again and gets a 6, which doubles to 12. Total with Atk bonus: 16. Torlen's parry is only 6 + 7 = 13, so he is hit. The attacker rolls 10 (simple roll) + 2 (Weapon Damage) + 1 (Str) + 1 (Skill) = 14 points for the Damage roll. Torlen's Soak is 5 (roll) + 8 (Soak) = 13. Torlen drops to Hurt with a strong blow to his right arm (as ruled by the Storyguide).

Torlen replies with an Atk roll of 5 + 6 = 11 and a Dam roll of 8 + 10 = 18. The attacker's Def roll is a mere 7, with no modifiers, and his Soak depends solely on his +1 Stm. The roll is 4 + 1 = 5. Since damage exceeds Soak by 12 points, the target loses three body levels. The attacker is now at Medium Wounds, with a -3 penalty on his actions.

**Between Time-** The Storyguide makes a Cowardly roll to see if the attacker will flee. The roll is 4 - 2 (Cowardly score) + 3 (wound penalty) = 5, below the ease factor of 6, so the attacker keeps fighting. The Storyguide also tells Torlen that he has had time to realize that he is fighting an inhabitant of Mercille, not an enemy. Torlen decides to drop his mace and shield and to wrest the club from the man's

hand. The Storyguide rules that taking time to drop weapons gives him a -5 penalty on his 1st roll.

**Round 3-** They must roll 1st again because the combat tactics have changed. The attacker rolls 8 + 4 - 3 (wounds) = 9. Torlen rolls 8 + 3 (Brawl) + 0 (Qik) - 2 (Enc) - 5 (penalty) = 4. The attacker strikes first.

The attacker's Atk roll beats Torlen's Def roll, which is easy to do when he does not have his shield, but Torlen's Soak roll protects him.

Torlen rolls 9 on his Brawl + Dex roll to grab the club, but the Storyguide rules that the club is short enough to give him a -2 penalty on the roll. The modified roll of 7 is still good enough to beat the attacker's Def roll of 4. Now that Torlen grips the club, he tries to pull it away. His Str + Brawl roll is 7 (stress die) + 1 (Str) + 3 (Brawl) = 11. The attacker's roll is only 8 + 1 + 1 - 3 (wounds) = 7, but Torlen needs to win by at least 5 points to get the club.

**Between Time-** Both combatants decide to struggle for control of the club.

**Round 4-** Torlen rolls a 9 compared to the attacker's roll of 4. Torlen pulls the club free and hurls it across the room, trying to get across the point that he is not an enemy.

**Between Time-** Torlen thinks his job is done, so he decides to address the fellow he has just bested, but the Storyguide makes a successful Daring personality roll for the other man, and he jumps for Torlen's dropped mace. Torlen changes his action and brings down his doubled fists on the man's exposed back. The Storyguide rules that Torlen will have to beat the attacker by at least 5 points in a Qik-Enc vs. Qik-Enc contest.

**Round 5-** Torlen rolls a 7 + 0 (Qik) - 2 (Enc) = 5 on his attempt to strike his attacker. It's a bad roll, but the Storyguide rolls a 0 for the attacker's attempt. He then rolls twice for a botch (twice because the smith's shop is cluttered with overturned furniture and tools), and rolls a 5 and another 0. The second 0 indicates a botch, so the Storyguide rules that Torlen lands a blow that sends the attacker sprawling onto the spiked mace, dropping him another body level, to Heavy Wounds.

The Storyguide rules that the wounded man surrenders now, and when the aid that Torlen called for at the beginning of the fight finally arrives, they find their friend tending to the man's wounds.

## Melee Weapon Chart

Weapon	Expense	Speed	AtkB	WpnDam	ParB	Str	Load	Space
Dagger (1h)	inex	+1	44	+2	+1	n	0	0'
Shortsword (1h)	stan	+ 2	+ 4	+ 4	+ 2	- 2	0.5	0'
Broadsword(1h)	expn	+ 3	+ 4	+ 6	+ 3	0	0.5	1'
Bastard Sword (1h)	expn	+ 4	+ 3	+ 8	+ 3	+ 2	0.5	2'
Bastard Sword (2h);	expn	+4	+3	+10	+4	0	0.5	2'
Greatsword (2h)	expn	+5	+3	+11	+5	+1	1	3'
Short Spear (1h)	inex	+5	+2	+3	+1	-1	0	1'
Short Spear (2h)	inex	+ 6	+ 3	+5	+2	n	0	0'
Long Spear (2h)	inex	+ 8	+ 2	+ 6	+ 3	- 2	0.5	0'
Lance(mtd)(1h)	stan	+7	+2	+8*	+	1 0	1	1'
Hand Axe (1h)	inex	+2	+2	+7	+1	0	0.5	1'
Battle Axe (2h)	stan	+4	+2	+12	+	2 0	1	3'
Pole Axe (2h)	stan	+5	+1	+13	+3	+1	1.5	4'
Halberd (2h)	expn	+5	+1	+15	+3	+1	2	4'
Club (1h)	inex	+2	+3	+2	+1	-2	0	2'
Club(2h)	inex	+2	+3	+ 3	+ 2	n	0	2'
Quarterstaff(2h)	inex	+ 5	+ 2	+ 4	+ 6	- 3	0	2'
Mace(1h)	stan	+ 2	+ 3	+ 5	+ 1	0 0		2'
Mace(2h)	stan	+2	+3	+7	+2	-2	0	2'
War Maul (2h)	stan	+3	+2	+10	+2	+1	1.5	2'
Morning Star (1h)	stan	+3	+2	+8	+1	+2	0.5	3'
Morning Star (2h)	stan	+3	+2	+10	+1	0	0.5	3'
Military Flail(2h)	expn	+4	+3	+10	+2	-1	1	4'
Throwing Knife	inex	-2	-1	+0	N/A	n	0	N/A
Javelin	stan	-5	-1	+5	N/A	-2	0	N/A
Throwing Axe	stan	- 4	- 2	+ 6	N/A	-1	0.5	N/A
Target Shield	inex	+1	+3	- 2	+ 2	n	0	1'
Round Shield	inex	+2	+2	-1	+3	-2	0.5	1'
Knight Shield	stan	+ 2	+ 1	0	+ 4	0	1	0'
Kite Shield	expn	+1	+1	0	+5	+1	1.5	1'
Tower Shield	expn	0	0	- 1	+ 6	+ 2	2	1'

Expense- There are three types of weapons, classified by the cost of making and maintaining them: Inexpensive (marked "inex"), standard (stan), and expensive (expn). Weapons available to you depend on your background or your covenant.

Speed- The bonus to the First Strike roll when using this weapon, based on the length, weight, and style of use. A long, light weapon held in front of the user has the edge over a short, heavy weapon swung from over the shoulder.

AtkB, Attack Bonus- Attack Bonus + Dex + Skill = Attack Total.

WpnDmg, **Weapon** Damage- Weapon Damage + Str + Skill = Damage Total.

ParB, Parry Bonus- Parry Bonus + Skill - Size = Defense Total.

Str, Strength- The minimum Str required to use the weapon effectively. An "n" means no minimum Str score is required.

Load- Represents the weight and awkwardness of the weapon, used to figure Encumbrance.

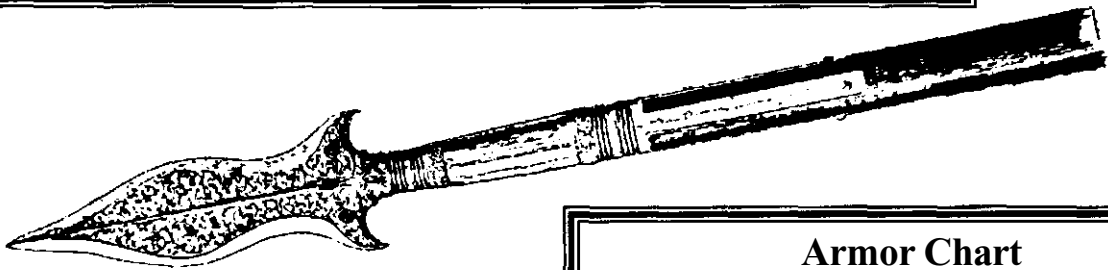
Space- Feet needed around the wielder for effective use; think of it as a zone, and if the zones of two people overlap there could be trouble.

\* See the combat section on Charging.

## Missile Weapon Chart

Weapon	Expense	Rate	AtkB	WpnDam	Str	Load	Range
sling	inex	+2	0	44	n	0	100
self bow	inex	+3	0	+8	0	0	120
longbow	stan	+6	0	+14	+2	.5	250
composite bow	expn	+4	+1	+9	-1	.5	225
light crossbow	expn	-8	+1	+10	0	.5	200
heavy crossbow	expn	-15	+1	+15	-3	1	300
arbalist	expn	-23	+1	+19	0	1.5	400

Expense- inex=inexpensive, stan=standard, expn=expensive.  
 Rate- The bonus to Rate total, which determines how often you can fire the weapon.  
 AtkB, Attack Bonus- The bonus to your Attack roll.  
 WpnDam, Weapon Damage- The bonus to your Damage roll.  
 Str, Strength- The minimum Strength needed to use the weapon.  
 Load- Represents the weight and awkwardness of the weapon, used to figure Encumbrance.  
 Range- Maximum range in paces.



### Type of Armor

Cuirass armor covers only the chest, abdomen, and back. The arms and legs are left completely unprotected. This very basic armor does not include a helm (which makes aimed blows especially effective against people wearing it).

Hauberk armor covers the torso as well as the shoulders and the upper arms. It also includes a short skirt that protects the thighs and groin. It includes a half helm that protects only the crown and the back of the head. The helm subtracts 1 from all Perception rolls.

Full armor covers the entire body, even the forearm, shins, feet, and hands, and it includes a full helm which covers the neck and part of the face. Subtract 3 from all Perception rolls when wearing the helm.

### Armament Availability

We provide stats for a broad variety of weapons and armor to cover as many possibilities as we can. No region will have all these armaments readily available, and some types of armament (notably plate mail) are only available late in the medieval period (which encompasses the thirteenth century). In regards to the many armaments we did not include, it should be easy for you to design your own statistics using ours as models.

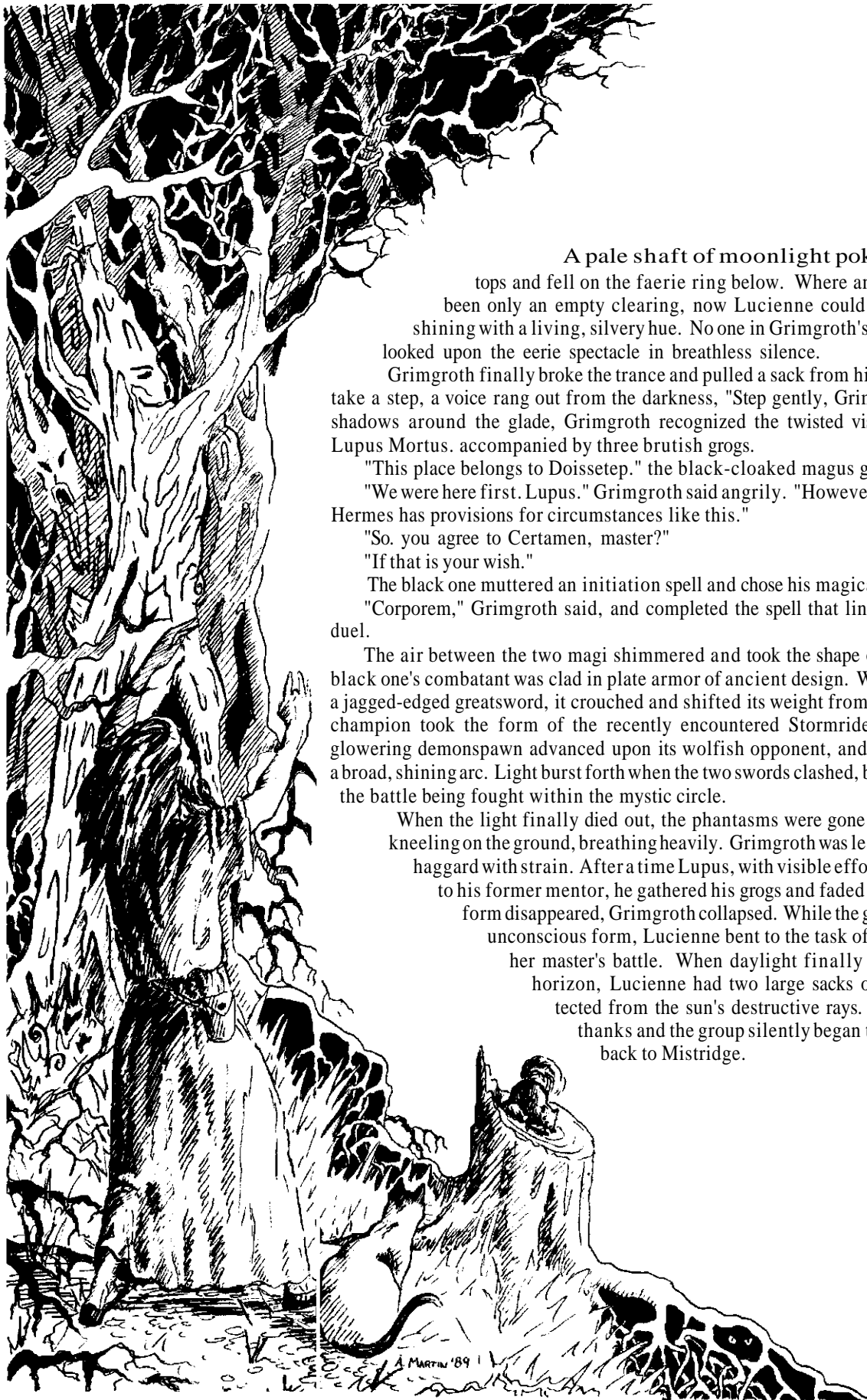
## Armor Chart

Armor	Expense	Protection	Load
<b>Cuirass Armor</b>			
Leather/Fur/Quilted	inex	1	0.5
Heavy/Hard Leather	inex	2	1
Ring Mail	stan	4	1.5
Scale Mail	stan	5	2
Chain Mail	expn	8	3.5
Plate	expn	10	4

<b>Hauberk Armor</b>			
Leather/Fur/Quilted	inex	3	1.5
Heavy/Hard Leather	inex	5	2.5
Ring Mail	stan	7	3
Scale Mail	stan	9	4.5
Chain Mail	expn	12	5
Plate	expn	15	6

<b>Full Armor</b>			
Leather/Fur/Quilted	inex	4	2
Heavy/Hard Leather	stan	6	2.5
Ring Mail	stan	8	4
Chain Mail	expn	14	6
Plate	expn	17	7

Expense- inex = inexpensive, stan = standard, expn = expensive.  
 Protection- Protection + Stm + Size = Soak total.  
 Load- Represents the weight and awkwardness of the armor, used to figure Encumbrance.



A pale shaft of moonlight poked through the tree-tops and fell on the faerie ring below. Where an instant before there had been only an empty clearing, now Lucienne could see a host of mushrooms shining with a living, silvery hue. No one in Grimgroth's party moved or spoke, but looked upon the eerie spectacle in breathless silence.

Grimgroth finally broke the trance and pulled a sack from his belt, but before he could take a step, a voice rang out from the darkness, "Step gently, Grimgroth." Peering into the shadows around the glade, Grimgroth recognized the twisted visage of his former pupil. Lupus Mortus, accompanied by three brutish grogs.

"This place belongs to Doissetep," the black-cloaked magus growled.

"We were here first, Lupus." Grimgroth said angrily. "However, if you insist, the Code of Hermes has provisions for circumstances like this."

"So, you agree to Certamen, master?"

"If that is your wish."

The black one muttered an initiation spell and chose his magical art for the duel. "Creo!" "Corporem," Grimgroth said, and completed the spell that linked the two in a magical duel.

The air between the two magi shimmered and took the shape of two armored men. The black one's combatant was clad in plate armor of ancient design. With the head of a wolf and a jagged-edged greatsword, it crouched and shifted its weight from foot to foot. Grimgroth's champion took the form of the recently encountered Stormrider, minus its steed. The glowering demonspawn advanced upon its wolfish opponent, and then swung his sword in a broad, shining arc. Light burst forth when the two swords clashed, blinding all and obscuring the battle being fought within the mystic circle.

When the light finally died out, the phantasms were gone and the black wizard was kneeling on the ground, breathing heavily. Grimgroth was leaning on his staff, his face haggard with strain. After a time Lupus, with visible effort, arose. Nodding soberly to his former mentor, he gathered his grogs and faded into the forest. As Lupus' form disappeared, Grimgroth collapsed. While the grogs guarded Grimgroth's unconscious form, Lucienne bent to the task of harvesting the reward of her master's battle. When daylight finally raised its head above the horizon, Lucienne had two large sacks of faerie mushrooms protected from the sun's destructive rays. Grimgroth muttered his thanks and the group silently began to walk through the forest back to Mistridge.

# ☉ Magic ☉

**I**n the 8th century the wizard Bonisagus developed a "universal" theory of magic, and with this creation the wizards could share their knowledge freely. The Order of Hermes was born. Until then magic had been highly individualistic and limited in scope. With the ability to share and accumulate knowledge, the Hermetic magi have gained an immense advantage over other wizards. Some believe, however, that the strict regimentation of Hermetic magic helps the mediocre magi who need an exact system to guide them but robs the truly brilliant magi of the chance to discover the modes of power that best suits them.

One of the innovations of the Order is the *parma magica*, a magical shield that has not been duplicated by other supernatural powers. This protection was instrumental in bringing the Order to power over other wizards in the 8th century.

The Order of Hermes, however, is only a small part of the magical world. Magical beasts, many of them intelligent, also fall in this category, and many wizards who have not joined the Order continue to practice their obscure arts. Non-Hermetic magi are less flexible but more specialized in specific talents, and in these areas of specialization they are quite powerful. The rules for magic in this game govern Hermetic magic only. Storyguides should be

sure to use non-Hermetic magic to create monsters, wizards, and magic items beyond the bounds of these rules and thus keep magic a mystery even to those who think they know it all. In this chapter we will provide rules that will allow you to use and employ Hermetic magic.

Magic is an earthly force, and as such it can only affect things below the lunar sphere, things on earth and in Hell. Magic can never affect the moon or anything beyond it. Nor can magic change anything's true nature. It cannot, for example, raise the dead or force a demon to tell the truth.

Hermetic magic is a useful but imperfect theory. These rules represent what the magi expect to happen, and what usually does happen, but the exact effects of a spell can be influenced by countless factors (the phase of the moon, the intangible nature of the target, the mental state of the caster, etc.). Storyguides who occasionally bend the rules and interpret magical effects imaginatively, therefore, are simulating the magical world better than those who follow the magic rules to the letter.

Admittedly, the magic rules can be complex, but you do not need to know them all to play a magus. Like an apprentice learning the arts of magic, take it one step at a time (and it won't take you fifteen years).

## The Magic Arts

Fifteen magic arts describe your mastery of the various fields of magic: five techniques and ten forms. The techniques describe what you do, and the forms describe what you are affecting. Each spell combines one form and one technique. Thus a "create fire" spell would produce light, heat, or fire, and a "control fire" spell would somehow control light, heat, or fire. Each of the fifteen arts has a Latin name.

You have a score in each art, just as if they were abilities. These scores represent your aptitude for working with the various types of magic. They are not, however, mere knowledges; your arts are actually a part of you. True magical prowess requires native talent, long term theoretical study, years of practice, a comfortable familiarity, intuitive understanding, high confidence in one's own skills, and much courage. Your score in a form helps you resist spells of that type (see Magic Resistance, p. 66) and withstand mundane danger. For instance, a high *Ignem* (fire) score gives you a bonus to resist damage from fire. For every full 5 points you have in a form, you get a +1 bonus to relevant rolls.

Each of the arts is listed with its abbreviation, translation from Latin, scope of effect, and perhaps a mnemonic device to help you remember it. The Hermetic pronunciation (close to that of Classical Latin) is also given. With the forms are listed those things from which they protect you, as described above.

## Techniques

### Creo(Cr) "I create"

This art allows you to create something from thin air. It turns dreams into reality. Creation is concerned with the instantaneous production of objects from nothing. When using a *Creo* spell, you enter a momentary state of transcendent meditation and contact the realm of Forms, in which all the objects that ever were and ever could be — chairs, dogs, anger, quills, whatever — exist as perfect Ideas. Your magic finds the proper form and makes it real. Objects created this way are closer to the world of Forms than are normal objects, so they are always perfect and flawless. You can also use the art of *Creo* to perfect things that have fallen away from their ideal nature, such as healing a wounded arm or mending a broken vase. Magi who study *Creo* intently see the world filled with growth, birth, and creation. Pronounced "CRAY-oh"

### Intellego (In) "I perceive"

All things in the world are connected to each other, and the magi who pursue the art of *Intellego* learn how to see these connections, read them, and learn from them. What others hear as

wind in the branches is to them the language of the trees. Pronounced "in-TEL-le-go," think: intelligence.

### **Muto (Mu) "I transform"**

The art of transformation and transmutation. Muto wizards tend to view the world as being in a constant flux of change. They see each apparent state, such as "sleeping," "young," or even "dead," as one step in a perpetual process of change. Through this art, they learn to direct and control this natural process. Transformations are easiest when there is a strong connection between the original form and the result of the transformation, such as turning a leaf into an apple. On the other hand, turning a leaf (living, flexible, and vegetable) into a sword (inert, unyielding, and mineral) is quite difficult. Pronounced "MOO-toc," think: mutate.

### **Perdo (Pe) "I destroy"**

The one trait held in common by all objects and creatures in this temporal world is that someday they will come to an end; their demise is inevitable. The magus who understands the art of Perdo knows this, and uses magic to control this universal process. Aging, disease, decay, rust, and death are all subject to manipulation through this art. Deep study of Perdo often leads magi to perceive everything about them as being in some stage of decay. Pronounced "PAIR-doe," think: perdition.

### **Rego (Re) "I control"**

You can move things with this technique, but not change them. The magus of Rego attempts not to change things, but to control their motions and positions. Since this art affects an external factor, action, rather than an internal factor, such as shape, it is versatile. A Rego spell that moves a person can be used to take someone out of danger or to slam someone into a wall. Those who have devoted their lives to this art often become obsessed with ordering the world around them, though the order they seek may be unfathomable to others. Pronounced "RAY-go," think: regulate.

## **Forms**

### **Animal (An) "animal"**

This art affects animals of all kinds, from the fish in the sea to the birds of the air. Animal magi develop a keen appreciation of the power of the animal spirit and form, and some prefer the company of beasts to that of humans. Nevertheless, an uncrossable chasm separates humans from animals: humans have souls. Bonus: animal poisons or other special abilities (but not claws). Pronounced "ah-nee-MAHL."

### **Aquam (Aq) "water"**

Affects all manner of liquids. Through this art, one gains access to the might of a roaring flood and the gentleness of a clear pool. Studying Aquam can teach one flexibility and strength. Bonus: drowning & swimming. Pronounced "AH-kwahm," think: aquatic.

### **Auram (Au) "air"**

Air, wind, and weather. The heart of an Auram magus is in the sky, among the roiling storms, rushing winds, cool fog, and gentle rains. To them, the world on the earth is slow, dull, ponderous, and static. True flight is only possible through this art. Bonus: effects of weather. Pronounced "OW-rahm."

### **Exempli Gratia: Bonus for Forms**

In Mercille, Grimgroth touches a plague-ridden corpse and must make a Stm roll of 3+ to keep from catching the plague himself. His Corporem score of 7 gives him a +1 bonus on the roll. His roll is  $3 + 0(\text{Stm}) + 1 (\text{bonus}) = 4$ , and he retains his health.

### **Corporem(Co) "body"**

Human and human-like bodies. Magi of this art see the human body as the most refined and perfect creation in the physical world, a combination of the other elements that is above any of its components. Some use their arts to heal, others to harm, but both kinds of Corporem magi develop an appreciation for the body's intricacy. Bonus: disease. Pronounced "CORE-pore-em," think: corpse.

### **Herbam (He) "plant"**

Plants and trees of all types, including dead wood. The trees of the forest are old and mighty, and their roots reach deep into the secrets of the earth. Herbam magi appreciate the many virtues of plant life: bountiful fruit, strong wood, powerful herbs, and ancient trees that can tell much to those patient enough to listen to them. Many Herbam magi develop an antipathy toward fire. Bonus: herbal poisons. Pronounced "HAIR-bahm," think: herbal.

### **Ignem (Ig) "fire"**

Fire, heat, and light. Fire is the most life-like of the four elements; it moves, devours, and grows, much like a living thing. Also like living things, it can be killed by the other three elements, smothered by earth, quenched by water, or blown apart by wind. Though it can be destroyed by the other elements, its position partway between inert matter and living being gives it the advantages of both. Ignem magi are often passionate and fickle. Bonus: heat and blinding light. Pronounced "IG-nem," think: ignite.

### **Imagonem (Im) "image"**

The art of illusions and phantasms. This art affects only sensations and can never affect matter. Masters of this art have learned to separate an object from its apparent features, and many of them likewise become separated from what those around them see as reality. Many Imagonem magi become more interested in colors and sounds themselves than in the actual things that produce them. Bonus: being fooled by appearances. Pronounced "i-MAH-go-nem."

### **Mentem (Me) "mind"**

Minds, thoughts, and spirits. This art comes as close as magic can to affecting souls. Through this art, magi manipulate what they call the "body of the soul": memories, thoughts, and emotions. They can also affect the "spiritual bodies" of noncorporeal beings, such as ghosts. Mentem magi who have thought too deeply of the implications of their art do not make good company. Bonus: confusion or mental weakness. Pronounced "MEN-tem," think: mental.

## Terram(Te)"earth"

Solids, especially earth and stone. Terram magi see their art as affecting the very foundation of this world, and they can wield powerful spells. Though Terram magic is mighty, the earth proves resistant to manipulation. Just as stone is heavy and hard to lift or push, it is inert and hard to change, even through magic. Many Terram magi learn patience and stillness from the earth they study. Bonus: damage from earth, such as avalanches and falling. Pronounced "TAIR-rahm," think: terrain.

## Vim (Vi) "power."

Magic and demons. All these arts rely on *vis*, the force that powers magic. This art, however, is on a higher level: it manipulates *vis* itself, allowing magi to take more control of their spells. The art also affects demons, which are innately magical creatures. Dealing with demons, however, is dangerous both because of the risk of corruption and because it is against the Code of Hermes. Bonus: none. Pronounced "WEEM."

# Casting Spells

As a magus, you will find yourself casting a lot of spells. You can cast a formulaic spell, such as one listed in the spell chapter or one invented by a player, if you have studied it and know it. You know a spell by choosing it to be in your books when you begin the game or by learning or inventing it during the course of the saga. (See the sections in the Laboratory chapter about Learning and Inventing Spells.) You may cast a spontaneous spell any time you please, making it up on the spot; you never "know" a spontaneous spell.

## Types of Magic

Magic is divided into two types: spontaneous and formulaic. Both draw upon your mastery of the magical arts and use magical words and gestures to obtain a supernatural effect. In the case of spontaneous magic, you combine the words and gestures that you think will work on the spot. Spontaneous magic, therefore, is flexible but unpredictable. Formulaic magic, on the other hand, is the repetition of magical formulae (including words and gestures) that will almost always have a given effect. It is more powerful than spontaneous magic, but less flexible.

## Casting a Formulaic Spell

To cast a formulaic spell, your magus recites the magic words in a firm voice and boldly executes arcane hand gestures memorized as part of the spell. This ritual shapes and directs the magical energy (*vis*) that pervades the world. Once these acts are completed, roll to see whether the spell worked and whether you are fatigued. With each spell cast, roll a **die + Technique + Form + Stm**. If the total equals or exceeds the spell Level, the spell works without fatiguing you. If the total falls short of the spell Level, you lose one fatigue level. If you miss the spell's Level by **more than 10 points**, the spell does not take effect, and you lose a fatigue level anyhow. The die rolled for the casting is a stress die if you are in stressful circumstances; otherwise it is simple.

When you successfully cast a spell, remember what number you rolled because it might be used immediately to see if you overcome the target's magic resistance (see p. 66).

The more powerful or difficult a spell is the higher its Level. Look at the Muto Corporem spells on p. 86 for examples.



## Exempli Gratia: Formulaic Spells,

Grimgroth finds a tavern filled with corpses, flies, rats, and debris. He wants to use this tavern as a temporary headquarters, but first he needs to clear it out. To do so, he casts the Charge of the Angry Winds (CrAu 30). His **Creo + Auram + Stm** total is  $4+12+0=16$ , and he gets a +4 bonus for his score of 4 in his Magical Affinity with Winds, so his total is +20. He rolls a simple die, 3, for a roll of 23. It's lower than the Level of the spell, so he drops a fatigue level, but it's still within 10 points, so the spell works. Grimgroth suffers a -2 penalty for being in a village of the faithful (see Supernatural Powers), but that still leaves him within 10 points of the needed roll. A huge wind roars through the tavern, clearing the floor of debris and vermin.



## Casting a Spontaneous Spell

Casting spontaneous magic is more flexible, but more complex, than casting a formulaic spell. You decide what effect to attempt and formulate a magic spell on the spur of the moment to achieve that effect. To determine the results of a spontaneous spell, you and the Storyguide first determine the technique and form that are appropriate for the feat being attempted. Then, decide whether you are going to exert yourself (i.e. expend a fatigue level). Finally, roll a die (simple or stress, depending on the circumstances) and add Technique + Form + Int. If you have decided to expend a fatigue level, divide the result by two. If you do not expend a fatigue level, divide it by five. (Any bonuses or penalties are applied to the roll before it is divided.) The result is the "Level equivalent" of the spontaneous spell. Compare this number to spells of that Form and Technique and near that Level to see what effect the spontaneous spell had. The spell should be as powerful as other spells of its Level. (The Storyguide's judgment is paramount in deciding the effects of a spontaneous spell.) If the result is 0 or lower, there is no effect.

If your spell is directed at a target with magic resistance, remember the roll you made (before dividing) because it will be used to see whether you overcome the target's resistance (see p.66).

If you describe exactly what your magus does to cast a spontaneous spell, and if it's interesting, colorful, or eminently sensible, you can get a bonus of up to +5 on your roll (Storyguide's discretion).

## Requisites

Most spells involve simply two arts, one form and one technique. Some spells, however, involve more than two. For instance, a spell that turns a human into a bird uses Muto (because you are transforming something), Corporem (because you are affecting a body), and Animal (because you are turning the body into an animal's body). In addition to the two primary arts, Corporem and Muto in this case, casting the spell involves your Animal score as well. This third art is a requisite.

### Formulaic Requisites

Requisites (if any) are listed for each formulaic spell in Chapter 5. (See the Curse of Circe on p. 86 for an example). The requisite limits one of the primary arts, the one that matches the requisite, i.e. the technique is limited when the requisite is a technique, and the form is limited when the requisite is a form. So if you cast the Curse of Circe, and your Animal is 6 while your Corporem is 13, you treat your Corporem score as if it were only 6.

Sometimes a spell has a requisite for both the art and form, so that both are limited. If several requisites apply to the same primary art (e.g. there are two requisites that are forms, so both limit the primary form), the lowest one serves as the limit.

Requisites listed at the top of the spell count when you are learning, inventing, or casting a spell. Requisites do not count for a defender's magic resistance.

Some requisites are not listed at the top of the spell because they only count when the spell is being used in a certain way. They sometimes count when casting a spell, but never when learning or

### Exempli Gratia: Spontaneous Magic

Grimgroth sets up temporary headquarters in the tavern while he and his party search Mercille. Unfortunately, the air in the tavern still reeks of corpses, and Grimgroth is not pleased. He wants to clear the air of stench with a spontaneous spell. He and the Storyguide agree that doing so is a Level 10 Perdo Auram feat, and Grimgroth decides to exert himself, since he thinks he will have time to recuperate afterwards. His Pe + Au + Int total is 16, and he rolls a 5, for a total of 21. Grimgroth suffers a -2 penalty because he is within the Dominion, so the total drops to 19. Divided by 2, the number becomes 9.5. The Storyguide could simply round up and say that the feat is complete but decides instead that a faint odor lingers on, detectable only by perceptive people.

### Fatigue

Fatigue is described in the Effects of Combat section of the Combat chapter. Fatigue from spells is normally short-term. (From ritual spells, it is long-term.) Short-term fatigue recovers at the following rates: Winded- 2 minutes, Weary-10 minutes, Tired- 30 minutes, Dazed- 60 minutes, Unconscious- wake up at Winded in 2 hours. You can recover a level in half time by rolling a Stm roll of 9+. Long-term fatigue is only recovered by sleep.

inventing it, so they are called **casting** requisites. Look at Shape of the Woodland Prowler, p.86, for an example. When learning the spell or using it to transform only your body, you only need an Animal requisite, but if you want to transform your wooden staff along with you, you need a Herbam requisite as well. You might,

### Exempli Gratia: Requisites

One of the corpses in the tavern appears to have died from a blast of fire, as from a spell, and Grimgroth decides to speak with her. He kneels by her side and casts Whispers Through the Black Gate (InCo 15), which allows him to speak with a recently slain person. Grimgroth's In + Co + Stm total is 9, but the spell has a Mentem requisite, so Grimgroth's Corporem score of 7 is treated as if it were 3, his Mentem score. His total for the spell is therefore 5. He rolls 5 + 5 = 10. Since the spell is Level 15, he loses one fatigue level but still casts the spell. (Actually, Grimgroth suffers a -2 on his roll for being in a village of the faithful, but his total of 8 still lets him cast the spell.)

From the corpse, Grimgroth learns that the woman was slain by a wizard who raided the town with several grogs. The woman asks for a proper burial, and Grimgroth assures her she shall have one.

therefore, be able to transform your staff as well if you have a good Herbam score but be unable to transform your metal dagger if your Terram score is low. The lowest score among all the requisites (and the original art) is the one that is used for your score.

Look at the requisites listed for the various spells in the Spells chapter, and you will see how requisites are determined.

## Spontaneous Requisites

Requisites are similar for spontaneous spells. When the arts used are determined, determine also whether requisites are involved. If so, they limit your arts just as they do for formulaic spells.

## Targeting

Some spells, especially Animal, Corporem, and Mentem spells, affect a target directly. While casting the Curse of Circe (p. 86), for example, you must concentrate on the body that you are going to transform into a pig, and if you successfully cast the spell, it affects the target directly (though the target may resist magically.) Other spells, however, conjure some type of medium, such as fire, which in turn affects the target. Since this medium could appear out of place and thus have less effect, or none at all, the full effect occurs only when you have successfully targeted the spell. For instance, if you are trying to blind an enemy temporarily with the Rash of the Scarlet Flames (p. 90), you have to get the flash right in the target's face. No problem if the victim is standing still and in plain sight, but someone sneaking through the bushes or dodging around in a melee is a harder target. Spells that need to be aimed are so indicated in their descriptions.

To see whether your spell comes up where you need it, roll a die and add Per + Finesse + Targeting Modifier. If the roll matches the ease factor set by the Storyguide (see the Spell Targeting Table), the spell hits the right target. Sometimes they have bonuses or penalties (targeting modifiers) depending on how hard they are to aim, such as the -3 penalty with Scarlet Flames.

You might need a targeting roll to use other spells in certain ways. For instance, the Unseen Porter (p. 98) is not aimed since it automatically lifts (or attempts to lift) the target, but a targeting roll would be necessary to place someone gently on a horse.

### Spell Targeting Table

Free Shot- Target is standing still in plain view at short distance. No roll required; automatic.

Easy Shot- Target is moving slowly or is standing at a distance. Targeting roll of 6+ necessary.

Hard Shot- Target is engaged in combat; is obscured by darkness, cover, etc.; or is at a great distance (200 paces). You need a 9+.

Very Hard Shot- Target is visually obscured and moving quickly. 12+.

Incredible Shot- Distant target is barely visible. 15+.

Other factors will have effects as the Storyguide sees fit. Ease factor is for a Per + Finesse + Targeting Modifier roll.

## Magic Botch Suggestions

Despite the Order's attempts to regulate it, magic remains an art, not a science, and the results of a given spell cast under stress are not entirely predictable. Here are some possible botches, with the kinds of spells most likely to produce them.

- Affects Wrong Target. (Spells that work at a distance)
- Spell Affects Caster. (Destructive spells, especially when cast against a powerful opponent or a faerie)
- Related but Unwanted Affect. (Muto spells)
- Incomplete or Improper Effect. (Muto)
- Misleading Information. (Intellego)
- Out of Control, the spell creates or calls forth something that is beyond the caster's ability to control. (Creo, Rego, Aquam, Auram, Terram, and especially Ignem)
- Reverse Effect. (Rego, Muto)
- Caster Overwhelmed by Own Magic, Stm roll of 6+ or be knocked unconscious, possibly losing magical ability for a while; rarely, it can obliterate the caster. (Powerful Vim spells, powerful spells that affect the caster)
- Caster Insane, confused, or demented, duration indefinite. (Mentem, Intellego spells, esp. when used on demons or faeries)

The following can result from a spell botch or from a botch on a natural resistance roll. Note that the more spells a person has been influenced by, especially for long periods of time, the more likely they are to suffer ill effects from botches like these (so a covenant that uses spells to make its grogs loyal may soon have a turb of insane or feeble-minded grogs). Sometimes even beneficial spells can have detrimental effects on those affected by them.

- Permanent Side-Effect, like a turn-to-wolf spell that leaves you with fang-like teeth even when in human form. (Muto)
- Debilitating, the spell pushes the target too hard and does permanent damage, such as a spell meant to influence emotions that leaves the target's emotions random and confused, forever. (Mentem, Corporem)
- Too Powerful, the spell does more than it should and thereby causes problems. (Muto, Perdo, Creo)
- Death & Destruction, the target "falls apart" under the preternatural pressure of the spell, such as a Rego Corporem spell that leaves the body lifeless or a Mentem spell that causes complete insanity. (Mentem, Corporem, Animal)
- Constitution Broken, the target loses the faculties related to the spell, such as a Muto spell that leaves the target with no natural shape so that the person's form droops and decays without a spell to support it. (Muto, Corporem, Mentem)

## Magic Resistance

There are two kinds of protection from a spell: natural resistance and magic resistance. Natural resistance (if any) is described for each spell. For instance, the Trust of Childlike Faith (p. 95) can be resisted by an Int roll. Even if the spell strikes you, natural resistance can keep it from affecting you (just as a Soak roll can keep a sword that hits you from hurting you). Most people have only natural resistance, and since most spells have no provision for natural resistance, normal people fall easily to the power of spells. Wizards and magical creatures, however, also have magic resistance, which can counter a spell before it even hits its target (like a shield that blocks a sword). Magic resistance comes from innate abilities (for faeries, demons, and such), from blessings of the Church, from black blessings of the infernal powers, from *parmae magicae*, and from a wizard's forms. Some spells cannot be countered by natural or magic resistance. These must be avoided by more active means, such as dodging or casting a quick counter-spell.

When a spell that can be resisted strikes a character with magic resistance, the target must roll a simple die + Magic Resistance to see if the spell is resisted. The result is compared to the roll that the

### Exempli Gratia: Magic Resistance

Grimgroth grasps a staff that he has found in Mercille. Unfortunately, it has been warded with the Blessing of Childlike Bliss held in a Waiting Spell. The magus who placed the ward rolled 29 + 3 for Penetration talent = 32, the Penetration roll. Grimgroth's Parma Magica score is 4, giving him 20 point of protection, plus his Mentem score of 3 = 23. Grimgroth rolls a 9, for a total of 32, exactly matching the penetration roll. The Blessing of Childlike Bliss is stopped.

**attacker made to cast the spell + Penetration talent** (called the penetration roll). If the spell was spontaneous, the number used is the roll *before* division. For spell-like powers that do not require rolls to cast, such as faerie powers or magic items, make a penetration roll as directed for that power. If the attacker beats the defender's roll, the spell has penetrated (but may still be resisted naturally, if the spell allows). If the resistance equals or exceeds the penetration, the spell has been countered and does not affect the target.

## Magic Activities Table

Action	Roll Modifiers	Notes
Cast Formulaic Spell	Tech + Form + Stm	Level of spell or lose fatigue level, within 10 or fail spell
Cast Spontaneous Spell	Tech + Form + Int	divide by 2 for exertion, divide by 5 for non-exertion
Cast Ritual Spell	Tech + Form + Stm + Meditation	lose one or two long-term fatigue levels
Magic Penetration	roll to cast spell + Penetration	beat target's magic resistance roll
Magic Resistance	Form + 5X <i>Parma Magica</i>	simple roll
Targeting	Per + Finesse + modifier	<b>see Spell Targeting Table</b>
Concentration	Int + Concentration	<b>see Distraction Table</b>
Fast-Cast	Spontaneous spell	-5 and double normal botch rolls, 0 means side effect (& roll for botch)
Multiple Casting	Int + Finesse - number of spells	roll 9+, penalty on casting & targeting rolls
Casting a Spell while Maintaining Another	Int + Concentration	roll 15+, +3 if same spell or target
Casting from Text	As for formulaic	stress & twice normal botch rolls
<i>Certamen</i> ! Basic roll	Tech + Form + Int + <i>Certamen</i>	compare w/ opponent's roll
Weaken Opponent	Int + <i>Certamen</i> + bonus points	vs. Stm + <i>Certamen</i>

### Using Raw Vis

Ritual Spell- requires 1 point/5 Levels of spell  
 Increase Spell's Duration- requires 1 point/5 Levels of spell  
 Strengthen Formulaic Spell- duplicates 5 Levels/point  
 Strengthen Spontaneous Spell- +5/point on roll  
 In *Certamen*- +5/point on basic roll

### Requisites

A requisite limits the form (if the requisite is a form) or the technique (if the requisite is a technique). A casting requisite limits the art only when the spell is used in a certain way.

Magic resistance is automatic. No one need ever decide to resist, nor does doing so require concentration. Magi may, however, decide not to resist a given spell. If you do so, you can deduct your Vim score from your normal magic resistance. (This means if your Vim score is lower than the form being used for resistance, you still have some magic resistance.) You may also drop your *parma magica* at will.

**For a magus, resistance is 5 times *Parma Magica* + the form of the attacking spell.** Without a *parma*, only the form counts. The *parma magica* is not cumulative with non-Hermetic forms of resistance. The reason the form of the attacking spell is included in the resistance rating is because mastery over a medium includes protection from it. If you are a master of the art of Ignem, you are not easily affected by flame spells; they flare all around you but usually do not burn you.

For non-magi, magic resistance is usually just a straight number. For instance, a faerie with a Faerie Might of 22 has +22 resistance.

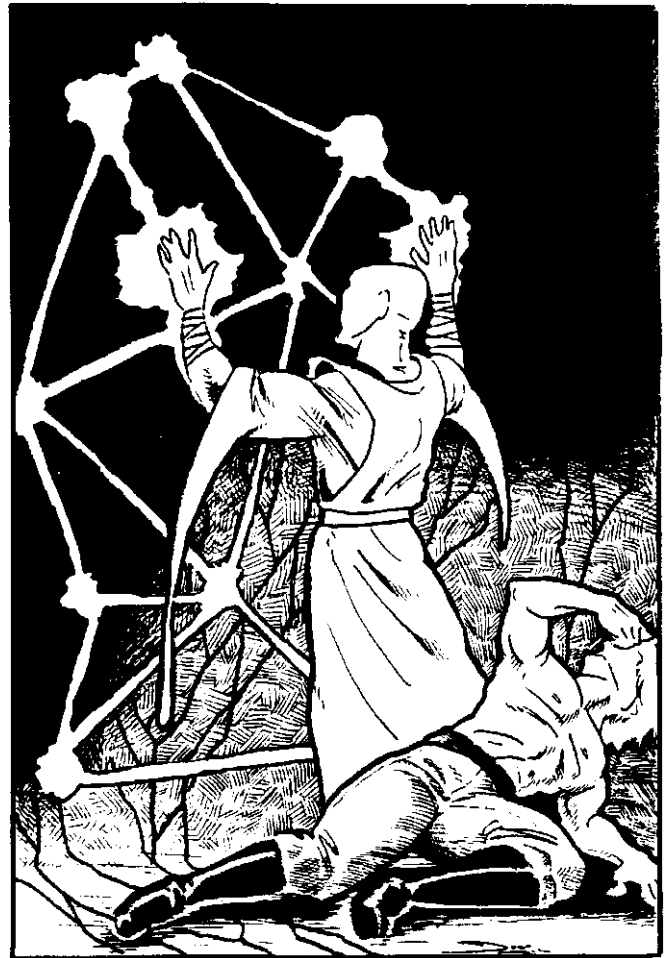
## Spells that Can be Resisted

Not all spells can be magically resisted. All spells that attack you directly or by magically forming an attacking medium can be resisted. Spells that affect you by changing the environment cannot be resisted, including most illusions.

Intellego spells can be resisted, but not always countered. If an Intellego spell gives the caster a vision without probing the target person, successful resistance merely detects the spell. When you resist this type of Intellego spell, you know that you are the subject of some type of detecting magic, but you do not know the spell itself. Spells like the Eye of the Sage (p. 85) work like this. Intellego spells that probe the target person, such as those that read minds, are blocked when resisted.

Another way to protect yourself from a spell is to cast a quick counter-spell against the attacking spell. For instance if an enemy magus causes a tree branch to swing down and strike you, you could fast-cast a spontaneous Rego Herbam spell in response to

make it swing off to the side and miss you. You can use a counter-spell against any attacking spell, but it can be a somewhat risky procedure, and it does not always work. See Fast-Casts, P. 68 for more details.



## Spells: Resisted & Not Resisted

### Resisted

Incantation of the Milky Eyes (PeCo 20)  
 Strike of the Angered Branch (ReHe 15)  
 Pilum of Fire (Crlg20)  
 The Chirurgeon's Healing Touch (CrCo 20)  
 Frosty Breath of the Spoken Lie (InMe 20)  
 Broom of the Winds (ReAu 15)  
 Weight of a Thousand Hells (CrMe 25)  
 Visions of the Infernal Terrors\* (Mulm 30)  
 Eye of the Sage\*\* (InCo 30)

### Not Resisted

Pit of the Gaping Earth (PeTe 15)  
 Cascade of Rocks (PeTe 25)  
 The Shadow of Human Life (Crlm 40)  
 Neptune's Wrath (ReAq 50)  
 Transmogrify Spell (MuVi Gen)

\* because of the Mentem requisite of the spell

\*\* detected but not countered

## Ritual Spells

Some powerful spells require much more energy and concentration than standard spells, and thus the process of casting them is different. These spells, called ritual spells, perform major feats, such as healing diseases or constructing towers of stone. For each 5 Levels of a ritual spell you are attempting to cast, you must spend fifteen minutes in uninterrupted concentration and 1 raw *vis* point. This raw *vis* must match the technique or form of the ritual spell. Then, you make a roll to resist fatigue as you would for a normal spell, except that you add your Meditation skill to the roll. Success means you lose only one fatigue level, while failure means you lose two. This fatigue is long-term, and if you drop below Unconscious you are unconscious for an extra hour. Some ritual spells have two durations. To achieve the second (longer) duration, you must expend double the normal time and *vis* points.

Ritual spells cannot be duplicated by spontaneous magic.

## Concentration

It takes concentration to cast a spell, so if anything distracts you while you are casting, you need to make a Concentration roll or be unable to cast the spell. The concentration roll is die + Int + Concentration skill, and the ease factor depends on the distraction suffered; see the Distraction Table. If you are moving, subtract your Enc from the roll. These rolls are also necessary when you are distracted while trying to maintain a spell.

### Distraction Table

Struck in combat	12 + 1 per point by which you miss your Soak roll		
Walking	6	Fall	12
Running	12	Knocked Down	15
Jostled	9	Blown Over	21
Sudden noise or flash of light		9	
Imminent personal threat		12	

The numbers are ease factors for a Concentration roll.

## Spell Effects

The range, duration, and effects of spells are all explained in general and specific terms in the Spells chapter.

## Spell-Casting Options

### Mastering a Spell

When you gain experience points at the end of a story, you can use them to master spells. You may put experience points on spells you have used in stress instead of on abilities (no more than 1 point per spell per story), and when you have accumulated one-fifth the spell's Level in experience points, it is mastered. When casting a mastered spell, always roll a simple die (which prevents botches). In addition, you may multiple cast mastered spells.

### Multiple Casting

You can cast a single mastered spell so that it affects more people, objects, or areas (as applicable) than normal. First, you must make a Finesse + Int roll of 9+, with a penalty on the roll equal to the number of spells cast. If you fail the roll, your time is wasted and you lose a fatigue level if you botch. If you make the roll, you must make a casting roll for each spell, subtracting the number of spells from each roll. If you drop below "Unconscious" because of this exertion, you will be unconscious for an extra hour for each fatigue level you lose past unconsciousness. Subtract the number of targets from any targeting rolls made when multiple casting. Even if all the spells are aimed at one target, you receive a -1 penalty. Only mastered spells can be multiple cast.

For example, if you cast three Balls of Abysmal Flame, two of them at one target and the other at a second target, you have a -3 penalty (the number of spells) on the rolls to cast them and a -2 penalty (the number of targets) on each targeting roll.

The Storyguide can penalize or prohibit multiple casting that is especially difficult, such as casting two spells in opposite directions.

## Words and Gestures

It is possible to cast either a formulaic or spontaneous spell without the firm voice and strong gestures that are typical, but doing so is difficult. Use the Words and Gestures Table to determine your penalty on your rolls to cast spells when not using full gestures and voice. For example, when using soft words and subtle gestures your penalty is -7.

### Words and Gestures Table

Voice	Penalty	Gesture	Penalty
<b>Firm</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Bold</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Soft</b>	<b>-5</b>	<b>Subtle</b>	<b>-2</b>
<b>None</b>	<b>-10</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>-5</b>

## Fast-Cast Spells

To cast a spell safely one needs time to draw together and form the *vis* that powers the spell. Formulaic spells always require this expenditure of time, but if you are daring or desperate, you can cast spontaneous spells more quickly. Fast-casting a spell entails gathering the energy and expending it before the normal precautions are taken to control it.

A fast-cast spell is rolled for normally, but with a -5 penalty because it is so hasty. If you roll a 0, however, the spell still works but has a serious side effect (like a botch). You might cast a quick Rego C6rporem to shunt instantly to the side and avoid an incoming spell, and if you roll a 0, you may land flat on your face or upside down. You must also roll for a normal botch with double the number of botch rolls.

You will usually risk the dangers of fast-casting a spell when you are directly threatened. Fast-cast spells can protect you from arrows, ambushes, attack spells, traps, and so on. Fast-cast spells can save your life, and, if used well, protect you against the most powerful magical attacks.

## Using Raw Vis

Raw *vis* is magical power in physical form, and you can use it to strengthen your spells. One way to use raw *vis* is to extend the duration of a spell. Some spells have two durations listed, and you can achieve the second duration only by expending 1 raw *vis* point per 5 Levels of the spell, or fraction thereof. If you wish to use raw *vis* to extend the duration of a spontaneous spell, the number of points expended must be decided before the roll is made for the strength of the spell, and the Level equivalent is limited to 5 times the number of points expended.

You must use raw *vis* for ritual spells, again 1 point per 5 Levels of the spell. For spontaneous magic, you can use raw *vis* to increase

## Raw Vis

Magic power (*vis*) is sometimes stored in physical objects, either because a magus has trapped it there or because of spontaneous processes. When in a physical object, this power is called "raw *vis*," and magi have many uses for it. Raw *vis* is always connected to a certain technique or form. Thus there is *Ignem vis*, *Creo vis*, *Imagonem vis*, and so on. There is even *Vim vis*, pure magic power stored in physical form. Raw *vis* comes in many forms, including blood, skins, horns, plants, sap, crystals, minerals, etc. When used, the *vis* is permanently lost, and the physical form usually changes. It dissolves, withers, crumbles, shrivels, or whatever is appropriate to the material in which the *vis* is trapped.

Raw *vis* can be used to strengthen a spell, to extend a spell's duration, to perform a ritual, to create a magic item, to enchant a familiar, to increase one's power in *Certamen*, and to provide a source for study. Because it is so versatile, it is used as currency among magi.

Raw *vis* is measured in "*vis* points." More powerful actions require more *vis* points. Most actions can use *vis* of any art, but some actions (such as casting a ritual spell) require *vis*

of a specific type. Magi measure raw *vis* in "pawns," each equal to 1 point. Ten "pawns" make a "rook," and ten "rooks" make a "queen."

When you expend raw *vis*, you must be touching it. This is why magi often wear magical sources of *vis* in necklaces or rings; it is a visible sign for all who might challenge them that they have *vis* to use if threatened. When you choose to use raw *vis*, you must use all the *vis* in contact with your skin. You cannot use just part of the raw *vis* you are touching. You may, however, cast spells without using raw *vis* even if some is touching you.

Your *Vim* score, since it represents your ability to manipulate magic power, is the limit on the number of *vis* points you may use in normal activities. For laboratory activities, since they take so long, *Vim* + Magic Theory is the limit to the number of *vis* points you can use in one season. If you try to use more *vis* than your *Vim* score allows, the extra points are lost. They do not count toward the action attempted, but they do count to determine the number of extra botch rolls you make.

your roll; you get +5 on your roll (before dividing) for every point expended. For non-ritual formulaic magic, each point of raw *vis* duplicates 5 Levels of the spell. Thus, you can double the effect of your spell by using 1 raw *vis* point per 5 Levels of the spell. Using the power of raw *vis* to increase the power of a spell (both spontaneous and formulaic) is tricky, and if you roll a 0, you must make one extra botch roll for every *vis* point put into the spell.

### Casting a Spell While Maintaining Another

To cast one spell while concentrating on another, make a Concentration + Int roll of 15+. You get a bonus of +3 if the second

spell is the same as the first or if the target for the second spell is the same as the target for the first. If you fail, you fail to cast the second spell; and if you botch, you lose concentration on the first spell as well.

### Casting from Text

It is possible to cast a spell that you do not know yourself if you have a readable copy of it. If you cast such a spell, you roll for fatigue on a stress die with *double* the number of botch rolls. You must also spend one round for every 5 Levels of the spell. Unless you botch, the spell will go off, but you will lose one fatigue level for every 5 points by which you fail the spell (just like losing body levels to damage).

## Certamen

*Certamen* ("CareTAHmen," Latin for "duel") is the ritual by which two magi voluntarily come to a magical "middle ground" where they pit their magic talents against one another. Within the Order of Hermes, it serves as a non-lethal way for one magus to establish dominance and precedence over another. The ritual has formal restrictions to keep it from disrupting the unity within the Order. You may challenge anyone to *Certamen* once, but the Code prohibits challenging the same person again without their challenging you in the meantime. Thus, you cannot hound an unwilling opponent with *Certamen*.

To engage in *Certamen*, you must find a magical middle ground with another magus and use your magic arts to try to overcome your enemy's. The middle ground consists of a form and a technique, which are the media in which the struggle takes place.

You and your opponent must agree on the form and technique or you cannot match power and fight. Thus, either combatant can decline to enter *Certamen*. (It is possible to decline *Certamen*, but not always socially acceptable.) By tradition, the aggressor in the duel chooses the technique and the defender chooses the form, but this system is purely artificial, and any system for determining the arts is possible as long as both magi agree.

Once the middle ground is chosen, you and your opponent concentrate for a second or two and enter trances. Temporarily, you become attuned to the magic forces around and between you, and these forces take shape as phantasms. These illusions can affect all the senses and are visible to all. The illusions created depend on the magical middle ground chosen. If the middle ground is Muto Animal, the phantasms might be two animals, one

## Exempli Gratia: Certamen

Grimgroth meets the magus who is behind the mystery, a sullen wizard who refuses to explain herself. Grimgroth is concerned for the inhabitants of Mercille and is outraged that another magus has intruded so close to Mistridge. He insists that the intruder explain herself, and the intruder responds by challenging Grimgroth to *Certamen*. Implicit in the contest is the agreement that the intruder will divulge her secrets if she loses and that Grimgroth will leave if he loses.

The intruder chooses the technique Rego. Luckily, this is Grimgroth's best technique. Grimgroth then chooses his best form, Auram, and he decides that the contest will involve controlling a whirlwind. This allows Grimgroth to use his affinity with winds on his rolls. The two wizards face off while their followers watch in anticipation. The Storyguide lets them ignore the -2 penalty for being in the Dominion since it applies equally to both of them.

Round 1- Grimgroth's Rego + Auram + Int + Certamen + Affinity total is  $6 + 12 + 3 + 2 + 4 = 27$ , to which he adds 2 Cnf points. He rolls a 1, rolls again for a 7, which doubles to 14. His first round total is 43. His opponent rolls only a 32, so Grimgroth has a healthy advantage of +11. He decides to keep his advantage and add it to the next roll.

Between them arises a swirling cone of air, which each of them struggles to control.

Round 2- Grimgroth rolls a  $4 + 27 + 11$  (bonus from last round) for a total of 42, +2 for Cnf is 44. His opponent rolls a 35, so his bonus has dropped to +9. Grimgroth realizes he should use the points he scored from his lucky first roll

before he can lose them, so he tries to fatigue his opponent. His roll is  $8$  (roll) +2 (Certamen) +3 (Int) +9 (bonus) +2 (Cnf) = 24. The other wizard's Certamen + Stm roll is 10, which means she drops three fatigue levels. She is now at -3 (from fatigue), which will make it hard for her to regain equal footing with Grimgroth.

The swirling cone of air suddenly lunges at Grimgroth's enemy, striking her soundly before she can force it back to the middle of the magical battlefield.

Round 3- Grimgroth rolls a 32, including 2 Cnf. The intruder rolls 37, plus she expends 4 points of raw *vis* which gives her 20 extra points! (She would rather have used just 3 points, but one cannot use just part of the *vis* one is touching.) This equals 57, giving her a 25 point advantage. Meanwhile, Grimgroth loses his 2 Cnf. She immediately uses the 25 point advantage to weaken Grimgroth. Her roll is 36 to Grimgroth's 8, which drops him six fatigue levels, to unconsciousness. She declines the opportunity to cast a spell at him, as she sees no point in possibly fatiguing herself further.

A bolt of wind flies from the intruder's ring, the source of her raw *vis*, and grasps the whirlwind. Under the control of the intruder, the whirl of wind pummels Grimgroth to unconsciousness. The ring turns to blackened metal and breaks, falling to the ground.

*Certamen* ends.

Grimgroth's friends carry him from the scene back to the tavern where they had made their camp, and when he awakens, they trudge back to Mistridge with only what they had already found and learned.

yours and the other controlled by your opponent. The animals change form at your mental commands, turning into various things in an effort to defeat each other. A *Creo Ignem Certamen* could look like two fire-beings fighting. An *Intellego Aquam* contest would not be spectacular; it might appear as if the combatants were in hazy water and they were trying to find their ways through it. The illusionary battle is the tangible form of the magical battle taking place. What happens between the phantasms affects the minds of the combatants and the minds of the combatants affect the phantasms. *Certamen* is a good situation for use of the

role-playing roll modifier, as a bonus given for good visualizations or interesting tactics using the details of what setting the duel is occurring in. The magus who chose the form chooses the nature of the phantasms, and magical affinities apply if the phantasms are appropriate. For example, if you have an affinity with wolves, you get it as a bonus on *Certamen* if the phantasms are of wolves.

In game terms, the combat is simulated by opposed die rolls of a stress die + Tech + Form + Int + *Certamen* skill. In any round you win the contest, count the points by which you exceed your opponent's roll. With these points you can do two things: save



them to add to your next roll or attempt to weaken your opponent. If you use any to weaken your opponent, roll a stress die + Int + *Certamen* + the points and compare the total to your opponent's stress roll of Stm + *Certamen*. For every 5 points by which you exceed your opponent's roll, your opponent drops one fatigue level (like losing body levels in physical combat). Any points that you do not use are added to your roll for the next round. While the points do not accumulate, per se, a bonus from the previous round might give you an even higher bonus the next round.

Just as one combatant falls into unconsciousness, the one remaining has time to cast one spell at the fallen, circumventing any *parma magica* the losing character might have. The target still gets a magic resistance roll based on the form of the spell alone. The

spell must have its technique or form (or both) in common with the *Certamen*. In most *Certamen* contests, this spell is unnecessary because the fall of your opponent indicates your victory, but some combatants use it to intimidate or embarrass those who fight them.

If your concentration is broken during *Certamen*, the fight ends, but your opponent has one chance to cast a spell at you, disregarding your *parma magica*. Then, you can engage in *Certamen* again if both of you wish. Use the rules for loss of concentration described under casting spells.

If you use raw *vis* in *Certamen*, you get a bonus of +5 on any one roll for every point you expend.

Rolls for *Certamen* come in the Magic phase of the round, if they are integrated into melee.

# Supernatural Powers

Magic is the supernatural power on which Ars Magica is based, but this is not the only power in the world of the Middle Ages. This section details the powers of the world and how they relate to each other.

The main powers are Magic, Divine, Infernal, and Faerie. Each of these powers is somewhat at odds with the others, though to different degrees. The lines are not drawn simply, with some on one side and the others presenting a united opposition. Rather, each power stands alone against the others, each with some power over the others.

## Power Interaction

The four main powers interact in various ways. Each has some parts of the world where its powers are strongest and the other powers are diminished. The effect that one power has on another depends on how opposed they are.

The Storyguide must assign every place the characters visit both a type of area (magical, divine, infernal, or faerie) and a rating (from 1-10). This type and rating combine to determine how each of the four powers is aided or reduced when in that place. Consult the Power Interaction Chart for details. Some areas far from human settlement are neutral, having no relation to any supernatural power and no effect on powers used there.

Sometimes two powers influence the same place, but only the stronger holds sway at any one time. A change in the relative strengths of the two powers can cause an area to switch from being under one power to being under another. For instance a serf village might have been built on the site of an old faerie ring, but usually the Dominion holds sway because its rating is higher than the faerie area. However, at night (when the Dominion decreases) and on special days of the year (ancient holidays when the faerie power increases), the faerie aura becomes stronger than the Dominion and it holds sway. It is then that the little faeries emerge from their burrows underground and inside old oaks to frolic and celebrate. Sometimes it is only small areas, like the cellar of a tavern, that feel the touch of a different power.

## Magical Power

Magic is commonly described as a subtle, intangible fluid that flows through the world; Hermetic magi call it *vis*. Just as one can use water to turn a mill, one can learn to harness *vis* to perform all manner of wonders. Hermetic magi are the most versatile manipulators of *vis*, but there are other wizards who use it as well, and countless beasts and creatures live on it and use it. As powerful as it may be, *vis* is an earthly element, and as such it can have no effect on those things that are beyond the earthly realm. Only divine power can alter such things as life and death and the eternal fate of an immortal soul.

### Magical Areas

These are places where *vis* naturally concentrates. Sometimes, areas pick up a magical aura after strong magic has been used there or a powerful creature has died. Most of the time, no one knows why a certain area is magical. Finding a magical area, for magi, is like finding a vein of gold in a mountain. They are delighted by the find, but they do not know why it is there. Most magical areas are rated 1 to 5. Legendary places are rated around 6. Areas rated up to 10 are almost unheard of. Within a magical area, the rating is typically the same throughout. Occasionally, there is some area within the magical place where *vis* is even more concentrated and the rating is higher.

Almost all covenants are in magical areas, but usually only in auras of strength 1 to 5. More powerful areas are rare and extremely dangerous to live in. If wizards try too often to use the magic of a powerful area, they may find themselves being used by the magic instead. Because of this threat, only the most powerful covenants in Hermetic history have based themselves in the strong auras, and they have not been able to retain apprentices, who have always been too weak to withstand the seductive power of the aura. Very strange things seem to happen in such covenants.

Magical areas are intense. Here the colors are more striking, the sounds more piercing, the day brighter, and the night deeper.

Mundane people who live in magical areas tend to get "weird"; their bodies and personalities warp. Insidiously the magic penetrates their very cores and permanently transforms them.



## Divine Power

The Church is the only supernatural power that the common folk generally have contact with. It is also the single greatest outlet for the higher pursuits of civilized people, such as philosophy, art, literature, and music.

The Church teaches that it gets its power from a single deity, the only true deity in the universe. All other powers, since they are not of the Church, are not holy, and are most likely connected with the Devil and the forces of Hell. The common folk come to the Church for safety from these powers, which would otherwise call them astray and steal their souls.

The magi are divided when it comes to the true nature of the Church. Most believe in the deity of the Church, but disagree with the Church's interpretation of religion, saying that pursuit of truth is the highest goal of humanity, and that magic is simply a powerful part of the truth. Others believe that the Church gains power from mighty spirits, but not from God; they point to the Church's decadence as proof. None doubt the power of the Church, whatever its source.

The Church's most powerful shield against the forces of evil (or other powers) is the Dominion: the holy area encompassing believers throughout the world. In every civilized area where the Church has a number of believers, its power covers the land. All other supernatural forces are reduced in strength because of the Dominion. Each church building is protected by it, and the altar area is protected even more strongly.

Individuals with true faith are protected from magic and can sometimes perform miracles, which are both rare and powerful. True faith is described in the Saga chapter. Even those who do not have true faith can give themselves a modicum of protection by crossing themselves at the sight of evil, or by wearing special charms, such as rosaries. These can be very effective at protecting the common folk against faeries and minor demons, but do little against the powers of Hermetic magic.

### Divine Areas

Most of the divine area is simply the Dominion, the area of the world inhabited by believers in the Church. On Sunday and on holy days the power of the Dominion increases. At night and on evil days the Dominion's power decreases. In addition to being weakened (represented by the penalty on rolls), magic is more temperamental and uncontrolled when it is cast within the realm

#### Areas of Divine Power

Area	Divine Power
Rural Area	1
Town	2
Metropolis	3
Consecrated Ground	3-5
Small Church	5
Large Church	6
Cathedral	8
Altar Area	10

of the Church, so magi suffer a number of extra botch rolls equal to the Dominion rating when casting spells.

Divine power inhibits all other powers. It keeps people safe from the dangers of other supernatural powers. At its best, the Dominion allows the human soul to express its deepest beauty, so it is in the cathedrals that one finds the most delightful music, the most enchanting art, and the most transcendent philosophy.



## Infernal Powers

Directly opposed to the Church are the forces of Hell, led by the Prince of Darkness. It is the chief goal of the devils to take the souls of humans to Hell, where they can be tormented for eternity. This they accomplish through subtle corruption of mortals and the spread of evil. Devils also take delight in causing pain, although the earthly, temporary pain they cause is trivial compared to the unending torment they can inflict on those whom they corrupt. Magi have been known to control demons to do their bidding; most magi, however, leave the infernal forces well enough alone, since these cunning beings can warp even the strongest will.

Demons often perform evil through those who worship them, diabolists. Diabolists have destructive magical powers, like those some magi have, but they are corrupted by the infernal source of that power and tend to be demented by it. Diabolists have sold their souls to the Devil in return for worldly power and sometimes magical gifts. The magical abilities or items given to a diabolist by the Forces of Darkness are always destructive, sometimes to the user as well as to others. Diabolists are the Devil's proxies on earth, causing harm and bringing more mortals to the ways of evil. The common people believe witches to be diabolists, and many think the same of magi. A diabolist gets the same bonuses and penalties as a demon for being in a supernatural area.

Diabolists make excellent villains because everyone hates them: the magi, the Church, the peasants, and the nobility. Also, their

magical powers make them interesting foes. Don't forget that they might also have the aid of one or several demons in their work, and that their mundane organizations may be spread far and wide throughout the social spheres, including the Church, the nobility, and even the Order of Hermes

Details of some different types of demons are given in the Bestiary chapter.

### Infernal Areas

Infernal power holds sway in cursed areas, where great evil has been done, often where diabolists have had regular contact with devils. The other powers are diminished in these cursed areas, as are the natural forces of growth and life. Few living things prosper in areas under infernal influence. There can also be found accursed caves that lead, eventually, to Hell itself.

Areas where the Devil has infected the land are cursed, rated 1-4. Where the Devil has an exceptionally strong sway, the rating is 5-10. At night the power of a cursed place can grow up to double its daytime level.

### Areas of Infernal Power

Area	Infernal Power
Where Demonic Evil has Happened	1
Diabolists' Meeting Place	2
Devil Worship Site	3
Major Devil's Church	5
Infernal Area, Where Demons Roam	8
Gateway to Hell	10

## Faerie Power

The Faeries are the most enigmatic of the great supernatural powers. They are intelligent, capricious beings somehow tied to nature. Their chief attribute is that they are as much spirit as body, and therefore highly magical.

Faeries can be driven away by divine power, but the magi are hard-pressed to affect them. Faeries are very resistant to magic, and the best most magi can do is to hold them at bay.

Faeries are described in detail in the Bestiary chapter.

### Faerie Areas

Faerie areas are magical tracts of wilderness where the faeries live. They can wander throughout the wilderness and often meet mortals who wander there as well, but they spend most of their time in their enchanted groves, forests, caves, and ponds. Many faeries find it impossible to leave the faerie areas, and those that do spend much of their time out of the faerie lands or under the sway of other powers are generally smaller and less powerful than their wilder kin. In the larger enchanted areas there is sometimes an entrance to eternal Faerieland itself. Here mortals do not naturally belong, and those who enter often fail to return. Even if they do return, they may find that a day spent in Faerieland is a year, ten years, a hundred years, or a only minute to the rest of the world.

### Power Interaction Chart

		Power Affected:			
		Magic	Divine	Infernal	Faerie
Magical Area	1-10	+	-	0	+2
Dominion	1-2				
	3-5				3-
	6-9			2-	X
	10			X	X
Infernal Place	1-7				2-
	8-10			2+	X
Faerie Area	1-8			0	
	9-10		5-		2+

Key:

0 No effect

+ Add the rating of the place to rolls. If there is a number in front of the +, multiply the rating by that number before adding it to rolls. +/2 means the bonus is divided by 2 before being applied.

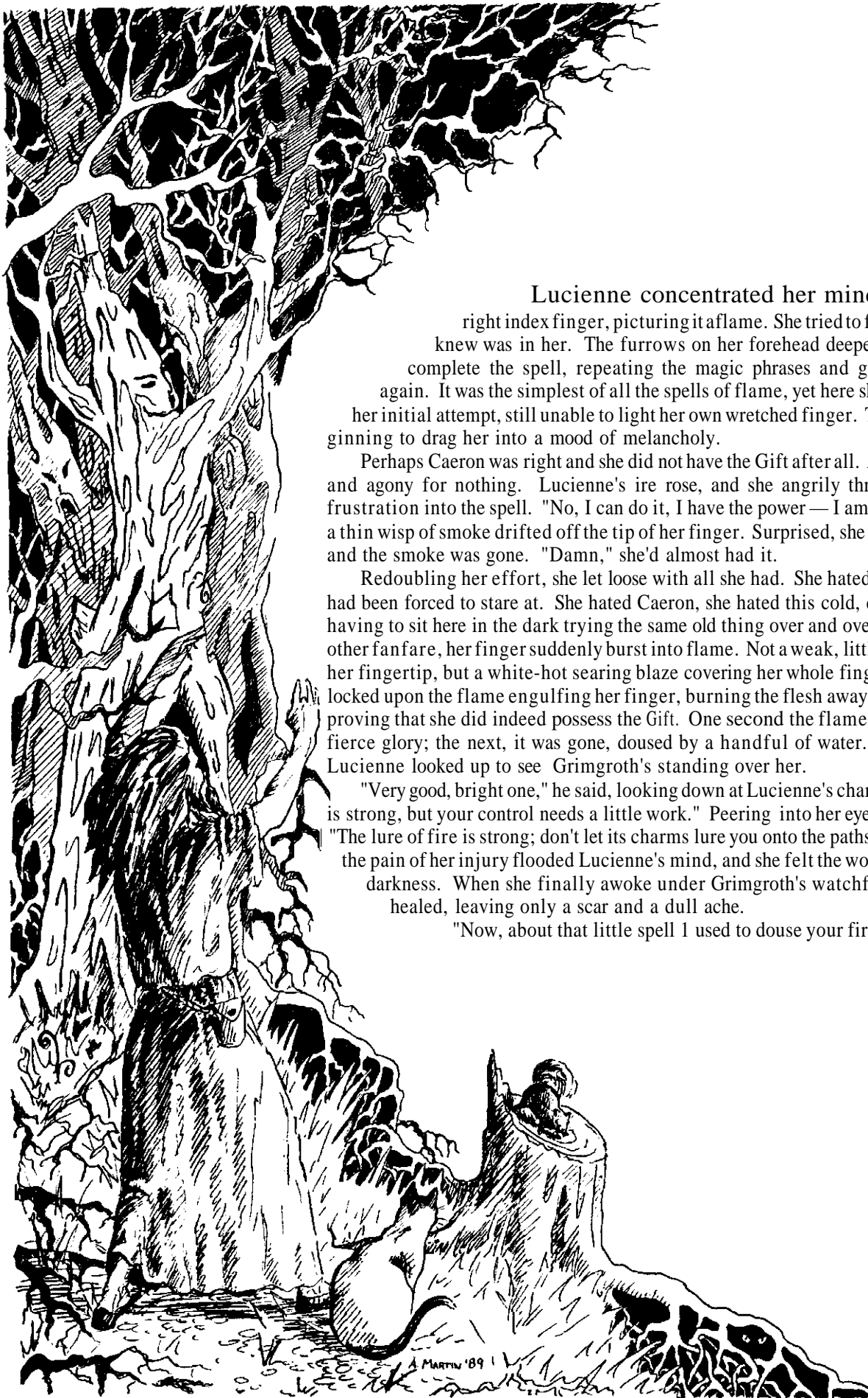
- Subtract the rating of the place from rolls. If there is a number in front of the -, multiply the penalty by that number before applying it.

X Supernatural powers of this type do not function in this area.

Faerie areas tend to be rich in magic (*raw vis!*), so magi are often tempted to explore them in search of this wealth. Raids on faerie areas can be quite rewarding, though one never knows what to expect upon entering a faerie area; they can be quite dangerous. As a Storyguide simply describe it as being as weird, whimsical, and wild as you can. Normal reality simply does not function in the heart of a faerie forest.

### Areas of Faerie Power

Area	Faerie Power
Outskirts of Faerie Wilderness	1
Faerie Woods	2
Important Site in Faerie Woods	3
Heart of a Faerie Forest	5
Outskirts of Faerieland	8
Faerieland	10



Lucienne concentrated her mind intently on her right index finger, picturing it aflame. She tried to focus the power that she knew was in her. The furrows on her forehead deepened as she strained to complete the spell, repeating the magic phrases and gestures over and over again. It was the simplest of all the spells of flame, yet here she was, four days after her initial attempt, still unable to light her own wretched finger. The frustration was beginning to drag her into a mood of melancholy.

Perhaps Caeron was right and she did not have the Gift after all. All these days of effort and agony for nothing. Lucienne's ire rose, and she angrily threw the weight of her frustration into the spell. "No, I can do it, I have the power — I am a wizard." Suddenly, a thin wisp of smoke drifted off the tip of her finger. Surprised, she lost her concentration, and the smoke was gone. "Damn," she'd almost had it.

Redoubling her effort, she let loose with all she had. She hated that finger which she had been forced to stare at. She hated Caeron, she hated this cold, dark tower. She hated having to sit here in the dark trying the same old thing over and over. Without trumpet or other fanfare, her finger suddenly burst into flame. Not a weak, little flame hovering over her fingertip, but a white-hot searing blaze covering her whole finger. Shocked, her eyes locked upon the flame engulfing her finger, burning the flesh away, scorching the bone — proving that she did indeed possess the Gift. One second the flame was there, burning in fierce glory; the next, it was gone, doused by a handful of water. Clutching her hand, Lucienne looked up to see Grimgroth's standing over her.

"Very good, bright one," he said, looking down at Lucienne's charred finger. "Your will is strong, but your control needs a little work." Peering into her eyes again, he continued, "The lure of fire is strong; don't let its charms lure you onto the paths of destruction." Then the pain of her injury flooded Lucienne's mind, and she felt the world spinning away into darkness. When she finally awoke under Grimgroth's watchful eye, her finger was healed, leaving only a scar and a dull ache.

"Now, about that little spell I used to douse your fire..."

# Spells

**T**he Order of Hermes has collected hundreds of spells that have been invented, improved, and passed down by the magi through the centuries. Those listed here are the most generally useful, interesting, and exemplary of these spells. In no way should these spells be taken as a definitive list of spells available to the Order of Hermes. Use them as guides when you invent your own and use them to

judge the power of spontaneous magic. Many of them can serve as examples for several other similar spells. For instance, a spell to turn you into a wolf can be used as a model for the spells to turn you into a large dog, a deer, a pig, and so on.

These formulaic spells are the heart of the magic system. They are the spells that magi can cast with relative surety, as well as a guide to spontaneous magic and to the powers of magic items.

## Spell Format

Each spell has several factors to describe it for game use.

**Technique and Form-** The technique and form are shown by the heading under which you find the spell. Spells are arranged first by their forms in alphabetical order, and then within each form by technique. (See the Spell List.) There are general notes for each form and for some form-technique combinations. Read the notes covering the spells in which you specialize and keep them in mind when you interpret these spells and invent your own.

**Title-** The titles given are the actual titles of the spells as known by the magi. Titles are often metaphoric or figurative when they describe effects not easily described in mundane terms.

**Level (Lv)-** Most spells are assigned a Level, which is a multiple of 5. A Level 5 spell is very weak, a 15th Level spell is of moderate power, and a 30th Level spell is extremely powerful. Level depends on the power of the spell and on its difficulty. For example, Gift of Reason (CrMe 30) has a relatively minor effect, but it is a difficult one to accomplish, so the Level is high.

Some spells are general spells (abbreviated: Gen.), which means they have no specific level, but represent several spells of various Levels, all with similar but increasingly powerful effects. A spell to ward off mountain faeries, for instance, can be any Level, and with progressively higher Levels you will be able to affect more powerful faeries. While the spells we list have levels as multiples of 5, there is no law of magic that requires new spells to follow this pattern, thus you could have a general spell of 13th level.

Magi use the term **magnitude** to rank spells. (The term "Level" is for game use only; characters never use it.) The magnitude of the spell equals the number of pawns of *vis* needed to give the spell its longer duration or to double its effect (1 pawn per 5 Levels). A second magnitude spell would thus be Level 6 to 10.

**Range-** There are seven basic ranges of spells. Regardless of range, a target must be seen or distinctly sensed to be affected directly. You can throw a Pile of Fire into the bushes and hope you get the bandit hiding there, but you cannot cast the Curse of Circe on the bandit unless you see him. (A pace is considered a yard.)

**Body:** affects your body or mind only, not your clothing and so on

**Self:** affects only you and your accouterments (clothing, etc.)

**Touch:** affects you or whomever or whatever you touch

**Reach:** touching or within two paces

**Eye:** eye contact; once you establish eye contact, even momentarily, you can hold it by casting the spell, and the target cannot look away until the spell is cast. Normally eye contact is almost automatic if your target is within ten paces, and someone who is avoiding eye contact at all costs can do so. Those who avert their eyes but still look in your general direction (as one must in a social setting or be conspicuous) must make Int rolls to avoid contact. Spells maintained through concentration require eye contact only in the first few seconds.

**Near:** within fifteen paces

**Sight:** see the target or otherwise sense it distinctly; if the effect has a radius or diameter, you need only see the center of the circle

**Special (Spec.):** a unique range, described in the spell's text.

**Duration-** Standard durations are described below. This is how long the effects of the spell last. If a spell has two listed durations separated by a slash, the first (shorter) is the normal duration and the second (longer) is the duration if the spell is supported by raw *vis*, 1 pawn per 5 Levels of the spell (two pawns per 5 levels for ritual spells). Only spells that produce normal results can be made permanent. Spells that produce unnatural things can be made to last longer with raw *vis*, but they cannot be made permanent. For example, you can turn someone into a dog indefinitely, but if you turn someone's head into a dog head the effect will not last forever. A spell's effects usually wear off gradually, not suddenly at the instant the spell's duration ends. Created things weaken and crumble to dust when the spell ends.

By concentrating for a round, you can automatically cancel any spell (besides an "instant" spell) that you have cast on yourself.

**Concentration (Conc.)-** The spell lasts as long as you concentrate on it. When distracted or when you attempt to do something else in addition to concentrating, you need to make Concentration rolls to maintain the spell. If a concentration spell explicitly involves speaking (as does Tongue of the Beasts, InAn 15), such speech requires no concentration rolls.

**Ring-** The spell creates an invisible magic ring which remains in effect as long as you do not leave it.

**Sunrise-Sunset (Sun.)-** The spell lasts until dawn or dusk, whichever comes first. Dawn and dusk, for the purposes of these spells, last about ten minutes, while the sun is on the horizon.

**Moon-** Lasts until both the new moon and the full moon have come. If cast before the night of the new moon, the spell lasts until the rise of the next full moon. If cast before the rise of the full moon, it lasts until the night of the new moon.

**Year-** Lasts until the fourth seasonal change. Thus a spell cast in the spring would last through the summer solstice, autumnal equinox, the winter solstice, and up to the vernal equinox. Only by casting one of these spells on a solstice or equinox can the spell be made to last a full year. If the spell is temporarily cancelled somehow, the effects return at sunrise or sunset, whichever comes first.

**Permanent (Perm.)-** The spell affects its target until it is dispelled. Compare to "instant."

**Instant (Inst.)-** The spell works for only an instant, after which nature takes its normal course; its effects are permanent and cannot be dispelled. If you burn someone with an instant spell, the magic is gone in a moment, but the burns remain. Only its effects remain. If you calm a raging bull with an instant spell, the bull can become angry again normally because the magic of the spell does not continue to affect the bull. A spell with a different duration keeps the bull calm until the spell wears off. Since instant spells do not continue to work, they cannot be dispelled.

**Special (Spec.)-** Some spells have unique durations detailed in their descriptions.

**Ritual-** Ritual spells (designated by the word "ritual") require fifteen minutes and 1 raw vispoint for each 5 Levels of the spell. See Ritual Spells in the Magic Chapter.

**Requisites-** Requisites that apply whenever you learn or cast a spell are listed before the spell description. Casting requisites are listed at the end of the spell description.

**Aimed-** Spells that affect targets indirectly require targeting rolls. You have to place the spell in the right spot to affect the target. For instance, if you launch a blast of water at someone's eyes, you

need no targeting roll to create the water, but you do need one to have the water hit the target's eyes.

**Description-** The effects of the spell. Since magic is variable and unpredictable and can be used in a variety of ways, the responsibility for determining the effects in unusual situations lies with the Storyguide. Descriptions cover about 95% of the circumstances in which the spells are used. Under exceptional conditions (Storyguide's option, as always) the spells may have different effects.

Spells tend not to be flashy, with bright lights and weird noises that you might be used to from watching movies. Magic is usually subtle, and while you can see the effects, you can't always see the medium.

For general spells, the power of the effect depends on the spell's Level. Often the Level is used as a bonus on a die roll, and the total determines the effectiveness of the spell.

The term "target" means the subject of the spell. The target can be a person, animal, monster, object, area, or yourself.

Natural resistance (often Stm, Size, or Int rolls) is described for spells that allow it.

Casting requisites (those needed to cast the spell in certain ways but not to learn it) are listed for some spells. The phrase "appropriate form for the target" indicates that the spell has several possible requisites, which are determined by the target.

Spell descriptions give you the bare essentials to know what you need to know in order to use the spell in a game. Many embellishments, however, have been left out. You are free to add your own interpretations, comments, and descriptions, both as Storyguide and player. When you invent a spell, whether it duplicates one here or is completely new, you can add whatever detail you want. What hand gestures are involved? Does the spell create sounds or smells in addition to its basic effects? What unforeseen side effects or uses does the spell have? Lavish your spells with detail and you will be rewarded with more interesting play.

**Spell Guides-** Among the spells are a few simple descriptions of spell effects that are not fleshed out as full spells. Use them to guide inventing formulaic and casting spontaneous spells.

## Notes on the Techniques

**Creo-** Things created are either independent or a natural part of a larger being or object. For instance, a Creo spell could grow back a severed hand or create a bird, but it could not grow wings on a person. (That would be a Muto spell.) Independent objects usually appear in your hand or directly in front of you. You cannot create things inside of people to kill them or other tricky maneuvers (unless the spell specifies this use and has a Perdo requisite).

**Intellego-** Lets you perceive things or see through them. An Intellego Terram spell, for instance, could let you see through walls. This technique cannot affect the subject of its spells, though those who are sensitive to such things might realize that they are being spied on magically.

**Muto-** A Muto spell that causes something to grow cannot be used repeatedly to cause the target to grow again

and again. A spell that doubles a creature's size, for instance, doubles its normal size, not its current size. A creature that is already double its normal size would not be affected by such a spell.

**Perdo-** Most Perdo spells affect their targets directly, using no intervening medium. Therefore, you usually need no targeting roll to strike something with a Perdo spell.

**Rego-** A Rego spell does not change the target for good or ill; it merely moves it or controls it. Any damaging effects are secondary results. For instance, you can slam someone into a wall with a Rego spell. The easiest way to move things is to move the whole object evenly. To spin the object or to move just part of it is more difficult.

# Spell List

## Animal Spells

### Creo Animal Spells

Soothe Pains of the Beast	15
Weaver's Trap of Webs	20

### Intellego Animal Spells

Image of the Beast	5
Shiver of the Lycanthrope	10
Tongue of the Beasts	15
Tongue of the Birds	15
Tongue of the Fish	20
Vision of the Marauding Beast	20
Opening the	
Tome of the Animal's Mind	25
Hunter's Sense	30

### Muto Animal Spells

Growth of the Creeping Things	10
Beast of Outlandish Size	15
The Immaculate Beast	15
Transformation of the Ravenous	
Beast to the Torpid Toad	20
Steed of Vengeance	25
The Beast Remade	30

### Perdo Animal Spells

Agony of the Beast	10
Decay Fur and Hide	10
Alleviate the Serpent's Bite	10
Cripple the Howling Wolf	15
The Falcon's Hood	20
Cleanse the	
Verminous Infestation	25
The Hunter's Lethal Arrow	30

### Rego Animal Spells

Disguise of the Putrid Aroma	5
Soothe the Ferocious Boar	10
Panic of the Elephant's Mouse	15
Viper's Gaze	15

## The Wizard's Sigil

When you invent a spell, a little of your personal affinity to magic is likely to make itself known. If nothing else, some little quirk in the spell will make it different from the spells listed in this chapter. Magic is unpredictable and idiosyncratic; to precisely duplicate another wizard's spell is nearly impossible. For instance, if you invent the equivalent of The Blessing of Childlike Bliss (PeMe 25), the spell might work as normal, with the added detail that the victim's babble "Bama bama bama..." The detail does not usually change the effectiveness of the spell. Many wizards have recurrent quirks in their spells. Once known, these quirks can identify certain wizards as having cast certain spells. This recurrent mark or quirk in a wizard's spells is termed by the Order of Hermes "the wizard's sigil."

Circle of Beast Warding	20
The Gentle Beast	20
Mastering the Unruly Beast	25
Ward Against the	
Beasts of Legend	25
Commanding the	
Harnessed Beast	30

## Aquam Spells

### Creo Aquam Spells

Douse the Fire	5
Creeping Oil	10
Footsteps of Slippery Oil	15
Deluge of Rushing and Dashing	20
Mighty Torrent of Water	25
Lungs of Water and Death	35

### Intellego Aquam Spells

Touch of the Pearls	5
Subtle Tongue of	
Poison and Purity	10
Call of the Rushing Waters	15
Voice of the Lake	25
Enchantment of the Scrying Pool	30

### Muto Aquam Spells

Lungs of the Fish	10
Breath of Winter	15
Bridge of Frost	20
Grant Lungs of the Fish	20
Ice of Drowning	25
Cloak of Winter	30

### Perdo Aquam Spells

Parching Wind	10
Incantation of Putrid Wine	15
Break the Oncoming Wave	20
Curse of the Desert	25
Vile Water of Sterility	30

## Rego Aquam Spells

Ward Against	
Faeries of the Waters	Gen
Cloak of the Duck's Feathers	5
Gift of the Floating Wood	10
Push of the Gentle Wave	10
Chaos of the Angry Waves	15
Wave of	
Drowning and Smashing	20
Parting the Waters	25
Pull of the Watery Grave	25
Tower of Whirling Water	30
Neptune's Wrath	50

## Auram Spells

### Creo Auram Spells

Air's Ghostly Form	5
Stench of the Twenty Corpses	10
Chamber of Spring Breezes	15
Wreaths of Foul Smoke	15
Clouds of Summer Snow	20
Clouds of Rain and Thunder	25
Charge of the Angry Winds	30
The Incantation of Lightning	35
Breath of the Open Sky	40
Wrath of Whirling	
Winds and Water	60

### Intellego Auram Spells

Whispering Winds	10
True Sight of the Air	15
Sailor's Foretaste of the Morrow	20
Eyes of the Bat	25

### Muto Auram Spells

Blasting Wind, Blinding Mist	10
Clouds of Thunderous Might	10
Rain of Stones	15
Talons of the Winds	20
Fog of Confusion	25
Heat of Hell's Impending Doom	35
Infernal Smoke of Death	40
Rain of Oil	50

### Perdo Auram Spells

Air Clear and Pure	10
Thief of the Stolen Breath	10
Room of Stale Air	20
Quiet the Raging Winds	25
The Cloudless Sky Returned	30

## Rego Auram Spells

Ward Against	
Faeries of the Air	Gen
Wind at the Back	5
Jupiter's Resounding Blow	10
Broom of the Winds	15

Circling Winds of Protection	20
Gathering of the Stormy Might	20
Wings of the Soaring Wind	25
Pull of the Skybound Winds	45

## Corporem Spells

### Creo Corporem Spells

Free the Accursed Body	Gen
Charm Against Putrefaction	5
Bind Wound	10
Gentle Touch of the Purified Body	15
The Chirurgeon's Healing Touch	20
Restoration of the Defiled Body	25
The Severed Limb Made Whole	30
Incantation of the Body Made Whole	45
The Shadow of Life Renewed	70

### Intellego Corporem Spells

Physician's Eye	5
Revealed Flaws of Mortal Flesh	10
Sight of the True Form	10
Whispers Through the Black Gate	15
The Inexorable Search	20
Tracing the Trail of Death's Stench	25
The Eye of the Sage	30

### Muto Corporem Spells

Evil Eye	5
Eyes of the Cat	10
Disguise of the New Visage	15
Arm of the Infant	20
Preternatural Growth and Shrinking	20
Shape of the Woodland Prowler	25
Curse of Circe	30
Gift of the Bear's Fortitude	30
The Silent Vigil	30
Mists of Change	30
Cloak of Black Feathers	35
Cloak of Mist	40
Stance of the Patient Tree	40
Transform to Water	45

### Perdo Corporem Spells

Touch of the Goose Feather	5
Invocation of Weariness	5
Grip of the Choking Hand	10
Dust to Dust	15
The Wound the Weeps	15
Incantation of the Milky Eyes	20
Twist of the Tongue	20
Bane of the Decrepit Body	25
Curse of the Leprous Flesh	30
Curse of the Unportended Plague	35
The Kiss of Death	35
Clenching Grasp of the Crushed Heart	40

## Rego Corporem Spells

Spasms of the Uncontrolled Hands	5
Curse of the Unruly Tongue	10
Despair of the Quivering Manacles	10
Endurance of the Berserkers	15
Gift of the Frog's Legs	15
Rise of the Feathery Body	15
Awaken the Slumbering Corpse	20
Gift of Vigor	20
Lifting the Dangling Puppet	20
The Walking Corpse	25
Strings of the Unwilling Marionette	30
The Leap of Homecoming	35
The Seven League Stride	45

## Herbam Spells

### Creo Herbam Spells

Conjure the Sturdy Vine	10
Trap of the Entwining Vines	15
Wall of Thorns	20
Wall of Living Wood	25
Bridge of Wood	30

### Intellego Herbam Spells

Probe Nature's Hidden Lore	5
Intuition of the Forest	10
Hunt for the Wild Herb	15
Converse with Plants and Trees	25
Shriek of the Impending Shafts	25
Calling the Council of the Trees	45

### Muto Herbam Spells

Transformation of the Thorny Staff	5
Dance of the Staves	10
Twist the Living Tree	15
Rope of Bronze	15
Piercing Shaft of Wood	20
Thaumaturgical Transformation of Plants to Iron	20
Stir the Slumbering Tree	25
Curse of the Haunted Forest	30

### Perdo Herbam Spells

Curse of the Rotted Wood	10
Wizard's Autumn	15
Plant's Withering Bane	20
The Great Rot	25
Treading the Ashen Path	30

## Rego Herbam Spells

Ward Against Faeries of the Wood	Gen
Whip of Thorns	5
Repel the Wooden Shafts	10
Strike of the Angered Branch	15
Tangle of Wood and Thorns	15
Coils of the Entangling Plants	20

The Traitorous Spear	20
Lord of the Trees	25
Freeing the Striding Tree	30

## Ignem Spells

### Creo Ignem Spells

Moonbeam	5
Palm of Flame	5
Heat of the Searing Forge	10
Lamp Without Flame	10
Flash of the Scarlet Flames	15
Pilum of Fire	20
Arc of Fiery Ribbons	25
Ball of Abysmal Flame	30
Blade of the Virulent Flame	30
Circle of Encompassing Flames	30

### Intellego Ignem Spells

Shadows of the Fires Past	5
Tales of the Ashes	10
Vision of Heat's Light	20
Words with the Flickering Flame	25
Sense of the Fires Nearby	30

### Muto Ignem Spells

The Many-Hued Conflagration	5
Show of the Flames and Smoke	10
Hornet Fire	15
Prison of Flames	15
Trapping the Fire	25
Flames of Sculpted Ice	30

### Perdo Ignem Spells

Quench the Rippling Flames	5
Winter's Icy Touch	10
Soothe the Raging Flames	15
Conjuration of Indubitable Cold	20
Well Without Light	25
Wizard's Eclipse	30

## Rego Ignem Spells

Tremulant Vault of the Torch's Flame	5
Light Shaft of the Night	10
Leap of the Fire	15
Ward Against Heat and Flames	25
Burst of the Sweeping Flames	30

## Imagonem Spells

### Creo Imagonem Spells

Restoration of the Lost Image	Gen
Fragile Image of the Painted Statue	5
Image of the Inanimate Thing	10
Phantasm of the Talking Head	10
Phantasmal Fire	15
Phantasmal Animal	20
Phantasm of the Human Form	25
The Shadow of Human Life	40

### Intellego Imagonem Spells

Discern the Images of	
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Truth and Falsehood	Gen
Discern Own Illusions	5
Image of the Past State	15
The Ear for Distant Voices	20
Eyes of the Past	25
Summoning the Distant Images	35
Visions of the Wandering Eye	45

**Muto Imagonem Spells**

Restore the Image Transformed	Gen
Taste of the Spices and Herbs	5
Aura of Ennobled Presence	10
Illusion of the Altered Image	10
Disguise of the Transformed Image	15
Notes of a Delightful Sound	15
Image Phantom	20
Visions of the Infernal Terrors	30

**Perdo Imagonem Spells**

Dispel the Phantom Image	Gen
Taste of the Dulled Tongue	5
Removal of the Conspicuous Sigil	10
Invisibility of the Standing Wizard	15
Illusion of Cool Flames	20
Chamber of Invisibility	25
Silence of the Smothered Sound	25
Veil of Invisibility	30

**Rego Imagonem Spells**

Restore the Moved Image	Gen
Illusion of the Shifted Image	10
Image from the Wizard Torn	15
The Captive Voice	20
Wizard's Sidestep	20
Confusion of the Insane Vibrations	25
Illusion of the Misplaced Castle	30
Haunt of the Living Ghost	40

**Mentem Spells****Creo Mentem Spells**

Return of Mental Lucidity	Gen
Words of the Unbroken Silence	5
Panic of the Trembling Heart	15
Rising Ire	15
Memory of the Distant Dream	20
Pains of the Perpetual Worry	20
Weight of a Thousand Hells	25
Gift of Reason	30

**Intellego Mentem Spells**

Sense State of Consciousness	5
Sight of the Transparent Motive	10
Perception of the Conflicting Motives	15
Frosty Breath of the Spoken Lie	20
Posing the Silent Question	25
Thoughts Within Babble	25

Peering into the Mortal Mind	30
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**Muto Mentem Spells**

Vision of the Haunting Spirit	5
Subtle Shift of Heart	10
Enchantment of Detachment	15
Recollection of Memories Never Quite Lived	20
Emotion of Reversed Intentions	25
Mind of the Beast	30

**Perdo Mentem Spells**

Lay to Rest the Haunting Spirit	Gen
Tip of the Tongue	5
Trust of Childlike Faith	10
Calm the Motion of the Heart	15
Loss of But a Moment's Memory	20
Passion's Lost Feeling	20
Blessing of Childlike Bliss	25
Black Whisper	30

**Rego Mentem Spells**

Coerce the Spirits of the Night	Gen
Ring of Warding Against Spirits	Gen
Snap of Awakening	5
The Call to Slumber	15
Confusion of the Numbered Will	15
Aura of Rightful Authority	20
Scent of Peaceful Slumber	20
Incantation of Summoning the Dead	25
Summon the Haunting Spirit	25
Exchange of the Two Minds	30
The Shrouded Glen	40
Enslave the Mortal Mind	50

**Terram Spells****Creo Terram Spells**

Tooth of the Staff	5
Clenching of the Earth's Mighty Hand	10
Stone of the Hundred Shards	15
Rampart of Protecting Earth	20
Wall of Protecting Stone	25
Circle of the Faerie Stone	30
Opening the Earth's Pore	40
Conjuring the Mystic Tower	50

**Intellego Terram Spells**

Probe for Pure Silver	5
Eye of the Eons	10
Eye of the Treacherous Terrain	15
Tracks of the Faerie Glow	25
Stone Tell of the Mind that Sits	30
Sense the Feet that Tread the Earth	35

**Muto Terram Spells**

Edge of the Razor	5
The Forgiving Earth	10
Supple Iron and Rigid Rope	10
Unyielding Earth	10

The Crystal Dart	15
Hands of the Grasping Earth	15
Object of Increased Size	15
Rock of Viscid Clay	15
Earth that Breaks No More	20
Statue to Animal	25
Teeth of the Earth Mother	35

**Perdo Terram Spells**

Fist of Shattering	5
Pit of the Gaping Earth	15
Rusted Decay of Ten Score Years	15
Obliteration of the Metallic Barrier	20
Cascade of Rocks	25
Stone to Falling Dust	30

**Rego Terram Spells**

Ward Against Faeries of the Mountains	Gen
Unseen Arm	5
Trackless Step	10
Wielding the Invisible Sling	10
The Earth's Carbuncle	15
Invisible Hand of the Thief	15
Unseen Porter	20
The Earth Split Asunder	25
Earth Shock	30
Creeping Chasm	35
Crest of the Earth Wave	50
Hermes' Portal	75

**Vim Spells****Intellego Vim Spells**

Wizard's Subtle Touch	5
Sense the Nature of Vis	10
The Invisible Eye Revealed	15
Scales of the Magical Weight	15
Perceive Magical Scent	20
Sense of the Lingering Magic	30

**Muto Vim Spells**

Shroud Magic	Gen
Wizard's Boost	Gen
Wizard's Communion	Gen
Gather the Essence of the Beast	15

**Perdo Vim Spells**

Demon's Eternal Oblivion	Gen
Disenchant	Gen
Wind of Mundane Silence	Gen

**Rego Vim Spells**

Aegis of the Hearth	Gen
Circular Ward Against Demons	Gen
Maintaining the Demanding Spell	Gen
Opening the Intangible Tunnel	Gen
Waiting Spell	Gen
Watching Ward	Gen



# Spell Descriptions

## Animal Spells

Animal spells affect all manner of natural living things besides plants and humans, doing to animals what *Mentem* and *Corporem* spells do to people. Any animal-like body or animal-like mind can be affected by an Animal spell. The body of an intelligent animal (such as an intelligent serpent or person whose body has been turned to a beast) is affected by Animal spells even though the mind is affected only by *Mentem* spells. If a human body has animal parts (such as bat wings), those parts can be affected by Animal spells even though the rest of the body is only affected by *Corporem* spells.

Unless *PI* is used to make it permanent, food produced by an Animal spell provides no nourishment, and the feeling of being sated vanishes as soon as the spell wears off.

### Creo Animal Spells

Animals created by *Creo Animal* spells are inherently magical and have a Magic Might of 5 + Size. These animals are not afraid of magi as normal animals are, and are somewhat loyal, but they will not automatically follow your orders. They die and rot away at sunrise/sunset unless *vis* makes the spell duration Instant.

Gen.: Counter a malign Animal spell if you can match its Level on a roll of die + Level of this spell.

Lv5: Create a bear's pelt (disappears at sunrise/sunset).

Lv 10: Produce enough meat for five people.

#### **Soothe Pains of the Beast: Lv15**

Touch, Sun./Inst,

The animal touched can recover a lost body level by making a stress *Stm* roll of 34+ {apply wound penalty}.

#### **Weaver's Trap of Webs: Lv 20**

Near, Sun./Year

Sticky spider webs as thick as string and strong as iron grow almost instantly to fill an area 5 paces by 5 paces by 6 feet high. With supports, the web can hang vertically, forming a wall; otherwise it acts like a net. Everyone in the area is caught in the webs and immobilized. Breaking free requires a *Str* roll of 12+, but someone who is not trapped can use an edged weapon to cut another person free in three rounds. Contrary to widespread opinion, fire is ineffective against these webs.

Lv 25: Create a house cat.

Lv40: Create an elephant.

Lv 50: Create a griffin.

### Intellego Animal Spells

When you try to get information from an animal, remember that their memories are filtered through their unique senses. For example, dogs remember much about the odors of various things but often forget details of how they looked. Animals do not remember human words but might remember tone of voice and such. You are not likely to get exactly the information you are looking for.

To communicate with an animal you must bring yourself to the animal's mental level, which might have strange (though usually temporary) effects on you. Uninitiated observers might be disconcerted.

#### **Image of the Beast: Lv 5**

Body, Conc.

Gives you a hazy mental image of an animal if you hold some significant piece of its body, such as a bone or severed paw.

#### **Shiver of the Lycanthrope: Lv10**

Reach, Conc.

You feel a sudden shiver if you are next to a person or beast that is actually a lycanthrope.

#### **Tongue of the Beasts: Lv 15**

Body, Conc.

You may hold a conversation with one land animal.

#### **Tongue of the Birds: Lv15**

Body, Conc., Auram

You may hold a conversation with a bird or bat.

#### **Tongue of the Fish: Lv20**

Body, Cone., Aquam

You may hold one conversation with any fish or aquatic creature.

#### **Vision of the Marauding Beast: Lv 20**

Body, Conc.

By touching wounds created by a beast, you can get an image of the beast from the perspective of the person who was attacked, handy for finding out what killed your grog. If the victim didn't see the creature, however, you can't see it either.

#### **Opening the Tome of the Animal's Mind: Lv 25**

Touch, Conc.

You touch the head of the animal in question and read its memories of the past day. The further the

animal is from human, the harder it is to read the memories accurately. To get a fact from an animal very dissimilar to a human requires a *Per* roll of 6+, or 12+ if the fact is obscure. Since normal animals are sensitive to magic, they strongly resist your touch.

#### **Hunter's Sense: Lv30**

100yds., Sun./Year

You sense the shapes and motivations of all animals above a certain size that come within 100 paces of you. You decide the size threshold when you cast the spell, such as all animals of Size-1 or greater. If asleep, you see the animals in a dream and might not waken.

### Muto Animal Spells

Animals are not infinitely mutable, and using too many of these spells for too long on an animal can warp its natural constitution and even destroy it.

Lv 5: Gradually turn meat into maggots, flies, beetles, and other vermin. Since this is what naturally happens to meat anyway, the duration is Instant.

#### **Growth of the Creeping Things: Lv 10**

Touch, Sun./Year

Causes an insect, mouse, rodent, or other small creature to grow to four times its normal size. If it was poisonous before, it is even more poisonous now. Semi-poisonous creatures, like most spiders, do +8 points of poison damage while in larger form.

#### **Beast of Outlandish Size: Lv 15**

Touch, Sun./Perm.

Increases the Size of a land animal by +1. This adds +2rodamage, +11o5oak, -1 to Defense, and one body level.

#### **The Immaculate Beast: Lv15**

Touch, Sun./Perm.

Makes an animal into a flawless specimen of its type, amplifying its outstanding features and giving it +3 on rolls related to its strongest feature. It will improve a hawk's vision, a racehorse's speed, a draft horse's strength, etc.

#### **Transformation of the Ravenous Beast to the Torpid Toad: Lv20**

Near, Sun./Perm.

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

**Steed of Vengeance: Lv 25**

Touch, Sun./Perm.

Turns a horse into a ferocious magical mount with fangs and razor-sharp hooves. All Atkand Dam rolls get a +5 bonus. The horse will tolerate a magus rider. When the spell wears off, the horse must make a Stm roll of 10+ or die from the shock.

**The Beast Remade: Lv30**

Touch, Sun./Perm., Corporem

Gives an animal a human form, though its mentality remains the same. Some feature of the animal is retained in the human form. A former dog might have an exceptionally hairy human body, and a former cat might let loose an occasional "meow."

## Perdo Animal Spells

Lv5: Remove fur from any pelt or living animal.

**Agony of the Beast: Lv 10**

Sight, Conc.

Causes intense pain in an animal. Each round the target must make a Stm + Size roll of 9+ to do anything but howl in pain.

**Decay Fur and Hide: Lv 10**

Sight, Inst.

Destroys an object made of animal fur or hide, including wool and leather. Each casting decreases leather armor's protection value by 3 points, and any arm or dropped to 0 protection or lower is destroyed completely.

**Alleviate the Serpent's Bite: Lv 10**

Touch, Inst.

Makes one dose of animal toxin harmless. If cast on toxin already in someone's body, it requires a Corporem requisite, and it keeps the person from suffering further damage. It can make poison in a poisonous animal harmless if you can touch the animal in question. No effect on herbal or mineral poisons.

**Cripple the Howling Wolf: Lv 15**

Sight, Inst.

Cripples the leg of any animal of Size up to +1,

slowing the target by at least half its speed. Stm + Size roll of 12+ to resist.

**The Falcon's Hood: Lv 20**

Sight, Inst.

Destroys an animal's vision. The title refers to the hood used to cover a falcon's eyes when it is not hunting.

**Cleanse the****Verminous Infestation: Lv 25**

Near, Inst.

All spiders, snakes, rats, mice, lice, and other little creatures emerge from their hiding places and kill themselves or each other until all are slain. Any animal Size -3 or greater is not affected. Affects one building such as a keep, tower, or gatehouse.

**The Hunter's Lethal Arrow: Lv 30**

Touch, Inst.

Enchants an arrow to slay an animal. The arrow must be fired on the round after the spell is cast. If it hits an animal, the beast must make a Stm + Size roll of 12+ or die. If it makes the roll, it still suffers normal arrow damage +10. The target gets normal magic resistance.

## Rego Animal Spells

**Disguise of the Putrid Aroma: Lv 5**

Near, Conc.

The target takes no interest in you as long as you do not threaten it. A carnivore treats you as if you were simply something that it would not want to eat. It retains normal interest, however, in anyone else nearby.

**Soothe the Ferocious Boar: Lv 10**

Near, Inst.

Calms an animal until it is threatened or aroused again. You must speak soothingly or musically to it.

**Panic of the Elephant's Mouse: Lv 15**

Eye, Sun./Perm.

Makes an animal fear you by preying upon its instinctive fears, causing it to try to escape by the quickest, most feasible means possible. The title refers to the elephant's legendary fear of mice. Size roll of 9+ to resist.

**Viper's Gaze: Lv 15**

Eye, Spec.

Holds an animal rigid as long as you can maintain eye contact and concentration.

**Circle of Beast Warding: Lv 20**

Spec., Ring

Creates a magical circle fifteen paces across that no natural animal will enter. Lasts until you leave the ring.

**The Gentle Beast: Lv 20**

Eye, Sun.

Calms an animal, making it nearly fearless. It does not resist being ridden, shaved, or whatever else you can think of. Combat, extremely frightening circumstances, or any kind of wound ends the spell. The animal must be Size +3 or less.

**Mastering the Unruly Beast: Lv 25**

Near, Conc.

You can mentally control an animal as long as it is in sight, making it perform any act of which it is capable. It is difficult to maintain control of particularly stubborn or fierce animals, such as mules or boars.

**Ward Against****the Beasts of Legend: Lv 25**

Spec., Ring

Creates a magical ring around you seven paces in diameter that lasts until you leave it. The Storyguide secretly rolls a simple die and adds your Rego + Animal + Int. No magical beast can enter the ring unless it can make a Mystic Points roll at least equal to this total. It rolls once when it attempts to enter. The ring can be seen as a golden-hued dome at certain angles during the night.

**Commanding****the Harnessed Beast: Lv 30**

Touch, Moon

You implant a complicated command into an animal, which it then carries out to the best of its abilities. The command must involve completing a certain task, such as finding a certain person. Vague orders, like "Protect me," do not work. If the animal has not completed the task as the end of the spell approaches, it becomes desperately ferocious, especially at night.

# Aquam Spells

Aquam spells affect water and all other liquids. It cannot affect liquids in a body, such as blood; that would require a Corporem spell.

## Creo Aquam Spells

Water created without raw pis quenches the thirst but provides no lasting benefits to the drinker.

Creating flammable liquids, such as oil, requires an Ignem requisite.

**Douse the Fire: Lv 5**

Near, Inst.

Creates water in a fire and puts it out if it is no larger than a bonfire. Causes a good deal of steam.

**Creeping Oil: Lv 10**

Spec., Sun./Perm., Ignem

Saturates porous material with oil. The oil first appears as a dot in the material and then spreads throughout it, saturating enough cloth to cover a person. If used on a person's clothes and ignited, the oil does +12 damage the first round, +6 the second, and +0 the third.

**Footsteps of Slippery Oil: Lv 15**

Self, Sun.

Nonflammable grease spreads out from each of the next twenty footsteps you make, leaving a slick ten paces wide. The effects of the grease on movement depend on the surface covered. Qik - Enc rolls are required to remain upright whenever a character on the oil runs, changes directions, stops suddenly, etc. A roll of 6+ is needed for the average maneuver, with rolls of up to 15+ needed to (for example) make a right turn at near full speed on a smooth, greased surface.

**Deluge of Rushing and Dashing: Lv 20**

Near, Conc.

Causes a stream to flood, starting at the stream's nearest point to you and continuing one mile downstream. As long as you concentrate, the stream remains at flood levels. Anyone caught near the stream when it floods is struck by the rush of water (+18 damage), caught up in the flood, and dragged along. Every round, each character makes a roll of Str + Dex + Swim - Load. A roll of 9+ means the character has escaped the flood. Otherwise the character drops one fatigue level and takes +10 damage. Any who fall unconscious drown. This is repeated until the character either escapes the flood or dies.

**Mighty Torrent of Water: Lv 25**

Spec., Spec., Aimed (-3 to +1)

A three foot diameter cone of water sprays from your outstretched arms towards a target for up to five rounds. (You must maintain concentration). Anyone hit by this gusher of water takes +14 damage and must make a Str + Size roll of 10+ or be sent flying back. Targeting is at -3 for the first round, increasing by +1 for every round it is aimed at the same target thereafter.

**Lungs of Water and Death: Lv 35**

Near, Inst., Perdo

Fills a target's lungs with water. The target falls to the ground and can do nothing but cough up water; Stm roll of 8+ to avoid drowning within three minutes. Casting Requisites: Animal for animals, Corporem for people.

## Intellego Aquam Spells

**Touch of the Pearls: Lv 5**

Touch, Inst.

Tells you whether a liquid you hold or touch is poisonous, just as a pearl sometimes does.

**Subtle Tongue of****Poison and Purity: Lv 10**

Touch, Inst.

Determines all the mundane properties of a liquid that you touch with your tongue.

**Call of the Rushing Waters: Lv 15**

100 miles, Moon

Guides you to any natural body of water whose name you know. Once you have cast the spell, you can hear the water whenever you concentrate. Following the sound brings you, eventu-

ally, to the water, but you must make Per rolls of 6+ to follow the sound accurately. (Roll once per day for long journeys.) Bodies of water which do not move or make noise require rolls of 9+ to be traced.

**Voice of the Lake: Lv 25**

Near, Conc.

You can hold a conversation with a body of water. A body of water usually knows about things directly in contact with it, such as boats and fish.

**Enchantment of the Scrying Pool: Lv 30**

Reach (500 miles), Year, Ritual, Imagonem

Turns a pool of water into a scrying pool. Innately magical people (including most companions with mystical virtues) who look into the pool can see any spot they know of that is within sight of some body of water. The view is from the perspective of that water. Maximum range is 500 miles.

## Muto Aquam Spells

Some Muto Aquam spells involve heat and cold, but are not Ignem spells. The distinction is that an Ignem spell uses heat as an intermediary to effect a change while a Muto Aquam spell effects the change directly. For example, you can turn ice to steam by applying heat with an Ignem spell, but you can probably make the change faster by using a Muto spell to make the change directly.

You cannot transform liquids within someone's body unless the spell is designed that way (and has a Corporem requisite.)

Lv 5: Turn a bottle of water into wine.

**Lungs of the Fish: Lvl 10**

Body, Sun./Year, Auram

Turns water into air as it enters your lungs, allowing you to breathe water as well as you would air.

**Breath of Winter: Lv 15**

Near, Inst.

Turns a circle of water up to 5 paces across into

**Bridge of Frost: Lv 20**

Sight, Spec.

Causes a thick layer of frost (firm enough to walk on) to form on the surface of some water. The frost can take any shape up to 15 paces in any direction. The bridge collapses after 6 to 15 creatures have crossed over it (roll a simple die +5). Only the Storyguide knows the number of creatures that can cross. The bridge begins to melt normally after an hour.

**Grant Lungs of the Fish: Lv 20**

Touch, Sun./Year, Auram

Allows a person to breathe water.

**Ice of Drowning: Lv 25**

Sight, Conc., Rego

Turns some of the water in a circle 10 paces across

into jagged chunks of ice that pound against anything on the water's surface. The ice can punch holes in small boats but does not damage ships. Any swimmers in the area take +15 damage and suffer -5 and two extra botch rolls on Swim rolls.

**Cloak of Winter: Lv 30**

Sight, Spec.

Over the course of an hour it snows and sleet on a body of water up to the size of a small lake (no more than two miles in diameter), causing it to freeze. If the water is running, it either freezes up (if it is small) or fills with ice floes (if it is large).

## Perdo Aquam Spells

Lv 5: Dry a wet object up to human size.

**Parching Wind: Lvl 10**

Reach, Inst.

Removes all water from any inanimate object of Size -1 or less, including plants (with a Herbam requisite), possibly making the object brittle and fragile.

**Incantation of Putrid Wine: Lv 15**

Near, Inst.

Makes all liquids in your presence vile, malodorous, and mildly poisonous.

**Break the Oncoming Wave: Lv 20**

Sight, Conc.

Breaks all waves and torrents of water (including magical ones) as they come within 10 paces of you.

**Curse of the Desert: Lv 25**

Near, Inst.

Removes much of the fluid from the target's body, doing +16 damage, which can only be soaked with Stm + Size. The target must drink within an hour of being struck with this spell or die. Casting requisites: Animal for animals, Corporem for humans.

**Vile Water of Sterility: Lv 30**

Sight, Perm.

Ruins a body of water up to the size of a small lake, making it unfit for natural life or consumption. The water becomes dark and murky, and noxious fumes emanate from it. Vegetation on the banks either dies or becomes corrupt.

## Rego Aquam Spells

**Ward Against****Faeries of the Waters: Gen.**

Spec., Ring

Creates an invisible ring 7 paces across with you at the center; it lasts as long as you remain within it. When the ring is created, the Storyguide rolls a secret simple die and adds the Level of the spell. No water faerie whose Faerie Points are equal to or less than the result can enter the ring.

**Cloak of the Duck's Feathers: Lv 5**

Touch, Sun. (Spec.)

Makes water run off one object or creature, protecting the target and the target's apparel from dampness. It lasts until the target is submerged in water or until sunrise/sunset.

**Gift of the Floating Wood: Lv 10**

Near, Sun. (Spec.)

Lets any object or creature of Size +3 or smaller float in water. Lasts until the object leaves the water or sunrise/sunset.

**Push of the Gentle Wave: Lv 10**

Near, Conc.

A low wave is formed to propel a small boat slowly through the water.

**Chaos of the Angry Waves: Lv 15**

Sight, Conc.

Causes water to churn wildly, overturning small water craft in a circular area 20 paces across.

**Wave of Drowning and Smashing: Lv 20**

Sight, Inst.

Raises a 5 foot high, 30 pace wide, wave that can submerge swimmers, overturn rowboats, and damage sailing ships. It starts as a small, curved wave and grows for the first 10 paces, at which point it reaches maximum size. If it travels 100 paces without striking an object large enough to break it up, it dissipates.

**Parting the Waters: Lv 25**

Near, Conc.

Parts a body of water up to 50 paces across, revealing a dry path 5 paces wide along the bottom.

**Pull of the Watery Grave: Lv 25**

Sight, Conc.

Creates a strong undertow which pulls any object smaller than a row boat 25 fathoms into the depths. (The effects of this submersion we leave up to your imagination.) Those caught in the undertcurrent must make rolls of 9+ on a Str + Dex + Swim - Load roll to avoid being dragged down.

**Tower of Whirling Water: Lv130**

Near, Conc.

From a large body of water you form a waterspout which moves under your mental direction. It causes +14 damage to anyone it hits (no Atk roll necessary). In addition, those struck must make Qik - Enc rolls of 8+ to avoid being sucked up the waterspout. Those that fail are helplessly pulled into the spout and begin to drown immediately. When the waterspout fails, they fall up to 20 feet to the water surface. If you direct the waterspout to move across land, you must make an Int + Concentration roll of 10+ each round to maintain it.

**Neptune's Wrath: Lv1 50**

Sight, Inst., Ritual

A gigantic wave is created in a very large body of water. The wave, which is over 20 feet high and up to a mile wide, is capable of capsizing ships at sea, smashing and drowning people near the shore, and utterly destroying coastline communities. The tidal wave needs 5 miles of water surface to build itself up to the proper proportions.

# Auram Spells

Auram spells are powerful because the element of air is ubiquitous. Their weakness is that air is not usually violent like fire nor strong like earth. Auram, however, also incorporates most weather phenomena such as storms, lightning, rain, mist, and falling snow.

Auram spells usually affect air as phenomena (winds, odors, etc.) rather than air as a gas (a modern conception).

By their nature, Auram spells cover large areas with poorly defined borders. The areas given in the spell descriptions are not exact, but describe the general boundaries of the effects. For example, consider the task of making a storm. Storms are naturally large things, and making a small one that would affect a room-size area is no easier than making a more natural, larger storm.

## Creo Auram Spells

**Air's Ghostly Form: Lv 5**

Spec., Inst.

A thick fog forms around you. A breeze can push the fog around. The fog dissipates at its natural rate, which can be as rapid as a minute.

**Stench of the Twenty Corpses: Lv1 10**

Near, Inst.

Makes the surrounding air stink horribly of rotting corpses until the odor dissipates naturally. All those within 10 paces of the target point must make Stm rolls of 6+ or act with a -3 penalty on all rolls. Anyone who botches the roll vomits and is incapacitated. Personality rolls are necessary for someone to enter the area voluntarily.

**Chamber of Spring Breezes: Lv1 15**

Reach, Sun./100 years

Creates breezes of fresh air that continually move through a room, keeping the air breathable, even if the room is airtight.

**Wreaths of Foul Smoke: Lv 15**

Near, Inst.

Thick, yellow, sulphuric smoke rises up from the spot you designate, filling a circular area 9 paces across. It blocks sight and each round anyone breathing the smoke must make a Stm roll of 9+ or lose a fatigue level. Once a character is unconscious, further levels lost are body levels. The smoke dissipates naturally.

**Clouds of Summer Snow: Lv 20**

Sight, Inst.

Creates clouds that drop snow over 4 square miles. Once created, the clouds behave as normal snow clouds and dissipate within an hour. This spell does not affect temperature.

**Clouds of Rain and Thunder Lv 25**

Sight, Inst.

Creates a severe rainstorm, including lightning and winds, covering 4 square miles. (If the temperature is below freezing, the storm may be a blizzard. If the temperature is high, the storm is brief.) It takes half an hour for the clouds to form and start raining. The storm rages for ten minutes and then calms down to nothing over the next twenty minutes.

**Charge of the Angry Winds: Lv 30**

Spec., Conc. (5 rounds)

A wall of wind roars away from you, starting up to 10 paces away and continuing up to 30 paces. The wind is 5 paces wide. All within this area must make Dex + Size rolls of 10+ or fall down. The rolls must be made at the start of the gale and each subsequent round that the wind is maintained. You must concentrate on the gale and can maintain it for up to 5 rounds. Missile fire into or out of the gale is futile, and marching against the gale requires a Str + Size roll of 16+. Failure in this attempt demands another Dex + Size roll of 12+ to keep from falling.

**The Incantation of Lightning: Lv 35**

Near, Inst., Aimed -3

A lightning bolt shoots forth from your outstretched hand in the direction you are pointing, doing +45 damage to the target it hits. Those next to the bolt must make Size rolls of 6+ to remain standing.

**Breath of the Open Sky: Lv 40**

Sight, Conc., Ritual

You call up a wind capable of devastating a countryside. You must stand under the open sky to cast this spell. Once you have completed the ritual, a breeze picks up from behind you. As long as you face the same direction, the wind grows in speed and width. After an hour has passed, the wind is a gale roaring over the visible countryside. If you turn away from your original facing for more than a few seconds, you will have to make a Concentration roll of 12+ to keep the spell going. If you turn away for a minute or more, the spell ends.

**Wrath of Whirling Winds and Water:** Lv 10  
Spec., Inst, Ritual

Creates a hurricane 45 miles wide. The winds and rain cause immense damage along shorelines. Can only be cast at sea or at the coast.

## Intellego Auram Spells

Lv 5: Sense poisonous vapors.

**Whispering Winds:** Lv 10  
Sight, Conc., Imagonem

You can hear words spoken by anyone within your line-of-sight, provided no solid barrier (including glass) intervenes.

**True Sight of the Air:** Lv 15  
Body, Conc.

Lets you see clearly through all manner of obscurement in the air, including smoke, fog, and dust, even if they are magical.

**Sailor's Foretaste of the Morrow:** Lv 20  
Sight, Inst.

You know precisely what tomorrow's weather will be and can get a general impression about the weather in the week ahead.

**Eyes of the Bat:** Lv 25  
Body, Spec., Imagonem

You can move about confidently in pitch blackness by sensing air and its boundaries (i.e. where solid objects are). The spell ends when you can see normally or stop using the blind navigation for any reason.

## Muto Auram Spells

Lvl5: Create the sound of chimes (with Imagonem requisite).

**Blasting Wind, Blinding Mist:** Lv 10  
Near, Inst.

Doubles the strength of some minor air phenomenon, including fog, smoke, odors, etc.

**Clouds of Thunderous Might:** Lv 10  
Sight, Inst.

Turns rain clouds into a full-fledged storm.

**Rain of Stones:** Lv 15  
Sight, Conc., Terram, Aimed

Turns raindrops into stones just before they strike the target, causing +15 damage per round of exposure to rain.

**Talons of the Winds:** Lv 20  
Near, Inst

Transforms a wind into an abrasive medium that tears and claws at everything in its path. It is up to 20 paces wide and blows through 40 paces before ending. Soft materials like leaves and cloth are shredded, and people take +5 damage from innumerable bloody cuts and abrasions.

Not surprisingly, this spell has a certain demoralizing effect on its victims.

**Fog of Confusion:** Lv 25  
Sight, Sun./Year, Imagonem

Turns all the fog within 5 miles of the center of the spell into a silvery mist too thick to see through. Random screams, thumps, hisses and other noises harass and confuse anyone within the fog, perhaps even leading them into danger. People have extreme difficulty navigating in this fog, especially through unknown terrain. Seven people you choose can see normally through the fog-

**Heat of Hell's Impending Doom:** Lv 35  
Spec., Conc./Moon, Ignem, Ritual

A huge wave of heat comes rolling over the area in a mile radius around you, with the exception of the area within 10 feet of you. This heat calls for a Fatigue roll of 8+ every round, and body levels are lost once fatigue levels are gone.

**Infernal Smoke of Death:** Lv 40  
Sight, Conc., Perdo

Turns smoke into a vile poison that eats through soft materials (like cloth) and poisons all within it. Anyone in the cloud of smoke takes +35 poison damage (once only), and various material objects are damaged or destroyed. While you concentrate, any new smoke formed becomes poisonous, but even after you stop concentrating the poisonous smoke coheres and remains deadly. It dissipates only after several hours. If not controlled, it rolls along the ground poisoning everything in its path.

**Rain of Oil:** Lv 50  
Sight, Spec., Ritual, Ignem

Turns the rain of a storm into droplets of oil. The rain of oil continues as long as the storm does, drenching the landscape with flammable liquid. A spontaneous Creo Ignem spell of Level 30+ could ignite the storm so that the oil burns as it falls.

## Perdo Auram Spells

Lv 5: Stop a breeze.

**Air Clear and Pure:** Lv 10  
Near, Inst.

Dispels an air phenomenon, such as smoke, haze, or odor.

**Thief of the Stolen Breath:** Lv 10  
Near, Inst.

Takes a creature's breath out of its lungs, causing panic and an instant drop of one fatigue level plus a second level unless a Stm roll of 7+ is made. Casting prerequisites: Corporem for people, Animal for animals.

**Room of Stale Air:** Lv 20  
Near, Inst.

Makes the air in a room stuffy and uncomfortable. Any creatures which breathe air suffer a -3 penalty on all rolls. In addition, for each round of exertion, a character must make a Fatigue roll

of 6+ or lose a fatigue level. This may cause panic in some creatures or people.

**Quiet the Raging Winds:** Lv 25  
Near, Inst.

Stops the wind near you, leaving only calm air. Calms any force of wind, magical or otherwise.

**The Cloudless Sky Returned:** Lv 30  
10 miles, Inst.

Clears the sky completely of any clouds or other meteorological activity within one mile of you.

## Rego Auram Spells

**Ward Against Faeries of the Air:** Gen.  
Spec., Ring, Vim

As Ward Against Faeries of the Water (ReAq Gen), but for faeries of the air.

**Wind at the Back:** Lv 5  
Reach, Spec.

A fresh breeze follows you until you stop traveling. It will cause fog or haze to follow you.

**Jupiter's Resounding Blow:** Lv 10  
Near, Inst, Aimed

Creates a thunderclap; anyone directly underneath must make a Stm roll of 9+ or be deafened. If deafened, the target gets another Stm roll each minute and recovers with a roll of 8+.

**Broom of the Winds:** Lv 15  
Near, Inst.

Whips up violent, swirling winds around the target, who must make a Size roll of 10+ to remain standing. The target can also resist by making a Str roll of 9+ if holding onto a strong support. If both rolls fail, the target is knocked in a random direction; roll a simple die: 1 - down; 2 or 3- left; 4 or 5- forward; 6 or 7- right; 8 or 9- backward; 10- up twelve feet and dropped. Damage depends on what obstructions are struck.

**Circling Winds of Protection:** Lv 20  
Reach, Spec.

Surrounds you with winds that circle you at great speed. Since the wind picks up dust, you may be obscured. Anyone standing near enough to you to attack you with a hand weapon must make a Size roll of 9+ at the beginning of each round or be blown away. Melee attacks against you are at -2 Atk, and missile or thrown weapon attacks are at -10. The winds continue for 5 rounds after you end concentration.

**Gathering of the Stormy Might:** Lv 20  
Sight, Inst.

Calls the surrounding clouds into a storm within one hour. The size of the storm depends on the amount of cloud cover available. This spell cannot be used under a clear sky.

**Wings of the Soaring Wind:** Lv 25  
Self, Conc.

Causes a massive gush of air around you which supports and pushes you along through the air at speeds up to 40 miles per hour. It is dangerous for extended travel, because you might easily lose your concentration.

**Pull of the Skybound Winds: Lv 45**

Sight, Conc.

Makes winds rise upward, pulling one object, creature, or person 50 feet into the sky before

letting it drop to the side. Even a small building can be torn from its foundation by this spell. Such a building can be no larger than 20 feet to a side and cannot be built out of a material heavier

than stout wood. Where it drops, nobody knows, but perhaps a Finesse roll of 12+ would let you choose.

# Corporem Spells

Corporem spells deal with bodies, human or human-like, and anything that involves those bodies. Most faeries are humanoid enough to be affected by Corporem spells.

## Creo Corporem Spells

Many Creo Corporem spells are most useful as permanent spells, requiring raw *vis*. A spell that binds your wounds without using raw *vis* lets your wounds open again by sunrise or sunset, whichever comes first.

No spell can restore fatigue levels.

**Free the Accursed Body: Gen.**

Touch, Inst.

Cancels the effects (short of death) of a malign Corporem spell, such as Twist of the Tongue, if you can match the Level of the spell on die + Level.

**Charm Against Putrefaction: Lv 5**

Touch, Moon./Perm.

Prevents decay of a human corpse. Necromancers use it to preserve their revived corpses.

**Bind Wound: Lv 10**

Touch, Sun./Inst.

A wound is sealed by magical means, stopping any bleeding. Any subsequent recovery rolls are made at +1.

**Gentle Touch****of the Purified Body: Lv 15**

Touch, Sun./Inst.

Stops the progress of any disease of typical strength. It does not remove damage that has already occurred nor cure such dread illnesses as leprosy.

**The Chirurgeon's Healing Touch: Lv 20**

Touch, Sun./Inst.

The person touched can recover a lost body level by making a stress Stm roll of 3+, to which is added the Chirurgery skill of anyone who has successfully tended the wounds. Also, subtract the wound penalty from the roll. Does not heal damage from poison or disease.

**Restoration of the Defiled Body: Lv 25**

Touch, Sun./Inst.

Removes the crippling or malignant effects of poison, disease, or premature aging. The effects

of natural aging cannot be undone by this or any other spell.

**The Severed Limb Made Whole: Lv 30**

Touch, Sun./Inst.

A limb which has been detached from the body can be reattached, but any decay that has occurred on the severed limb remains after the limb is reattached. After a day of decomposition, a limb is weak. After seven days it is nearly useless and infects the character on whom it is replaced (Stm roll of 6+ or die). After two weeks it is completely useless.

**Incantation of the Body Made Whole: Lv 45**

Touch, Sun./Inst.

Heals all damage to a human body at the rate of one body level per round. You must maintain concentration for the rounds during which the spell is being cast. You must lay a cloak, blanket, or similar covering over the recipient to cast the spell.

**The Shadow of Life Renewed: Lv 70**

Reach, Inst., Ritual, Mentem

Brings the semblance of life to a corpse. During the ritual, healing spells will work on the corpse, and the body must be returned to physical wholeness, or it simply dies again once it has been brought back to life. For each day the person has been dead, roll for characteristic loss as for aging. When the ritual is complete, roll a die to determine the success of the attempt. 1- body dissolves; 2- body possessed by demon, faerie, etc.; 3- mindless, useless living corpse; 4 or 5- automaton with no abilities over 3; 6 or 7- automaton; 8- person with self-direction but no personality and somehow dangerously demented; 9 or 10- person with will, but no personality. In any case, the revived person is not truly alive and is unable to gain experience points. Also, the character must make an aging roll each year regardless of age. This is the closest the Order of Hermes has gotten to raising a person from the dead.

## Intellego Corporem Spells

**Physician's Eye: Lv 5**

Sight, Inst.

Determines the general health of a single person. Specific afflictions appear to you as areas of

yellow on the person's body. A Medicine + Per roll is required to identify unusual diseases.

**Revealed Flaws of Mortal Flesh: Lv 10**

Sight, Inst.

You are able to find any medical defects in the person or being that you see. You must possess something of *emotional* value to the person.

**Sight of the True Form: Lv 10**

Sight, Inst.

You see the true, original form of any person whose form has been changed or masked.

**Whispers Through the Black Gate: Lv 15**

Reach, Conc., Mentem

You can, figuratively, talk through the gate that stands between the dead and the living, letting you speak with a corpse that has not yet decayed into a skeleton nor been buried by Church burial. All those around you can hear the voice of the corpse.

**The Inexorable Search: Lv 20**

100 miles, Conc.

Determines the location of a specific person. To cast the spell, you need a map and something intimate to the person sought, such as a lock of hair, or a fingernail. After casting the spell, you can move your finger (or other focus) over the map at the rate of one hour per square foot. When your finger passes over the person's location as represented on the map, you sense the person's presence. (If the person is not in the area covered by the map, no sensations result.) You can locate the person to within a thumb's width on the map. Thus a map with a larger scale provides more precise information. A map of a kingdom would reveal in what area the person is. A map of a city would reveal in what neighborhood. Each casting of the spell allows for the searching of one map.

**Tracing the Trail of Death's Stench: Lv 25**

100 miles, Conc.

Finds the corpse of any being in the same manner as that described for The Inexorable Search (InCo 20). Some object intimate to the being is needed.

**The Eye of the Sage: Lv 30**

100 miles, Conc. (1 hour), Imagonem

Lets you see the specified person and what is within one pace of that person. The image is clear enough to allow reading. The vision lasts for an hour until concentration is broken. To cast this spell, you need some object intimate to the target.

## Muto Corporem Spells

These spells transform people somehow. There are beneficial spells to cast on yourself and on your compatriots and harmful spells to cast on your foes.

Transformations usually do not completely eradicate the original form; something of the original remains. If you turn a fat, one-armed man into a wolf, the wolf will be fat, three-legged, and male. Likewise, transformations can have subtle (and sometimes dramatic) permanent effects. Someone who spends a long time, say a month, as an animal will begin to act and think like that animal. Eventually, such individuals might lose their human identities altogether. What's more, someone transformed back into a human might temporarily or permanently retain some features gained in the transformation. Someone turned into a rabbit and back might keep a fondness for carrots or unnaturally long ears. Transformations are tricky things.

Muto Corporem spells cannot alter a person's mind, so they leave the transformed person's intelligence and knowledge intact. Magi can cast spells while in animal form, but they suffer the normal -15 penalty for casting without hands or voice. Any abilities that the animal form has, the transformed person has as well, though it takes a day or so of experience to get used to the form. To change accoutrements along with the body requires requisites. For example, one needs a casting requisite of Animal for leather, of Aquam for any liquids carried, Terram for metal objects (including studs in armor), etc. Accoutrements are transformed only if they are actually being worn, not just carried in the hand. Anything that does not transform with the body, because the casting magus chooses not to use the casting requisites for it or because the Storyguide rules that it is not sufficiently a part of the target's worn equipment, falls to the ground.

### Evil Eye: Lv 5

Near, Sun./Perm.

Enlarges the left eye of the target, malforming the face and producing a grisly visage.

### Eyes of the Cat: Lv 10

Body, Sun./Year, Animal

You gain the eyes of a cat, which allow you to see in darkness (but not the absolute lack of light).

### Disguise of the New Visage: Lv 15

Body, Sun./Year

Your facial features are transformed to any approximately human configuration.

### Arm of the Infant: Lv 20

Near, Sun./Year

Turns a person's arm into an arm half its original length and pudgy like an infant's.

### Preternatural

#### Growth and Shrinking: Lv 20

Body, Sun./Year

Adds +1 to your normal Size or decreases it 1 or

2 points. An extra Size point gives one +1 Soak, +1 Str, an extra body level, and -1 Def. Each point lost has the reverse effect.

### Shape of the Woodland Prowler: Lv 25

Self, Sun./Perm. Animal

You place a wolfskin over yourself and turn into a wolf. You may change back at will. Casting requisites: various forms for accoutrements you choose to transform.

### Curse of Circe: Lv 30

Eye, Sun./Perm., Animal

Turns a person into a pig. Casting requisites: various forms for accoutrements you choose to transform.

### Gift of the Bear's Fortitude: Lv 30

Body, Sun./Year

Your flesh becomes resistant to physical damage. You get +10 on Soak rolls until you botch one. If the duration is "Year," your resistance comes back after either sunrise or sunset, whichever comes first. Your flesh is tough and insensitive; any rolls that involve sensitive touch (such as for picking a lock) are at -2.

### The Silent Vigil: Lv 30

Self, Spec., Terram

You can move into and become part of a rock formation that is at least twice your size. While in the stone, you can hear what is going on around you, but you cannot use other senses. The spell lasts until you come out, and you must come out where you came in. While inside the stone, you have no need for food or drink, though you do age. Rolls to recover from fatigue or wounds take twice as long to make while you are in the stone. Casting requisites: various forms for any accoutrements you choose to transform.

### Mists of Change: Lv 30

Spec., Moon/Perm., Ritual, Animal, Auram

As this spell is cast, a whipping wind arises and patches of mist begin to roll across the landscape. Sometimes, a patch of mist suddenly stops and envelops a person for a few seconds, during which time the victim cannot move. When the mist blows away and continues its course, the person has been transformed into a random creature. Roll a simple die to determine the result: 1- Raven, 2- Horse, 3- Brown Bear, 4- Large Toad, 5- Ferret, 6- Viper, 7- Boar/Sow, 8- Dog, 9- Black Cat, 0- Other (Storyguide picks, be cruel). The people transformed partially retain their human minds but inherit all the passions and instincts of their new forms.

The mist covers an area with a one mile radius, whose center must be within 10 miles of you when you cast the spell; and it lasts an hour. It affects about one in ten of the people who remain within the radius for the full half hour. (To see whether a given character falls victim, make a stress roll. A 0 indicates that the spell has affected the character.) Once the transformations begin, people will realize the nature of the mist and flee the cursed area.

Casting requisites: various forms for any accoutrements you choose to transform.

### Cloak of Black Feathers: Lv 35

Self, Sun./Perm., Animal, Auram

You hang a small cape of raven feathers on your back and turn into a raven. You can revert to human form at will. Casting requisites: various forms for any accoutrements you choose to transform.

### Cloak of Mist: Lv 40

Body, Sun./Perm., Auram, Aquam

Your body becomes a thick, cohesive mist of approximately human size. You can float through the air at walking speed and see and hear what is going on around you. You can seep through cracks but cannot move through solid objects. You can return to your normal form at any time. When returning to human form, you can grow into a set of clothes so that you will not be naked. (Magi, after all, must retain their dignity.) As mist, you are subject to the force of winds.

Casting requisites: various forms for any accoutrements you choose to transform.

### Stance of the Patient Tree: Lv 40

Self, Sun./Perm., Herbam

You turn into an oak tree about a foot thick and 12 feet high. You can sense only the most basic things, such as night and day, strong winds, and things that affect you physically. Casting requisites: various forms for any accoutrements you choose to transform.

### Transform to Water: Lv 45

Body, Sun./Perm., Aquam

You turn yourself into water, one pint for every pound you weigh. As water, you can hold yourself together unless someone makes an effort to break part of you off. You can roll across the ground slowly, but you cannot move uphill. You can hear sounds, feel things touching you, and sense the temperature. If you return to your normal form while occupying clothing, you can grow into those clothes. (Once again, dignity!)

## Perdo Corporem Spells

These spells harm people directly and usually permanently.

### Touch of the Goose Feather: Lv 5

Near, Conc.

The target must make a Stm roll of 7+ or let out a loud sneeze. Spell-casters must make Concentration + Int rolls of 15+ to maintain concentration, and others get -1 on most activities.

### Invocation of Weariness: Lv 5

Near, Inst.

The target must make a Fatigue roll of 9+ or lose a fatigue level.

### Grip of the Choking Hand: Lv 10

Near, Conc.

The target feels an invisible, strangling hand on the throat. Each round the target loses a fatigue level (or a body level, once unconscious). Stm roll of 6+ to break the spell, roll each round.

**Dust to Dust: Lv 15**

Near, Inst.

Turns a dead (or undead) body into dust in two rounds. This spell is a life saver against some undead, which prove particularly resilient against most Corporem and Mentem spells; but it does not work on those undead that are possessed by spirits. It works only against those undead who are walking, mindless corpses, generally skeletons and zombies. Casting requisite: Animal for animal corpses.

**The Wound that Weeps: Lv 15**

Near, Inst.

Opens a bleeding wound on your target. Each round the target must make a Stm roll. If the result is 2 or below, one fatigue level is lost (or a body level, if unconscious). If the result is 3 to 8, no level is lost. If the roll is 9+, the bleeding stops. A target fighting in melee suffers a -3 penalty. One that is completely still receives a +1 bonus. A Chirurgy roll of 7+ stops the bleeding.

**Incantation of the Milky Eyes: Lv 20**

Near, Inst.

Blinds a target, leaving the eyes milky with cataracts.

Lv 20: Deafen a target (causing -1 on combat rolls).

**Twist of the Tongue: Lv 20**

Near, Inst.

Twists the target's tongue into a spiral, completely destroying the ability to speak. A grave offense to a magus.

**Bane of the Decrepit Body: Lv 25**

Near, Inst.

The target ages a number of years equal to a simple roll + 5, determine characteristic loss normally. Works only on adults.

**Curse of the Leprous Flesh: Lv 30**

Near, Inst.

This curse of leprosy causes a person's flesh to rot off in a matter of weeks. Every week for three months, the person must make a Stm roll of 6+ or lose a body level permanently. Regardless, the target loses a point of Stm by the time the spell ends. The spell can be dispelled while it is still in effect, but any damage done cannot be dispelled.

**Curse of the Unportended Plague: Lv 35**

Near, Inst., Ritual

Starts a plague in a city. The plague reaches its height in 6 to 12 months and can spread like any other plague. It is non-magical once begun, and health measures can lessen the effect of the plague. A full-blown plague kills one in ten inhabitants of a city in the course of a few months. Using or even transcribing this spell is rigorously discouraged by most of the Order of Hermes Tribunals.

**The Kiss of Death: Lv 35**

Touch, Inst.

The person you kiss dies a sudden death. The only mark on the corpse is the black imprint of your lips. No words or gestures are necessary. Stm roll of 12+ to resist.

**Clenching Grasp of**

the Crushed Heart Lv 40

Near, Inst.

You hold out one hand and make a clenching motion; the target's heart is crushed and instant death results. Stm roll of 15+ to resist (lose 5 points of Stm regardless).

**Rego****Corporem Spells****Spasms of the Uncontrolled Hands: Lv 5**

Near, Inst.

Target must make a Stm roll of 5+ or drop whatever is held in hand.

**Curse of the Unruly Tongue: Lv 10**

Near, Conc.

Causes the target to stutter and slur words. Communication rolls are at -4; spoken spells are at -6 with an extra botch roll.

**Despair of the****Quivering Manacles: Lv 10**

Near, Conc.

Your target shakes vigorously from side to side without falling. Those affected get -3 to combat or other action rolls, and -1 to most other rolls.

**Endurance of the Berserkers: Lv 15**

Touch, 5 minutes/Sun.

The target's body acts as though it is unwounded and unfatigued for five minutes, as long as the character is not killed but even if incapacitated. Keep track of the actual wound and fatigue levels anyway because as soon as the spell wears off, the target falls to actual levels. In addition, vigorous action can aggravate a wounded character's condition. A character who engages in combat while at medium wounds or worse while under this spell must make a stress Stm roll of 10+ or drop an additional wound level. Thus, a character who fought in combat while suffering from heavy wounds would need to make the roll to keep from falling to incapacitated when the spell ends. Consecutive castings of this spell on a character will delay the end of the spell, when the wounds take effect, but a body can only take a number of consecutive castings equal to its Size + 4. Further castings have no effect.

**Gift of the Frog's Legs: Lv 15**

Touch, 10 seconds

Allows the person on whom it is cast to leap up to 15 feet vertically or 25 feet horizontally (less if loaded down). The person must make a Dex - Load roll of 6+ to land without injury. A miss indicates the loss of one body level, and a botch indicates a broken ankle or other crippling injury. The person can only make such a leap once for each casting of the spell, and that leap must be made within ten seconds. As with a frog, a running start does not improve the leap.

**Rise of the Feathery Body: Lv 15**

Body, Conc.

Allows you to float up and down to any

height, but you cannot move horizontally by means of this spell. You can lift up to 50 pounds with you. You move as fast as smoke rises, or slower if you are carrying a load.

**Awaken the Slumbering Corpse: Lv 20**

Near, Conc.

Raises a corpse and causes it to function at your verbal command. Use the statistics for zombies (if it still has most of the flesh on it) or for skeletons (if most of the flesh is gone) on p. 127. The corpse cannot have been buried by Church ceremony.

**Gift of Vigor: Lv 20**

Touch, Inst.

Transfers bodily energy from you to any target who is at a lower fatigue level than you. You are then at the target's original fatigue level, and the target is at yours. If you lose a fatigue level from casting this spell, the loss comes after the transfer. Magi have looked for a way to restore their energy so they can cast more spells, and this is the closest they have come.

**Lifting the Dangling Puppet: Lv 20**

Near, Conc.

Lifts a person of Size +1 or lower vertically into the air. Generally, you can make the target rise or descend as fast as smoke rises, but a heavier person rises more slowly and falls more quickly.

**The Walking Corpse: Lv 25**

Reach, Inst., Ritual, Mentem

Turns a corpse into a nearly mindless servant. If the corpse still has most of its flesh, it becomes a zombie; if not, it becomes an animated skeleton. (Stats are in the Undead section of the Bestiary chapter.) The creature follows your orders faithfully but unimaginatively. Unless the corpse is preserved with the Charm Against Putrefaction or the equivalent, the body decays normally.

**Strings of the****Unwilling Marionette: Lv 30**

Near, Conc.

You can control the gross physical movements of a person, such as walking, standing, turning, and so on. If the target resists, the movements are jerky. The target can yell, but you can prevent intelligible speech by controlling the target's mouth. The target must be conscious to be moved about. Str roll of 12+ to resist, roll each round.

**The Leap of Homecoming: Lv 35**

Self (150 miles), Inst.

Teleports you back to the one place you know best (probably your laboratory), provided it is within 150 miles.

**The Seven League Stride: Lv 45**

Self (49 miles), Inst.

Teleports you to any place (within range) with which you have some arcane connection, such as a spell that lets you see there. If you fail a Finesse + Int roll of 11+, your arrival goes slightly awry. For instance, you might fall when you appear or just be facing the wrong way. A botch means you have appeared in the wrong place, perhaps even in a wall (ouch).



# Herbam Spells

Herbam spells work on plants and plant matter, both living and dead. Since wood is a common material in weapons, vehicles, and buildings, Herbam spells can be useful in improving or destroying physical things. They can also be used to bring the plant world to your aid.

## Creo Herbam Spells

These spells create or heal plants. Any food created is nutritious only if raw *vis* is used.

**Gen:** Cancels effects of a malign Herbam spell if you can roll its Level on die + Level of this spell.

**Lv 5:** Create an apple.

**Conjure the Sturdy Vine: Lv 10**

Near, Sun./Inst.

Grows 10 paces of vine from a moderate quantity of wood or from fertile soil. The vine is extremely strong and pliable, suitable for use as a rope.

**Lv 15:** Cause a tree to bear fruit within the hour. The tree cannot bear fruit again for a year.

**Trap of the Entwining Vines: Lv 15**

Near, 1 hour

Causes strong, woody vines to grow rapidly out of fertile earth. The vines cover a circle 2 paces across and reach 6 feet high. Anything caught within them is immobilized. To avoid the vines, the target must make a Qik - Enc roll of 9+, and to break out requires a Str roll of 12+. Someone not trapped can cut a trapped person free in two rounds. The vines weaken and wither to dust after an hour.

**Wall of Thorns: Lv 20**

Near, Sun./Inst.

Creates a straight wall of woody, thorny bushes up to 20 paces across, one pace thick, and 12 feet high. The thorns, which are unnaturally resilient, have +15 Soak and four "body levels" (cut by edged weapons only). Forcing one's way through bodily requires a Str roll of 9+ and does +15 damage regardless of the attempt's success. The wall grows out of existing bushes or fertile soil. A Climb roll of 9+ allows a character to scale the wall, but the character takes +10 damage in the process.

**Wall of Living Wood: Lv 25**

Near, Sun./Inst.

A straight wall of living oak is created, growing out quickly from nearby trees, other plant growth, or fertile earth. The wall is 20 paces long, one pace thick, and 15 feet high. It can be scaled by a Climb roll of 9+.

**Bridge of Wood: Lv 30**

Near, Sun./Inst.

Creates an ornate and exquisitely carved bridge made from living leaves, vines, and wood. The bridge can reach up to 50 feet and is sturdy enough to support creatures of up to Size +4.

## Intellego Herbam Spells

**Probe Nature's Hidden Lore: Lv 5**

Touch, Inst.

Lets you know what kind of plant you touch. You get an image of it in its natural habitat. Works with plant products as well as with plants themselves.

**Intuition of the Forest: Lv 10**

Body, Sun.

Gives you an intuitive sense of how to get along in the forest and how to get the most out of the forest without causing it harm. It is a type of communion with the woods. This spell provides a +2 to all nature-oriented rolls (not spells) when in a forest or similar area. Causing significant harm to the forest cancels this spell and gives you a headache.

**Hunt for the Wild Herb: Lv 15**

10 miles, Conc.

When you cast this spell, the vegetation of a forest guides you to the nearest specimen of the type of plant you seek. You must make a Per roll of 6+ to follow the subtle signals, which include pointing branches, inclined trunks, and such. A plant of the type you seek must be within 10 miles or the spell will fail.

**Converse with Plants and Trees: Lv 25**

Reach, Conc.

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

**Shriek of the Impending Shafts: Lv 25**

Body, Conc.

Lets you know where anything wooden will be in the immediate future (a second) by a shriek that sounds in the air where the wood will be. You get a +8 bonus on Def rolls against wooden weapons, and you can automatically dodge

wooden missiles from 10 or more paces away (unless so many are coming at you that you cannot get out of the way). Missiles from nearer archers still require an ease factor 5 points higher than normal to strike you.

**Calling the Council of the Trees: Lv 45**

20 miles, Moon, Ritual

All magical and potentially mobile trees within 20 miles uproot themselves and travel to the spot where the ritual was performed. Trees from a faerie forest are especially prone to responding to the call. Once gathered, they hold meetings, summon ancient powers, and discuss the problems facing their kind. The results of the conference may not be entirely in your favor. The trees remain animated only for a month and seek to return home before the end of that month. The trees can be called only once per decade.

## Muto Herbam Spells

**Transformation of the Thorny Staff: Lv 5**

Touch, Sun./Perm.

Causes a length of wood to grow thick, sharp thorns in whichever spots you touch (up to 6 feet length). If cast on a staff, they provide a +4 damage bonus the first time a hit is scored, after which the thorns break off.

**Dance of the Staves: Lv 10**

Near, Inst.

Causes a pole, staff, haft, or any other long, thin, non-living wooden object to bend and lash about wildly for a few seconds and then stop suddenly, keeping its new, twisted shape. A staff that strikes someone while whipping about does +4 damage, with a possible bonus if the weapon head hits a person.

**Twist the Living Tree: Lv 15**

Near, Sun./Year

You make a living tree bend into unusual positions. Depending on your needs, you can make a cage, a shelter, a wall, etc. Even the leaves can be bent to form a solid roof that sheds rain so as to form a tree tent. Takes one to ten minutes to complete (depending on the complexity of the new shape), during which time you must maintain concentration.

**Rope of Bronze: Lv 15**

Reach, Sun./Perm., Terram

Turns up to seven paces of rope (made from plant material) into refined, superior bronze, which will not break under normal circumstances.

**Piercing Shaft of Wood: Lv 20**

Touch, Inst, Rego, Aimed +2

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

**Thaumaturgical****Transformation of Plants to Iron: Lv 20**

Reach, Sun./Year, Terram

Makes any plant, dead or alive, as hard as iron. Affects any amount of continuous plant material up to the size of an entire tree or a small glade of grass. Sharp-edged plants can become deadly when this hard.

**Stir the Slumbering Tree: Lv 25**

Reach, Sun./Perm., Mentem

Raises any tree into a conscious state resembling that of a human. Such a tree can see and hear what is going on around it at normal human speed. These trees often share some mental attributes or personality traits with those that woke them. The trees can move their branches about slowly, too slowly to be detectable by people. Most trees in magical areas are already awake. It is theorized by some Hermetic scholars that before the Dominion arose, in the days when the faeries danced across the lands with humanity, all the trees were awake and that some even spoke aloud.

**Curse of the Haunted Forest: Lv 30**

Near, Inst., Ritual, Perdo

Turns a previously normal forest into a haunted and dangerous place. The trees become conscious and cruel, capable of sight, hearing, and limited movement. While they cannot uproot themselves, they can move their branches about, reaching the ground in an hour or two. (Only the foolish sleep in such forests.) The trees become gnarled and hideous, and the imaginative can see menacing faces in them. Only ill-tempered animals, such as boars and crows, will live in the woods, and nothing in them is left edible. The only knowledge of what would happen should this ritual be attempted on a faerie forest comes from ancient and disputed legends of the Order of Hermes.

## Perdo

### Herbam Spells

These spells destroy plants and plant material. Since many items are made of wood, these spells can be quite destructive.

Lv 5: Cover up to a bushel of vegetables, fruit, grain, etc. with mold, making them inedible.

**Curse of the Rotted Wood: Lv 10**

Near, Inst.

Causes a non-living, wooden object to rot and fall apart. Objects up to the size of a single door can be affected, but things that size take up to two rounds to decay.

**Wizard's Autumn: Lv 15**

Sight, Inst.

Causes all the deciduous leaves within a one mile radius, first to brown, then fall to the ground. The full process takes about one minute. The trees will not bud again until the next spring.

**Plant's Withering Bane: Lv 20**

Near, Inst.

Withers and destroys one living tree or all smaller living plants in an area 20 feet square.

**The Great Rot: Lv 25**

Near, Inst.

Rots a large amount of dead wood, up to the amount found in a wooden house or small inn. Wooden structures creak and groan mightily for about a minute before collapsing.

**Treading the Ashen Path: Lv 30**

Spec., Inst.

As you walk through a forest after casting this spell, all the plant material 10 paces in front of you and 5 paces to either side withers and dies. Trees are reduced to bare trunks, while their leaves and all smaller plants turn to ash. You can walk for seven miles with each casting of this spell. Use of this spell in faerie woods is not recommended.

## Rego

### Herbam Spells

**Ward Against Faeries of the Wood: Gen**

Spec., Ring

Like Ward Against Faeries of the Waters (ReAq Gen), but for faeries of the wood. All faeries are faeries of the wood unless it is obvious that they are of the mountains, water, or air.

**Whip of Thorns: Lv 5**

Near, Inst, Aimed

A small branch whips itself at some object close to it. A thorny branch can cause +0 damage, but most branches are relatively harmless; it can be employed to hit something out of a person's hand. You must target the spell to hit with the branch.

**Repel the Wooden Shafts: Lv 10**

Near, Conc.

Deflects the blow of any weapon made of wood, up to the size of a two-handed club. You can deflect a different weapon each round. The weapons automatically miss, but attackers must

still roll to see if they botch (with two extra botch rolls for melee weapons).

**Strike of the Angered Branch: Lv 15**

Near, Inst., Aimed

Causes a tree branch to swing at a target. You must target the spell for the branch to hit; Damage is +10.

**Tangle of Wood and Thorns: Lv 15**

Near, Spec., Aimed +1

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

**Coils of the Entangling Plants: Lv 20**

Near, Spec.'

Animates all the grass and other plants smaller than adult trees within a field delineated by your outstretched arms and no more than 15 paces away, causing them to grab and wrap themselves around the people nearest to them (Str rolls of 7+ to 10+ to break free). You can free one individual per round as long as you maintain concentration.

**The Traitorous Spear: Lv 20**

Near, Spec.

Animates a wooden or wooden-hafted melee weapon in someone's hands and makes that weapon attack the former wielder until the wielder is dead or the weapon is destroyed. Immediately when the spell is cast, the weapon tries to break free from the wielder's hands. The wielder must make a Qik - Enc roll of 9+ to hang on. On subsequent rounds, the wielder can only hang on by making Str rolls of 6+, one roll per round. Once the weapon has broken free or been released, it attacks the one who had held it with same 1st, Atk, and Dam totals as it had in the wielder's hands. The weapon has a Def total equal to 7 minus its Load score. One-handed weapons have +10 Soak and 3 "body levels" (with no wound penalties). Two-handed weapons have +14 Soak and 4 body levels. All thrusting and missile weapons suffer -5 on Atk and Dam rolls versus the weapon.

**Lord of the Trees: Lv 25**

Near, Conc.

Causes a tree to move its branches and bend its trunk in any way which you mentally direct. A large tree striking with branches will have 1st+5, Atk +7, and Dam +16. Normal weapons are practically useless against large trees.

**Freeing the Striding Tree: Lv 30**

Near, Conc.

Like Lord of the Trees (ReHe 25), but the tree can walk half as fast as a human can. If you botch a Concentration roll to maintain control, the tree will probably attack you, having been awakened and disturbed by this spell.

# Ignem Spells

As fire is volatile and dangerous, so are these spells. Magi who pursue the art of fire do so with fine regard for the dangers and also the powers involved, for fire is both dangerous and mighty, to friend and foe alike. Storyguides should make Ignem botches particularly deadly.

Light and heat are included in this form.

Various Ignem spells have limits regarding the size of the fires they can affect. The following si7.e categories are used to describe fires: candle, torch, campfire, bonfire (large heap of burning things), and house fire. Unless specified otherwise, a spell that can affect one type of fire can affect all smaller fires as well. Fire damage is explained On p. 55-56.

## Creo Ignem Spells

Spells that create fires are versatile weapons, destructive to living things, undead, buildings, and morale. Those who depend on fire spells, however, risk the botch. Fire is an unforgiving clement for those who lose control of it, and self-incineration is always a possibility.

### Moonbeam: Lv 5

Spec., Spec.

Causes a gentle light, enough to read by, to shine down from above and illuminate the area described by your encircled arms. Lasts as long as you hold your arms out in a circle.

### Palm of Flame: Lv 5

Touch, Conc.

A flame leaps up from your palm, which must be upturned for the spell's duration. Wind can blow out the flame.

### Heat of the Searing Forge: Lv 10

Near, Inst.

Makes a piece of metal too hot to touch. Something the size of a breastplate or helmet will do +10 damage if in direct contact with the skin for one round. For each additional round, more damage is done, the amount dropping 2 points each round (+8 damage on round 2, then +6, etc.). Smaller objects do less damage. Most metal armor has leather or cloth underneath it that gives the victim a +2 Soak bonus vs. the heat.

### Lamp Without Flame: Lv 10

Touch, Spec.

Creates light (like that of a lamp) that shines forth from some object as long as you hold it.

### Flash of the Scarlet Flames: Lv 15

Near, Inst., Aimed -3

A brilliant red flash explodes in the air where you designate. If in someone's face, the target needs a Stm roll of 9+ to avoid temporary blindness. If blinded, one can try to make another Stm roll of 9+ to recover each minute. The targeting modifier is for the flash in the eyes.

### Pilum of Fire: Lv 20

Spec., Inst, Aimed +1

A two foot thick *pilum* (javelin) of fire flies from your palms, doing +25 damage (-1 for every pace of distance from you) to whatever it strikes. Beyond 25 paces, the flames dissipate.

### Arc of Fiery Ribbons: Lv 25

Spec., Inst.

A dozen ribbons of flame leap from your hands and fly out 15 paces, covering a 60 degree angle. All those in the arc take +20 damage, -1 point per pace from you. The area affected by this spell is so broad that targeting rolls are necessary only in exceptional circumstances. Anyone who sees the ribbons coming can fall flat and therefore suffer half normal damage with a Qik - Enc roll of 18+, with a +1 bonus for every pace the character is from you.

### Ball of Abysmal Flame: Lv 30

Near, Inst., Aimed -2

This spell creates an apple-sized ball of fire in your hand. When you throw it, it bursts into flames as soon as it touches some creature or substance, doing +30 damage to the target and blinding any within 5 paces who are looking at it. Blindness lasts one round, Stm roll of 12+ to resist. You can hold the ball in your hand for up to three rounds before throwing it, but after three rounds it flickers out.

### Blade of the Virulent Flame: Lv 30

Reach, Spec.

Forms a fire along the length of a metal blade. This flame doubles the Weapon Damage score for the blade (or adds +6, whichever is greater), and can start fires as well. Note, however, that after half an hour, the blade will have become so hot that it will have partly melted. Once this occurs, the spell ends. The user of the flaming blade needs gloves to use the weapon because the hilt gets very hot.

### Circle of Encompassing Flames: Lv 30

Near, Conc., Aimed

Creates a circle of flames six feet high. The circle starts with a one pace radius, but you can make it shrink to a pillar or grow up to a 3 pace radius. Anyone moving through the flames takes +20 damage. You cannot move the center of the circle. Targeting roll needed to encircle some-

## Intellego Ignem Spells

### Shadows of the Fires Past: Lv 5

Near, Inst.

Allows you to see where fires have been in the past lunar month. A light red flickering haze appears wherever there was a fire, and you gain an intuitive sense of how and when that fire was there.

### Tales of the Ashes: Lv 10

Touch, Inst.

Lets you see what the ashes you touch originally were and how and when these objects were burned.

### Vision of Heat's Light: Lv 20

Near, Sun./Moon

Allows you to "see" the heat of objects that are nearly human body temperature or higher. Excellent for use in the dark, but it doesn't give true vision. This spell must never be called "infravision."

### Words with the Flickering Flame: Lv 25

Reach, Conc.

Allows you to converse with fires, which are commonly very chaotic and distractible. Promising them more fuel to burn might keep their interest. Fires are aware mostly of what they have burned, but they have a limited awareness of what goes on around them as well.

### Sense of the Fires Nearby: Lv 30

1 mile, Conc.

Lets you know the location and size of every fire larger than candles within one mile and all smaller fires within one hundred paces as well. With a Concentration + Int roll of 13+, you can concentrate on one of these fires and get some idea of what is around it (e.g. people, food, tents).

## Muto Ignem Spells

### The Many-Hued Conflagration: Lv 5

Near, Inst.

Makes a fire burn brightly for an instant. Those looking at the fire must make Stm rolls of 7+ or be blinded for one round by the many-colored lights.

### Show of the Flames and Smoke: Lv 10

Near, Conc.

Causes smoke of different colors, streams of flame, and strange popping and sizzling noises to come from a fire. It is so spectacular that folk will either be entranced or completely panicked, depending on the circumstances. The pyrotechnics might ignite nearby flammables and cause minor burns to those within 2 paces of the fire.

**Hornet Fire: Lv15**

Near, Conc.

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

**Prison of Flames: Lv 15**

Near, Sun.

Turns a bonfire into a prison the shape of a miniature castle. A person thrown into the middle is not burned, but will take +25 damage if they try to escape. The prison ends if the fire goes out or the spell ends.

**Trapping the Fire: Lv 25**

Reach, Sun./Year

This enchantment places the heat and the flames of a campfire into a small, very hard object, such as a gem or a piece of metal. If the object is broken, the flame returns, but dies if there is nothing to burn. The object is as hot and bright as a coal.

**Flames of Sculpted Ice: Lv30**

Near, Spec., Aquam

Turns a house fire into ice. When the ice has melted halfway, the flames start again but probably do not spread because of the wet surroundings.

## Perdo Ignem Spells

**Quench the Rippling Flames: Lv5**

Near, Inst.

Puts out a bonfire.

**Winter's Icy Touch; Lv 10**

Near, Inst

Causes the target to lose a great amount of body

heat (Stm roll of 10+ or lose a fatigue level). Also makes one susceptible to colds and other minor, but irritating, illnesses. Casting requisites: Animal for animals, Corporem for people.

**Soothe the Raging Flames: Lv 15**

Near, Sun./Year

Eradicates the heat of a bonfire, which continues to burn until it burns itself out. The remaining flames do not spread or harm things.

**Conjuration of Indubitable Cold: Lv 20**

Spec., Inst.

Cools the air within 10 paces of the caster, leaving it a little below freezing. All non-living things are chilled thoroughly, not just on the surface, and all living things (except you) lose one fatigue level and must roll a Stm roll of 6+ to avoid losing a second. House fires become as small as campfires, bonfires become small as torchfires, and campfires and smaller go out.

**Well Without Light: Lv 25**

Near, Ring/Perm.

Creates a 20 pace radius ring in which no light can enter or exist. Only spells greater than Level 25 can create light within the ring.

**Wizard's Eclipse: Lv30**

1 mile, 5 minutes

The sun is eclipsed by a magical interference that covers the ground within a mile of you with a darkness equal to night.

## Rego Ignem Spells

**Tremulant Vault****of the Torch's Flame: Lv 5**

Reach (10 feet), Inst, Aimed

Causes a torch fire to quiver a few seconds and then leap up to ten feet. You need a targeting roll

to hit a specific target. The flame stays at the spot it hits if it can burn there. Otherwise it simply singes the spot and goes out (+6 damage).

**Light Shaft of the Night: Lv 10**

Near, Conc.

Collects moonbeams and starlight into a single, vertical shaft of soft, silvery light that moves under your control. It illuminates an area fifteen paces across with light nearly equal to starlight (if the moon is out) or moonlight (if not). If the sky is overcast, the spell does not work. Can be cast under the night sky only.

**Leap of the Fire: Lv 15**

Near, Inst, Aimed +2

Makes a bonfire jump up to ten paces, where it catches if there is fuel or burns out if there is none. Make targeting roll to hit a target, does +12 damage.

**Ward Against Heat and Flames: Lv25**

Touch, Sun./Year

Keeps heat and fire at bay, unable to approach within one pace of the target, making the target immune to damage from flames or heat. Any flames that come within a pace of the target shrink to tiny wisps, which relight as soon as they are no longer within the warded area. If fire or heat damage of more than 25 points is ever directed at the target, the ward falls and the damage is done.

**Burst of the Sweeping Flames: Lv 30**

Near, Inst., Creo

This spell causes a fire to explode outwards from its source along the ground as if a giant wind blew on it from above. It will travel for no more than ten paces and will ferociously ignite anything in its path. The original fire is left dead, but in all probability a number of new fires are started. The flames cause +5 to +25 damage, depending on the size of the original fire.

# Imagonem Spells

Imagonem is the form of sensations and illusions. By using the Imagonem form, a magus can alter what others perceive. Imagonem, however, means "image," not "illusion." Thus one creates, transforms, perceives, destroys, and control images, not necessarily illusions. A clairvoyance spell, therefore, is Intellego Imagonem. It detects real images. By manipulating sensations, however, a magus can create effective illusions.

An image works on the senses, not on the mind, so an unthinking beast is as likely to believe an image as an imaginative human. Nevertheless, Imagonem spells are still most effective at fouling the communication on which human society depends.

Fantastic beasts are likely to be fooled by illusions, as are the simpler undead and demons. The faeries, as expected, are hard to catch at their

own game, and often see through illusions and manipulate them to fool the caster in turn. Certain members of the Church have proven remarkably adept at discerning truth from illusion, though the talent is not dependable.

A spell for special attention is Eyes of the Past (InIm25). It sees into the past and is used by the Order of Hermes to settle disputes and to find out who deserves Hermetic vengeance. Those who kill magi and magi who break the Code of the Order of Hermes can be found out through this and other spells.

Imagonem spells require a great variety of requisites for the specific things they are changing or mimicking. Finesse + Per rolls are required to mimic a specific image, such as the visage of the Duke. The higher the roll, the better you can fool people. You get a bonus on your roll for familiarity with what you are mimicking (-3

for an unfamiliar object, +3 for highly familiar or with the subject to be mimicked available as a model). For mimicking people, a roll of 6+ lets you fool acquaintances of the person, 9+ fools friends, and 12+ fools close friends and family. Use a similar scale for mimicking objects.

## Creo Imagonem Spells

**Restoration of the Lost Image: Gen**

Near, Inst.

Cancels the effects of a PeIm spell that masks some sensation, such as invisibility spells, if you can roll the target spell's Level on die + Level.

**Fragile Image of the Painted Statue: Lv 5**

Reach, Sun./Year

Makes a still, silent image of anything up to human size. Unlike superior images, this one disappears when touched. Casting requisites: appropriate to the object created.

**Image of the Inanimate Thing: Lv 10**

Reach, Sun./Year

Creates an illusionary object up to one pace in each dimension.

**Phantasm of the Talking Head: Lv 10**

Near, Spec.

Creates an illusionary face on a wall or other flat object. The visage can speak up to twenty words before the spell expires, but cannot sing.

**Phantasmal Fire: Lv 15**

Near, Sun./Year, Ignem

Makes an image of a fire that dances, illuminates, crackles, and (apparently) warms. It does not spread, burn, or protect against cold.

**Phantasmal Animal: Lv 20**

Reach, Sun./Year, Animal

Creates an image of any animal or beast up to the size of a horse (Size +2). Under your direct mental commands, it moves about and makes appropriate noises.

**Phantasm of the Human Form: Lv 25**

Reach, Sun./Year, Corporem

Makes an image of a clothed and equipped person. Under your direct, unspoken command, the person can move about, speak, and behave as a human would.

**The Shadow of Human Life: Lv 40**

Reach, Sun./Year, Corporem, Mentem

The human image created (as in Phantasm of the Human Form above) has limited freedom and simulated intellect. It functions as an independent human, albeit stupid, capable of interpreting general orders in new situations.

## Intellego

### Imagonem Spells

Generally, these spells have the least to do with illusions of all the Imagonem spells, because one detects an image without altering or controlling it. They improve upon your senses by bringing in images (sounds and sights, mostly) not normally available.

**Discern the Images of****Truth and Falsehood: Gen.**

Near, Conc.

You can tell whether an image has been created or altered through a spell, seeing both the original and false images in the case of alterations. Roll a die + Level + 5; any illusion spells higher than your roll are not discerned.

**Discern Own Illusions: Lv 5**

Body, Sun.

Casting this spell lets you see through all your own illusions.

**Image of the Past State: Lv 15**

Reach, Conc.

You can see what an object, animal, or person looked like up to one year ago, even if you have only part of the thing to be viewed. For instance, you could tell from a bone what the original creature looked like, provided it was killed within the past year. Casting requisites: appropriate form for the target.

**The Ear for Distant Voices: Lv 20**

100 miles, Conc.

You can hear what is happening in the place you designate. You must have a connection with the place, usually meaning a physical object associated with the place or with a person there.

**Eyes of the Past: Lv 25**

Near, Conc.

Shows what happened in your present location at a specific time in the past, up to five years ago. You can see what happened in the past as if you had been standing where you are when the events took place.

**Summoning the Distant Images: Lv 35**

100 miles, Conc.

You can see and hear what is happening in a distant place, with which you must have some sort of contact, such as some object from the place.

**Visions of the Wandering Eye: Lv 45**

10 miles, Conc.

Lets you view any area within range from any perspective. You can change perspectives, but each change requires a Concentration + Introll of 12+. If beings foreign to the area have entered, you can sense their location.

## Muto

### Imagonem Spells

These are useful and powerful illusion spells, altering the visual image, the noises, the smell, or taste of some object or being. The image remains altered without the caster's concentration and adapts itself appropriately to the medium. The accuracy of duplication depends on the caster's knowledge of the subject. For instance, a magus who wants to make a voice sound like that of a specific person must be familiar with the voice to be mimicked. Those more familiar with the face, voice, body, or other aspect being mimicked might see through an illusion by mundane means. (E.g. "Duke Tybol, didn't your scar used to be on your left cheek?")

**Restore the Image Transformed: Gen.**

Near, Inst.

Restores to normal an image that has been transformed with a Muto Imagonem spell if you can match the target spell's Level on die + Level.

**Taste of the Spices and Herbs: Lv 5**

Reach, Sun./Perm.

Food or drink affected by this spell tastes exactly as you designate. Casting requisites: Aquam for drinks, Animal for meat, Herbam for vegetables and such.

**Aura of Ennobled Presence: Lv 10**

Near, Sun./Year, Corporem, Mentem

The target appears more forceful, authoritative, and believable. Numerous subtle changes in appearance effect this change, including slight illumination of the face, a more erect posture, and a louder and smoother voice. The target's Prs increases by +1 or rises to 0, whichever produces the higher result, and others are more willing to follow the character's orders or advice.

**Illusion of the Altered Image: Lv 10**

Near, Sun./Year

Causes an object or illusion up to the size of a door to appear different but still normal. For instance, a door could appear open instead of closed, or a person could appear dirty instead of clean. You change the apparent state of the object (e.g. dirty, closed, dry), but not the object itself. Casting requisites: appropriate form for the target.

**Lv 10:** Alter someone's voice.**Disguise of the****Transformed Image: Lv 15**

Touch, Sun./Year, Corporem

Makes someone look different, though still at least passably human.

**Notes of a Delightful Sound: Lv 15**

Near, Sun./Year

Causes any sounds, but especially music, to sound especially clear and sonorous. The notes are clearer, sharper, and much more distinct. Add +2 to Com rolls and +5 to music rolls.

**Image Phantom: Lv 20**

Near, Sun./Year

Any one thing, including living things, can be made to look like something else of approximately the same size and shape. The illusion is broken by actions that show it to be false. For instance, a person would have to curl up to be made to look like a rock. Standing up or being touched would show the illusion to be false, so either would end the spell. Casting requisites: appropriate form for the target.

**Lv 25:** Make an object transparent

**Visions of the Infernal Terrors: Lv30**

Near, Sun., Mentem

Causes everything that the target sees to look and sound terrifying. The world looks basically the same, but everything is hideously transformed. The target must make a Stm + Braveroll to see what the effects are: 0- scared to death; 1 to 5- incapacitated with fear, -1 Stm (permanent); 6 to 9- incapacitated with fear; 10 to 15- flee, but fight at -5 if cornered or obstructed; 16+ carry on, but at -4 on all rolls.

## Perdo Imagonem Spells

In addition to destroying created images, these spells mask the sensations of things, making wine tasteless, sneaks silent, and magi invisible.

**Dispel the Phantom Image: Gen.**

Near, Inst.

Destroys the image from any CrIm spell whose Level you can match on die + Level.

**Taste of the Dulled Tongue: Lv 5**

Reach, Sun./Year

Hides the taste of any substance, liquid or solid. Casting requisites: appropriate form for the target.

**Removal of the Conspicuous Sigil: Lv 10**

Reach, Sun./Year

Marks, grooves, runes, writings, and other such things can be obscured so that they are not visible, but the overall shape of the medium remains constant. For example, runes carved onto a sword blade could be made invisible, making the sword appear normal. Casting requisites: appropriate form for the target.

**Invisibility of the****Standing Wizard: Lv 15**

Self, Sun./Year, Corporem

You become invisible, but the spell is broken if you move (aside from breathing and shifting slightly in place), speak, or are touched by any being larger than a mouse.

**Illusion of Cool Flames: Lv 20**

Near, Sun./Year, Ignem

A hot object (possibly a fire), seems to lose its heat and drop to the surrounding temperature. It still, however, has its normal beneficial and harmful effects. A glowing coal will still burn someone's hand, though it does not feel hot.

**Chamber of Invisibility: Lv25**

Near, Sun./Year, Corporem

Causes a motionless group of creatures to become invisible. (Affected characters can see each other.) You designate a circular area which can hold up to ten beings. Any affected character who takes a step, makes a noise, or is touched makes everyone become visible. (The required discipline may be difficult for ill-trained grogs and free-spirited companions.)

**Silence of the Smothered Sound: Lv25**

Near, Sun./Year

Makes one being or object incapable of producing sound by any means. Magi who cannot utter their magic words suffer -10 from their magic rolls. Casting requisites: appropriate form for the target.

**Veil of Invisibility: Lv30**

Self, Sun./Year, Corporem

You become completely invisible, regardless of what you do, but still cast a reflection in a mirror.

## Rego Imagonem Spells

These spells makes things appear to be elsewhere from where they actually are. Moving your image to another place counts as a magical connection to that place if you need such a connection for another spell.

**Restore the Moved Image: Gen.**

Near, Inst.

Cancels a ReIm spell that moves an image, putting the image back where it belongs, if you can match its Level on die + Level.

Lv 5: Make your voice come from another place.

**Illusion of the Shifted Image: Lv10**

Near, Sun./Year

Makes any being or object appear to be up to a pace away from its actual position. The image cannot be placed in a solid object. As soon as the being or object moves or is touched, the spell ends. Casting requisites: appropriate form for the target.

**Image from the Wizard Torn: Lv15**

50 miles. Conc, Corporem, Intellego

Your image separates from your body and moves at your command. It can speak in your voice, and you can see through its eyes. You can use this spell to create a double and then separate from the image, instead of having the image separate. Thus someone watching will be unable to tell which is the double and which is you. You must make a Concentration + Int roll of 12+ or lose concentration for each solid object the image passes through and for each mile it travels.

**The Captive Voice: Lv 20**

Near, Sun./Perm.

Captures a person's voice and places it in a bag. The person may not speak unless the bag is open, in which case the voice comes from the bag, not the victim's mouth. If the person screams while the bag is shut, the bag vibrates visibly. The bag must be leather with a copper chain for a draw-string. Casting requisites: Corporem for human voices. Animal for beasts.

**Wizard's Sidestep: Lv20**

Self, Sun., Corporem

Your image appears up to one pace from where you actually are, so attacks aimed there are likely to miss you. Whenever the image is successfully struck, it disappears and reappears in another spot. Each time it reappears, there is a 1 in 10 chance it returns to your body, ending the spell.

**Confusion of the  
Insane Vibrations: Lv 25**

Spec., Sun./Year

Everything within half a mile of you seems to vibrate back and forth at varying high speeds. In addition, sounds and scents are displaced and seem to come from the wrong areas. Anyone trying to fight in these circumstances suffers -3 on Atk and -2 on Def rolls and two extra botch rolls. Navigating is exceedingly difficult. People in the area are likely to become desperate and terribly confused. The visual effects of this spell are negated by complete darkness or closing one's eyes.

**Illusion of the Misplaced Castle: Lv30**

Sight, Sun./Year, Terram

Moves the image of any building of castle size or less up to a mile distant from its actual location.

**Haunt of the Living Ghost: Lv 40**

300 miles. Conc., Corporem

With this spell, you can project your own image to any designated spot. You can speak, hear, and see through the image. The image must appear in some medium, such as a fire or a pool, and the spell has a casting requisite appropriate to this medium. You also must have some connection with the spot to which you project your image. Each minute requires a Concentration roll of 9+. Very powerful magi use this spell to attend inter-covenant meetings without traveling the intervening distance.

# Mentem Spells

Mentem spells govern thoughts, emotions, minds, memories, and so on. All intelligent minds are affected by Mentem spells, while the minds of beasts are affected only by Animal spells.

Normal people can get better than normal resistance against spells of the mind if they are especially dedicated, impassioned, or desperate. For instance, a parent defending home and family might get a +3 on rolls to withstand a malign spell or get a resistance roll where one is not normally applicable.

Since ghosts are essentially minds without bodies, many Mentem spells work on them. Emotions, however, arise from the body's humors, heart, and other organs (the medieval paradigm, remember?) so non-corporeal creatures, such as ghosts, do not have normal passions and are therefore not affected by Mentem spells that influence emotions.

Since the effects of Mentem spells are not usually visible, they can give you a great deal of power when dealing with the common folk. Even spells requiring eye contact are relatively inconspicuous when cast without voice or gestures, but only the more powerful magi can cast spells this way in the Dominion.

## Creo Mentem Spells

In addition to healing minds, these spells can create thoughts, emotions, and memories in another person.

### **Return of Mental Lucidity:** Gen.

Reach, Inst.

Cancels the effects (short of death) of a malign Mentem spell if you can match the Level of the spell on die + Level.

### **Words of the Unbroken Silence:** Lv 5

Near, Inst.

Lets you say two words directly to the mind of the target, who can tell that the words are supernatural and who can recognize your "voice."

Lv 10: Make someone understand a concept more easily.

### **Panic of the Trembling Heart:** Lv 15

Eye, Sun./Moon

Creates an overpowering fear of a specific object, person, or place.

### **Rising Ire:** Lv 15

Eye, Sun./Moon

Makes the target furious at someone or something (your choice). An appropriate personality roll (e.g. Calm) of 9+ can hold the anger in, but the anger is felt strongly regardless of the roll.

### **Memory of the Distant Dream:** Lv 20

Eye, Year/Perm.

Inserts a full and complete memory into a person's mind. Thoughtful concentration and an Int roll of 8+ reveals the memory to be false.

### **Pains of the Perpetual Worry:** Lv 20

Eye, Moon/Year

Gives someone a recurrent sense of anxiety, a fear of something one does not know, fear of everything, fear of nothing, a nagging, taunting, painful emotion. To have this spell cast on you is truly a curse. (The Western world's first taste of nihilism.)

### **Weight of a Thousand Hells:** Lv 25

Eye, Moon/Perm.

Causes the victim to feel the despair and sorrow of a thousand sinners in Hell. One feels despair, anguish, pain, etc. This is a truly horrible spell, for the victim loses almost all motivation and earthly cares. All one can feel is one's own pain, endless, inexorable, and searing. Appropriate personality rolls suffer a harmful adjustment of 5 points, and the target suffers -2 on any rolls that require thought or concentration. The target has a strong tendency to do nothing but brood.

### **Gift of Reason:** Lv 30

Eye, Conc./Sun.

Gives the target the ability to reason clearly and understand ideas without the biases and distractions that normally interfere with thinking. Strong commitment to a cause, a strong prejudice, or a stubborn personality nullifies the effects of this spell. Even a relatively stupid person will be able to understand difficult concepts.

## Intellego Mentem Spells

These spells are superb for cutting through the confusion of social interaction and the endless banter of the rabble.

### **Sense State of Consciousness:** Lv 5

Near, Inst.

Determines the state of consciousness of one other intelligent being. Some states are: asleep, awake, meditating, dead, drugged, insane, and comatose. A Per roll is required to identify unusual states. Cannot detect possession.

### **Sight of the Transparent Motive:** Lv 10

Near, Inst-

Detects the general motive most powerfully influencing the target at the moment. General motives are such things as fear, anger, and greed, not specific things like the desire to look good in front of one's superiors.

### **Perception of the**

### **Conflicting Motives:** Lv 15

Near, Inst.

You can detect the conflicting motives behind one target's actions. Thus you could learn that a guard is feeling a conflict between fear and duty.

### **Frosty Breath of the Spoken Lie:** Lv 20

Eye, Conc.

For as long as you maintain this spell, the target exhales a misty breath with each spoken lie, like one does during the winter, and small bits of ice form on the person's lips if the lie is particularly severe. In winter, when breath is visible anyway, lies produce a greater than normal amount of mist (it literally billows out). A target who makes a Guile + Communication roll of 18+ can determine whether any given statement is taken as a lie (i.e. will produce frosty breath).

### **Posing the Silent Question:** Lv 25

Eye, Spec.

You can ask one silent, mental question of the target, the answer to which you then detect. Veracity of the answer is limited by the knowledge of the target. Questions about what the target "would do if..." are often inaccurate. You could ask the question, "Are you afraid of me?", to a guard and get a truthful answer, but the question, "Would you let me pass if I tried to intimidate you?" would get what the guard thinks he would do, not necessarily what he really would do. The individual does not notice the questioning.

### **Thoughts Within Babble:** Lv 25

Body, Conc.

You can get general ideas as to the nature of human speech and writing in any language, unless the speech or writing is coded. Per or Com rolls required for difficult exchanges.

### **Peering into the Mortal Mind:** Lv 30

Eye, Conc.

You can thoroughly probe and understand the mind of the target, including immediate and long-term motives, personal strengths and weaknesses, etc. The entire process takes about an hour, with half the relevant information available within ten minutes, but more subtle knowledge open only to longer-lasting or higher level probes.

## Muto Mentem Spells

Since these spells literally change people's minds, they are quite powerful.

**Vision of the Haunting Spirit: Lv5**

Near, Inst.

All spirits within sight and range become visible (if they can do so normally). They can then turn invisible again, but are likely to be interested in whoever has cast this spell on them.

**Subtle Shift of Heart: Lv 10**

Eye, Sun./Moon

Subtly changes an emotion into a related but different emotion. For instance, loathing could become hate, greed become jealousy, and so on.

**Enchantment of Detachment: Lv15**

Eye, Inst.

Calms and greatly lowers the intensity of the target's current emotions.

**Recollection of****Memories Never Quite Lived: Lv 20**

Eye, Inst.

Changes the target's memory of a detail into a similar, though different, memory. The target is no more sure of this manufactured memory than of the authentic one, so strange fabrications may well be discovered to be false.

**Emotion of Reversed Intentions; Lv 25**

Eye, Sun./Moon

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

**Mind of the Beast: Lv 30**

Eye, Sun./Year, Animal

You turn the mind of the target into that of an animal of your choice. The victim acts and thinks like that animal as much as possible. Usually amusing.

## Perdo

### Mentem Spells

**Lay to Rest the Haunting Spirit: Gen**

Near, Inst.

Sends a non-corporeal spirit to the afterlife if you beat its Mystic Might on die + Level.

**Tip of the Tongue: Lv 5**

Near, 1 minute

Causes the target to forget one word of your choosing. The harder the character tries to remember the word, the harder it is to remember. It is incredibly frustrating. The target can come up with the word by making an Int + Concentration roll of 6+.

**Trust of Childlike Faith: Lv 10**

Near, 1 minute

The target loses judgment and believes almost any passable lie for the duration of the spell. Int + Stm roll of 7+ to resist. Truly incredible lies allow additional resistance rolls.

**Calm the Motion of the Heart: Lv 15**

Eye, Inst.

Removes one emotion from the target until it appears again naturally. An angry person stops being angry and a curious one stops being inquisitive (good for keeping an apprentice's nose out of your business).

**Loss of But a Moment's Memory: Lv20**

Eye, Inst., Intellego

Removes up to five continuous minutes of a target's memory, leaving a blank. You target the loss of memory to a specific event or time. With an Int roll of 8+, the target realizes that memories of a certain period are missing. This ease factor can change, depending on how important this missing memory was and what sort of circumstances surrounded the event. Careful introspection restores the memory.

**Passion's Lost Feeling: Lv20**

Eye, Inst.

The target, until taking an hour's rest or meditation, is unable to feel any sort of emotion and acts listlessly, without motivation or cares. Int + Stm roll of 114 to resist, and dire need allows additional resistance rolls.

**Blessing of Childlike Bliss: Lv25**

Eye, Inst.

Reduces an adult mind to a child's level. The target solves problems, reasons, and expresses emotions as would a three year old. Magi affected cannot cast spells. At first, anyway, the target is likely to be happy at having lost a world of cares and troubles that are no longer imaginable.

**Black Whisper: Lv30**

Spec., Inst.

You must whisper a magic sentence in the target's ear. It takes several seconds to speak the sentence, so an unwilling, able-bodied target can stop you. If you speak the whole sentence, the target must make a Stm roll of 15+ or go completely insane. You need not use your hands for this spell, but you must be able to speak.

## Rego

### Mentem Spells

**Coerce the Spirits of the Night: Gen**

Near, Conc.

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

**Ring of Warding Against Spirits: Gen**

Spec., Ring

Makes a circle 7 paces in diameter, with you at the center. When the spell is cast, the Storyguide rolls a simple die + Level. Only ghosts with

Mystic Points higher than this total can enter the ring.

**Snap of Awakening; Lv 5**

Near, Inst.

When you snap your fingers, you awaken someone from sleep to alert consciousness, instantly. Does not work on someone unconscious from fatigue, wounds, or magic.

**The Call to Slumber Lv 15**

Near, Inst., Corporem

The target becomes sleepy and falls asleep within 5 minutes unless some current need makes wakefulness imperative. Stm roll of 12+ to resist.

**Confusion of the Numbed Will: Lv 15**

Near, Moon

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

**Aura of Rightful Authority: Lv 20**

Touch, Sun./Moon

Those who listen to the target of this spell have their obedience and tendency to follow orders enhanced greatly. Common people generally do as told without question (as long as the orders are within the realm of reason), but those who are accustomed to giving orders are much less likely to do so. Bishops, dukes, and generals are not affected by this spell unless this spell is cast on someone of nearly equal status.

**Scent of Peaceful Slumber Lv 20**

Near, Inst., Auram

A very light purple haze that smells of lilacs slowly rises out of the ground. Those who breathe the haze and fail Stm rolls of 8+ fall asleep. You must concentrate for two rounds before the haze rises to the height of a standing person's nose. The haze has a radius of 10 paces.

**Incantation of****Summoning the Dead: Lv 25**

Reach, Conc.

Calls up someone's ghost. You must be in the spot where the person died or have the corpse. Alternately, you can summon any ghost that haunts the area. Those buried by Church ceremony are not available for summoning.

**Summon the Haunting Spirit: Lv 25**

n/a, Inst., Ritual

Summons someone's ghost, provided you have something intimately connected with the person, such as part of the corpse or a treasured possession. Once you have summoned the ghost by this ritual, it haunts the place and can be contacted by the Incantation of Summoning the Dead (ReMe 25). Most ghosts do not present themselves in places they haunt; they lurk invisibly and impotently, just waiting to be summoned.



Rare is the spirit that appreciates being summoned to serve the living.

As usual, those buried by Church ceremony are beyond the reach of magic and cannot be summoned.

### Exchange of the Two Minds: Lv 30

Touch, Year, Ritual

This spell switches the minds of two creatures. A new body greatly confuses those who are unprepared for the shock, and even those who are ready take at least a day to adjust completely. Magi who transport their own minds into younger, healthier bodies, usually find that a strong body entails powerful passions, which interfere with the clear thinking needed to pur-

sue the magic arts. Both people involved must make a Stm roll of 3+ to survive the transfer. (That's a stress roll, sucker, and it's against your Stm before the switch.)

### The Shrouded Glen: Lv 40

Spec., Moon/Perm., Ritual

Enchants an area so that anyone moving toward it is subtly diverted, effectively keeping the place from being discovered accidentally. Anyone not actively searching for the hidden place will never find it. Those actively searching can find the place by making a Per roll of 12+ Searchers get a +5 bonus for having a map. If the surrounding terrain is more difficult than the average forest, the ease factor increases. Likewise, the ease factor drops if the terrain is more open than a

forest, and completely open terrain is unsuitable for this spell. Once a searcher spots the hidden place, the spell does not prevent approach. Hides up to one square mile of area, and diverts people up to ten miles away. All those who participate in the ritual are unaffected by the spell. This spell mimics the properties of many faerie forests

### Enslave the Mortal Mind: Lv 50

Touch, Sun./Perm., Ritual

Enables you to control completely the loyalty, emotions, desires, interests, and long-term activities of any person. The target gets one chance to resist, by rolling Stm + Int of 12+. Further resistance rolls are possible when the control makes the victim do things strongly against that person's former personality.

## Terram Spells

Terram spells, in addition to covering earth, stone, clay, metal, glass, etc., sometimes can affect all inanimate objects in general. For instance, Wielding the Invisible Sling (ReTe 10) will throw all manner of non-living things.

Though Terram spells affect all manner of solid objects, it is harder to affect certain materials. Here, in increasing difficulty, are the materials Terram spells affect: earth (sand, dirt, etc.), clay, stone, glass, metal, gemstones. Spells that affect "earth" can only affect sand and dirt. Spells only affect solid stone if so specified.

### Wall of Protecting Stone: Lv 25

Near, Sun./Inst.

Makes a wall of granite up to 10 paces wide, 4 paces high, and 1 pace thick. One needs miner's tools to break through it, though it can be toppled if it is not connected to a support on its side or top.

### Circle of the Faerie Stone: Lv 30

Near, Sun./Inst., Aimed

Creates a 12 foot high stone wall in a circle up to 10 paces across. It has a magic resistance of +20.

### Opening the Earth's Pore: Lv 40

Sight, Inst., Ritual, Ignem

Opens a hole from the surface of the earth down to the hot reaches of Hell. Molten rock spews forth out of this hole, accompanied by noxious gases. Except for those in the immediate vicinity of the pore, people can outrun the lava flow. The lava spill covers the land within one mile of the pore, doing +20 damage to anyone caught in it each round. Nasty.

### Conjuring the Mystic Tower: Lv 50

Near, Moon/Inst, Ritual

An elaborately carved tower, formed from a single block of stone, rises out of the ground. The tower stands 80 feet high and 30 feet wide, with a foundation set 20 feet into the ground. You determine the design of the chambers within.

## Intellego Terram Spells

### Probe for Pure Silver Lv 5

Near, Conc.

You are guided by a vague hunch, which is sometimes wrong, to silver nearby.

### Eye of the Eons: Lv 10

Reach, Inst.

Determines the age of any non-living object to

within 10% of its actual age. Casting requisites: appropriate form for the target.

### Eye of the Treacherous Terram: Lv 15

Sight, Conc.

You can tell intuitively when any natural terrain you see is treacherous, such as a rock field prone to sliding.

### Tracks of the Faerie Glow: Lv 25

30 paces, Conc.

Causes any even faintly perceptible tracks of a specific being to glow with a faint faerie light, making them stand out, when you are within 30 paces of them. The fainter the tracks are, the fainter the glow. You need something intimate to the target. This glow provides a bonus on tracking rolls, and the bonus depends on the relation of the being tracked to the terrain.

Magically related to the terrain	+2
Native to the terrain	+4
Neutral to the terrain	+6
Inimical to the terrain	+8

In addition, tracking at night without a light source doubles the bonus.

### Stone Tell of the Mind that Sits: Lv 30

Reach, Conc.

Allows you to talk with living stone (but not statues and such, which have been cut off from the earth and are therefore "dead"). A typical question and response takes one hour; stone speaks slowly. Though a stone is usually willing to talk, its direction sense and its awareness of quickly-moving things (such as people) are limited. Wherever magic functions at a penalty, the stones will not speak with you.

### Sense the Feet that

#### Tread the Earth: Lv 35

1 mile, Conc.

You touch the earth and feel what is moving along the ground within 1 mile of you. You can tell direction, distance, weight, number, and manner of movement. For instance, you might

## Creo Terram Spells

### Tooth of the Staff: Lv 5

Touch, Sun./Inst.

Creates a polished, flint spear head. It can appear already fastened on the end of a staff if you use a Herbam requisite.

### Clenching of the

#### Earth's Mighty Hand: Lv 10

Near, Sun./Inst.

Creates dirt to fill in a pit of up to 3 paces across and 3 yards deep. (A good follow-up to the Pit of the Gaping Earth [PeTe 15].)

### Stone of the Hundred Shards: Lv 15

Touch, Sun., Perdo

Creates a stone the size of two fists which, if thrown, shatters into a hundred pieces, causing +5 damage to all within ten feet, and +15 damage to anyone hit by the stone itself. The stone explodes when it touches anything after it leaves your hands.

### Rampart of Protecting Earth: Lv 20

Near, Sun./Inst.

Creates a wall of packed dirt up to 15 paces wide, 4 yards high, and 2 paces thick. One can knock it down by striking it repeatedly.

sense "a single 50-stone creature slithering toward us a hundred rods in that direction."

## Muto Terram Spells

### **Edge of the Razor** Lv5

Touch, Inst, Ritual

Sharpens any metal edge to a degree unequaled by manual methods. An edged or pointed weapon gains a +1 bonus to damage. Good-natured magi reward grogs by enchanting their weapons thus.

### **The Forgiving Earth:** Lv10

Sight, Inst.

Weakens earth in a 15 pace by 15 pace area, making packed dirt like plowed ground and soft ground into fine silt.

### **Supple Iron and Rigid Rope:** Lv10

Touch, Sun./Inst.

Makes a flexible object stiff and a stiff object flexible. Works only on items easily held in two hands. Casting requisites for the material affected.

### **Unyielding Earth:** Lv10

Sight, Inst.

Makes the surface of the ground in a 15 pace by 15 pace area more solid. Mud becomes soft earth, and soft earth becomes packed dirt.

### **The Crystal Dart:** Lv15

50 paces, Inst., Rego, Aimed +4

Creates a ten inch crystal dart that rises from the ground beneath your feet, floats into the air, and then speeds off like an arrow at your target when you move the palm of your hand towards it. Does +8 damage.

### **Hands of the Grasping Earth:** Lv 15

Near, Sun., Rego

Earthen hands from beneath the target rise out of the ground and grasp the victim's ankles. The target can avoid the hands on a Qik - Enc roll of 11+. A roll of 8 through 10 indicates that only one ankle has been caught. (The other hand disappears into the earth.) To break free requires a Str roll of 15+ if both ankles are caught and a roll of 12+ if only one is caught. (Each attempt requires a Fatigue roll.) Each hand can be destroyed by beating its +25 Soak roll (hacking weapons do double normal damage).

### **Object of Increased Size:** Lv 15

Reach, Sun./Perm.

Enlarges an inanimate object up to the size of a large chest, doubling each dimension and increasing its weight by a factor of eight. The size increase is based on the object's original, natural size, so casting it more than once on an object does not work. Noble elements, like gold, silver, and gems, are not affected by this spell. If anything resists the growth of the item, it cannot grow. (The same goes for shrinking when the spell ends.) Casting requisites: appropriate form for target.

### **Rock of Viscid Clay:** Lv 15

Reach, Sun./Year

Softens rock enough so that it may be dug out, molded, and otherwise manipulated in the same manner that good, hard, river clay would be. The rock is slightly sticky. Affects the amount that you could enclose in your arms.

### **Earth that Breaks No More:** Lv 20

Near, Sun./inst.

Turns up to 30 feet square of packed dirt into stone. Works well on a Rampart of Protecting Earth (CrTe20).

### **Statue to Animal:** Lv 25

Reach, Sun./Year, Ritual, Animal

Enchants a hand-size, earthen or stone statue of an animal. Later, any time someone gives the command word (decided during the ritual), the statue turns into a life-size specimen of the animal represented. The animal follows the orders of the person who gave the command word and reverts to statue form when killed or commanded to do so. If killed, the statue is no longer magical. One must touch the statue when giving the command word.

### **Teeth of the Earth Mother:** Lv 35

Sight, Sun./Year, Rego, Aimed (-3,0)

You cause twenty pointed pillars of white marble to spring up from the earth to a height of 12 feet, forming a circle three paces in diameter. These pillars can be used to cage people, to form a wall, or simply to skewer enemies. At their tops, the pillars are thin and as sharp as spears. At the base, where they touch, they are 18 inches thick. To skewer a target, you must make a targeting roll with a penalty of -3, but to capture a target you must make a standard targeting roll. Climbing to the top of the pillars requires three Climb rolls of 12+, and the tops break away when the target reaches them, causing the victim to fall. Skewering a target does +25 damage, possibly more on the following rounds if the victim struggles or is exceptionally heavy. When the spell ends, the pillars crumble into dust.

## Perdo

## Terram Spells

### **Fist of Shattering:** Lv5

Near, Inst.

An object of clay, wood, glass, or weaker material that weighs up to five pounds breaks apart. Casting requisites: appropriate form for the target.

### **Pit of the Gaping Earth:** Lv 15

Near, Inst.

The dirt in a circle 3 paces across recedes into the ground, leaving a pit 9 feet deep.

### **Rusted Decay of Ten Score Years:** Lv 15

Near, Inst.

After the spell is cast, the metal of the target becomes so thoroughly rusted that it breaks if used in any demanding way (e.g., in combat, to

pry open a door). It also loses any sharpness it might once have had. Works on up to 25 pounds of metal.

### **Obliteration of the**

### **Metallic Barrier:** Lv20

Reach, Inst.

Shatters a barrier of metal or weaker material up to one foot thick. Those within one pace of the barrier on the opposite side from you take +10 damage. Alchemically refined and magical metals may be able to withstand this spell. Casting requisites: appropriate form for the target.

### **Cascade of Rocks:** Lv 25

Sight, Inst, Ritual

Makes a cliff collapse, causing an avalanche. The effects depend on the size of the cliff and what lies below it.

### **Stone to Falling Dust:** Lv 30

Sight, Inst.

One solid object weighing up to 500 pounds turns to a pile of dust. Casting requisites: appropriate form for the target,

## Rego Terram Spells

### **Ward Against**

### **Faeries of the Mountains:** Gen.

Spec., Ring

As Ward Against Faeries of the Waters (ReAq Gen), but for faeries of the earth and stone,

### **Unseen Arm:** Lv5

Near, Conc.

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

### **Trackless Step:** Lv 10

Self, Spec.

You leave no tracks in the earth until you come to a stop, such as to rest or to fight.

### **Wielding the Invisible Sling:** Lv 10

Reach, Inst, Aimed +2

Hurls any nearby object that is normally throwable by a person at any target within 100 paces. The object must be unobstructed (notheld down). Damage depends on the object thrown, up to +5 for a fist-size stone.

### **The Earth's Carbuncle:** Lv15

Near, Inst, Muto, Aimed +1

Turns the ground just under the surface into jagged rocks, which suddenly burst through the surface and into the air. Anyone standing on the circle, which is one pace across, is knocked into the air and then hit with the falling rocks and partially buried once they have landed. Damage is +10.

**Invisible Hand of the Thief:** Lv 15

Near, Inst.

Takes an item weighing up to three pounds and teleports it instantly to a sack or pouch that you are holding. The spell does not work if the item is worn, held, touched, or seen by anyone but you, if it is made of iron or steel, or if it is a living thing. You must know exactly what and where the object is. Casting requisites: appropriate form for the object stolen.

**Unseen Porter** Lv 20

Near, Conc.

Like Unseen Arm, but it can carry large objects, such as crates. Roughly speaking, it has the capabilities of a very strong person (Str +5) with no hands. The heavier the object is the slower the unseen porter moves. If delicacy is required high finesse rolls (12+ or so) are needed. Can only carry inanimate objects, and by no means can you carry yourself. Cannot lift things more than 6 feet above the ground. Casting requisites: appropriate form for the target.

**The Earth Split Asunder** Lv 25

Sight, Inst., Perdo, Aimed

Creates a 5 foot wide, 20 pace long, 10 foot deep

crack in the ground. It opens during one round, stays open for another round, and then closes again, crushing all within it for +25 damage. You must maintain concentration all three rounds to have the spell be cast in full.

**Earth Shock:** Lv 30

Sight, Inst.

Shakes the earth in a 15 pace radius. All those within that circle must make Qik - Enc rolls of 10+ or fall. Apply these modifiers:

Standing Still	+2	On Solid Stone	+2
Moving Slowly	0	On Earth	0
Running	-2	In Tree	-6

**Creeping Chasm:** Lv 35

Sight, Inst., Perdo, Aimed +6

Creates a chasm that runs from the ground in front of your feet to some target determined by your outstretched arms. The chasm travels about 4 paces per round, growing slowly wider as it travels, reaching a maximum width of 20 feet at a distance of 30 paces. The chasm is 20 to 30 feet deep and the sides are likely to collapse, so any caught in it are in a bit of a bind. The chasm closes naturally in a week. You must maintain concentration for eight rounds for the chasm to reach maximum length.

**Crest of the Earth Wave:** Lv 50

Spec., Inst., Aquam

Creates a wave in the earth that starts at your feet and travels 100 paces in a designated direction. It starts as a narrow ripple and within 5 paces reaches its full size of 5 feet high and 30 paces wide. It moves about 50 paces per round (over 15 mph). Those caught in its path must make Dex - Enc rolls of 10+ to leap over the wave or they are caught underneath and crushed. Damage is +30. The wave will overturn trees and damage buildings in its path.

**Hermes' Portal:** Lv 75

Reach, Perm., Ritual

Creates a magical portal through which people, animals, and objects can travel instantaneously. The ritual must be conducted simultaneously at two different locations, after which there is a magical connection between them. Each time the resulting portal is used, 1 point of vis per human or human-sized traveler must be expended. The traveler holds the vis in hand, and it disappears in transit. The portal is activated by some command words or ritual determined when the portal is enchanted. Inanimate things and unwilling creatures can be transported if someone else performs the necessary ritual.

# Vim Spells

Vim spells are very useful. They help you use your spells to better effect, and since using spells efficiently is what being a master magus is all about, these spells are very important. With imagination, you can use these spells to make wards, alarms, one-use magic items, etc.

Vim spells also cover demons. Summoning and dealing with demons is prohibited within the Order, but fighting them is allowed.

Since Vim spells deal with magic in its many forms, Storyguides often have to assign Level equivalents to their ideas when they had not planned to do so. For instance, when you try to break the effects of some magical power that the storyguide has set up, the storyguide then has to give that effect a number rating to determine whether your counter-spell is strong enough. Storyguides, be aware of this possibility and prepare for it.

## Creo Vim Spells

There are no Creo Vim spells common to the Order, though you can use these arts to extract raw vis (see the Laboratory chapter). The powers of Creo Vim might be effective at high levels of proficiency, or in the hands of specialists.

## Intellego Vim Spells

Since magic is a tricky thing to understand, spells to detect magic are at once difficult and important.

**Wizard's Subtle Touch:** Lv 5

Touch, Inst.

You can tell whether an object you touch is magical by holding it in your hand and concentrating on it. After a short time the object feels like it is vibrating very quickly and softly if it is magical.

**Sense the Nature of Vis:** Lv 10

Touch, Inst.

You can tell what art a supply of raw vis is connected to. In other words, you can tell whether the vis is good for studying Ignem and for casting Ignem spells, or whether it is connected to Auram, and so on.

**The Invisible Eye Revealed:** Lv 15

Near, Conc.

You can see a visual representation of any magical means used to spy on you. The image varies depending on the spell, but often it looks like some kind of eye floating in the air. It works on Intellego spells of up to Level 30.

**Scales of the Magical Weight:** Lv 15

Touch, Inst.

You can determine the relative "weights" of magical things you hold in your hands as if your arms were the arms of mundane scales; the perceived weight being proportional to the number of vis points in each hand. Without a standard "weight" with a known number of vis points, you can only get a vague idea of the number of vis points in an item. Just as if you were weighing mundane things, closing your eyes and holding your arms straight out improves the accuracy of

your measurement. The Storyguide may call for a Per roll to determine your accuracy.

**Perceive Magical Scent:** Lv 20

5 paces. Conc.

You become sensitive to magical things as if they gave off a scent. Generally you can sense magical things within 5 paces of you. You can sense magical things farther away if the magic is powerful and if you make appropriate Per rolls.

**Sense of the Lingering Magic:** Lv 30

Reach, Conc.

You can determine if magic was ever used in an area in the past; and if it was in the past ten years, you can get a definite idea of what kind of magic it was, what powers it had, and any distinguishing characteristics it may have had.

## Muto Vim Spells

These spells let you change other spells.

**Shroud Magic:** Gen.

Reach, Sun./Perm.

Changes the outward appearance of a spell, either one that has already been cast or one that another magus is casting. The spell to be shrouded can be up to double the Shroud's Level. You can cast this spell while casting the one to be affected if you can roll an Int + Concentration roll of 9+.

**Wizard's Boost: Gen.**

Near, Inst.

You cast this as another magus casts another spell. The other spell increases 5 Levels in effectiveness, but not past the Level of the Wizard's Boost. The effects of the extra 5 levels of power are for the Storyguide to determine. You can also cast this spell simultaneously with one of your own if you can make an Int + Concentration roll of 9+.

**Wizards' Communion: Gen.**

Reach, Inst.

Lets magi combine their powers to cast spells. The Level of the spell must be less than or equal to double the Level of the Communion, and only one extra magus can be added to the group for each 5 Levels of the Communion. All the wizards in the gathering that know the Communion spell can add their Levels together to get the effective Level of the Wizards' Communion for that gathering. One of the magi in the group must know the spell to be cast or must cast it from a text. Each magus rolls for fatigue and success as if casting that spell but versus a number equal to the spell's Level divided by the number of magi participating. If any magus fails to cast the spell, the whole spell fails. If all succeed, the spell is cast. Spontaneous spells cannot be cast by this means. Mostly this spell is used to cast protection spells for the covenant that are too powerful for a single magus to cast, or even learn.

**Gather the Essence of the Beast: Lv 15**

Touch, Inst.

Concentrates the raw *vis* in a corpse into one part of that corpse, which can then be removed. This spell lets you gather all the raw *vis* you find without lugging around entire corpses of monsters slain. Note that the *vis* in many magical creatures is already concentrated in this manner.

## Perdo Vim Spells

**Demon's Eternal Oblivion: Gen.**

Near, Inst.

Weakens and possibly destroys a demon. Roll die + Level; for every point by which you exceed the target's Demon Points, it loses one Demon Point. If its Demon Points drop to 0, the demon is banished back to Hell for an indeterminate amount of time. If you know the demon's true name, double your roll.

**Disenchant Gen.**

Touch, Inst.

You can make a magic item lose its powers permanently if you can roll double the total *vis* points used in it on die + Level.

**Wind of Mundane Silence: Gen.**

Reach, Inst.

Metaphorically speaking, you raise a "breeze" that blows the magic away from an area, cancelling the effects of a spell. You can cancel the effect of any spell if you can match double the

caster's Technique + Form (at the time the spell was cast) on a roll of die + Level. (If the spell was not cast by a magus, the number to match is double the caster's Might score. If the spell was from a magic item, it is double the Level of the spell.) It does not work on spells of instant duration. Magical things nearby will wave slightly in the "breeze" that this spell creates.

## Rego Vim Spells

The spell to repel demons is Rego Vim. It is theoretically possible to conjure and control demons through Rego Vim spells, but this knowledge and its use are forbidden by the Hermetic Code. Any who find and dare to use this knowledge face dangers both from the beings they deal with and those in the Order of Hermes who object to such practices.

**Aegis of the Hearth: Gen.**

Spec, Year, Ritual

This ritual protects a covenant the way a *parma magica* protects a magus. It affects a circle up to 100 feet across (or the equivalent in area), though the diameter can be increased another 100 feet for each extra point of raw *vis* used in the ritual. If a spell enters the circle from anyone besides those who participated in the ritual, the aegis resists the spell. If the target of the spell normally gets a resistance roll, the Level + 5 of the aegis is added to that roll. If the spell would not normally be resisted, the caster must overcome the aegis' resistance of die + Level + 5. The aegis blocks Intellego spells that would penetrate its perimeter even if they cannot be blocked by a *parma magica*. Demons and faeries cannot enter the protected area unless they have higher Mystic Points than the Level of the aegis. Those who participate in the ritual must walk around the perimeter of the protected area. When crossing the border of an aegis, a magical person feels a slight tingle in the extremities.

**Circular Ward Against Demons: Gen.**

Spec., Ring

A magical ring 7 paces across forms around you and remains active as long as you do not leave it. When you setup the ring, the storyguide secretly rolls a die + Level. All demons with Demon Points equal to or less than this total are unable to enter the circle or harm those within it. If you cast the spell again, the second ring dissipates the first, regardless of their relative strengths. Some magi cast this spell in bed before going to sleep at night,

**Maintaining the Demanding Spell: Gen.**

n/a, 1 minute

You cast this spell on a spell that you have already cast and are maintaining through concentration. The spell that requires concentration is then automatically maintained for one minute (ten rounds), whether you concentrate or not. You cannot change the effects of the concentration spell without concentrating normally. For instance, you could use the Unseen Arm (ReTe 5) to hold an object in the air without concentrating,

but to move the object would still require concentration. A Concentration + Int roll of 6+ must be made in order to cast this spell while keeping the first one going (a lower roll than normal because this is what the spell was designed for). Works only on spells of equal or lower Level.

**Opening the Intangible Tunnel: Gen.**

100 miles, Conc., Ritual

You can open a magical channel from yourself to some target, allowing you to cast a spell at some one or some place not in your presence. First, you need some definite connection, such as an Intellego spell, that establishes a connection and lets you sense the target specifically. The connection must be strong enough that you can at least see the target. Then, you cast this spell, which opens the channel between you and your target. Finally, you can cast a spell, whose Level can be no greater than the Level of this spell, at the target as if you were present. Note that you must make standard concentration rolls to maintain concentration on both the initial connecting spell and on this spell. In addition, a magus who magically recognizes the Tunnel may cast spells back at you.

**Waiting Spell: Gen.**

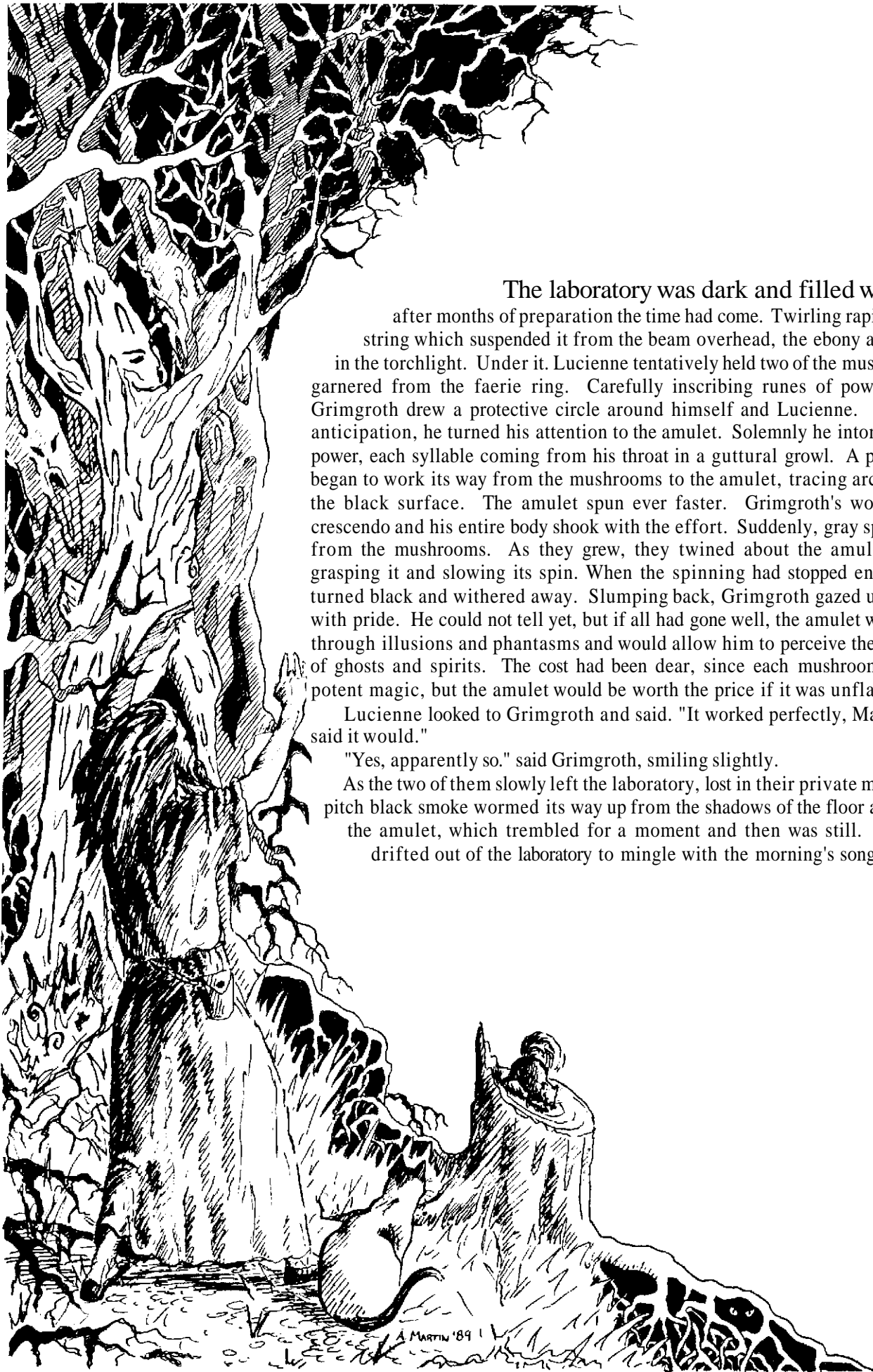
Reach, Spec., Ritual

You place a spell in a specific locus where it will discharge under the conditions that you specify. (These conditions must be immediately obvious, requiring no exceptional modes of detection. Thus, a trap could not be set based on some distant event or obscure fact.) The Waiting Spell must be equal to or greater than the Level of the spell placed in waiting. Several spells can be placed in waiting together if the Waiting Spell's Level at least equals the sum of the other spells' Levels. If one of these spells is a detection spell, then the other spell(s) can be based on an event detected by the detection spell. Thus, if you put Frosty Breath of the Spoken Lie into the Waiting Spell, you could have a spell that fires when someone lies. (An Intellego spell in the Waiting Spell has no effect other than to fire the other spell[s] when the proper condition is detected. Thus, one's breath would not be frosty when caught in a lie.) The Waiting Spell is often used for traps, for emergency devices that (for instance) teleport their users away if they are captured, or for spells held in staffs, to be discharged at will. The Waiting Spell lasts until it is set off. You cannot store a ritual spell with a Waiting Spell.

**Watching Ward: Gen.**

Touch, Spec., Ritual

Puts another spell in suspension on a target, who must be present for the entire ritual of this spell. Under the conditions you specify, the spell will take effect. The Level of the Watching Ward must at least equal the Level of the spell held in suspension. You can also put multiple spells in the Ward, provided that its Level at least equals the sum of the Levels of the spells. Only one Watching Ward can be placed on any one person. If someone tries to dispel the Watching Ward and fails, the spell is cast.



The laboratory was dark and filled with shadows; after months of preparation the time had come. Twirling rapidly on the silver string which suspended it from the beam overhead, the ebony amulet glistened in the torchlight. Under it, Lucienne tentatively held two of the mushrooms they had garnered from the faerie ring. Carefully inscribing runes of power on the floor, Grimgroth drew a protective circle around himself and Lucienne. Trembling with anticipation, he turned his attention to the amulet. Solemnly he intoned the words of power, each syllable coming from his throat in a guttural growl. A pale orange glow began to work its way from the mushrooms to the amulet, tracing arcane patterns on the black surface. The amulet spun ever faster. Grimgroth's words built into a crescendo and his entire body shook with the effort. Suddenly, gray sprouts shot forth from the mushrooms. As they grew, they twined about the amulet, each tendril grasping it and slowing its spin. When the spinning had stopped entirely, the vines turned black and withered away. Slumping back, Grimgroth gazed upon his creation with pride. He could not tell yet, but if all had gone well, the amulet would let him see through illusions and phantasms and would allow him to perceive the invisible world of ghosts and spirits. The cost had been dear, since each mushroom had contained potent magic, but the amulet would be worth the price if it was unflawed.

Lucienne looked to Grimgroth and said, "It worked perfectly, Master, just as you said it would."

"Yes, apparently so," said Grimgroth, smiling slightly.

As the two of them slowly left the laboratory, lost in their private musings, a curl of pitch black smoke wormed its way up from the shadows of the floor and merged with the amulet, which trembled for a moment and then was still. A deep chuckle drifted out of the laboratory to mingle with the morning's song.

# Laboratory

# M

ost of the magic rules so far presented in *Ars Magica* have governed the use of magic during stories, such as casting spells and engaging in *Certamen*. A magus, however, spends much more time at home studying than out adventuring in the land outside the cove-

nant. In between stories, magi study their magical arts and perform research in an effort to build their powers. Time between stories is recorded in seasons, each enough time to accomplish a single activity. As will be seen, there are a great number of different things that magi can spend their time doing.

## Basic Laboratory Activities

### Studying

#### Studying Knowledges

If you have a source from which to study, you can gain 3 experience points in a knowledge per season of study. A source is usually a book or set of books, but direct experience can serve, pending the Storyguide's approval. Your score cannot exceed the score of the source (i.e. you can't learn more than your source tells).

#### Recording Knowledges

You can write what you know about a knowledge for others to study. You can record 1 point per season that you spend working on a text, but you can produce a text with a final score of no more than one-half your own.

You can copy 3 points of a text from an original to a new book per season.

#### Exempli Gratia: Mundane Knowledge

Grimgroth has a Hermes Lore score of 3. He has a Hermes Lore text with a score of 4, so he can study from it. In one season he has earned three experience points, one point away from raising his score to 4. If he spends the next season studying from the text, he gets only 1 experience point, raising him to 4. (The text cannot teach him past 4.) Once his score is 4, he will be able to write his own text with a score of 2 (not that doing so would do much good, since he already has a text with a score of 4).

#### Exempli Gratia: Studying Arts

Grimgroth wants to raise his Muto score so he can invent a good Muto Auram spell. Currently his score is 0, and Mistridge has texts describing Muto up to level 10, so the study should go quickly. In his first season he gains 3 levels (because 10 is more than 3 times his beginning score of 0). He spends a second season studying, and since 10 is still at least 3 times his score, he gains another 3 points, bringing him to 6. In his third and fourth seasons he gains only 1 point each time, so after a year of study he has a score

#### Studying Arts

If you are studying an art from a book, the book's score must be higher than your own. If the score is at least three times your score, you gain 3 levels in the art in one season. If it is at least double, you get 2 levels. Otherwise you gain 1 level. In any case, you cannot raise your score above that of the book.

You can also learn an art from raw *vis* of the same type (e.g., you can learn *Herbam* from *Herbam vis*). If you are studying with *vis*, you first decide how many pawns of *vis* to use (up to 3). Then make a stress roll and multiply the result by the number of pawns used. Treat the result as if it were the score in books that you were studying from, so that you gain 1, 2, or 3 levels if the total exceeds your score.

Raising one's art score to 30 is quite difficult, and beyond 30 is even harder. Because of this, books that describe the arts past level 15 are rare and those with scores of 20 or higher are rarer still (though they do exist) and are incredibly valuable.

You can write what you know about an art at the rate of 3 levels per season, but you cannot write higher than half your score. You can copy what has been written about an art at the rate of 9 levels per season.

## Basic Laboratory Total

You will use one total (call it "Lab total") frequently in calculating your ability to accomplish tasks in the laboratory. The total varies from task to task because it uses the technique and form appropriate to the task at hand. For instance, if you are learning a Rego Auram spell, the Lab total will include your Rego and Auram scores. Your apprentice's Int + Magic Theory also applies to your Lab total. Depending on the specific task, other modifiers may also apply. Remember, spell requisites count for your Lab total.

**Basic Lab Total = Form + Technique + Int + Magic Theory**

## Spells in the Laboratory

Formulaic spells are a major measure of your power because they determine those things you can do easily and predictably. As a magus, you will learn the spells of others and invent your own.

### Learning Spells

If a spell has been written out fully in normal spell fashion, you can try to learn it. (Most magi's notes are incomplete, so learning spells from their private grimoires is difficult.) In one season you can learn any spell if the Level is equal to or lower than your Lab total. You can learn more than one spell in a season if they are all of the same technique and form and if their Levels add up to less than your total.

Requisites listed at the top of the spell description count for learning and inventing spells just as they do for casting them.

If you already know a spell similar to the one you are learning, learning the second spell is easier. If the second spell is simply a variant of the first, you can add half the known spell's Level to your Lab total. If the spells are similar, but not simply variants of each

other, you can add one-fifth of the known spell's Level to your Lab total. You can get this bonus based on only one spell you know.

### Inventing Spells

Inventing a spell is more difficult, but you of course do not need a copy of the spell to do it. First, decide the effects of the spell you are going to invent. You can pick a spell described in the rules if you want, or you can make up something completely on your own. The rest of the troupe or the acting storyguide (someone who officiates over all magic rules, if your troupe has such a position) must agree on such things as the technique and form, the Level, requisites, and so on.

If you want to duplicate an existing spell, use the stats given for it (but include your wizard's sigil; see the Spells Chapter). If you create a variant of an existing one, extrapolate the stats. If your variant eliminates an inherent restriction (such as the need for eye contact or for something intimately connected to the target), your variant is 15 Levels higher than the original. If you create a variant whose range is "touch" instead of "self" or "body," the variant is +10 Levels. If the effects are less or more powerful, adjust the Level appropriately. Use existing spells to guide you in all respects.

### Exempli Gratia: Inventing a Spell

Grimgroth would like to invent a spell to turn an odor into a pungent, debilitating stench. On consulting the other players, he decides that it will be Level 15 with no requisites. His Lab total is  $8(\text{Muto}) + 12(\text{Auram}) + 3(\text{Int}) + 5(\text{Magic Theory}) = 28$ . Each season he will gain 13 points toward completing the spell, so in two seasons he will have invented it, having accumulated even more than the necessary 15 points. If Grimgroth's Lab total were 30, only 2 more than it is, he would be able to invent the spell in one season because one season would be enough for him to get the 15 points necessary. He therefore considers studying Muto or Auram a bit more before trying to invent the spell.



You can only invent a spell if your Lab total exceeds the spell's Level. You get modifiers on this score like those for learning a spell. For each point by which your total exceeds the spell's Level, you accumulate 1 point per season. When you have accumulated points equal to the Level of the spell, you have invented it. (Thus if your Lab total is double the spell's Level, you can invent it in one season.)

### Transcribing Spells

All magi have grimoires containing their spells, which are constantly updated as they learn and invent new spells. These spells are not immediately useful to others, however, as they include all sorts of personal abbreviations and writing shortcuts that others would not understand. (The use of shortcuts is understandable considering how difficult writing can be in the Middle Ages.) In addition, some magi sprinkle their magic texts with false directions, which they recognize and ignore themselves, but which would endanger others who take these parts of the text as genuine.

If you would like to translate a spell of yours so others could read and learn it, you can spend a season rewriting up to 60 Levels of spells to make them useable to others. Also, in one season, you

can copy 180 Levels of spells that are already written understandably.

If you want to translate the spells of another magus, whose secrets and abbreviations you do not know, you first must roll to "break the code." For most wizard's texts, the "code" is merely the author's personal style, and you need only make a Scribe Latin + Int roll of 6+ to figure out the author's style. If the author intentionally obscured the work, add the author's Int to the ease factor, or more if the information is actually in a code. You get one roll to decode a text per season.

## Extracting Raw Vis

You can extract raw *vis* from a magical environment by focusing the *vis* that is in the area into a physical form, usually powder or liquid. Each season that you attempt to extract raw *vis*, add up your Creo + Vim + Magic Theory + three times the magical aura of the area. For each full five points in the result, you get 1 point of Vim-related *vis*.

## Laboratory Activities Table

### Knowledges

Study with Source- 3 experience points

Write Knowledge- 1 point (up to half your score)

### Arts

Study with Book- 1,2, or 3 levels, depending on score of source

Study with *Vis*-1,2, or 3 levels if you roll over your score on a stress die times number of pawns used (up to 3).

Write Art- 3 levels (up to half your score)

### Extracting Raw Vis

Cr + Vi + Magic Theory + 3 times Aura, 1 Vim *vis* point per 5 points

### Spells

Learn Spell- Lab total must at least equal Level of spell

Invent Spell- for each point by which Lab total exceeds spell Level, you accumulate 1 point; when accumulated points equal Level, the spell is invented

Transcribe Spells- 60 Levels put into form useable by others

### Magic Devices

Prepare Item for Enchantment- automatic, requires *vis* (see Material & Size Table)

Instill Power in Item- Lab total must equal Level of power; use 1 *vis* per 10 Levels

Make Batch of Potions- Lab total + 3 times Aura must exceed Level of spell copied; one extra dose per 5 points over Level

Open a Focus to One Type of Spell- automatic, one season

Invent Longevity Potion for Yourself- In + Co + Int + Magic Theory must equal 20+

Invent Longevity Potion for Someone Else- In + Co + Int + Magic Theory must equal 30+

Investigate Magic Item- Roll stress die + In + Vi + Int + Magic Theory, must match the Level of a power to detect it

### Apprentice

to find one- stress roll of 5+, or a story

learns 1 art, 10 spell Levels, and 10 experience points with arts per season of training

### Familiar

Open Enchantment- 12 + Size in *vis* points

Three Cords- In + An + Me - Magic Resistance -Size; use total to buy scores in Cords

Power- Need score of 15+ in appropriate art

Close Enchantment- Sin's

### Experimenting

You can experiment when inventing spells, instilling powers in enchanted items, and granting powers to a familiar. Add a simple die to your Lab total, but roll on the Extraordinary Results Chart.

Note: "Aura" is the bonus of the covenant's magical aura.



# Magical Creations

Physical creations, as well as mental ones, can increase your power. Making a physical magical creation requires raw *vis*, but it can produce highly useful devices. In addition to standard magic items, which mimic the powers of spells, you can create potions that affect those who drink them, magic foci to concentrate your power, and longevity potions, to extend your mortal life. Since magic devices are unique creations of individual magi, determining how to use one that someone else has created can be a lengthy and even dangerous process, as you will see.

## Magic Items

Creating a magic item has two steps. First you must enchant the physical material; then you must instill a power in the item. You can instill more than one power in an item, but any given item has a limit to what powers can be put into it.

### Form and Material

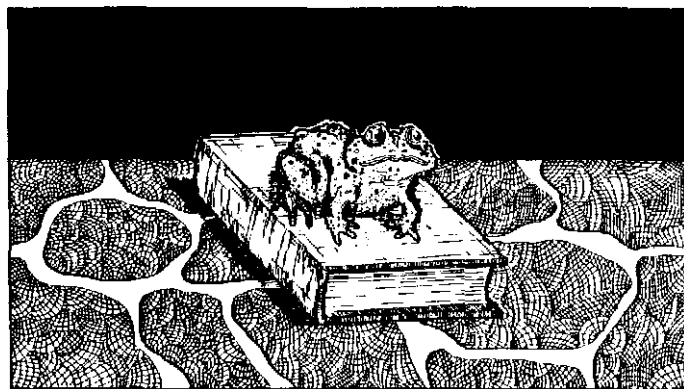
Choose the physical form that the item will have, both the shape of the item and its component material. A golden ring will allow different enchantments than a copper ring, and a copper ring different enchantments from a copper wand. Consider well the effects you wish to instill because the form and material of the item will limit you if you choose poorly and aid you if you choose well (see below).

Pay attention to mundane criteria as well as magical. For instance, the enchantability of a gold sword might appeal to you, but it would be too heavy and soft to use in combat. And a diamond might be perfect for your ring, but do you have a diamond? You might have to go out into the dangerous world to find your materials, especially if your covenant is poor.

### Preparation for Enchantment

Once you have the physical item to enchant, you must spend a season preparing it. You must expend a number of raw *vis* points equal to the number derived from the **Material & Size Table**.

The number of raw *vis* points spent is also a limit on the effects that can be enchanted into the item. Each effect requires a number of raw *vis* points, and the total number of raw *vis* points for the effects cannot exceed the number derived from the **Material & Size Table**.



### Material & Size Table

Material	Base Points	Material	Base Points
cloth	1	silver	8
wood	2	gold	10
bone	3	gem	15
base metal	5		

Size	Example	Multiplier
tiny	ring, bracelet, pendant, all gems	X1
small	wand, dagger, belt, cap	X2
medium	sword, tunic, boots	X3
large	staff, shield, cloak	X4
huge	boat, wagon, small room	X5

To determine the number of *vis* points needed to prepare the item and the maximum number of *vis* points that can be put into it, find the Base Points (determined by material) and multiply by the Multiplier (determined by the size). For example, a silver dagger would take 16 *vis* to enchant, 8 (for silver) times 2 (for the small size).

It is possible to enchant only part of an item. For example, you can enchant a ruby on the end of a staff. Because it is on a staff, the gem would gain bonuses appropriate to staffs (see the Form & Effects Bonuses Table.), but you wouldn't have to enchant the whole staff.

### Designing the Effect

You choose an effect and calculate its Level. The Level will determine how hard it is to instill that effect in the item.

First, choose a spell to be duplicated by the effect. The spell's **Level** is the effect's **Base Level**.

Then look at the **item Frequency Table** and decide how many times per day you can use the effect. The number you choose corresponds to a bonus which is added to the effect's Level.

If you want to **restrict the item's use** to some people, add +3 to the Level. You may then specify any group that cannot use it or any group that exclusively can. For instance, you could say that only you and those to whom the item is willingly given can use this effect.

When you use a magic effect against someone or something with resistance, you will have to make a **magic penetration** roll, but it is the power of the effect itself that attempts to penetrate, not your ability. The penetration bonus equals the base Level of the effect (the Level of the spell being duplicated, not modified by frequency of use or other factors). Effects can be designed to penetrate at your penetration total with that form and technique (your total at the time you make the item, not when you use it; cost

### Form & Effects Bonuses Table

Wand/Staff	+4 destroy things at a distance +4 control things at a distance +3 project bolt or other missile +2 repel things
Jewelry/Clothing	44 transform self +4 protect self +2 move self
Container	+5 create material within +5 transform things within it
Cloak	+5 alter or suppress your image +3 flight
Wolfskin Cloak	+7 turn to wolf
Boots	+5 affect walking
Iron	+7 harm/repel faeries
Human Bone	+4 destroy the human body +3 destroy the human mind
Animal Bone	+4 destroy animal bodies & minds
Silver	+10 harm lycanthropes
Wood	+3 affect living wood +3 affect dead wood
Ruby	+6 fire-related power
Pearl	+5 vs. poisons
Bloodstone	+4 with blood and wounds
Emerald	+7 vs. snakes and dragonkind

of +4 Levels) or according to the ability of the current user (+8 Levels).

Unless otherwise specified, an effect that needs **concentration** to maintain when it is cast as a spell will need concentration when it is in an enchanted item as well. By adding +5 to the effect's Level, you can do away with the need for concentration, but you would still need to concentrate to change how you are using the effect. For instance, a levitation belt that does not require concentration could hold you in the air, but to move up or down you would have to concentrate. Also, these effects gradually wear off at sunset and sunrise, unless you actively concentrate to maintain them.

The **duration** of the effect is equal to the shorter duration (if there are two) of the spell being copied. For a +3 bonus on the Level of the effect, you can make the effect open to the application of *vis* to increase the duration. For instance, a healing wand only heals damage temporarily unless *vis* is used (the same amount as would be required for the spell being imitated), and if you did not design the healing effect with this +3 bonus on its Level, the use of *vis* with it would be impossible.

Some effects work on the item itself, such as a staff that grows thorns like the Transformation of the Thorny Staff. **If the effect works only on the item** containing it, the total Level, after all modifications, is divided by 2.

Each effect requires a **triggering action** or ritual of some kind. The ritual can include a command word or phrase, moving the

### Item Frequency Table

1 Use per Day	0	12/Day	44
2/Day	+1	24/Day	45
3/Day	+2	50/Day	+6
6/Day	+3	Unlimited	+10
		Constant Use	+5

Add the number listed to the effective Level of the power. Only powers that function continually, such as invisibility, can have "constant use."

### Exempli Gratia: Creating a Magic Item

Grimgroth gets some raw *vis* and decides to enchant his staff with the power to lift people into the air, like the spell Lifting the Dangling Puppet (ReCo 20). Unfortunately, preparing a wooden staff for enchantment requires 8 raw *vis* points, and Grimgroth only has a Vim + Magic Theory total of 7. He takes some time to raise his Vim score 1 point, and then he can handle the enchantment.

He takes one season and 8 *vis* points (as directed by the Material & Size Table) to prepare the staff. Then he takes another season to instill the effect he wants.

The Level of the effect is 20 (the Level of the spell) + 3 (to be used six times per day) + 5 {for not requiring concentration to maintain} = 28.

A staff is a good item to use for a power that controls things at a distance. According to the Form & Effects Bonuses Table, a staff give one +4 on powers like this, so he can add +4 to his Lab total when he tries to enchant the staff with this power. Grimgroth's Lab total is 6 (Rego) + 7 (Corporem) + 3 (Int) + 5 (Magic Theory) + 3 (magic aura) + 4 (the Form & Effect Bonus) = 28, so he can instill the effect. It takes one season and 3 *vis* points (1 point per 10 Levels) to accomplish.

Grimgroth decides that the power will be triggered by pointing the staff at the target and circling the tip of the staff widdershins (counter-clockwise).

The staff now has 3 *vis* points worth of powers in it, and since it was enchanted with 8 points, there is still "room" for 5 more points.

item in a certain way (e.g. waving or pointing a wand), a stance to be adopted, or anything physical that you can imagine, (The enchanted item cannot read thoughts, so the trigger action must be physical, not mental.)

### Instilling the Effect

If your Lab total equals or exceeds the Level of the effect, you can instill it in one season. For every 10 points or fraction thereof in the modified Level of the effect, you must expend 1 raw *vis* point to instill it. But remember, a given item can only hold a limited number of powers. If these raw *vis* points would bring the total raw *vis* used to instill effects above the total originally derived from

the Material & Size Table, the effect cannot be instilled. So if you are putting effects into a silver wand (which took 16 *vis* to enchant at first), you can only put in 16 points of powers. If the wand already has 14 points worth of powers, a power that requires 3 points (i.e., a power whose Level is 21 to 30) would not "fit"; you could not put it in the wand.

You may add your covenant's Magic Aura to your Lab total.

For each effect already in the item that has a matching technique or form of the effect to be instilled, add +1 to your Lab total.

Look on the Form & Effect Bonuses Table. If the form or material of the magic item provides bonuses for the effect at hand, add those bonuses to your Lab total.

## The Enchanted Item in Use

You can use one effect from an item each round, using the appropriate trigger action for each. You must make any aiming or magic penetration rolls that would normally be necessary, but you do not have to roll for fatigue. The duration is usually the shorter of the two listed for the spell, but some effects can be boosted by *vis* to the longer duration.

If the effect used duplicates a ritual spell, using it takes the normal amount of time for that spell, and you must expend the normal amount of *vis* as well.

If the item is physically broken, the enchantments are lost.

You may use an enchanted item before it is "filled up" with powers and then add powers later. There is no finishing ritual as there is with a familiar.

## Charm Against Magic

Even though there is no spell to do so, magi can invent magic items to protect the user against magic. Treat this effect as Rego Vim, and the Level of the effect is the bonus provided on magic resistance rolls. This charm works just like a *parma magica* and is incompatible with a normal one. It works continually on the bearer of the device.

# Potions

Potions are a specialized, limited form of magic item that affect those who drink them. Manufacturing potions is easy. Doing so requires no raw *vis*, and you can often make several doses of a potion in one season.

To make a potion, first select the effect, equivalent to any spell. The effects will only affect the drinker of the potion, so some spells cannot be duplicated by potions. For instance, an "Unseen Arm" potion is not possible. A potion never gives anyone the ability to cast a spell.

Then you spend a season working on the potion. Total your Technique + Form + Int + Magic Theory + three times Aura. For each 5 points by which you exceed the spell's Level, you get one dose of the potion.

## Exempli Gratia; Making a Potion

Grimgroth would like to be able to get out of trouble in a hurry, so he decides to make a potion that mimics the Leap of Homecoming (ReCo 35). His Lab total is 6 (Rego) + 7 (Corpore) + 3 (Int) + 5 (Magic Theory) + 9 (3 times the aura) - 30, not good enough. He uses 2 *vis* points to boost his total to 36, and he spends a season making one dose of the potion. With 4 *vis* points he could have boosted his total to 42, which would have been 7 points over the potion's Level, and he would have gotten two doses in the same amount of time.

You may expend raw *vis*, each point increasing your total by +3.

If you want the potion to have the longer of two durations listed for a spell, you must put *vis* into each potion just as if you were casting the spell. (This option is especially important for healing potions.)

Anyone who drinks a potion undergoes the effect of the spell copied. The effect might not be obvious. For example, a potion that lets the drinker fly will have no noticeable effect until the person jumps into the air. Drinkers get normal resistance rolls against the effects of a potion.

## Magic Foci

To help you concentrate your magic powers, you can develop a focus. A focus will give you bonuses on certain types of spells, depending on the focus you choose and the work you put into it.

First you choose a shape and material, just as you would for a magic item. You must spend one season enchanting it with raw *vis*, also like a magic item. Then, for every extra season you spend, you open the focus to one kind of spell. Use the Form & Effect Bonuses Table to determine what bonuses are possible. A certain type of item might provide you with many possible bonuses, but you only get those that you choose and spend a season obtaining. For instance, Grimgroth could use his magical staff as a focus by spending a season to attune it to spells that control things at a distance. He would then get a +4 bonus on rolls with spells that control things at a distance (the bonus listed on the Form & Effects Bonuses Table.)

## Distractions from Studies

The rules for what a magus can do in a season assume that the season is uninterrupted. Sometimes, however, magi take time away from their labs to travel and explore, and this lost time makes itself felt in their lab performance. For each day lost, subtract 1 from any lab totals. If the procedure you are performing requires a certain amount of time, such as preparing an item for enchantment, then any interruption ruins the procedure.

You can only have one focus at a time. One must be completely destroyed before you can make another. You cannot make a focus for someone else. You can put magic powers in a focus, as if it were a standard magic item, and you can use a magic item that you have created as your focus. Since the item has already had raw *vis* put into it and has been prepared for enchantment, you need only spend the time to open it for the spell types you want to use.

## Longevity Potions

As a magus, you will find that your time to study and increase your power has an ultimate deadline: your mortal demise. In their attempts to gain themselves more time in this world, the magi of the Order of Hermes have developed longevity potions. Though death is still inevitable, these potions can stave it off for hundreds of years. Each magus has an individual formula for longevity, and one magus' potion is of no benefit to another magus.

The first stage in making your potion is determining what ingredients you need. You can determine the ingredients and gather them in one season if your Intellego + Corporem + Int + Magic Theory adds up to 20 or more. Gathering the ingredients could be part of a story. In addition to mundane ingredients, a longevity potion requires 1 point of raw *vis* for each 10 years or fraction thereof you are in age. The potion requires this input of *vis* every year you use it.

Every year you take your longevity potion, you receive a +5 bonus on rolls to avoid characteristic loss.

You can make longevity potions for others, even for non-magi. To determine the ingredients for another character's potion, you and that character must spend one season of experimentation. Your Intellego + Corporem + Int + Magic Theory must equal 30+. Once you succeed, you must supply the raw *vis* as normal. A potion for another magus will work normally, but one for a non-magus will be less powerful. Non-magi do not have the magic resilience that magi have. The non-magus player gets only a +3 bonus to resist characteristic loss.

## Investigating an Item

Investigating a magic item involves taking an item of someone else's creation and examining it in your study. Each power in the item has a factor whose score you must match on a stress die plus Intellego + Vim + Int + Magic Theory. That factor is equal to the Level equivalent of the power. (An item's functioning as a focus is Level equivalent 20.). If you match the score of the lowest rated power, you have discovered it and can roll again that season for the next lowest rated power. As long as you succeed, you can keep rolling. If you roll and find nothing, it either means that there are no more powers in the item or that you did not roll high enough to find the next one. (Only the storyguide knows.) In either case, you can keep trying as long as you want, but each failure to discover a power ends the rolls for that season. Discovering the power includes discovering how it is used (i.e. the activating ritual, words, etc.) and any restrictions there might be on it.

Magi sometimes use the Waiting Spell to guard their magic items. The spell held in waiting is often released at anyone who magically examines the item. Beware.

## Summary of Magic Devices

### Creating a Magic Item

1) Select the item's physical form (e.g. wool cloak, gold ring, etc.)

2) Prepare the item for enchantment for a season. Expend the number of *vis* points indicated by the Materials & Size Table.

3) Choose an effect to instill, including its Level. Adjust Level for number of uses per day, restrictions on use, and so on. The Level cannot exceed Technique + Form + Int + Magic Theory + bonuses for the type of item used (see Form & Effect Bonuses Table). Expend one *vis* point for each 10 points of the Level or fraction thereof. You can instill this effect in one season.

4) Repeat step 3 as desired, but the total number of *vis* points used to instill effects cannot exceed the number of *vis* points originally used to enchant it (step 2).

### Potions

Select a spell whose effect you wish to duplicate. Total Technique + Form + Int + Magic Theory + three times thy Aura + three times the number of *vis* points used. You get one dose of the potion for every five points by which the total exceeds the Level.

### Magic Foci

1) Decide the form that the focus will take.

2) Spend a season enchanting it with the number of *vis* points indicated on the Material & Size Table.

3) Spend a season "opening" one of the bonuses listed on the Form & Effect Bonuses Table.

4) Repeat step 3 as often as desired.

### Longevity Potion

If your Intellego + Corporem + Int + Magic Theory is 20+, you can spend a season inventing a longevity potion for yourself and gathering the mundane ingredients necessary for it. It requires 1 *vis* point per 10 years of your age.

To make a longevity potion for another person requires an Intellego + Corporem + Int + Magic Theory total of 30+.

### Investigating an Item

Roll a stress die + Intellego + Vim + Int + Magic Theory. If the roll matches or exceeds the Level equivalent of the weakest power, you have discovered that power and may roll again for the power with the next highest Level equivalent. If you fail any roll, you may make no more rolls this season, but may keep trying indefinitely in later seasons.

# Apprentices

In your pursuit of the art of magic, you will likely wish to find an apprentice to help you in your work. The apprentice will take some time away from your studies, as you will be obliged to teach as well as research; but the knowledge your apprentice gains will in turn help you in your studies. An apprentice will help you in your laboratory work. In return you must devote one season per year to teaching your ward rather than doing research. In addition to service, an apprentice provides close human company and the chance to leave a living legacy after you have died. Apprentices are the closest thing most magi ever have to offspring and family.

## Minimum Competence to Teach an Apprentice

You may only have an apprentice if you are competent enough to teach someone every magical art. This requires a score of at least 5 in each art. Without a score of at least 5, you are not familiar enough yourself with the art to initiate someone else in its

## Finding Your Apprentice

If you qualify to teach an apprentice, the next step is to find one. Out among the common people there regularly appear those rare individuals with the Gift, those who have innate magical inclination. Only these can become apprentices and eventually magi. Luckily for those magi who seek them, they inevitably stand out from the crowd. They are almost invariably bright, making them fit in poorly with the illiterate society in which most find themselves. Also, most of them somehow attract supernatural attention to themselves. In most populations, there is a youth who is prone to lone wanderings at night, who is the subject of much town gossip, and who displays a precocious wit. Chances are, such a person is your potential apprentice. For every season spent searching for a potential apprentice, make a stress roll. If the result is 5+, you have found one. Searching for an apprentice could lead to a good story, especially if enemy forces contrive to thwart your efforts. It could also provide fertile role-playing possibilities.

## Training Your Apprentice

Once you have the apprentice, the training begins. Each year, according to the Peripheral Code of Hermes, an apprentice is guaranteed at least one season's worth of training. If you do not provide this training, the apprentice is free to go to another magus, and the training you have provided will no longer benefit you.

In each season of your training, an apprentice gets one experience point in Magic Theory, which starts at 0. If all you want is an assistant, then simply keep track of your apprentice's Magic Theory score. After fifteen years, your apprentice becomes a full magus and can leave the saga, if that is how you want to play it. If you want to develop the apprentice more, you will have to keep track of other scores.

For each season of training, an apprentice learns one art. Before learning an art, casting any spell that uses it is impossible. Once the art is learned, even if the score is 0, casting a spell with that art is possible. Choose the arts as they are learned.

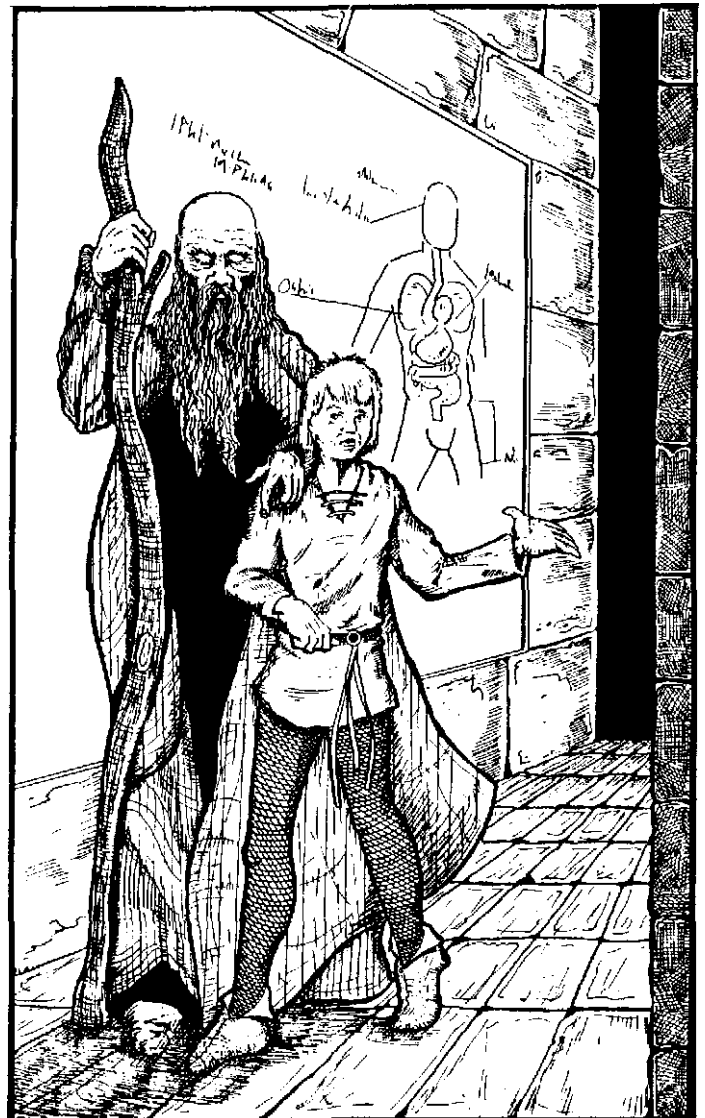
Each year of apprenticeship, the apprentice gets 10 Levels of spells and 10 purchase points in the magic arts that have been learned.

The apprentice character will also pick up abilities during the apprenticeship. More essential abilities, such as Scribe Latin, are learned first, but other than that, it is up to you to determine how an apprentice character increases in abilities. As a guide, assume that after fifteen years of apprenticeship, the student will have abilities like those of a beginning magus character. Likewise, an apprentice could be assigned all the traits (characteristics, personality traits, etc.) required of a complete character generated normally.

## The Value of an Apprentice

Your apprentice's Int + Magic Theory score is added to all laboratory totals that include your Magic Theory. (Roll a simple die to determine the apprentice's Int; 1-5: +2, 6-8: +3, 9-10: +4.)

When studying from *vis* with the aid of an apprentice, add +1 to your stress roll.



## The Apprentice in Play

A fully developed apprentice makes a playable character. If you want to play an apprentice, keep in mind that you have no natural niche in the story. Grogs fight, companions provide skilled assistance, and magi have powerful spells. As an apprentice, you would probably be outclassed in all areas. Nevertheless, some stories would be exciting with an apprentice character or characters, as they are interesting individuals, especially if there is not a wizard around to overshadow their immature magical abilities.

Attacking another magus' apprentice is, according to the Code of Hermes, almost as serious as attacking a magus' familiar.

# Familiars

Protective of their secrets and suspicious of any who might hold power over them, magi are notoriously distant from other people. They can find some companionship with apprentices, but the master-apprentice bond atrophies after the apprentice has become a magus, and sometimes their devotion to each other turns to rivalry. For longer-lasting and deeper companionship, the magi turn to beings that they have formed and that they can trust: their familiars.

## Finding and Befriending the Animal

The first step in getting a familiar is finding an animal with inherent magic but no human-like intelligence. Accomplishing this is left to your Storytelling. Wandering at random in search of a magical creature is usually profitless; magi generally follow rumors to the locations of the familiars they want. Some also receive visions of the animals that are somehow "meant" for them.

Once found, the animal must be befriended. You must genuinely admire or even love the animal in question, and it must trust you freely, under no coercion, magical or mundane. The animal can sense something of your nature when you are in close contact, and if your nature's clash, it will reject you. The need for mutual admiration is why air wizards, for example, often take birds as familiars, and why you can often tell something about magi by the familiars they have chosen and that have chosen them.

## Enchanting the Familiar

Once you and the familiar have accepted each other, you take the animal to your laboratory and begin a year-long series of enchantments. Any serious distractions to these rituals will ruin them and force you to start again from the beginning.

## Opening the Enchantment

The first season is spent attuning the animal's magic to your own. This ritual requires a number of *vis* points equal to 12 + the creature's Size. During this season, the animal often undergoes physical changes, such as a change in hue, shape of limbs, or texture of skin. It may develop a physical trait to match one of yours. It also learns rudimentary speech that you, at least, can understand. You need an Animal score of 10+ to perform this ritual.

## The End of Apprenticeship

Normally an apprentice leaves after fifteen years of service, though one can leave any time with the master's permission or after learning all fifteen magic arts. In some traditions an apprentice must undergo tests by a tribunal of magi before being officially recognized as a magus. The dreaded "apprentice's gauntlet" is one such test.

An apprentice of yours that becomes a magus is likely to remain loyal to you, to some degree. Even if not played as a full character, former apprentices can aid you in times of need. (But then, we've also all heard stories of thankless students who turn against their masters.)

## Forging the Three Cords

In the second season, you forge the three mystic cords that connect you and the familiar. (The cords may be seen by someone with the second sight, but otherwise they are intangible.) A golden cord connects your magical abilities, a silver cord connects your minds, and bronze cords connects your bodies.

The strength of each of these cords, is rated from 0 to +3. To determine the ratings, add your Animal, Mentem, and Intellego scores, then subtract the animal's Magic Resistance and Size. This gives you a total from which to "purchase" ratings in each of the three cords; see the Cord Strength Table. The cost for the cords cannot add up to more than the total derived above. The effects of the cords are explained below.

### Cord Strength Table

Strength	Cost
0	0
+1	5
+2	15
+3	30

## Granting a Power

In the third season, you grant the familiar a power chosen from the list below. You must have a score of 15+ in the listed art to grant your familiar a given power. If your familiar already has major magical powers, this season is spent attuning those powers to Hermetic magic, and you may not grant the familiar another power. You may invent a power of your own, with troupe approval.

Granting the familiar a power may alter its physical form.

## Closing the Enchantment

In the fourth season, you close the enchantment and complete it, which takes another 3 pawns of *vis*. From then on, you have a familiar, independent but loyal. At this point determine the remaining stats for your familiar.

Your familiar's Int is 1 point lower than yours (though it might be intelligent in a different way and thus better than you in certain mental activities). Over the years the familiar will learn what you know, provided you keep it with you when you study and share your knowledge with it.

You can give your familiar personality traits. Most familiars also have a quirk or two, such as a penchant for recalling irrelevant details or an obsessive delight in the color blue.

Your familiar's speech might be only intelligible to you, poor but understandable, or perfectly articulated.

Your familiar is going to be with you a long time, so make it interesting.

## The Familiar in Play

A familiar retains any of its natural abilities it had before it became your familiar.

The familiar **ages** along **with you**, generally dying a few days **before or within several weeks after you do**.

The familiar uses your forms or its own Magic Resistance, whichever is better, to resist spells. It can use a *parma magica*.

If their familiar dies, most magi feel a profound loss and emptiness in their lives that may last for months and echo through their souls for years.

A familiar is a personal, almost private thing, so only those more concerned with status than with true companionship use their familiars as status symbols.

You can only have one familiar at a time.

## Familiar Powers

**Healing (Creo)**- Once per day the familiar can heal someone it touches. The target must make a Stm roll of 4+ to recover a body level (apply wound penalty to roll).

**Special Sense (Intellego)**- The familiar can sense a specific thing on a roll of 6+. The thing the familiar can sense is one of the following: lies, magic, imminent danger, emotions (including those of animals), or faerie power. The thing must be nearby to be sensed.

**Control of Size (Muto)**- The familiar can increase its Size by +1 or decrease it by 1 or 2 points at will. It can only be out of its normal size for one hour per day. The bonus or penalty to Size (+1 to -2) also applies to Soak and Damage rolls, but is subtracted from Def rolls.

**Deadly Gaze (Perdo)**- Once per day the familiar can kill anything up to Size +1 merely by staring at it. The victim can resist with a Stm + Size roll of 8+, but loses a fatigue level even if it makes the roll.

**Fascination (Rego)**- If it catches someone's eye, it can hold that person still. The target gets a Stm roll every round to break free (roll 6+). The familiar can only move slowly while fascinating a victim. Works on animals, too.

**Control Over Animals (Animal)**- Once per day the familiar can dominate an animal and force it to act under its mental commands. The familiar must concentrate and keep the animal in sight. Stm + Size roll of 9+ to resist.

**Live Underwater (Aquam)**- The familiar can swim, breathe water, and survive underwater as comfortably as it can on land.

**Learn Secrets of the Winds (Auram)**- The familiar can smell and hear things up to half a mile upwind.

**Human Shape (Corporem)**- The familiar has a human shape that it can assume at will. Some physical traits of the familiar's animal form remain, so that a toad familiar in its human shape may have bulging eyes and a paunch.

**Knowledge of Plants (Herbam)**- The familiar can know all relevant information about a plant or tree (age, whether it's poisonous, whether it's intelligent, etc.) just by eating a tiny (and therefore harmless) sample of a leaf or fruit. It can identify and find some plants just by smell.

**Control of Fires (Ignem)**- The familiar can start and extinguish small fires within five paces. It must concentrate on the item to be ignited, and the more flammable the material, the sooner it starts on fire (1 to 5 rounds).

**Invisibility (Imagonem)**- Once per day the familiar can become invisible and remain so for up to an hour.

**Communion of the Minds (Mentem)**- You and the familiar can speak directly to each others' minds as long as you are within 100 paces of each other.

**Shape of a Stone (Terram)**- Once per day, the familiar can take the shape of a rock and return to normal shape at will. While in rock form, it can hear and feel, but not see, smell, or taste.

**Share Spells (Vim)**- The familiar can use your spells. When it does so, you must roll to cast the spell normally (at -15 for lacking hands and words), but the effect is directed by the familiar. The familiar's use of one of your spells ends any concentration you are maintaining, so only one of you can cast a spell any given round. You may refuse to let the familiar cast the spell, but its attempt is still a distraction. Range: 100 paces.

## The Participation of Other Players

Since your familiar is not dominated by your will, you may wish to let other players influence its growth and play. They might have a say in how its cords and powers develop or in its personality. You may even let another player play your familiar.

## The Cords

Each cord has a varying effect depending on how well it is forged. The effects apply only when the familiar is within 100 paces of you. These benefits also apply to the familiar. If you and the familiar are being threatened by the same event, you cannot help each other. Your familiar, for example, can "breathe for you," giving you a bonus on holding your breath while you are underwater, but if it is underwater, too, it can't help you.

## The Golden Cord

The familiar helps you avoid magical errors, letting you roll fewer botch rolls when using magic. The bonus is the number subtracted from the number of botch rolls you would normally roll (but there is never less than one).

## The Silver Cord

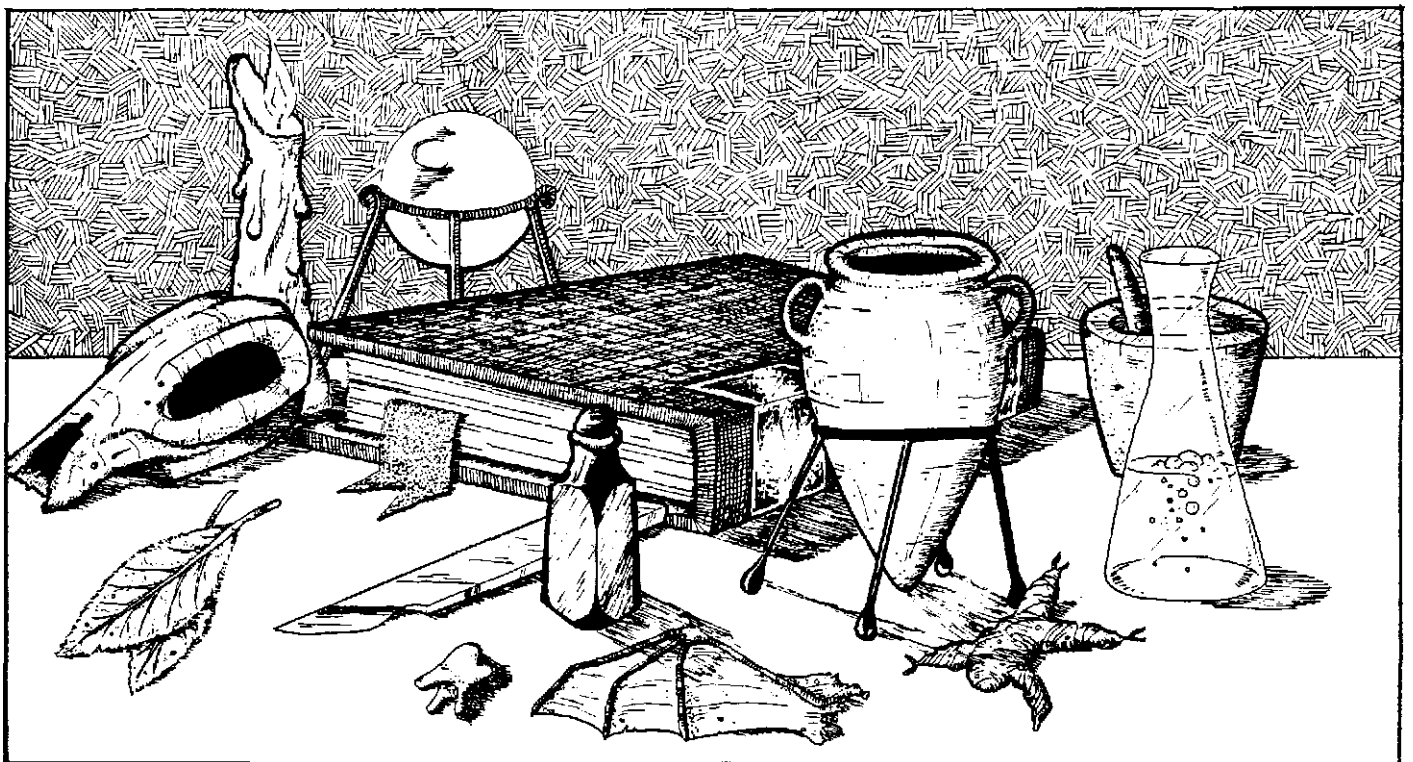
You can apply the bonus to all personality rolls (or to one roll only when you roll two in opposition), to natural resistance rolls against mental magic, and rolls to protect you from natural influences, such as intimidation and verbal trickery. In addition, if your mind is ever overcome by another force, the familiar may be able to free you. It must roll 9+ with the Silver Cord score as its bonus (one attempt per day).

## The Bronze Cord

The bonus applies to Soak rolls, healing rolls, and to rolls to withstand deprivation (such as holding your breath or resisting sleepiness). It does not help you withstand fatigue.

## The Powers

Each of the powers has an art listed with it. You must have a score of 15+ in the listed art to give your familiar the power. When a power is used against something with magic resistance, the master's scores are used to derive a bonus for the Magic Penetration roll.





# Arcane Experimentation

The preceding laboratory rules assume that you are being careful with your magical inventions, staying safely within the bounds of what you know how to do. If you wish, however, you can test your limits and experiment, trying new and possibly dangerous techniques. You can experiment when inventing a spell, instilling a power in a magic item, or granting a power to a familiar. In any case, you have the chance to perform feats you normally could not do, but you also have the chance to fail utterly, perhaps dangerously.

## Inventing a Spell

If you experiment while inventing a spell, you may add a simple roll to your Lab total, each season rolling again. These extra points might let you finish the invention sooner or even invent a spell that would otherwise be beyond your capability. You must, however, roll on the Extraordinary Results Chart each season you push yourself. You may decide from season to season whether to experiment or not.

If your spell is flawed or difficult to cast, you have two choices: live with it, or re-invent the spell. If you re-invent it, use the normal rules for spell-invention, but you can use one-half the Level of the flawed spell as a bonus on your total to accomplish the invention (see p.102).

## Instilling a Power in a Magic Item

You may add a simple roll to your total. If the total still does not equal the power of the item, you have failed to instill it, but you may try again next season. You lose the raw *vis* that would have been used to instill the item. Roll on the Extraordinary Results Chart even if you failed to instill the power.



## Exempli Gratia: Arcane Experimentation

Remember when Grimgroth was trying to invent a Level 15 spell and he could almost do it in one season? Instead of taking up two seasons or studying his arts to make the task easier, he chooses to experiment, to push his capabilities, and try to complete it in one season. His Lab total is 28, plus a simple roll of 6 equals 34, high enough to invent a Level 15 spell in one season. But then he has to roll on the Extraordinary Results Chart. He rolls a 3, Flaw. For the type of flaw he rolls 5, Minor. The spell causes a stench, so Grimgroth's player and the Storyguide agree that the stench lingers noticeably on Grimgroth's person for hours after the spell is cast. Not a horrible flaw; it even gives the spell a little character. If the flaw were worse he would re-invent the spell (and the +8 bonus on the Lab total for knowing the Level 15 flawed spell would let him do it easily in one season).

If the power in your item turns out flawed, it "takes up space" just like a normal power. A given magic item can only hold so *many vis* points worth of powers (see p. 104), and a flawed power still "takes up the space" that it would have if it were perfect.

## Granting a Power to a Familiar

Add a simple roll to the art used to grant the familiar its power. If the result is 15+, you have a normal result (pending a roll on the Extraordinary Results Chart). If the result still falls below 15, the power is somehow limited, roughly halved in power, and you still must roll on the Extraordinary Results Chart.

## Extraordinary Results

Some of the results listed are specific, such as a penalty in casting the spell, but others require some interpretation. When interpreting these results, consider the magus' sigil, specialties, and weaknesses. Also take into account the type of spell or power being created. The more aspects of magic that you bring together, the more interesting the result will be.

## Extraordinary Results Chart

Roll	Result
0	Disaster
1	Complete Failure
2	Partial Success
3	Flaw
4	Shortcoming
5	Discovery
6	Exceptional Success
7	Unexpected Side Effect
8	Story Event
9	Special

**Disaster.** You can avoid the disaster if you make a Per + Magic Theory roll of 12+, but your work is still for naught for that season. If you fail, roll on this chart:

0 **Roll Twice**

- 1 Explosion: Take** damage equal to a damage die plus the Level of the spell or power.
- 2 Overwhelmed:** You release too much magic for you to control. Roll your Stm vs. the Aura of the covenant. If you fail, you are destroyed, though a magical shadow of your former self may remain.
- 3 Deterioration:** You lose 1 point automatically from one characteristic; roll on the Characteristic Loss Chart, p. 33;. This isn't real aging, but the effects are similar.
- 4 Lab Ruined:** You must spend the rest of the season and the next one repairing your lab, salvaging your notes, etc. If the covenant is not wealthy enough to provide more lab equipment, you will have to work or pay to get it from somewhere else.
- 5 Something Valuable Destroyed:** Your familiar, apprentice, magic item, stores of *vis*, etc. is destroyed.
- 6 Mentally Enfeebled:** A surge of magical power is too much for your mind. You cannot work magic for the rest of the season. Each season hereafter you can recover if you make a Stm roll of 6+. Magical cures might work partially and temporarily, but they will prevent natural, complete recovery.
- 7 Threat to the Covenant:** Your work backfires and threatens the covenant, causing a fire, leaving the covenant open to enemy assaults, calling up a dangerous creature, or whatever is appropriate.
- 8 Creation Turns on You:** You are hit by the spell you're developing, attacked by the familiar, or struck by the magic item. (If your creation has absolutely no attack capability, you're safe.)
- 9 Creation Turns on You:** As #8, but the power or spell is double strength during the attack.

**Complete Failure.** You get nothing for your efforts. If working on a magic item or familiar, roll another die; a 0 indicates that the familiar or item is destroyed.

**Partial Success.** Spell or power of one-half the expected Level. Adjust effect accordingly

**Flaw.** 1-5: Minor Flaw, such as a speak-to-animals spell that causes you to retain some speech habits of the animal in question for a few minutes after the spell ends; 6-8: Major Flaw, such as a healing power that causes intense pain in the recipient; 9-10: Fatal Flaw, such as an invisibility spell that makes you glow.

**Shortcoming.** The spell or power is limited in some way. 1-5: Reduced Effect, the effect is limited in range, duration, or potency, such as a mind spell that allows a generous natural resistance roll; 6-9: Restricted Use, the spell fails to work in certain circumstances, such as a fire spell that only sputters in fog or rain; 10: Heavily Restricted Use, only works during special circumstances, such as a healing spell that only works on children.

**Discovery.** Your work has given you a new insight into the art of magic. 1-3: Add three experience points to your Magic Theory; 4-10: +1 to score of one of the arts used.

**Exceptional Success.** +5 to the Level of the spell or power, adjust effect accordingly-

**Unexpected Benefit.** The spell or power has a beneficial secondary effect, such as a wind spell that has a sweet scent and that makes vermin and other vile creatures uncomfortable. Try for something interesting rather than something rational or powerful.

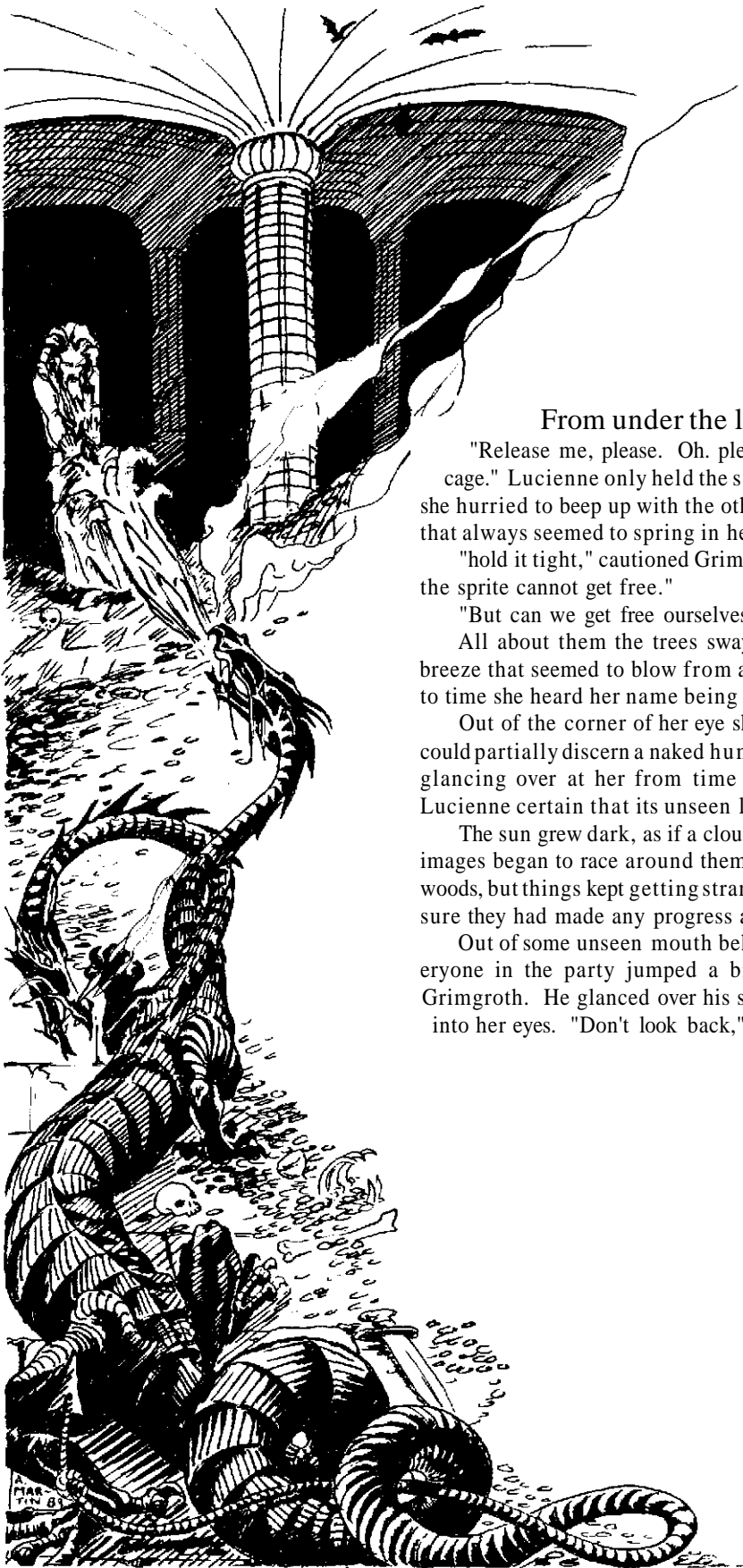
**Story Event.** The lab work somehow involves the covenant in a story. For instance, an emergency might arise and the other magi find out a secret about you when they come to your aid. The story can involve danger, humor, problem-solving, and interaction among those who live in the covenant. The story can take up a whole session on its own or just a few minutes of casual role-playing. Have fun with it.

**Special.** The result depends on the feat attempted.

- **Invent Spell-** The spell is difficult to cast. 1-5: roll a stress die, subtract the result from all attempts to cast or learn the spell, 6-8: cannot be mastered; 9-10: roll double number of botches.

- **Invent Magic Item-** Requires special care. A wand that throws fire spells might have to be stored in a furnace and be hot before it will work.

- **Familiar-** The creature acquires independence. It will probably like you and work with you, but it will not serve you devotedly as a normal familiar would. It develops goals of its own, which might conflict with yours.



From under the leather hood, a faint voice cried out.

"Release me, please. Oh, please, bind darling. Free me from this hellish cage." Lucienne only held the small, cubical cage more tightly to her chest as she hurried to keep up with the others around her, dodging the thorny branches that always seemed to spring in her path.

"hold it tight," cautioned Grimgroth. "The cage is made of iron and silver, and the sprite cannot get free."

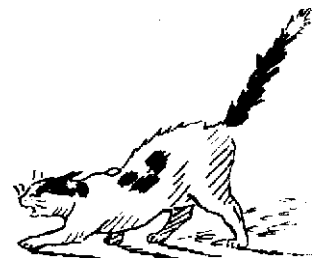
"But can we get free ourselves?" mumbled Lucienne under her breath.

All about them the trees swayed as their silver-tinted leaves twirled in a breeze that seemed to blow from a different direction each instant. From time to time she heard her name being called out softly from the rustling foliage.

Out of the corner of her eye she noticed something. Turning slightly, she could partially discern a naked human-like figure loping casually, pacing them, glancing over at her from time to time. Its strange bounding stride made Lucienne certain that its unseen legs were not human.

The sun grew dark, as if a cloud were passing in front of it: and pale, ghostly images began to race around them. They were supposed to be leaving the faerie woods, but things kept getting stranger as they hurried through. Lucienne wasn't sure they had made any progress at all through this haunted place.

Out of some unseen mouth behind them rolled an enormous bellow, and everyone in the party jumped a bit in mid-stride. Lucienne looked over at Grimgroth. He glanced over his shoulder and then over at her, peering briefly into her eyes. "Don't look back," he said, and then yelled "Run!"





# Bestiary



**O**n cold winter nights, as the family hunches around the hearth and the wind rustles through the cracks in the cottage, the grandparents tell stories of the beasts that lurk in the dark forests and terrorize innocent people. They speak of huge winged serpents seen flying over a jagged crag, of the footsteps of giants heard across a valley, and of ghosts seen floating through the night air. They speak of horror, of terror, of a shadowy world that exists all around but cannot always be seen. The children shiver, the parents feign indifference, and the brownies up in the rafters struggle to swallow their snickers.

The medieval world is populated by many strange creatures. Usually they play no part in the lives of common folk, but everyone

knows of these creatures. All but the foolish fear them. These people do not think, as we do, that the world is a kind and loving place; they know of the evil and perils that surround them.

These creatures, so feared by the common folk, are sought out by the magi. While others speak in awe of such monsters, magi regularly confront and sometimes slay them. This chapter aids in the creation and use of these creatures, provides a broad selection of examples, and details ways which they can be added to the story.

The medieval scholar occasionally wrote a compendium of beasts of myth and legend and called it a "bestiary." In this tradition we present this chapter.

## Designing Beasts

You have a heavy responsibility, as Storyguide, in designing monsters for your stories. Your goal is to use supernatural beings to bring more excitement, challenge, mystery, fear, and wonder to the story. This can be done in many different ways. If you overuse them, however, they will become commonplace and dull. Monsters play an essential role in the narrative, and the characters' encounters with them should serve the story you are trying to tell.

You can use the example creatures directly in a story, but it is better to invent your own, using them as a guide. Do not take the design of a monster lightly. Careful thought can turn what would have been just another battle into an encounter full of wonder and fear. Your characters live in an inherently magical world, full of the weird and wonderful — without mystery and awe, however, all the charm is lost.

### The Monster's Prerogative

If you see monsters as elements of the story, not mere combat opponents, you are fully justified in giving them the "monster's prerogative." That is, until the characters know what a creature can or cannot do, you are free to let it do anything. If the story calls for it, give the creature a new power in the midst of the game.

For instance, if the characters have gotten a string of lucky rolls and massacred a worm that should have been a mighty challenge, you could say that the blood and vapor pouring from the beast's wounds are poisonous, even if you had not planned it that way. If you are subtle and imaginative about making up powers on the spot — and if you do it to enhance the story, not just to smash the characters — the players won't object. (They probably won't even

know.) If you want the encounter with the beast to be a straight contest between the monster's abilities and the characters', do not exercise the "monster's prerogative"; but do put more time and care into designing the creature.

### Designing a Monster

Designing a monster is a challenge, as is any aspect of being a Storyguide. With practice, though, it becomes relatively easy. What you need to begin with is a concept for what the story needs, what purpose the monster serves. When you are done, you will need all the relevant combat stats and more to make the encounter with the beast run smoothly. Keep an open mind, try different things, change what doesn't work, and you will learn to make interesting monsters that challenge the characters on a variety of levels.

Here is a method for conceptualizing a creature and turning it into a set of numbers for play. Answer the following questions step-by-step, but move back and re-think things when you need to.

1. Purpose- Why are you creating this monster? For fear, humor, role-playing, awe, combat, pity? How does it fit in the story and what should it do for the story?

2. Image- What does it look like? Sound like? Smell like? How does it move? Does it have a distinguishing feature that sets it apart from others of its kind?

3. Behavior- What does it do, and why? How intelligent is it? What are its goals and motivations? What are the different ways it will respond to the characters, depending on what they do? Is it inherently evil?

4. Basic Stats- Stats for Size, Might, combat, abilities, etc. Use the Size Chart (p. 25) and the monsters described in this chapter as standards for stats. Be willing to change these in the midst of a battle if you've made the creature too weak or too powerful. Don't forget personality traits.

5. Special Powers and Weaknesses- What are its special mystical abilities, including Level equivalents for spell-like powers? Does it have a special weakness or bane? Would the characters know or be able to find out these powers and weaknesses? Does the corpse have raw *vis* in it?

Overview- Now that you have a better idea of what the creature is, go back over it, change things, and add anything you may have missed.

## Might Scores

Mystical creatures have Mystic Might scores, which represent their overall mystical power. The Might score remains constant, or change only as the creature matures. The score is used for several purposes:

1) Measure of Power- The Might score gives you a general idea of how powerful the creature is.

2) Regulate Mystic Powers- Some creatures have powers that drain their mystic energy, thus limiting the amount they can use these powers. Such a creature has a number of Points equal to its Might, but it expends these Points through using powers. If the creature does not have enough Points to pay for using a power, it can't use that power. All Points return within 24 hours.

3) Magic Resistance and Penetration- Except under special circumstances, a creature gets its Might score as a bonus on its Magic Resistance rolls and its Points as a bonus on Magic Penetration rolls. So using up Points will reduce a creature's offensive but not defensive ability,

4) Determine Effectiveness of Spells- Many General Level spells will only work if their Level is equal to or greater than the Points of the creature to be affected. A weakened ghost, therefore, is easier to control than one with all its Points unused.

5) Indicate Source of Power- Might and Points are referred to by their type, depending on the type of being. Thus there are Faerie Might and Faerie Points, Demon Might and Demon Points, etc. Magical creatures receive bonuses and penalties on their magic-related rolls depending on the type of area they are in. See the Power Interaction Chart on p. 73.

## Special Powers

These are some suggestions for special powers that you can give your monstrous creations. Specific powers will vary from creature to creature in strength and other details.

For powers that are like spells determine a technique, form, and Level. Even though the creature does not cast spells like a magus, the powers' technique and form determine what arts a magus can use to resist or counter it.

### Emotions

**Fear**, causes fear, naturally because of its horrific visage or magically through a spell-like power. **Emotion aura**, others share the emotion felt by the monster, such as satyrs that cause those around them to feel wild. **Entrancement**, holding or controlling people by staring into their eyes.

### Special Attacks

**Constriction**, squeezing people to death, causing damage that increases from round to round. **Fiery breath**. Poisonous bite or **breath**, that could cause death, paralysis, insanity, or loss of will. **Spiked tails**, and other unnatural weapons.

### Defenses

**Immunities** that completely protect the monster from certain types of spells or damage, such as a fire drake's immunity to fire damage. **Resistances** that give the monster a bonus on magic resistance or Soak against certain types of attacks. Metal scales that protect against weapons and possibly against fire or other forms of attack.

### Magic Use

Specific **spells** that it can cast, and none other. Spontaneous spells, casting any spells up to a certain Level, which can vary by technique or form, such as "any Ignem spells up to level 15 and any other spells up to Level 5." **Decide** whether either type causes fatigue for the creature.

### Miscellaneous

Animal Control, controlling animals, perhaps only of a similar type. Shape-change, turning into humans, beasts, rocks, trees, etc. Special senses, for seeing in the dark or detecting lies, danger, magic and so on. Illusions, for changing their own appearance, but also for changing the surroundings.

## Weaknesses

Weakness can be as interesting a part of your monsters as their powers are. They can also let you throw powerful monsters at your players without killing them as long as you give those monsters weaknesses that the characters can exploit. Like powers, weaknesses should make sense and arise from the monster's nature, not just be something tacked on.

Finding out what weakness a monster has can be part of a story, an important part if the monster is formidable.

Weaknesses include such things as the vampire's fear of garlic, the unicorn's compulsion to lay its head in a virgin's lap, the profound stupidity of an ogre, or the missing scale in a dragon's armor.

## Raw Vis in Monsters

Many magical beasts have *vis* in their bodies, *vis* that might make them valuable to magi. Generally, the more magical and powerful a creature is, the more *vis* it will have. The *vis* can be related to a variety of arts; use your imagination. Many beasts will simply have Animal *vis*, but poisonous ones might have Perdo *vis*, shape-changers might have Muto *vis*, creatures related to earth might have Terram *vis*, and so on.

## Science Fiction vs. Medieval Imagery

Science fiction has become a big part of our imagination, and it has strongly influenced our visualization of fantasy. Therefore it's a great temptation at first to make weird monsters that look more like space aliens than like medieval terrors. If you want to add to the medieval flavor already established in **Ars Magica**, look over the monsters you design. If they would fit better in a space opera than a bardic saga, re-design them.

# Descriptions

The following creature descriptions give you the basic background and stats to include these beings in your stories. Format varies slightly from creature to creature, depending on what aspects of them are most important. Most of the stats (such as characteristics and combat totals) are explained in other chapters.

**Cunning (Cun)** is the animal equivalent of Intelligence. A creature with Cunning might be very clever and wily, but it cannot use reason, understand speech (unless trained to specific commands), or use rational thought.

Body levels are listed by the penalties associated with them. If a creature has more than one of a given body level, the penalty is

listed the appropriate number of times and the numbers are separated by slashes. (E.g., two "Light Wounds" levels are listed as "-1 / -1.")

**Abilities** are always listed as totals, already combined with the most appropriate characteristics.

Powers are listed with the Technique, Form, and Level equivalents (if appropriate) and with the Mystic Point cost for using the power. (See Mystic Might above.)

The Story description is a suggestion of how to use the creature in a story.

## Animals, Creatures Tame and Wild

These animals can serve as models for more fantastic creatures, but some are formidable in their own right. The domestic beasts are as we think of them; but the wild ones are more deadly, according to the medieval understanding.

### Cat

Size -3 Cun +1  
Per +5 Stm 0  
Curious +4  
Fat 0 Def +8 Soak -1  
Body Levels: OK, -3, Incapacitated

### Horse

Size +2 Cun -5  
Per 0 Stm +6  
Cowardly +3  
Hooves: 1st: +6 Atk +4 Dam +10  
Fat +7 Def 0 Soak +9  
Body Levels: OK, 0/0, -1/-1, -3, -5,  
Incapacitated

### Boar

Size +1 Cun -2  
Per -1 Stm +5  
Vicious +5  
Gore: 1st +4 Atk +8 Dam +18  
Fat +2 Def 0 Soak +15  
Body Levels: OK, 0/0/0/0, -3,  
Incapacitated

### Dog

Size -2 Cun -1  
Per +4 Stm +1  
Loyal +4  
Bite: 1st +3 Atk +5 Dam +0  
Tackle: 1st +3 Atk +4 Tackle +0  
Fat +3 Def +3 Soak -1  
Body Levels: OK, -1, -5, Incapacitated

### Bird of Prey

Size -3 Cun -2  
Per +8 Stm 0  
Fierce +5  
Fat +1 Def +9 Soak -3  
Body Levels: OK, -3, Incapacitated

### Brown Bear

Size +2 Cun +1  
Per +3 Stm +6  
Ferocious +3  
Maul: 1st +6 Atk +12 Dam +16  
Tackle: 1st +6 Atk +6 Tackle +14  
Fat +5 Def +6 Soak +10  
Body levels: OK, 0/0, -1/-1, -3, -5,  
Incapacitated

### Mule

Size +2 Cun -4  
Per -1 Stm +9  
Stubborn +6  
Fat +9 Def 0 Soak +12  
Body Levels: OK, 0/0, -1/-1, -3, -5,  
Incapacitated

### Wolf

Size -1 Cun +3  
Per +4 Stm +4  
Brave +5, Cowardly +4  
Bite: 1st +3 Atk +5 Dam +6  
Tackle: 1st +3 Atk +4 Tackle +5  
Fat +4 Def +5 Soak +5  
Body Levels: OK, -1, -3, -5,  
Incapacitated

### Great White Stag

Size +3 Cun -2  
Per +2 Stm +8  
Brave +5  
Antlers: 1st +8\* Atk +7 Dam +24  
Hooves: 1st +8\* Atk +5 Dam +12  
Fat +12 Def 0 Soak +16  
Body Levels: OK, 0/0, -1/-1, -3/-3, -5,  
Incapacitated  
\* make one roll for both

# Demons, Stealers of Souls

Demons are angels fallen to Hell who periodically come up to Earth to torment mortals and steal souls for their master, the Prince of Darkness. They are cruel, cunning, powerful, and ancient; and they have had an untold number of bitter, hateful years in which to perfect the art of spreading evil and corrupting souls. Do not dare to underestimate them.

Ultimately the most dangerous enemies of the Order of Hermes are demons. While other magical beings can oppose and often match the magi's magical power, demons can corrupt the heart and soul of any mortal, even wizards. *No parma magica can protect* a magus from greed, pride, envy, or any other vice upon which the forces of Darkness prey.

The prime motivation of demons is winning souls, which they can only do through subtle deception. Therefore demons spend most of their time on earth invisibly haunting people, learning their secrets, poisoning their emotions, corrupting them, and luring them away from the Church in whatever manner they can. Demons cannot corrupt a soul by forcing one to do evil because as long as the evil is forced, the person who commits it is still innocent. When forced to do evil, however, most people are too proud to admit they have done wrong. Instead, they accept the evil as their own and justify it. For instance, if a demon makes a husband yell at his wife, the husband is not corrupted until he thinks about what he has done and chooses to believe she deserved the ill treatment instead of asking for her forgiveness.

Demons could cause incredible pain and destruction if they chose to wage an overt war with humanity, but such a direct attack would drive people to the protection of the Church. The demons would have the corpses, but the Church would save the souls, which is really what they are after. Demons, therefore, have to work subtly, and the best minions of Hell are never noticed at all.

When fighting magi, demons can be more open because the magi are unlikely to seek protection from the Church. Nevertheless, the ultimate goal of Hell in regard to the Order of Hermes is to subvert it and take it over from within, not to destroy it, so

demons' plans are likely to be subtle even when facing the magi.

Demons are deceivers first and foremost. The characters might argue with them, fight them, talk peaceably with them; but they will never be sure of the demons' true intentions. No magic of the Order can determine whether a demon is lying. No matter what short term aims they might have, ultimately it is souls that demons seek.

Some magi are proud enough to believe that they have the power to deal with the Dark Powers, learn from them, and not be corrupted themselves. The more they learn, however, the greater the chance that they will fall under the seductive sway of Hell. Beware the one with the wizard's mind and the devil's heart.

Demons often work through diabolists, mortals who have sold their souls for infernal power. These misguided individuals are given knowledge and magical power by the demons they serve. Some can summon demons and use them to their own ends, while others can use powers that are similar to destructive spells. Since they are still mortals, diabolists tend not to have plans as subtle or as effective as the demons'. They are also more often moved by personal grievances. For these reasons, diabolists are often found behind plots that are more destructive of the body than of the soul. Diabolists make interesting enemies because they are powerful, despicably evil, and universally despised.

A demon has a spirit form and a physical form. When they assume bodies, they usually are misshapen toads, bats, snakes, or other vile things. Some take the form of humans and others of powerful monsters. A demon's corpse often has misappropriate to its powers or shape, such as *Perdo*, *Ignem*, *Animal*, *Imagonem*, or (if nothing else) *Vim*. Killing a demon's physical form banishes it to Hell for an indeterminate time, but since a demon is an eternal spirit, it can never be completely destroyed.

Demons are completely immune to fire, spells that detect or force the truth, and spells that would make them kind, compassionate, or somehow virtuous.

## Skellius, an Imp

Demon Might 12

Size -5 Int -2

Calculating +2, Crazy +3

Fat n/a Def +12 Soak 0

Body Levels: OK, Destroyed

### Spirit Form Powers:

Demon's Touch, 1 Demon Point- Alters any die roll by 3 points in either direction. When winning souls, Skellius affects personality rolls. Technique and form appropriate to the effect attempted, such as *ReMe* to influence thoughts.

### Physical Form:

A bat with large ears. It has no effectual attacks, but it can speak in a squeaky voice.

### Physical Form Powers:

Stench, CrAu 10, 1 Point- He can raise a horrible smell about himself, like the Stench of the Twenty Corpses (CrAu 10), but the smell is of bats.

### Description:

Skellius is a minor fiend, similar to most of those infesting the world. He tries to design intricate plans, but most often he simply causes trouble and hopes it will result in evil. Only when focused on a single victim do his plans have coherence. If confronted by a mage he can converse, but he is largely an incoherent, muttering lunatic bent on a single purpose.

His blood is worth 2 *Vim vis*.

### Story:

A mortal friend of the covenant (a local barkeep, or a friendly sage) comes into Skellius' plans, turning hostile under Skellius' emotional manipulations. If unchecked, Skellius' plan will culminate within a year with the friend's sickness, death, and eternal damnation.

**Harkerr, a Warrior-Demon** \_\_\_\_\_

Demon Might 24\*

Size +2 Int -3

Impulsive +3

Whip: 1st +9 Atk +8 Dam Spec.  
Fat n/a Def +8 Soak +23\*\*

Body Levels: 0, -1/-1, -3/-3, -5, Incapacitated

\* double normal magic resistance to any spells that would counter his violent rage and urge to destroy

\*\* only harmed by metal weapons and powerful attacks (such as dragon bites)

Powers (using whip):

Death, PeCo 30, 12 Demon Points- Stm roll of 10+ or die. Even if successful, lose two body levels and make a characteristic loss roll (as for aging, p. 33).

Burn, CrIg 20, 3 Demon Points- +18 fire damage

Pain, PeCo 15, 1 Demon Point- Stm roll of 9+ or fall to ground in pain. Roll again each round to recover.

**Sainela, One of Hell's Negotiators** \_\_\_\_\_

Demon Might 64

Int +4 Size -1

Dex +3 Qik +6

Patient +6

Hand: 1st +5 Atk +7 Dam +6  
Fat n/a Def +8 Soak +5

Body Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, Incapacitated

**Spirit Form Powers:**

Force Words, CrMe 20, 2 Demon Points- Sainela can put up to a dozen words into someone's mouth. The target might be surprised to have uttered these words, but most people are proud enough to defend what they say rather than take the words back. (Have you ever said what you didn't intend to say, but pretended you meant to say it all along?)

**Physical Form:**

Sainela is a stylishly dressed young woman with a forceful demeanor and a short, red, barbed tail. She will disappear in a cloud of sweet-smelling, lavender hued smoke rather than stay and fight.

**Physical Form Powers:**

Spells, 1 Demon Point- Any Mentem spells up to Level 10 and other spells up to Level 5.

Create, 5 Demon Points- Creates impermanent items, such as a weapon, rope, tent, gold, etc. She uses this power to offer people the things they most need. Form depends on the item created. It disappears on the next full moon. Technique is Creo, form depends on item created, Level 10.

**Description:**

Her specialty is dealing with people who would not be horribly distressed to talk frankly with a demon — magi for example. She is reasonable, patient, even-tempered and quite sophisticated (with a passion for music, art and philosophy) but her eventual goal can only be to corrupt those she is dealing with.

Her tail is worth 21 Mentem *vis*.**Story:**

Sainela accepts the task of corrupting the covenant or one of the magi. She repeatedly offers innocuous aid, posing at first as a young noble lady. Later she arranges situations in which the

**Description:**

A simple-minded demon who has not yet learned to replace his lust for battle with subtlety and subterfuge, Harkerr is employed only when brute strength is required. Thus he appears only in physical form, a husky man from the waist up and a sinewy snake with gray-green scales from the waist down. He carries a whip in his left hand and a shield bound with human-skin leather in his right. With his whip he can use any of the powers listed below. He must expend Demon Might Points before rolling to hit with the whip.

His corpse is worth 12 Animal *vis*.**Story:**

When the characters begin to uncover the plot of some diabolists, Harkerr is summoned in a grand ceremony and sent to destroy them.

characters need her help. Her goal is to get the characters used to accepting demons rather than fearing them. As she knows she has centuries to accomplish her mission, she is not hurried.





# Dragons and their Kind, Noble Wyrms

The most powerful and noble of all mortal creatures are the dragons. They are so powerful and rare that slaying one is the stuff of legend, a task worthy of a hero or arch-mage. They are highly intelligent, physically domineering, and usually very magically potent. Some are so powerful that they are beyond the statistics provided in *Ars Magica*, and cannot be harmed by normal means.

Related to the dragons but not as powerful are many types of creatures, divided into the categories of worm (most powerful), drake, and serpent (least powerful). They share some of the dragons' attributes but lack others.

Worms are mighty creatures, usually lacking limbs, though some have wings. Often they have the minds of beasts, but some are intelligent.

Drakes have the general form of the typical dragon (four legs, serpentine neck, bat wings), but they are much smaller and more likely to be misshapen. They are not typically bright, but are more likely to be intelligent than worms. Often drakes are mistaken for dragons, and most legends about dragon-slaying knights involve drakes.

Serpents are glorified snakes, usually with greater size and special powers. They are cunning and often speak, showing more intelligence than the bestial worms and drakes. Some are the size of normal snakes.



## Sigusen, the Dragon of the Tome

Magic Might 65

Size +6 Int +6

Curious +6, Cruel +2,

Bite: 1st +6 Atk +11 Dam +36

Breath: 1st +12 Atk +8\* Dam +40/+80"

Fat n/a Def 0 Soak +40

Body Levels: OK, 0/0/0, -1/-1/-1, -3/-3, -5/-5, Incapacitated

\* Can be dodged but not parried

\*\* Fire damage, see pp. 55-56.

### Powers:

Fiery Breath, CrIg 50, 5 Magic Points- Causes +40 damage to each target if directed at a large area (a circle 10 paces across) or +80 if directed at a single person.

Dampen Magic, PeVi 95- His +65 Magic Resistance protects all things within his cave. Casting any spell, even on oneself, is difficult. This dampening does not affect the magic of Sigusen or his drakes.

Some say that, like the drakes, Sigusen can take human form. He certainly has many other smaller powers too numerous to delineate.

### Description:

Sigusen is a thin, snake-like dragon with short legs but dextrous forepaws. He is forty feet tip to tail. He has wings folded on its back, but no one has ever seen him use them, since he spends all his time in his cave which is atop a mountain in the Pyrenees.

Sigusen is writing a great tome in an ancient language, and he is collecting knowledge of all kinds to support his views on the nature of the universe. To further his ends, he collects sages as well. He has several intelligent drakes living with him (perhaps his children) who can take human form. In human form they seek out scholars and kidnap them, bringing them back to Sigusen, who interrogates them and eats them if they don't provide anything interesting. Some of these drakes are quite well known as vibrant poets, rakes, and scholars in the towns which they frequent.

Scholars can come to him to get answers to their questions, but they will be eaten if they don't provide interesting information in return.

His heart is worth 60 Ignem vis.

### Story:

A scholar-character is kidnapped by Sigusen's drakes, and the other characters must fight them to get the victim back. Perhaps they must face the great Sigusen himself, to bargain or to fight.

**The Worm of Abbinton**

Magic Might 42

Size +4 Cun 0

Passive +3

Bite: 1st +4 Atk 45 Dam +23

Breath: 1st +8 Atk spec. Dam spec.

Fat +8 Def 0 Soak +32

Body Levels: 0/0, -1/-1/-1, -3/-3, -5, Incapacitated

Powers:

**Tiny Breath, 1 Magic Point-** A cloud of black smoke envelops one person, coating the target with black residue. Each round (including the first) the character must make a Stm roll of 9+ or lose a body level, even if the sticky substance is not in contact with the skin. Immersion in spring water can cleanse one of the poison.

**Great Breath, 12 Magic Points-** The worm sprays smoke all around itself, coating everyone within four yards with the poison. This tactic weakens the worm so it loses a fatigue level and cannot attack the following round.

**Description:**

This worm is a fifty foot, black, slimy creature that lives in an isolated lake in the mountains, occasionally devouring fishermen and their boats. It has a long head with a cavernous mouth filled with teeth, and three rows of fins run down its back. It sometimes lumbers ashore for unknown reasons, and would wreak havoc should it find its way to a village. On land it moves very slowly, except when moving downhill.

Its teeth are worth 12 points of *Perdo vis*, and the poison of its breath is valuable for certain magical experiments or projects (Storyguide's discretion).

**Story:**

The magi need the thing's poison but probably aren't powerful enough to kill it. Their strategy is to provoke it to breathe on one of the characters and then drive it away or flee themselves. Then they will rinse the poison from the target and collect it for work in the lab. Who volunteers to be the sponge for the poison?

**Ruklin, the Two-Headed Drake**

Magic Might 20

Size +3 Int +1

Per +2 Stm +5

Rapacious +5

Breath: 1st +10\* Atk +10\*\* Dam +20\*\*\*

Bite: 1st +6\* Atk +8 Dam +18

Claw: 1st +6\* Atk +6 Dam +15

Fat +6 Def 0 Soak +24t

Body Levels: 0/0, -1/-1, -3/-3, -5, Incapacitated

\* Can use all attacks each round; make one 1st roll and add +10 for breath and +6 for bite and claw

\*\* Can only be dodged, not parried

\*\*\* Fire damage, see pp. 55-56

+ Immune to damage from fire

Power:

**Fiery Breath, CrIg 20, 2 Magic Points-** Sec combat stats.

**Invisibility, PeIm 25, 4 Magic Points-** She can turn invisible as long as no one is looking at her at the time.

**Description:**

This drake is long and sinuous, and she sports two lizard-like heads on the ends of serpentine necks. Ruklin has a pair of golden bat wings, but it takes quite some effort to fly; usually she leaps from a high place to make getting off the ground easier. Her entire body is covered with copper scales (worth 14 *Ignem vis*).

In combat, Ruklin typically bites with one head and exhales flames from the other. In addition she can claw once per round.

**Story:**

Ruklin has information the characters need. They can cause her to surrender if they kill one of the heads, but if they kill the body, both heads die and the information is lost — and what if they wind up killing the head that has the knowledge?

**Shashali, the Venomous Riddler**

Magic Might 12

Size -1 Int +2

Discerning +4, Gullible +1

Sting: 1st +7 Atk +5 Dam +5\*

Fat 0 Def +8 Soak +4

Body Levels: OK, -1, -3, -5, Incapacitated

\* Plus poison, Stm roll of 9+ or drop 3 body levels, otherwise still lose one body level, botch is death; +1 on roll for each time Shashali has already struck that day.

Description:

Shashali is a ten foot long, drab-colored serpent about as thick as a human thigh. Its head has brightly colored scales forming a fascinating pattern. At the end of its tail is a sharp barb filled with

poison. Shashali's favorite tactic is to speak to its intended target in a soft, soothing voice while its tail slowly creeps up from the side or rear. It then stings the distracted target and flees. Shashali will have to return to the target again for another sting, since its poison is not usually strong enough to kill at one sting.

If engaged in a challenging riddle contest, it forgets its murderous intent.

Its barb is worth 9 points of *Perdo vis*.

**Story:**

Shashali has trapped the characters in some way, but they've been forewarned. Can they distract it and guard themselves long enough to find a way out?

## Faeries, Enigmas of the Wilderness

Demons, giants, dragons, and other powerful monsters can endanger magi; but they are predictable, and wise magi can foresee their actions and protect themselves from such threats. What unsettles even the knowledgeable magi is the world that lies beyond the limits of civilization and rationality, the land of Faerie.

Most human-like faeries fall into two groups, the Seelie Court and the Unseelie Court. The Seelie Court is composed of noble, regal, beautiful faeries (often elves) who, at times, aid mortals.

They are incomparable masters of song and music. Still, there is in each of them a touch of power so great and alien that human life can be seen as irrelevant, even annoying. The Unseelie Court comprises the dark, malicious faeries, those who delight in tormenting humans. Generally these faeries are more brutal and less refined. The Seelie court may rule a faerie area during the day, and during the night, in the same area, the Unseelie court may rule. In addition, many faerie creatures are independent of these two courts.

The goals of the faeries are mostly incomprehensible to mortals. They lack any real need for food and shelter, so they are apparently motivated simply by the desire to amuse themselves, so much of their time is spent in games of "let's pretend." Many faeries seem fascinated by humanity and play out elaborate games in the roles of kings, queens, courtiers, jesters, knights, and so on. While playing out roles, faeries are ritualistic and rigid in their actions because they are playing games with certain rules. If faeries pretending to be soldiers are marching down a path, they might consider it "against the rules" to leave that path, even if staying on it would mean their destruction. Nor will they use their faerie powers beyond what their roles permit. Mortals can often use this lack of flexibility against faerie opponents.

Just how many of a faerie's attributes are due to the role it has chosen and how many are due to its essential nature is never certain. How aware a faerie is that it is playing a role is likewise unknown. Faeries, in general, are rather inscrutable. They are immortal, are intimately connected with nature, and have no souls. They may sometimes look human but they are not human in spirit.

Faeries are intimately connected to nature, and every type of natural area has its own faeries. Indeed faeries may be the spiritual manifestation of nature itself. Faeries take on certain aspects of the

area in which they are found. Thus mountain faeries are sturdy, sullen, and strong, while water faeries are mysterious, often helpful, but with a hint of danger about them. The faeries most commonly encountered are those that inhabit the woodlands; they are good-natured but touched by the spirit of the beast. Many of the faeries that have the shape of a woodland animal can also shapechange into human form, but rarely do they make the effort.

The strength of most faeries lies in their inherent magical nature, not in their muscle. Some **have** supernatural strength, but most rely on illusion, deception, and other forms of magic to protect themselves.

Luckily for mortals, faeries have several banes. The common folk know endless tiny charms to protect themselves from faeries, but these vary from place to place and are of questionable value. A few nearly universal trends emerge, however. Iron is a bane of faeries, and even when not in weapon form it can be offensive. The Church, prayers, holy symbols, church bells, and relics can also drive them off or at least make them uncomfortable. Even fire has some protective value in threatening faeries or dispelling their illusions or enchantments.

On special nights almost all of the wilderness and even some of the Dominion falls under the sway of Faerie power, and on these occasions the faeries can leave their forests and burrows and tread the naked earth. Usually only the most powerful faeries can leave their faerie homes, but on these special nights faerie land is almost everywhere. At such times it is best that normal folk stay locked up in their homes.

When you role-play faeries, imagine them as the wild side to the folk of the Middle Ages, the restless, endlessly creative, playful, unfathomable, crazed, and unleashed side to an otherwise stolid group of people. They are the dark, obscure aspect of an honest people who realize on an intuitive level that there is much within them that they do not understand and never will.

Some faeries you could use in your stories are bawdy satyrs, timid fauns, eerie wills-o'-the-wisp, surprising changelings, drunken cluricaunes, gorgeous nymphs, playful pixies, giant animals, ambling giants, animated trees, ghosts & spirits, stolid dwarfs, noble elves, and surly knockers. Look for our supplement about faeries for more information.

### Onthax, Faerie Boar

Faerie Might 18

Size +2 Cun -2

Per +4

Fierce f6

Gentle +3

Gore; 1st +3 Atk +6 Dam +17

Fat n/a Def +4 Soak +15\*

Body Levels: OK, 0/0, -1/-1, -3, -5, Incapacitated

\* Iron weapons do +4 damage to the boar.

Abilities: Alertness (hearing & smell only) 7, Track by smell 8

#### Powers:

Surge of Power, 5 Faerie Points per round- When someone or something that the boar has chosen to defend is threatened, it can push itself to feats of great strength. Add +4 to all its rolls when it is pushing itself like this.

#### Description:

This is a huge, greasy, tusked boar who can speak with a very deep, grunting voice. Unlike the vicious faerie boars near which he lives, Onthax can be gentle, loving, or ferocious, as the situation requires. When in need, he can tear through the undergrowth of the forest faster than a horse on a smooth road.

His ruses are worth 4 points of Animal *vis* each.

#### Story:

Onthax befriends one of the grogs and protects him, even threatening any magi who speak harshly to him or her; an interesting exercise in group dynamics?

**Tewquille, the Shadow Knight** 

---

Faerie Might 25

Size 0 Int -1

Haughty +5

Sword: 1st +6 Atk +7 Dam +14

Stone: 1st 0 Atk +6 Dam \*

Fat n/a Def +13 Soak +16\*\*

\* See Burning Stone description below.

\*\* Iron weapons do +2 damage to Tewquille.

Body Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3 -5, Incapacitated

Crow Form (see Powers below)

Size +1

Claws: 1st +5 Atk +8 Dam +12

Fat n/a Def +11 Soak +14\*

\* Iron weapons do +2 damage.

Body Levels: OK, 0/0, -1, -3, -5, Incapacitated

Powers:

Fly, 3 Faerie Points- Tewquille and his steed can fly until they next touch the ground. He can only do this when he is astride his steed.

Burning Stone, PeCo 15,1 Faerie Point- He has a saddlebag filled with small rocks that he can hurl at humans. Each stone hurled takes 1 Faerie point. If it strikes a person, the target must make a Stm roll of 12+ or suffer a hot flash that will bring them to their knees and cause vomiting, incapacitating them for at least three rounds.

Bellow of Pain, 4 Faerie Points- If wounded by iron and ready to flee, he can bellow so loudly that all mortals around him must make Stm rolls of 9+ or be stunned for a round. This power cannot be resisted. Tewquille can only use this bellow before he retreats, and it usually gives him time to make his way gone.

**Marlossi, Lady of Light** 

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Faerie Might 16

Size -1 Prs +5

Int +3 Per +3

Regal +4

Fat 0 Def +3 Soak 0\*

Body Levels: -1, -3, -5, Incapacitated

\* Damage from iron weapons that exceeds her Soak is doubled before body Level loss is figured.

Abilities: Sing 6, Play Lyre 5

**Powers:**

Disappear, 1 Faerie Point- If grievously threatened, she can suddenly disappear, to where no one knows. If someone is holding her, she cannot disappear, nor can she if bound by iron.

Heal, 3 Faerie Points- She can heal those she touches, chasing away pain and fear as well. Each use of this power allows for the recovery of a lost body level. Certain magical or especially grievous wounds might not be healed by this power.

**Description:**

Tewquille is a knight of the Unseelie Court in the forest of the Moaning Oaks. He often ventures on his own at night, riding his dark steed searching for mortals to torment. He bleeds thick, black sludge. He is haughty and violent, but he cannot stand the touch of iron and will flee when wounded by it rather than stay and fight.

His corpse is worth 7 Corporem *vis*.**Story:**

Tewquille confronts the party and after briefly testing their martial prowess invite them to join the Unseelie Court at the Moaning Oaks. He is insulted if all decline, and he harries the group repeatedly, following them and hurling his burning stones at them from the sky. Any who agree come to a magnificent party but when they wake up they find they have taken an animal shape and become dark faeries. In that form they cannot leave the forest so finding a way out of their predicament will become a fascinating adventure. If they remain as Dark Faeries, eventually they will learn new shapes and may learn to take human form again.

**Nightcloud, Tewquille's Steed**

Nightcloud is a pitch-black steed that moves silently, though it can make noises if it chooses. Its corpse is worth 6 Animal *vis*.

Magic Might 15

Size +2 Cun -3

Per +1 Stm +8

Hooves: 1st +7 Atk +6 Dam +15

Fat n/a Def +1 Soak +12\*

\* Iron does +50% damage to Nightcloud.

Body Levels: OK, 0/0, -1/-1, -3, -5, Incapacitated

**Description:**

Marlossi is a high elf of the Seelie Court. At first she seems human, and the only thing that truly sets her off from a mortal woman is the sense of peace and welcome one feels when looking upon her gentle visage. (Those protected by *parmae magicae* do not notice this effect.) She wears a light green gown and simple jewelry. She never leaves the safety of her home in the small faerie section of the woods. She is most often found in the boisterous company of animal-like faeries and will rely on them to protect her from physical threats. If struck, she bleeds a liquid that looks like white wine. This "blood" is worth 4 Creo *vis*.

**Story:**

The characters are found trespassing on her land, but she graciously accepts them as guests. It becomes apparent, however, that she expects them to perform a dangerous task for her, as "noble people" should for a "regal lady." This could be to take back from the Unseelie court the Forest of Moaning Oaks where she was once Queen.

## Hybacus, the Feral Musician

Faerie Might 20

Size +1 Int 0

Str +4 Stm +6

Wild +7

Spear: 1st +7 Atk +6 Dam +14

Fat +8 Def +4 Soak +10\*

Body Levels: OK, 0/0, -1, -3, -5, Incapacitated

\* iron docs +1 Damage

**Powers** (while playing panpipes):

Enrage, MuMe 20, 2 Faerie Points- Hybacus can play wild, violent music, and those hearing it get +2 on Atk, Dam, and Brave rolls if they are involved in a battle. This works for both sides of a battle, which is fine for the satyrs, who love a rousing fight.

Revelry, MuMe 20, 2 Faerie Points- This music makes those at a party feel more riotous and merry (+4 to Reckless, Impulsive, etc.).

Amour, MuMe 20, 2 Faerie Points- This music lets those who listen see the beauty in each other and in what is around them, and it raises the desire to possess and to please. The target of these emotions can be humans, faeries, trees, food, drink, weapons, etc.

**Description:**

Hybacus is a satyr (human body with goat legs and horns) whose greatest joy is to play his panpipes while he and his brothers go on their rare raids into human villages for women and other booty. When such opportunities do not present themselves, he enjoys playing at drunken parties. He is not as skilled a warrior as his fellows, but they appreciate the music he provides.

His horns are worth 10 Animal *vis*.

**Story:**

The characters find Hybacus and his rowdy fellows having a party in the woods, and they are asked to join. If they refuse or are otherwise rude (to satyr sensibilities), they risk being attacked. But if they participate in the drinking, wrestling, bragging, and singing, they can make themselves some good (if unpredictable) friends.



## Gizzle, a Goblin of the Mine

Faerie Might 10

Size -2 Int -2

Str +3 Stm +5

Mischievous +4

Pick: 1st +6 Atk +4 Dam +11

Fat n/a Def +5 Soak +5\*

\* Iron does +1 damage; earth related attacks do half damage.

Body Levels: OK, -1, -5, Incapacitated

Abilities: Stealth 8, Alertness 6, Athletics 4

**Powers:**

Extinguish Flames, 2 Faerie Points- He can extinguish any flame he sees, up to the size of a torch. Up to three flames may be put out at once, but Gizzle must still expend 2 Faerie Points per flame.

**Description:**

Gizzle and his fellow goblins haunt the mine owned by Mistrudge. He looks like a four foot tall, misshapen man with mottled gray skin. He wears crudely woven clothes (but no shoes), and he carries a miner's pick with a bronze head. His boisterous laughter can be heard rolling through the tunnels. Sometimes he amuses himself by causing cave-ins or stealing miners' equipment that he finds lying around, and when he is in a vile mood, he might attack a miner directly.

His body has 2 points of Terram *vis*.

**Story:**

Gizzle and several other goblins have taken over a valuable section of the mine, killing several miners in the process. The magi must act decisively to keep the trust of the remaining miners and to keep the mine operating at its full potential.

**Feggimer, the Mischievous Brownie** 

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Faerie Might 11

Size -2 Int -1

Humorous +6

Fat n/a Def +8 Soak -2\*

Body Levels: OK, -1, -5, Incapacitated

\* Iron weapons do double damage to Feggimer.

**Powers:**

Laugh, MuMe 15,1 Point-When Feggimer laughs, everybody laughs and is unable to do anything else (including spell-casting). Lasts three rounds.

**Description:**

A clown and a fool, Feggimer likes nothing more than a good joke at someone's expense — even his own. He lives inside a hill near a serf village. In this faerie mound he and his kin spend every day, but when night arrives, or some great ancient holiday that evokes the faerie powers latent in this area, he goes outside to revel under the open sky.

His body is worth 1 Corporem *vis*.

**Story:**

While the characters finally have their enemies surrounded on a hill one night (or visa-versa), Doron shows up. Grievances will be forgotten amid magically inspired peals of laughter, and the enemies could escape if the characters are not careful.

## Fantastic Beasts, Bane of the Wilderness

Fantastic beasts include powerful creatures with limited magical ability but incredible physical prowess. Dragonkind could fall under this category, but they warrant treatment in their own section.

Be careful when you design fell beasts that their reliance on physical strength does not make them easy prey for the magi. Give them a healthy Magic Might or they will succumb to the first spell cast on them.

When modeling monsters after those of legend, you must consider how true you want to be to the original story. For

example, the Minotaur of Greek myth was a unique creature, a being capable of challenging a hero's might. Do you want your minotaur to be something similar, an awe-inspiring creature lurking somewhere in a maze, something worth telling stories about? Or your minotaurs may be just another race — stronger than humans and with a nasty appreciation for human flesh — but nothing truly exceptional.

Fantastic beasts you might want to include are basilisks, cockatrices, manticores, griffins, hippogriffs, unicorns, sea monsters of all types, and the legendary white wolf.

**Griffin** 

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Magic Might 30\*

Size +4 Cun 0

Per +6 Stm +9

Brave +6

Claw: 1st +6 Atk +7 Dam +28

Fat n/a Def +2 Soak +26

Body Levels: OK, O/O, -1/-1, -3/-3, -5/-5, Incapacitated

\* Double Magic Resistance against spells that counter strength, bravery, hunting prowess, etc.

**Description:**

The griffin has a lion's body in the back and an eagle's in the front. It attacks with its talons, reserving its beak for tearing the flesh off its prey and for emergency use. Although ferocious when

threatened or hungry, it is not entirely malicious.

The griffin embodies the virtues of might, bravery, and hunting prowess. It gets double its normal Magic Might when resisting spells that would directly counter these strengths, such as spells to cripple or calm it.

Its heart is worth 18 Animal *vis*.

**Story:**

Living atop a rocky crag high in the Pyrenees is a flock of griffins. Living with them is an old hermit who has forgotten how old he is (though he only speaks classical Latin and says he's the emperor's messenger). He leads the griffins though he never leaves the nest.

## Giants, the Races of Cain

Cain fathered a brood of monstrous children by a demoness, and over the years these creatures have bred and spread across the face of the earth, some tall as trees, some human-sized but stronger than bulls. A few have exotic abilities, such as the power to shape-shift, to resist normal types of damage, or to use spell-like abilities. They have come to be known as giants, ogres, and other various races, but they share brute strength, often great size, and always hate and envy held against their more beautiful, human cousins.

The races of Cain can take any of many forms, so use your imagination. Some are even handsome and intelligent, but few are kind-hearted. Some might be large or strong enough that you will need to alter the combat rules a bit. For instance, a shield that stands up fine to axes and swords would not be able to stop a tree trunk swung by a giant. A large enough giant could knock down and injure even those who parry its blows.

## Hierbent, Giant of the Frozen Wastes

Magic Might 35

Size +3 Int -2

Belligerent +4

Axe: 1st +10 Atk +9 Dam +25  
Fat +3 Def +2 Soak +30\*

Body Levels: OK, 0/0/0, -1/-1, -3, -5, Incapacitated

\* Fire does +25% damage, but Hierbent is immune to damage from cold.

Powers:

Cloak of Snows, CrAu 40,0 points- Hierbent is almost always surrounded by swirling snow or sleet driven by mighty winds, even when he is in sultry lowland regions. That makes fighting him difficult (-2 on rolls and one extra botch roll). Only works where the temperature is near or below freezing.

### Description:

Hierbent is a sullen giant who roams the snowy, wind-swept peaks of the Pyrenees. He has a huge, frost-covered beard and

carries a mighty axe, which was forged for him by dwarfs. He is eager to exchange boasts with his opponents before engaging in battle. Over the years he has slain seven knights. Hierbent has several treasures hidden under massive rocks on various mountain-tops. When the winter is hard, he strides down into the valleys and farmlands to vent his rage, he is always accompanied on these trips to the low lands by a severe storm.

His body contains 16 points of Corpore *vis*; the axe is worth 7 Terram *vis*.

### Story:

An early thaw catches Hierbent farther from his mountains than he would like to be, and he is stranded on a magical hilltop near the covenant, unable to cross the warm valleys below. The characters can hunt him down to kill him or they can help him back home in exchange for some of his treasure.

## Shapeshifters, Those Who Walk as Beasts

The peasants fear wolves and other vicious beasts of the wilds, but even more frightening are those who walk as beasts at night but live as normal humans during the day. Mortals in beast form are more cunning, bloodthirsty and magical, and less predictable than the beasts whose shapes they take. The most common form adopted by shapeshifters is the wolf, but other forms are known as well.

Shapeshifters have many different origins. Some are people who have made pacts with the Prince of Darkness, selling their souls in return for the shapeshifting gift. Some learn magical rituals that can transform them. Others are victims of curses, those

who hate their affliction and have little or no control over it. Such curses are often hereditary or passed from the shape-shifter to those it bites. Some people are just born with the power in their bodies and hate in their hearts.

Use the stats for normal animals as guidelines for those of shapeshifters, but feel free to spice them up. A few supernatural abilities, such as the lycanthrope's immunity to weapons other than those of silver, add a nice touch.

Shapeshifters are aligned with whatever supernatural force gave them the shapeshifting ability, infernal, magical, or even faerie.

## Suzaria, the White Werewolf

Magic Might 16 (8 while in human form)

Size 0 Int +2

Cautious+4, Daring+1

Bite: 1st +4 Atk+6 Dam +13  
Fat +5 Def +8 Soak +6\*

Body Levels: 0, -1, -3, -5, Incapacitated

\* Non-silver weapons do half damage, wooden weapons do one-fourth damage.

Abilities: Alertness 8, Scan 5, Stealth 6

Powers:

Shinning Beauty, ReMe 15- In wolf form Suzaria is even more beautiful than in human form, and anyone intending to attack her must make a Reliable roll of 12+ or hold back at the last moment. Men suffer -3 on the roll. Those that she is actually attacking can strike as normal. The Storyguide can call for rolls whenever anyone intends to do something that would cause Suzaria harm, such as sounding the alarm when she is spotted or pointing out to pursuers where she fled to.

### Description:

Suzaria is an intelligent, strong-spirited woman who learned from her mother how to take the form of a wolf. She rubs a magical

jelly over her naked body under the moon atop a magical rock in the woods, and as long as the moon is in the night sky she lives as an exceptionally large and beautiful white wolf. At first she roamed the forest and brought down occasional wild game, but as she has grown older her hungers have become more ravenous. She has begun killing her enemies one by one, but soon she will have degenerated so far as to attack anyone who crosses her path. Legends in this area have grown about her; she is known as the shadowkiller.

Though she was once a normal woman, use of the shape-changing salve has imbued her long white hair with 1 point of Muto *vis*.

### Story:

Suzaria-as-wolf approaches the characters when they are camped in the woods, then flees. One of the characters becomes obsessed with the beautiful animal, perhaps a magus who wants it as his familiar. The obsession is emotional, but be sure the player has practical reasons for wanting to find her. Eventually that very character has to kill her rather than let her continue killing people, as her thirst for death has become entirely unquenchable.

## Undead, Stalkers of the Night

The boundary between life and death is hazy, and in the gray area between the two stalk the undead, those whose deaths have led to a horrid non-life instead of peaceful rest. An undead being is missing some aspect of human life, such as the body in the case of a ghost or the mind in the case of a zombie. In some ways this weakens them, but in others cases it makes them stronger. Ghosts, for example, cannot be struck by physical weapons, and zombies cannot be demoralised. The undead are largely driven by inhuman desires to kill and terrify.

Due to their magical nature, undead have many powers. Typical ones include: resistance to thrusting damage (because weapons that pierce do most of their damage to internal organs.

Animated skeletons are human skeletons mystically animated. The stats below are for typical skeletons animated by certain Hermetic spells; stats for other skeletons can vary. Most combat stats depend on the weapon being used. The skeleton's Str, Dex, Qik, and weapon skills are all 0, so use the basic combat stats for the weapon to determine 1st, Atk, and Def.

Infernal or Magic Might 5\*

Size 0 Cun -4

Soak {w/out armor} +8\*\*

Body Levels: OK, Destroyed

\* Immune to mind spells.

\*\* +5 bonus on Soak rolls vs. puncture damage.

Story:

A wizard at Windgraven has been creating skeletons in the caves under their covenant, and he may be under demonic influence. One of the characters discovers this and goes to investigate.

Zombies are mindless, animated corpses. Combat stats depend on weapons used; assume skill of 0 in all weapons. These stats are for a typical zombie, to be used when a magus animates a corpse. Superior and inferior zombies are also possible.

Infernal or Magic Might 5\*

Size 0 Cun -4

Str +5 Stm +8

Dex -3 Qik -3

Soak (w/out armor) +12\*\*

Body Levels: OK, -3, Immobilized

-\* Immune to mind spells

\*\* +5 bonus on Soak rolls vs. puncture damage

Story:

Raegle and his father and his father before him have been grave robbers. When he was younger Raegle was content with the meager wealth he gained from his evil robberies, but now he has become a diabolist and has started stealing the corpses as well. In his shack in the woods he turns them into Zombies and uses them to guard himself against intrusion. The Zombies hide up trees, then fall out and attack when someone walks by.

which are superfluous to the undead), immunity to mind-affecting spells, immunity to fatigue, causing fear, and Entrancement. Some undead can take the shape of bats, fleas, wolves, or clouds of vapor. The undead can also be vulnerable to fire and sometimes their own stupidity can defeat them. In game terms, the undead make satisfying opponents because they can be hacked apart without scruple. Properly used, they can slowly build a feeling of suspense and terror, which can be brought to a grand conclusion with a final battle.

Undead are typically aligned with infernal power; but magi are able to create some of the simpler undead as well, and these would be aligned to magic.

Ghosts are the spirits of the dead who cannot rest, of ten tied to the world because of some emotional event. A violent death or lack of proper burial can create a ghost.

Ghosts are interesting creatures not because of their combat potential but because of their personalities and magical powers. An enemy ghost can frighten or curse characters, and some ghosts retain the ability to affect the material world in a certain way. The ghosts of miners killed in a cave-in might retain the ability to mine, even though their picks are as insubstantial as they are. They could use this power to cause another cave-in. For more rules on ghosts, see our supplement *The Broken Covenant of Calebais*,

### Harlin, a Fiend of the Night

Infernal Might 15\*

Size 0 Int -2

Impulsive +2, Cautious +1

Claws: 1st +3 Atk +6 Dam +12

Fat n/a Def +6 Soak +5\*\*

Body Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Incapacitated

\* +10 vs. mind spells

\*\* +5 bonus on Soak rolls vs. puncture weapons

Abilities: Stealth 12

**Powers:**

Suck Breath, **PeCo** 30, 2 Infernal Points- Kills a young child. Harlin must actually inhale the breath of the victim.

**Description:**

Harlin was an evil woman who died in childbirth, and now she has returned from the grave to slay children. By day she can take the form of a shrivelled hag, but at night she becomes a horrific corpse-like creature. In this form she sneaks into houses and sucks the breath from the lips of children, leaving them cold and lifeless. She can only enter a house into which she has been invited at least once, so during the day she poses as a woeful traveler to gain admittance to houses where babies live.

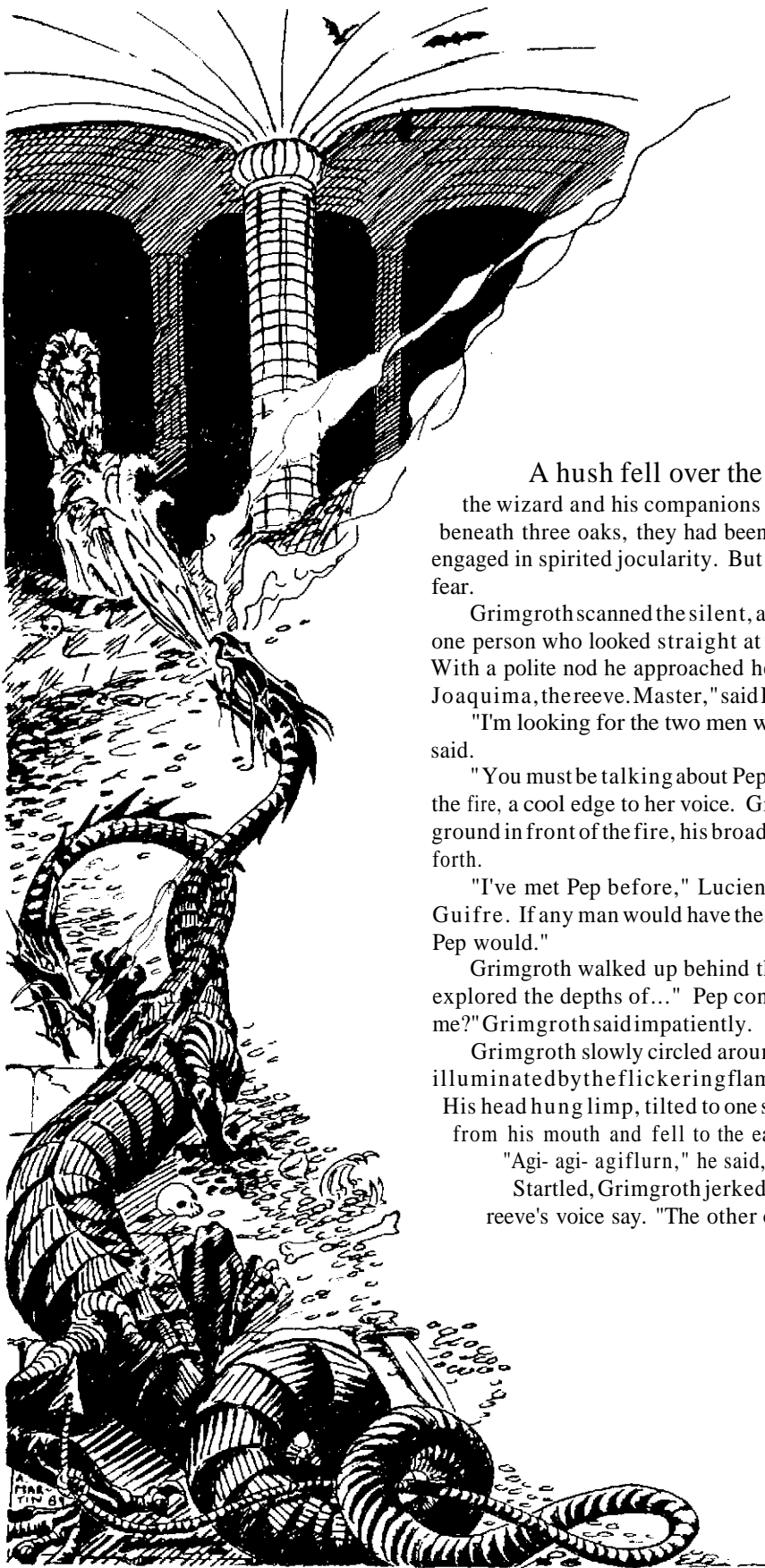
Her corpse has 5 points of Perdo *vis*.

Against strong opposition she prefers to flee rather than fight, though she fights ferociously if cornered.

**Story:**

The death of a child known to one of the characters involves the covenant in the mystery of why babies are dying, but while they are investigating the magi themselves get blamed for the deaths. The best way to stop the killing might be to find Harlin's middle-aged son, whose birth killed her, and have him speak with her.





A hush fell over the villagers as one by one they noticed the wizard and his companions standing in the lane. Seated at tressel tables beneath three oaks, they had been enjoying their evening wine and had been engaged in spirited jocularities. But the jolly mood was gone, and in its place was fear.

Grimgroth scanned the silent, averted faces of the villagers until he found the one person who looked straight at him, a heavyset woman with dark features. With a polite nod he approached her. Lucienne following a step behind. "It's Joaquim, the reeve. Master," said Lucienne.

"I'm looking for the two men who were in the Forest of Moaning Oaks," he said.

"You must be talking about Pep, he's over there," she said, motioning towards the fire, a cool edge to her voice. Grimgroth turned to see a man sitting on the ground in front of the fire, his broad back to Grimgroth. He was rocking back and forth.

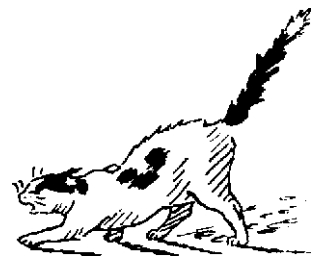
"I've met Pep before," Lucienne chimed in. "He's a man-at-arms for Sir Guifre. If any man would have the courage to enter the Forest of Moaning Oaks, Pep would."

Grimgroth walked up behind the man and said. "I have heard that you've explored the depths of..." Pep continued to rock gently. "Are you listening to me?" Grimgroth said impatiently.

Grimgroth slowly circled around the man and looked in his face, which was illuminated by the flickering flames. Pep looked back up at Grimgroth, blankly. His head hung limp, tilted to one side, his meaty jaw was slack. Drool dribbled from his mouth and fell to the earth.

"Agi- agi- agiflurn," he said, with a twisted smile..

Startled, Grimgroth jerked back and paused reflectively. He heard the reeve's voice say. "The other one wasn't so lucky."



# Saga

**I**t is easy to rely on clichés and stereotypes for our images of the Middle Ages. Some see it romantically, with brave, honorable knights, beautiful maidens, and a flowering of all the wonders of chivalry. Others see it as a time of rampant corruption and ruthless oppression, where most of the freedoms we enjoy today simply had no place. While either view might be true in specific cases, neither is entirely correct. We are not, however, attempting to present a realistic view of medieval society; rather we offer a mythical perspective.

First we will describe the Order of Hermes, its structure and position in society, and second, the more traditional medieval society. We will then describe in detail a campaign setting, the Mistridge Saga. You can use this as the basis of your own saga, or you can treat it as a guide to medieval society and as an example of an Ars Magica setting.

You will find that an authentic, consistent medieval setting can add spice to your role-playing, by lending a more realistic feel to the game and enabling characters to make sense as real people.

## The Order Of Hermes

The roots of medieval wizardry go back millennia to the Nile valley, to the Far East, and beyond, but the continuity of this tradition of magic was broken with the fall of Rome. In the subsequent period of chaos and violence the practitioners of this ancient art were separated and left living in fear. Finally, in the 8th century, several powerful magi decided that working together was the only way the art of magic could continue to grow and survive the perils of the Dark Ages. Over a period of years they developed a theory of magic so they could share their discoveries and knowledge, and established rules and laws that would allow them to live in harmony with one another. Wizards were still guaranteed their individual freedom, but the Order provided the means by which peace could be kept between them. Though many of these wizards were descended from the priesthood of the Roman cult of Mercury, they knew that this cult had been based on that of the Greek Hermes. They took this god's name for their own to emphasize the deep roots of the newly formed Order. Shrouded in mystery, its membership a secret, the Order of Hermes was born.

### The Code of Conduct

Central to the Order is its Code of Conduct, which regulates the activities of magi, both among their peers and in society at large. Magi want protection from their neighbors and sufficient peace to carry out their arcane studies. They know that their lives are potentially hundreds of years long, and that those who could most easily cut short this long life are other magi. Therefore, by living within the Order and avoiding mortal combat with each other, the magi assure themselves a broad degree of security. Additionally there are other powers upon this earth, some with strength equal to or greater than a wizard's own; only with unity can these challenges be successfully met.

The Code of Conduct prohibits dealing with demons, killing magi, endangering the Order, and magically spying on fellow wizards. Since the Code is the only thing that holds together the individualistic magi of the Order, those who step too far outside of its simple precepts are seen as unpredictable and therefore highly dangerous. The only official punishment the Order has for those who break the Code is the Wizards' March. When a Wizards' March is called against a wizard, that magus is declared outcast and is no longer protected by the Code. Any who wish to attack, kill, maim, or rob the offender may do so with impunity and will have the full support of the Order. Groups of magi are encouraged to seek outcasts, put an end to them, and share in their wealth. Older, extremely powerful magi sometimes take it upon themselves to enforce the code and uphold the Order by personally leading a Wizards' March.

Wizards' Marches are called on those who betray the Order, those who slay fellow magi outside of Wizard Wars (explained below), and all those who prove to be a consistent danger to others in the Order. Depending on the political structure of the Order in a particular area, a Wizards' March might be a formal matter, including a trial and such, or it might be a general agreement among several magi that a certain magus has gone too far. Those who call a Wizards' March without due cause, however, may be subject to one themselves. A Wizards' March is no trivial matter.

### Wizard War

Occasionally, a conflict between two magi becomes so vicious that only a battle to the death can settle it. The Code makes a provision for these feuds: Wizard War. A Wizard War is a formal conflict in which two or more magi temporarily step outside the bounds of the Code and are then permitted to harm and even kill one other without fear of a Wizards' March.

One magus initiates the Wizard War by sending a declaration of the war to the other. The message must arrive on the night of the full moon, the Wizard War begins on the rise of the next full moon, and it lasts until the full moon following. Injury or destruction of bystanders or other wizards' property is expressly forbidden. Some magi simply hide when a Wizard War has been declared against them, some fortify themselves in their labs, others come out and fight. Wizard War is epitomized by the sabotage, traps, and trickery often employed by those involved. Raids on laboratories and sources of *vis* are common, and severe bodily injury is often incurred. Unjust use or overuse of the Wizard War by a magus is considered just cause for a Wizards' March or other punishment. Alternately, enemies can join together informally against a wizard who overuses (he Wizard War. The politics, nature of enforcement, and details of the Order of Hermes vary from place to place and time to time. Generally, magi strive diligently to avoid or mitigate conflicts within the Order.

## Tribunals

There are many lesser punishments that might be inflicted by various Hermetic councils and tribunals. The councils are groups of wizards with whatever political power the surrounding wizards grant them; a covenant council is one example. Local tradition is the main determining factor in the amount of power a council has. Tribunals are inter-covenant councils formed by representatives from each local covenant. A tribunal meets once every three to seven years at the home of the oldest magus in the region. It settles conflicts that inevitably have arisen between magi or even covenants, and while its judgments are not necessarily binding, they are usually enforced by its more powerful members. Sometimes united responses to problems with the outside world are also decided upon at the tribunal. Tribunals also elect representatives to attend larger, less frequent tribunals at which magi from all across Europe gather. The tribunal is the traditional place to call for a Wizards' March, though lesser punishments are also commonly handed out. If the wizard does not voluntarily accept a lesser punishment, a Wizards' March is called. Lesser punishments are in no way dictated by the Code; they are matters of consensus and tradition.

Each magus in the area covered by a tribunal gets one vote, either directly or through proxy. Magi give another magus the power to represent them by giving the representative their "sigils," which are wands or other symbols given them by their masters upon completion of their apprenticeship. A sigil is enchanted with a small amount of *vis* and engraved with the owner's name and any arcane symbols the master finds appropriate when creating it. It symbolizes the spiritual membership of a wizard in the society of magi. A sigil can take any form, including twisted wooden wands, statuettes, bronze spheres, coral, animal bones, or crystals. Some magi enchant their sigils and use them as magic items. You may actually want to construct a "sigil" to use as a prop when playing your character.

Magi also meet less formally in councils to decide less important matters. Covenants typically have council meetings to decide covenant actions, and sometimes magi from different covenants meet to discuss specific issues. The authority of these councils is completely dependent on what the participating covenants and magi chose to grant them.

## The Covenant

Some magi, concerned that rivals might steal their hard-won secrets, live alone. The vast majority, however, live together in small communities bonded by vows of friendship and cooperation. A covenant is a self-sufficient center of magical learning where magi gather for protection and to share resources. Usually it is located in a magical area, where magical forces are more easily controlled and gathered. Covenants can be of any size. Most have fewer than a dozen members, but some magi live in huge covenants where the centralization of power and lore make them formidable, but where complex hierarchies limit the individual magi's freedoms.

Ideally, the covenant is the focal point of a saga in *Ars Magica*. It is, in some ways, a group character around which the entire troupe can focus its ambition and concerns. It can give a focus to a saga, and provide a rationale for many of the adventures the characters undertake.

The politics within a covenant are entirely the product of the members. Some covenants have a rigid structure, while others are loose collections of individuals, cooperating only occasionally. Some are rife with internal schemes and attempts by individuals or factions to gain power over the others.

While this style of covenant can initiate a series of engrossing, if somewhat arduous, stories to role-play—rivalry can be fun—it is eventually, if not inevitably, destructive. Beware of destroying your covenant through scheming and antipathies between the characters.

## Wizards and Society

Magi are outside the bounds of normal society, and though they may visit and travel through it, they are never truly a part of it. Among the common folk, the Order is something of a legend, though few openly scoff at its existence. This separation of the world at large and the mystical world of the magi is essential if you want to keep the medieval world authentic and largely untouched by the forces and creatures of magic described in *Ars Magica*.

The Order is a threat to the hierarchy of society since magi bow to neither Baron nor Bishop, but it is powerful enough to deter rulers from attacking it openly. Similarly, the Church restricts the free practice of magic through the influence of the Dominion. The knight's courage and the priest's prayers have supernatural powers of their own, so members of the Order rarely attack their mundane foes in open warfare. Any magi who cause undue conflict between the Order and society are subject to punitive action, possibly even the Wizards' March.

Young magi often find the restraints caused by society annoying, and they sometimes skirmish with the powers of the mundane world. Older magi, however, usually find ways to pursue the art of magic despite the anti-magical sentiment of society, and scorn those who do not follow their example. Most magi are very wary of the outside world and will go to any length to maintain the shaky peace which has been held for so long. (Longevity tends to make a person cautious.)

## The Order of Hermes Vs. the Church

Fanatic voices within the Order and within the Church have called for an end to the long-standing truce and a final confrontation between the two to settle their differences. But fortunately more reasonable voices have so far prevailed.

While the Church opposes the Order as a matter of principle, it cannot get the support of the nobility they would need for a Crusade. Magi tend to have their covenants in out-of-the-way locales, and the nobles have little to gain in land or wealth from defeating the Order. (The nobles also know that they, not the Church leaders, would suffer terribly even if they were to suc-

ceed.) While the Order may be anathema to the Church's doctrine, it does not make a point of corrupting the common people. The Church is therefore more concerned with heresies, such as the Believers' heresy in southern France and Aragon, which are a more immediate threat.

For their part, most magi realize that, while they wield great power, they have no defense against miracles. As long as they stay out of the Church's way, they are largely left alone, but were they to threaten society at large, they would no doubt suffer God's fury. Besides, many in the Order support the work of the Church and agree with many of its teachings. Misunderstanding is the basis of any conflict between them, not moral antipathy.

# Medieval Society

One of the hardest things to do in **Ars Magica** is to make the transition from the modern world to the world of the Middle Ages. This journey requires that you forget many concepts which you have been raised to believe in. Such values as equality, peace, and the separation between Church and State were simply not part of this earlier day and age.

The Middle Ages comprise the very basis of our culture, its roots and essential beginnings, and there is much we can learn by reliving it. Our thoughts and inner lives are deeply affected by the myths, legends, and ideas of these "dark" times. The concepts of love, honor, sworn word, honesty, battle, and war, which form an essential part of our daily lives, have all been influenced by the medieval viewpoint.

Feudalism is the key to understanding medieval society. At its base, feudalism depends on the value of a person's word. You swear loyalty to your lord, and you are expected to remain loyal. If you don't, it is "just" for your lord to punish you, severely at times. Practically everyone, except for the magi, is a vassal to someone else. A serf is a vassal to the knight, who is a vassal to the baron, who is a vassal to the count, who is a vassal to the king.

This is a society of hierarchy: you are born to a certain status, and that status does not easily change. If you are born a peasant, a peasant you shall die. Forget any ideas you might have of equality or liberty; these do not hold water in the medieval world.

Power is the transcendent aim of most of the nobility—it is the basis of the elaborate political game they play. Those at the top seek to consolidate and expand their power, the barons in the middle attempt to exert control over their vassals and avoid their enemies' machinations, and the knights at the bottom fight to retain their rights and advance themselves. However, a lord does not have absolute power. Vassals retain certain traditional rights, and if these rights are abridged, the vassals may band together to fight the lord or appeal to the liege of their lord.

With the fall of Rome and the rise of feudalism, law became a thing of tradition instead of written, formal legal codes; and it was exerted and maintained in the rights of a lord to judge over his vassals. Much of feudal law is based on the concept of sworn word, though Church law and town law have their own well-established traditions. A king is the highest judge in the land, in terms of justice his word is final. In a knight's own manor, his word is law, he has the right to judge most crimes and hand out most punishments.

If you are not interested in role-playing in medieval Europe, use what you find appealing from this chapter to create an interesting and self-consistent world of your own.



## Spirit of the Times

- Throughout the Middle Ages there is a great longing for a return to the "glory days" of Rome and Greece, when the world was truly civilized. Some of the nobility are very well read and many of the clergy have very liberal views concerning the pagan culture which preceded them. Knowledge is respected because of its connection to the past, and young children of any parents who can afford it are sent to church-run schools and eventually to universities so that they can re-learn the knowledge of Rome.

- The belief that man is an innately sinful creature who cannot hope to achieve happiness, and is destined to ignorance and suffering, is fairly widespread. These people do not share our boundless optimism and faith that someday things will get better. These are hard times; the fatalism and pessimism of the common folk make sense in the light of the wars, plagues, and famines that so often upset their lives.

- Not all is doom and gloom, however. The festivals of these lusty folk are extravagant and wild affairs (more than we might imagine), and saint's holidays occur incessantly. Indeed, some peasants have more days off than we do today.

- There is a certain vigor and love for life in the medieval personality. They felt their emotions and feelings strongly, and let their hearts guide them more than we do today. Remember this as you play out your characters' personality traits.

# The Setting: Mistridge Saga

The Mistridge Saga has been provided for you to use as the basis of your own covenant and saga, or as an example of one if you wish to create your own. The detail to which we have gone is, of course, not necessary when you create your own saga, but it is desirable. The more background you have the better, so don't be reluctant to add in new things to this setting yourself.

This saga is based on the covenant of Mistridge, situated in the foothills of the Pyrenees in what is now southern France. The wizards live at the south end of a fertile river valley, called Val du Bosque, which has a long history of mystic happenstance and mysteries unsolved. It is said that it was once home to a kingdom of faeries, and that there was a three year long battle between them and thirteen tribes of pagan Celts. A local monastery has record of a Roman temple lying somewhere in the hills near Mistridge. And there are stories of a mighty dragon who once held the valley ransom to its evil desires.

Living in the densely settled valley are over three thousand serfs, in villages dotted among the thick patch work of fields, pastures, orchards, and woodlands. The primary crops are wheat, oats, rye, and olives. Vineyards can be found on every hillside in the valley; indeed Val du Bosque has achieved local notoriety for its excellent vintage. To the south of Mistridge is a large mountain range, the Pyrenees, where all kinds of strange and fell creatures dwell. In contrast to the domesticated and civilized valley, it is a fierce and wild place that can get quite cold in the winter.

To the north and east is the rest of the prosperous and exotic land of Languedoc, where chivalry and romance are in full flower. It is a remarkable culture, renowned for the beauty of its people, the sophistication of its art, and the excellence of its troubadours. Here in the south, the winter is mild, cities are powerful, feudal ties weak, trade prosperous, diversity tolerated, poetry beautiful, and heresy rife. The capital city of the land, Toulouse, is ruled by Count Ramon VI of the St. Gilles family (who for all intents and purposes is its King). Toulouse is home to a famous university.

The language, Provençal, is extremely close to Catalan, the language of the Kingdom of Aragon which is found to the south, across the Pyrenees. Merchants from Toulouse are easily under-

## Mistridge

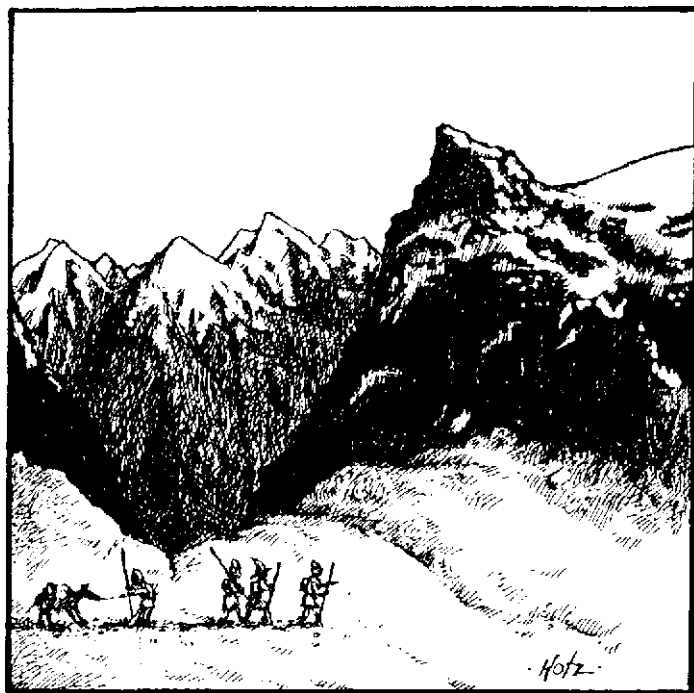
Some of the old magi at Mistridge have grown tired of managing the day-to-day affairs of the covenant and have decided to seek younger magi to maintain the interests of Mistridge. Their decision to do so may have been provoked by the growing ambitions of an old rival — Windgraven covenant. The player-character magi will be newcomers who have come to study at an established covenant; in exchange for this privilege, they are responsible for dealing with external problems that may arise. Player-characters might also be former apprentices of the older magi described below.

Mistridge is a covenant of several magi that sits atop a hill overlooking Val du Bosque. At the top of the hill on the edge of a cliff is a lone tower whose base is perpetually shrouded in mist.

stood when they travel to Barcelona. You can think of Provençal as half-way between Spanish and French.

To fake passable Provençal names, take an English name and change it a bit, make it more romantic and less harsh. (Peter — Pere, Raymond — Ramon, Michael — Miquel, Carmen — Carrne, Catherine — Caterina, Mary — Maria) Not necessarily authentic, but close enough.

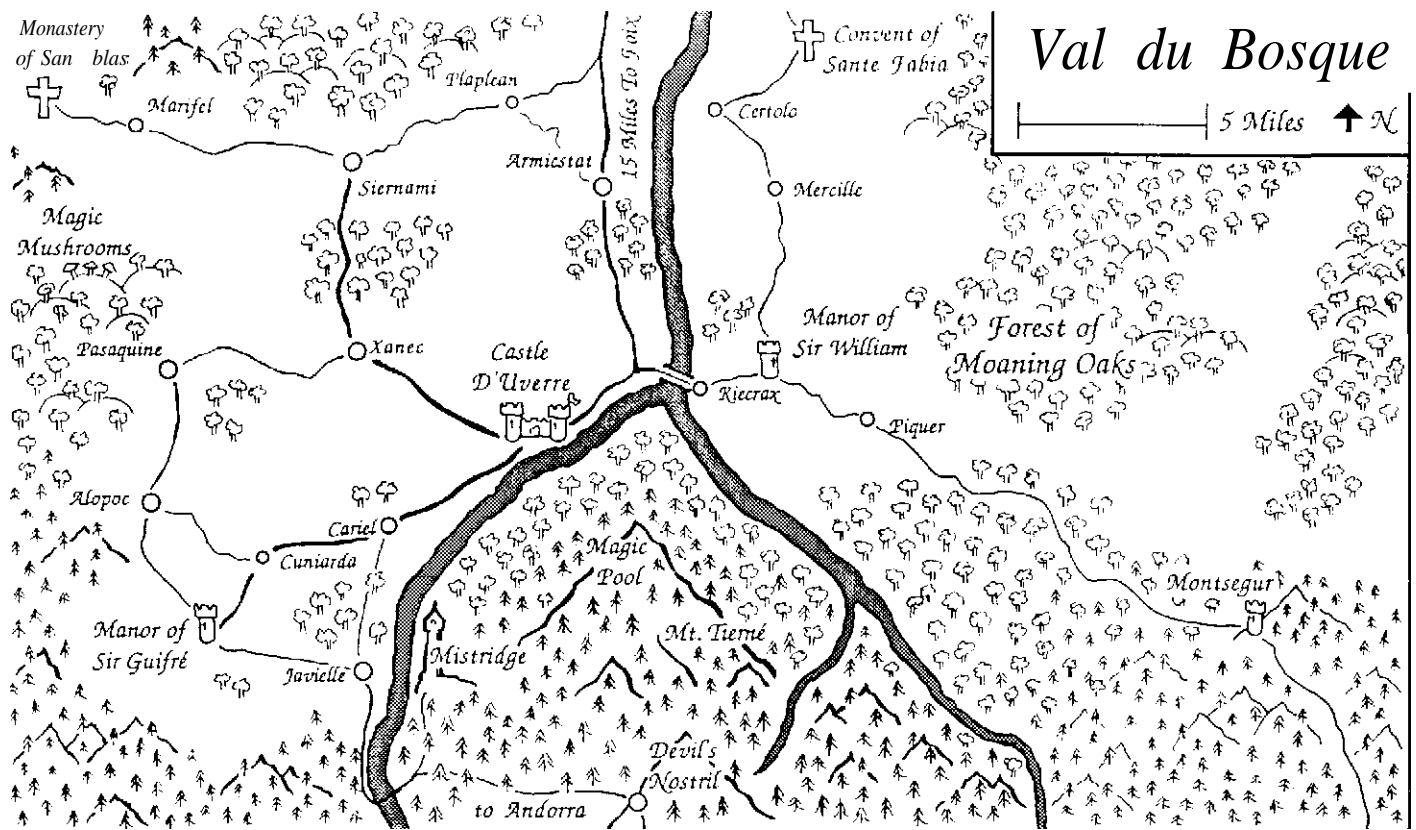
It is the Year of Our Lord 1197. There are still crusaders in Palestine, the Moors (Moslems) have been driven out of half of Spain. France and England are in the middle of a hundred years war and throughout Europe trade is booming and society is blossoming. Yet some sinister trends have emerged: in some places the Church has grown decadent, the Inquisition will soon begin in earnest, and wars of all sizes are being waged across the land. It is an exciting and calamitous time, one of opportunity, adventure, and great peril.



(Grimgroth is currently developing a spell to turn mist into poisonous smoke, which will aid greatly in defending the tower.) The magi study in this tower. From the top you can see the farms of the peasants stretching across the valley, the Baron's Castle rising in the distance, and looming over it are the gray slopes of Mount Tierne.

At the foot of the cliff, in a fortified compound, the covenant's grogs live, thirty of them in all. About ten covenfolk — servants and drudges — and a few friends of the magi who choose not to live in society stay here as well. Tunnels connect the compound to the tower, but no outsiders know the tunnels' true extent.

Since its founding by the magus Consuelia 130 years ago, Mistridge has been a source of confusion and frustration for the folk in Val du Bosque; they simply do not know what to make of



it. Mostly they have learned to ignore the magi when they travel nearby. The covenant, however, is a ceaseless source of gossip and speculation.

Consuelia knew that she and her covenant needed some friends in the area, so she courted the favors of the local Church. Though the Church has never been truly friendly with Mistridge, the clergy at least have remained neutral. The monks at the monastery of San Blas have been particularly cooperative, and the previous Prior even paid a visit to the covenant.

In need of supplies for the growing covenant, Consuelia reopened an old silver mine in the mountains. It is still the covenant's primary source of income. The peasants of Val du Bosque cooperate with the covenant by providing food and service in return for the silver coins the magi forge from the mine's ore. Some grogs come from the villages, but most are mercenaries who have pledged life-long loyalty to the covenant.

Consuelia was old when she founded Mistridge, and a dozen years ago she took her belongings and walked up Mount Tierne, too old to continue mortal endeavors. No one knows what became of her. Without her strong presence, Mistridge fell to minor chaos. Currently there is no true leader and little order. The grogs follow the orders of the magi, as do the other folk who occasionally lend their services to the covenant, and the magi do respect one another, but beyond that, there are no rules. Grimgroth, the senior magus, takes much of the responsibility and makes many of the important decisions, but he holds no formal power over the other magi. Council meetings tend to be chaotic, rambunctious affairs that last deep into the night and usually end with a furious argument between two of the magi.

Mistridge has a poor magical library because the magi are reluctant to cooperate with each other. Ratings for the holdings are

given below:

Auram	15	Vim	4	Rego	2
Muto	10	Corporem	7		

The magical aura is strong (+3).

The mundane library is scanty as well. It has texts on history, politics, and such, both of the Order of Hermes and of the mundane world (Provencal Lore 6, Hermes History 2). The equipment supply for special purposes is superb, allowing magi to take a mule loaded with most of the things they might need on an expedition into the hostile world.

Vulcris is a bent and shriveled woman whose ratty black cloak sheds greasy feathers when she moves it too quickly. Her ill temper is infamous throughout the covenant. What is not widely known is that she was once Grimgroth's familiar, albeit a very independent-minded one, who somehow blackmailed him into giving her human shape. Grimgroth's spells were only partly successful, as Vulcris' eyes and feet retain some memory of their past, and she tends to squawk when she is perturbed. When she speaks at all in council, it is usually to oppose Grimgroth. Vulcris is a master of magic that relates to birds, and she has commandeered the shack on the top of the tower for her roost, where flocks of birds nest and come to bring her secrets.

**Felix Necromius** is a pale, gaunt, awkward-looking magus who spends most of his time in the damp, stone cellars of the covenant. Here he avidly explores the nature of life and death, and further expounds his theory of the three stages of death. He has learned how to animate bodies, speak with spirits, and so on, but his ultimate goal is to synthesize life and death, producing a state that is superior to either one alone. Felix is not normal.

**Clavius** hasn't spoken in the last sixteen years, though his piercing grey eyes let all concerned know that he is still very much

aware of his surroundings. His toad familiar, **Wartzle**, speaks for him and takes care of all the mundane covenant matters. Clavius still pursues the art of the mind, but he no longer shares his strange hypotheses and unnerving discoveries with anyone. He maintains an extensive correspondence with some of the leading intellectuals in Europe, mostly monks and priests, and has achieved wide notoriety through his open letters concerning the recently rediscovered philosophy of Plato and Socrates. Few know of his other interests, and none but Ramon, Baron d'Uverre's nephew, know of his magical talents.

**Oculo**. Though the wrinkles around his eyes suggest the wisdom of years, Oculo's body and voice are that of a large boy. His specialty is magic of divination, and he has intricate maps of many areas, locked in a room beside his laboratory. When necessary, he parts with what he knows for the preservation of Mistridge, but if he had his way he would hoard his knowledge and share it with none. He is good-spirited as long as his secrets are not threatened, though he is terrified of Clavius and believes his colleague is up to no good.

Oculo's apprentice of seven years is **Dalio**, an obnoxious young lad who hero-worships Felix's old apprentice Caeron, who is soon to leave the covenant now that he is a magus. Dalio is eagerly assimilating all that Oculo has to teach, but he is chaffing under his master's methodical and plodding personality. Dalio can be annoying because of his uncurbed curiosity and his incessant questions about the most mundane of details—he is the object of some derision among the grogs. He has secretly begun to spend more and more time out of the covenant, at a nearby faerie mound. So far Oculo has said nothing, but it is difficult to imagine that he doesn't know every detail of his apprentice's activities.

**Grimgroth**, a tall, gaunt man with a dignified and somber disposition, is the nominal leader at Mistridge. Grimgroth rarely smiles and never laughs. A consummate scholar on magical theory, he has written several important texts on Auram magic. Though he is prone to fits of melancholy, he is known to be a genial host with a droll sense of humor. Grimgroth likes to know the facts and is more comfortable when he knows where he stands. He has a cat familiar, **Samantha**, who is his constant and loyal companion. Grimgroth is known to stand at his window, gather the clouds around him, and fly out of his lab to the peak of Mount Tierne. There he will sit for hours in mute contemplation of the setting sun, a weekly vigil of which he never speaks.

Leading the grogs at Mistridge is **Torlen, the grog sergeant**, a

heavy-set man with only half a nose and a horribly scarred face. He has had decades of experience at Mistridge, and knows firsthand the experience of being a grog. Torlen is highly capable at defusing any hostilities that might grow between the grogs and their masters, as he has a deep respect for both groups. Torlen does not often leave the covenant for he hates being stared at,

**Doron** is a new recruit in the turb of grogs at Mistridge. He has chosen to be a grog to escape life as a serf under Sir Guifre, and he still has some ties to the family he left behind. Sir Cuifre has the right to reclaim his escaped serf, so Doron has asked that he not be made to accompany the magi into areas near Sir Guifre's manor. Doron's main goal is to prove his bravery and earn the respect of the older grogs.

**Carlane**, a dour and sharp-tongued little man, is a redcap who regularly visits Mistridge. Redcaps are the invaluable messengers of the Order who keep the disparate magi in contact. They wear distinctive red caps with a triangular blue patch to let the common folk know enough to leave them alone. It is the duty of magi to avenge any attempts to hamper or harm redcaps.

**Jerines is a quaesitor**, the magus responsible for overseeing the covenants in Langedoc. He is tall and thin, and his narrow face is like a wedge thrusting before him. He visits each covenant in turn (visiting Mistridge about every third year for a month), listens to grievances, investigates possible wrong-doing, and attends the tribunals held at Doissetep. The quaesitoris are magi who have the authority to interpret and enforce Hermetic law. Most other magi see them as meddlers and power-mongers, but without them the Order would certainly have fallen to internal strife by now. Jerines is uncompromising on most issues, but is known to have a soft spot in his heart for apprentices.

## The Devil's Nostril

For its income, Mistridge depends on a silver mine in the mountains ten miles to the south. The previous owners abandoned it decades ago when goblins began attacking miners, but Mistridge has put it back in use. The magi occasionally have to fight goblins that threaten the miners, but they have closed off the more dangerous tunnels. A few years ago the miners broke through into some mammoth caverns containing a tribe of goblins, as well as some other strange creatures, but with the extensive help of Felix and Grimgroth, this breach has been sealed off. The village of Sharneal (population 103) lies perched on a mountainside just beneath the cavern entrance.

# Magical Areas

## Faerie Mound

On certain nights of the year one can see lights dancing in the dark about a mile from Mistridge tower. If you listen carefully and the wind is favorable, you can hear the eerie sounds of unworldly pipes and strings. These are the lights and music of the hill faeries, out for one of their rare revels in the open air. Usually the hill is silent, just like any other hill, with three ancient elms presiding over it. But on special days of the year these spry faeries come from their burrows and dance. Oculo has managed to speak with **Feggimer**, a three-foot tall fellow with an immensely broad face and missing teeth, but Feggimer was too drunk to provide any real con-

versation. While the magi are not over-raiding faerie forests, they have decided that it is dangerous to offend neighbors so close and risk their mischievous wrath.

Faerie Aura: 3 on nights when the faeries dance, 1 at other times.

## Caves of the Shimmering Pool

A certain cave on the north face of Mount Tierne burrows deep into the earth with tunnels that twist chaotically forming a labyrinth. Here, in the profound dark that flame has trouble conquering, is found a shallow black pool that smells vaguely of rotten



eggs. A wizard would quickly recognize the smell: brimstone. The magi of Mistridge come here when a crisis is at hand or they need to make important decisions. The older magi treat it with an almost mystical reverence, and would be displeased if it were put to petty use. Drinking the water brings nausea and dizziness, but those who look into it, especially in times of need, often have strange visions. Roll on the following chart.

Roll	Vision
botch	An enchanting vision of a faerie wonderland that makes you want to stay near the pool forever and hinder others from looking in it.
0	Terrifying visions; you come close to a mental breakdown and are visibly shaken for the rest of the season.
2-6	Confusing, dream-like images that seem to make no sense and leave you exhausted (drop to Dazed for three days).
7-9	Dream-like images that provide important information, though it may be confusing or hard to interpret.
10+	A clear vision with poignant significance.

Magical people and creatures feel at home here because of the magic aura (rating 6), so it may be inhabited if the characters visit.

## Windgraven Covenant

Atop a huge, lichenous boulder sprout several weathered stone towers, like fungus growing from a tree stump. Within their worn walls lurk four magi, all former apprentices of a single master, all sharing the master's skill at Rego magic, all sharing his paranoid distrust of the outside world.

These are the rivals of Mistridge, the wizards of Windgraven.

The darkness is filled by an incessant whining and low moaning noises. Strange winds are constantly rushing through the tunnels, and sometimes one can catch snatches of words carried on the winds: vague warnings not quite understood, tantalizing hints at hidden knowledge, or the unmistakable sound of one's own name. No one has found the origin of these winds, or their meaning. Perhaps exploring the ever deeper twists of these caverns would offer some clues.

### The Forest of the Moaning Oaks

There are many woods in the valley, and the hills to the west are covered with cork trees, but this is a special forest where the trees sway a little too wildly in the winds and eerie sounds follow wanderers who happen through. In its center there stands a circle of seven oaks. Here can be heard a low moaning sound that one can feel penetrating the body like a deep winter chill. Some say it is not the oaks themselves that moan, but something that lies beneath them. When the wind is right, the moaning can be heard in all parts of the forest. It is said by the peasants of the valley, that if you can survive a night inside the circle of seven oaks, you will awake to the most beautiful, perfect morning imaginable.

This faerie forest is dominated by a cruel band of six elves from the Unseelie Court. They have fair skin and hair, lithe bodies, and wicked smiles. Each has a distinct magical power, though they all have a limited control over the air. Although they do not hold true power over the forest's kinder inhabitants, they and the magical boars that serve them can usually enforce their will, which usually means forcing other faeries to serve them or to attend their fiendish parties. They warn that if any threaten their power in the woods, they will awaken the Devourer, the precise nature of which is unknown.

Various sprites, faerie animals, and other faerie creatures also live here, some collaborating with the dark elves, some living in fear of them.

The strength of faerie influence varies from 3 at the edges to 6 within the circle of oaks.

### Hill of Mushrooms

Atop one of the hills to the west of the valley is a small magical area with a grove of gnarled cedars. Once a year a patch of magical mushrooms sprouts up from the thick silvery moss that grows beneath the trees. Mistridge won the rights to this patch from Windgraven ten years ago, and now the covenant collects 7 pawns of Herbam *vis* here every Midsummer's Eve.

Each has a specialty in one of the forms to complement their expertise with Rego. They were much more powerful when their master lived, and have now fallen into a period of decay and decadence. Currently they are aggressively attempting to regain their lost power. This means shutting out their rival, Mistridge, so they can have free access to all the resources that this area offers.



# Javielle

A serf village sits across the river from Mistridge. As the crow flies it is only a mile off, but since the ford is three miles upstream, it's a seven-mile walk. It is the largest village in the area, 300 inhabitants — and serves as a center of trade and industry for the surrounding communities. It has a monthly fair in the town square, which is sponsored by Sir Guifre", the lord of this area, (His manor is three miles west.) Javielle boasts a mill, a smithy, a carpenter, a cooper (barrel-maker), a stone church, and an open-air tavern.

Half a mile north of the village is a stone cross by the side of the road, dedicated to Sante Fabia, who healed the mortal wound of the grandfather of Sir Guifre" at that spot. Most folk stop and ask her to pray for them when they pass by.

Joaquima, a large, stout woman, is the reeve of the village. She oversees the place and all the serfs, making sure that the lord's taxes are paid and so on. Proud of her status and responsibility, she tries to distance herself from her fellow peasants by being heartless in the pursuit of her lord's laws. While a highly proficient organizer, she can be cruel to those who offend her. She has no children; the result, it is rumored, of a faerie curse.

AD of the local serfs must take their grain to the water-mill. Poul, the miller, takes a portion of it for himself (his only payment for his work) and must in turn give some of this to Sir Guifre, as

## The Peasantry

Over nine-tenths of the population tills the soil, and yet more live in the countryside, which is crowded by today's standards. Freeholders are fairly uncommon, most farmers being serfs and to some degree bound to the soil they till. They are not free to leave the manor they were born in, and a host of laws restrict hunting, clearing new fields, and milling grain, among other things.

The government they live under is the "manor system" by which a landed knight owns several villages of 50 to 300 people, and lives in a fortified manor house. The knight's fields are all tilled by the serfs of his villages, and that work composes a large fraction of their heavy tax burden. The serfs are not free, but nor are they slaves. Strangely enough they often grant their liege the utmost in loyalty and respect, even if they are mistreated and abused.

The life of a peasant is full of festivals, often of pagan background but now part of the Church. Some serfs are fairly wealthy and live good, hearty lives; some are not and live short ones. Commonly the peasantry is despised, abused, and thought of in the lowest of terms, considered by some to be little better than animals. However, they are not as stupid as some of the nobility tend to think—while they do tend to be narrow-minded, naive, and woefully ignorant. The peasants' hearts are indeed tied to their land; and though their thoughts often go no further than the nearest hill, in the world they know, they are capable enough, and live full lives.

Poul loves to talk and enjoys his work because he gets to see so many people. His mill is a social center of the village, because people enjoy sitting beneath the willow trees on the bank of the river while waiting for their grain to be ground. Unfortunately, the villagers resent the cut he takes, and Poul has a hard time making any real friends. To be sure that the mill remains prosperous, any peasants caught with hand mills are beaten.

A small stone church, tended by the village priest, Father Llorenc, sits at the center of the village. Father Llorenc, has risen from the ranks of peasantry to a position of education, status, and power, albeit limited in all three. He was trained in Foix and returned to the countryside to be with those around whom he is most comfortable. Father Llorenc, is a serious fellow, and everywhere he looks he sees signs of imminent Armageddon. He foresees a bloody battle between the Church and the Believers that will also include the wizards. The time is approaching, he warns, so keep yourself safe from temptation and cleave to the Church.

## Father Llorenc

An energetic man in priestly robes with a large bronze cross hanging around his neck.

Age: 31

Prs +1 {stands out in a crowd) Com +2 (articulate)

Cnf 2

Dramatic +3

### Reputation

Strong-willed 2 in Val du Bosque

### Important Abilities

Preach 4	Speak Latin 1	Church Lore 3
Charisma 2	Scribe Latin 2	Church Knowledge 2
Folk Ken 4	Subterfuge 2	Occult Lore 1

His altar boy, Frederic, helps him in all the mundane tasks of running the church, and Father Llorenc, is teaching him the rituals and doctrine he needs to know to go to the seminary. Frederic has adopted Father Llorenc's dire view of imminent destruction and, when allowed, outdoes the good Father himself in vehemence and passion.

Commonly found sitting on the steps of the church is Pep, the village idiot. Eight years ago he visited the Forest of the Moaning Oaks, and ever since he has been unable to speak coherently or take care of himself. The villagers and serfs treat him kindly, giving him the food and clothes he needs, and on feast days he is always given a seat of honor and plenty of good food (to which he responds with tears and an exclamation of "Agi-agi-agiflum!"). He is not happy, but the kindness of the villagers keeps him from being miserable.

Cugat is one of Sir Guifre's yeomen, serving his lord with military service, not with hard labor and grain. He has the largest farm in the town and is rather haughty about his freeman status. (Most of the villagers are serfs.) Part of his right ear was bitten off by one of the Baron's men-at-arms, Ot, in a brawl last year, and the two of them still carry a deep grudge.

# Wayfarers

A number of individuals pay occasional visits to Javielle. Many of them simply travel through the valley, while others are from outside and are only rarely seen.

A bishop of the Believers makes regular visits to Val du Bosque. Guerau is easily recognized as a Good Man (one who has accepted the restricted lifestyle advocated by the sect) by his black robes and the way he avoids any sort of physical contact with women. He is thin from his restricted diet, sturdy from years of travelling afoot, and pure of heart from a life devoted to transcending the endless troubles of the world. Guerau is enlightened and above mortal suffering. With him travel his "elder son" and "younger son," also Good Men, his assistants. (The terms are ranks, not familial labels.) Many in the village welcome Guerau with open arms, pleased to see in their midst a man who exemplifies chastity, restraint, and peacefulness; a man who treats them with dignity, despite their lack of those virtues. In a pocket Guerau carries a booklet containing the Sermon on the Mount translated into Provençal, and he intends to leave it with the first interested person he finds who can read.

A friar, Guillem, also visits regularly to tend to whatever needs he can and to provide the villagers with the "voice of reason." Though not a Believer himself, he is accepting of any who try to follow the Golden Rule. He hopes that through the actions of people like himself, some accord can be reached between the Church and the Believers. Because Guillem is a jolly man who loves to sing and dance, Father Llorenc considers him to be impious and disrespectful of his vows and seeks to have him dismissed from his order, or at least banished from the valley.

Bernat, a pardoner, visits monthly. He comes to offer the villagers the opportunity to prove their devotion to God (thereby compensating for sins and gaining divine pardon) by making a donation to the church— some of which he secretly keeps. While many hate him, there are others who feel so guilty for their secret thoughts and acts that they willingly pay to be free of that guilt. Bernat is given to bouts of melancholy and drunkenness, during which time he drops his haughtiness and speaks freely with anyone about his past deeds. He was once a servant of a crusader who was assassinated by those whom he calls the "infidel warlocks"; because of this he is terrified of the wizards at Mistridge.

Another occasional visitor is Xavier, a partially lame storyteller. This aged bard brings news of the world and a score of marvelously entertaining stories to the villagers, and in exchange gets food, shelter, and news of the magi on the ridge (highly exaggerated, you may be sure). Occasionally he has important news the magi themselves may wish to hear, and he trudges out to Mistridge. For this service he expects a few silvers. Some of the older grogs remember Xavier visiting when they were children, and they do not recall him looking much younger than he is now.

Jon-Luc is a middle-aged merchant who brings his mule train to Javielle every month for the fair. He envies the merchants of Foix with their five-story stone houses and fine robes. Jon-Luc eagerly brings the fine glassware and instruments that the magi need for their laboratories, and is forever searching for a unique item to sell to them for enough silver to set himself up as a spice trader. The magi sometimes value the information he brings them more than the wares he supplies.

## The Believers

This area has generated a homespun heresy, adherents of which call themselves "Believers" (also known as Cathars or Albigenses). They view the material world as evil and seek to divorce themselves from it as much as possible. They eschew the ornate trappings of Christianity, meeting mostly in each others' houses and relying on traveling clergy rather than using grand cathedrals and ostentatiously garbed priests. All in all, they are like orthodox Christians, just simpler in the expression of their faith, a bit unworldly, and hostile to those Catholics who view them as heretics.

The leaders of the heresy, called the Good Men, travel the land in black robes, preaching and holding ceremonies. They say that the physical world was created by Lucifer, and one should look for no comfort in worldly things. In some cities they have their own churches, and throughout the countryside there are hospices to aid and shelter them. The Good Men are chaste and strict in diet, and those who follow them admire these ideals, while perhaps not themselves living up to them. One of the most important purposes they serve is giving the consolamentum (baptism through laying on of hands) to dying Believers who, on their deathbeds, are finally willing to accept the rigorous restrictions of being a Good Man and thus enter Heaven after death.

Heresy is a serious crime, but Pope Innocent III's current strategy is to send orthodox missionaries to counter the Good Men's words. Only the Good Men, those who have accepted heretical baptism and the "pure" life that accompanies it, are considered true heretics. The rest of the Believers are seen as misguided Christians. The local church is more interested in maintaining its political power and gaining yet more wealth than it is in fighting the Heresy. It is mostly outsiders who are fundamental in opposing the Believers and offering the most devout arguments against them.

The Good Men claim to have performed miracles, proving their connection to God, but these could be the works of devils who have deceived the Believers as to the true nature of these powers. As a Storyguide you may eventually have to make a definitive statement as to the nature of these alleged miracles, but the less the players know about whose side God is really on (perhaps both), the better.

If history in your saga proceeds as it did in real-life earth, the Believers will be wiped out in a bloodthirsty Crusade in the early 13th century, which is largely an excuse for the northern Franks to grab the land and riches of the south. The Albigensian Heresy was destroyed, and Provençal culture along with it. It was the end of a golden age of poetry, romance, and chivalry.

## The Manor of Sir Guifre

Just outside the village of Javielle stands the fortified wood and stone manor of a **landed knight, Sir Guifre**. His family has held this land for generations, and he is extremely proud of this heritage. He is the vassal of the Baron and pays a yearly tithe, which is taken in turn from the tithe that the serfs on his 300 acres of land must pay. Within the wooden walls of the manor house itself live a score of servants, Sir Guifre and family, a few men-at-arms, and a cacophony of hunting dogs.

Sir Guifre is a stout Believer, proud to be connected with people whose ideals are stronger than their greed. If only his responsibilities didn't hold him back, he says, he would accept the consolamentum and the ascetic lifestyle that accompanies it. Besides, that would mean he couldn't hunt any more.

Just outside the walls of his manor is a modest house run as a hospice for Believers. It is run by an old widow, Elissa; two young women also live and work here. All are Good Women. Hospices such as these are similar to convents, only they are much more modest and humble dwellings. Good Men on their travels can stay

### The Nobility

The idea that all people are created equal is, in the Middle Ages, too ludicrous to even be considered. The nobility is innately, patently superior to the common lot. Members of the aristocracy may be both haughty and charitable, unscrupulous and honest, valorous and cowardly. Whatever they might be, however, they are always aware that they have been chosen to rule, that somehow they have an automatic, hereditary power over other people.

After centuries of power this class of rulers has obtained a high degree of culture, while still retaining its warlike nature. This resulted in the practice of chivalry and an advanced level of education for many nobles, including many women. Lyric poetry, the songs of the troubadours, the ideals of romantic love, and the legends of Le Morte D'Arthur serve as examples of the depth of culture that they created. Yet the nobility never abandoned its martial roots, making warfare an essential part of the culture. Wars and battles of all sizes continue unchecked throughout the age,

As you role-play knights, as either a storyguide or a player, always remember their pride in who they are and in their honor and Chivalry, which expresses itself as more than just arrogance and conceit. Though the ideals of Chivalry were never completely upheld, they are always seen as the true ideals of the aristocracy. In much the same way that freedom and tolerance characterize our ideals, honor and chivalry characterizes theirs, and these ideals, however poorly maintained, compose the true romanticism of the Middle Ages.

here, as can other travelers who are not hostile to the Believers. Even magi might be welcome to seek shelter for the night.

Currently a young Believer, **Mathieu**, is living the ascetic life there for a year before deciding if he has the faith necessary to become a Good Man himself. He has the dangerous gift of hexing, and has unwittingly cursed many a soul in a fit of anger.

Living among the serfs of the surrounding villages are Sir Guifre's seven yeomen (including Cugat) who owe him military service in exchange for their land. They are old cronies of his and often go on hunts with him in the foothills to the west.

### Sir Guifre

A broad-shouldered man; if ready for battle, he wears full chain mail, rides a steed, and bears a bastard sword, kite shield, and lance.

Age: 39

Prs +3 (commanding) Com +1 (regal speech)

Cnf 4

**Reserved +3**

**Reputation**

Fair 2, among his serfs

**Combat Stats**

lance:	1st +7	Atk +7	Dam +14
sword:	1st +7	Atk +11	Dam +18
	Fat -3	Def +10	Soak +16

**Important Abilities**

Sword Atk 6*	Ride 6	Scribe Latin 2
Lance Atk 5	Leadership 5	Animal Handling 4
Shield Parry 5	Diplomacy 4	Believer Doctrine 2
* +2 knack with swords		

## The Manor of Sir William

They say his kindness was scoured from him by the hot winds of the Levant, that his compassion died with his brother on the curved blade of a heathen's scimitar. But what the Crusade robbed from **Sir William**, it paid back with gold.

Rather than return to his father's castle in England, which would no longer seem home to him, he took his band of warriors here to the land of Frovenqal where the weather was more pleasant and the ladies, the troubadours had promised, were more beautiful. Now from his fortress—bought on questionable grounds and held through force - this gaunt warrior looks over the wheat fields

and vineyards he rules with an iron fist.

The remains of his warrior band, some half a dozen hardened but aging warriors, share the luxury of this holding. They throw raucous parties with the vigor of conquering looters, and the young women of the area know that if they ever fall on hard times, they can at least find wine, food, and a bed (especially a bed) here at William's manor.

William's wife, Nuria, the daughter of the past lord, has found chastity to satisfy both her faith in the words of the Believers and

her need to distance herself from her husband. She keeps to one tower of the castle (this is a very large manor house); the door guarded by her enormous handmaiden, Veronica. She occupies herself with meditation and whatever books Veronica can obtain.

William's vain and opulent lifestyle cannot be entirely sustained by the taxes he and his men extract from the local peasants, so he readily accepts the bribes of a local group of bandits. On occasion they visit him for a night of feasting. Rumors of this have begun to come to the attention of the Baron d'Uverre.

## The Baron's Castle

Baron Luc d'Uverre is a man of advanced years and great girth, but he retains much of the strength and vigor of his younger years. His left eye was lost in a skirmish with Moors when he was adventuring in Spain as a young man, and now he wears an ornately embroidered patch over it. (He also has a jeweled one he wears at Mass and other important occasions.) His patch and his mane of long white hair are the hallmarks of the noted Baron of Uverre.

Baron d'Uverre has grown in power over the years, winning large parts of his father's inheritance from siblings and some of his grandfather's inheritance from his cousins. Now he rules much of Val du Bosque. His schemes over-reached themselves, however, when a local priest was slain by some of his men in what he swears was a misunderstanding. This "misunderstanding" led to an enormous tithe to the Church to buy his way out of excommunication, and a public supplication to the Bishop in Foix. Ever since, he has had to be extremely cautious in his dealings with the Church and has gained little land or power the past eight years. He tolerates the Believers' heresy, though he is ready to shift positions in an instant should Bishop Merdici's threats of "dire actions" be realized. Baron d'Uverre has a pearl which he puts into everything he drinks in order to nullify any poison. One of the Baron's sore points is the story of his long lost brother, with whom he had a falling out. Few dare to bring up his name in the Baron's presence.

Isabel, the Baroness, is a shy woman, a Believer at heart who has learned, for political reasons, not to be vocal about anything. When important guests visit, the Baron has Isabel serve as a gracious hostess. With her winning ways and keen perception, she can find out much about those who visit, and the Baron always questions her closely once the guests have left. As she gets older she grows more and more independent of her husband, and has developed her own list of priorities.

Their daughter **Franceses**, once a rebellious tomboy, has grown to be quite a beautiful and talented lady of the court, renowned for her gentle wit and charming manner. Francesca's mother worries that she is too haughty ever to accept a suitor.

Imagine her surprise if she knew Francesca was being wooed by a young knight from a scandal ridden family — **Sir Tarbil**, the only son of Sir William. With a head of golden hair, crystal blue eyes, and voice as honeyed as any bard's. Sir Tarbil is as honorable and forthright as his father is cruel. But if Francesca's father were to learn of this courtship, the Barony would be in an uproar for months. Though he knows his father is an evil man, Sir Tarbil still

honors him and would never betray his family or even allow his father's honor to be questioned.

Sir Tarbil spends little time at his father's manor; and last year, while wandering in the hills, he had an encounter with a strange hermit who told him where to find a sword with a fingerbone of Sante Fabia in the hilt. After a harrowing adventure, Sir Tarbil now has this holy sword in his possession.

The Baron can, in a fortnight's time, call on fourteen knights and their eight score men-at-arms, vassals of his who owe him 60 days of military service per year. He also has the service of seven bachelor knights who stay at the castle, and twenty men-at-arms. Their leader, the grizzled **Sir Pere**, has seen enough blood to have lost the fire for chivalry and glory that many of the younger knights have. Relying on his status as a knight of renown, he has earned an important place in the Baron's court, but he detests warfare and violence, and frequently counsels the Baron against using warfare as a means of settling differences. Sir Pere and the Baron play a game of chess together every evening, and they are always looking for new opponents.

**Jaume** is Sir Pere's squire and the son of Sir Guifre. At fourteen he still has several years of training before he can be knighted, years of drudge-work, martial training, studying heraldry, and sleeping on the cold stone floor before his master's door. The glory of knighthood seems far away for young Jaume, and he has learned to make the best of being a squire: jesting and fighting with the other squires, chasing the younger chambermaids, and eavesdropping on important conversations within the castle.

One of the Baron's most loyal soldiers is Ot, a peasant by birth who has, through exemplary and devoted service to the Baron, risen to the rank of knight sergeant. He rides with the knights, but is not nearly as well armed and does not use a lance. Though dependable and strong-willed, he sometimes unleashes a violent temper toward the other men-at-arms (but never to the knights). He has a reputation for fighting dirty in brawls.

The Baron's **barber, Eloi**, sees to the lord's health and grooming. The Baron refuses his insistence that regular bleeding would improve his health and longevity, saying that he would rather keep the blood and risk the bile. This disappoints Eloi, who would like to have the chance to converse more with the Baron, as he is a spy for Mistridge. He sends messages to the wizards via his dim-witted son, **Davin**.

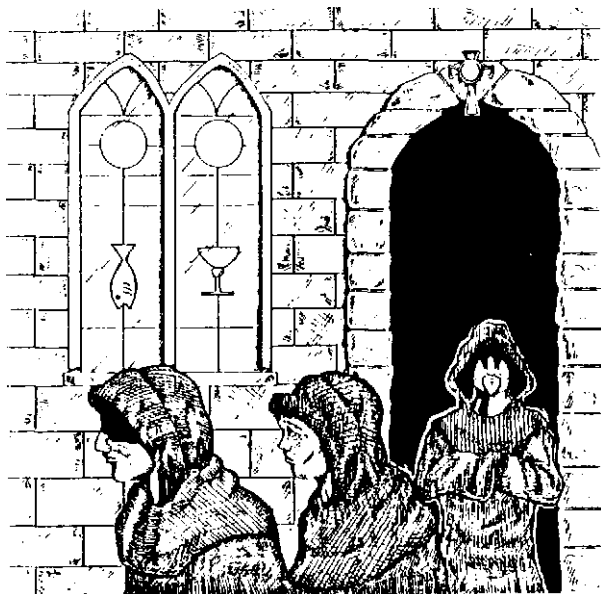
# The Monastery of San Blas

The monastery of San Blas is important to the Church because it is the intellectual center of the valley. Here the educated monks study, copy, and write books and treatises of all kinds, isolated from the outside life, largely unconcerned with worldly matters.

The monastery owns a huge tract of land, and its fief includes three villages spread throughout the barony. The monks are careful stewards of the lands and have been involved in several disputes with local lords over ownership. Due to San Blas' preeminent position as a holy monastery (the monks in the other monasteries in the region taking their holy vows far less seriously and falling to the temptations of gluttony, greed, and lust), it has the strong support of the Count of Foix and the Bishop. The monastery has won every court case and violence has never been attempted against it.

The abbot of the monastery is Vicent. He takes care to make the monastery a place of which the Bishop can be proud; a center of pure devotion and study. A priority of his is countering the Believers' heresy through words of reason, and he has his monks write carefully researched works condemning the beliefs of the heresies. Occasionally he invites outspoken Good Men to debate their views with the monks; these have become a famous tradition in the region and many travel to hear them. Though the Good Men are careful students of their beliefs, the orthodox monks somehow always win the debates. Since Vicent believes that only rational debate will stop the heresy, he discourages his monks from using unfounded rumors of the Believers' sins as evidence against them — a precaution not followed by some of the more ardent enemies of the heresy.

Alfons is one of twenty-three monks at San Blas. Some of his brothers devote themselves to prayer, while others enjoy Epicurean life-styles; but he takes full advantage of the opportunity to study. He has learned Arabic and is currently studying the Arabic texts of Aristotle, comparing them to what he considers inferior Arabic-to-Latin translations. The Aristotelian concept of God as the Unmoved Mover appeals to him greatly, though he isn't yet sure how to reconcile it with Church doctrine. He is a devoted fan of a famous man of letters known simply as Clavius.



## The Ideal Medieval Person

A good way to understand a culture is to ascertain what kind of person the folk in the society most admire, the type of person they regard as the most moral or in some way as the "best." In medieval society, the "ideal person" is the ascetic: the nun, the monk, or the hermit. These people have renounced earthly interests, cares, costs, and temptations and are above all things of sinful, earthly nature. They are dedicating themselves to the spiritual side of life and seek a transcendent salvation through prayer, meditation, and solitude. This, in part, explains the success of the Believers in obtaining converts in the south.

## The Church

The great religious faith that pervades most of society is a real and deep and abiding faith and is not to be taken lightly. The idea of atheism is ludicrous, held by only the most deranged and mentally enfeebled. Faith in God's existence is total. Debates as to the nature of God are still possible, though not common among the orthodox. Since most people cannot read and are not educated, they rely upon the Church to show them the Bible story and message in paintings and sculpture, and to teach them about the right way of life.

The Church is the principal center of learning and knowledge, and serves an important unifying function in medieval life. It may be characterized by its own peculiar canon laws and jealously guarded rights of jurisdiction. Members of the Church cannot be tried in secular courts, and instead are dealt with by special ecclesiastical courts. Perhaps even more important is its role as a major landlord and property owner. To ensure it retains this temporal power, the Church is constantly engaged in strife and intrigue with the nobility and townfolk.

The Church is not entirely hostile to the Order of Hermes, though the magical activities of the wizards are frowned upon (especially if performed where the common folk might be corrupted) and transgressions of religious laws — such as consorting with demons, blasphemy, or injury to a priest — result in extreme disfavor.

It is important to know of the tradition of sanctuary. If a criminal or anyone who is being pursued seeks refuge inside a place of worship, such as a church or a monastery, they are granted 60 days of safety during which no one is allowed to harm them as long as they do not leave. Although it is not unknown for the right of sanctuary to be violated, doing so can bring mundane as well as divine retribution.

## True Faith and Miracles

Faith Points are a measure of a person's connection to God. Those who have given up their own striving for self-improvement and have selflessly dedicated themselves to leading holy lives (as many in the Church have done) no longer have Confidence points but instead have Faith points.

If you have no Faith points, you may gain 1 point (and thereby lose your Cnf) by spending at least a year in selfless service to God. If your own desire for recognition, esteem, self-respect, or power underlies your actions, you do not get the Faith point. Once you have 1 Faith point, you may gain more only through extreme devotion to your faith, such as spending years in a cave resisting the demons who come to tempt you, putting yourself at great risk for your faith's sake, and overcoming habits of thought and behavior that are major stumbling blocks on your spiritual path. (If they are indeed "major stumbling blocks," then overcoming them takes great effort and years of work.) You may lose Faith points if you turn away from your faith.

A person with 1 Faith point is rare and somewhat holy, while someone with 5 or more Faith points is exceedingly holy and will most likely be canonized after death. Most of those with high Faith scores have attained them only late in life. Many clergy, though certainly not most, and a few reverent lay people have Faith points.

True faith protects you from all manner of supernatural powers. Any time you are affected by magic, good or bad, make a stress roll (no botch). If the result is equal to or lower than your Faith points, the magic has no effect on you; indeed, no magic will affect you during that entire encounter. You may add a relic's Faith points to your own for this roll even if you do not have true faith.

Also, Faith points can be used at any time to modify any personality rolls, but they are not lost when so used.

Miracles are possible to those with Faith points. When you ask for a miracle, the outcome is decided by two die rolls. The first is a simple roll, and you must roll equal to or below your Faith points. The nature or circumstances of the request may modify your effective Faith points for this roll; see the Miracles Table. If the roll is successful, the request for a miracle is answered somehow. Then you make a stress roll (no botch). If you roll a 0, your miracle is answered with only a sign that God is with you but that you are to persevere on your own. If you roll 2+, multiply the roll by the number you made on the simple roll. The result determines the Level of the miracle. The Miracles Table describes the Level required to perform many common miracles, using the same scale used for magic spells. If you ask for a miracle but do not roll high enough for the miracle requested, a smaller miracle might result, or at least some sign that God has heard your petition.

Miracles come from a power above the Earth, so no force on Earth or from Hell below can stop them. There is no magic resistance roll against miracles.

If the request is strictly exploitative, the miracle will

definitely not occur, though a demon who hears the petition might show up eventually to grant the desire as part of "a deal."

Relics are holy items, often the bones of saints. If you have a relic, add its Faith points (1, 2, or 3) to your Faith points for miracles and for protection from magic, even if you have no Faith points of your own. The swords of most knights are constructed with relics in their hilts, but many of these relics are fakes. People who are especially unfaithful or currently driven by sin find that relics do not aid them, so it is hard to know whether a relic is inert because it is a fake or because its user is not worthy.

### Miracles Table

Condition	Faith Point Bonus
Previous request unsuccessful	-1
Request in past week	-1
Request in past day	-2
Partly greedy or prideful request	-2
Entirely greedy or prideful request	n/a
Dire personal need.	+1
Dire need of many faithful	+2
Dire need of the Church	+3
Part of holy quest	+1
Possession of relic	+points of relic

Miracle	Ease Factor
Exorcise Demon	Demon Might
Dispel Magic Spell	Spell Level
Banish Faerie	Faerie Might
Remove Curse	Curse Level
Calm Fears	5
Cure Severe Fever	15
Give Speech to a Mute	20
Strike Blind	20
Determine Guilt	25
Walk on Water	25
Cure Leprosy	30
Divine Rescue	30
Smite Foe	40
Raise the Dead	100

# The Convent of Sante Fabia

**Mother Blanca** has risen to the highest rank attainable by women: **Prioress**. In this role, she watches over her convent with great care. Her goal is to separate the convent from worldly concerns. Each nun who comes to the convent is given a new name and stripped of personal possessions so that she will no longer have ties to the outside world. Mother Blanca and her convent will have nothing to do with those who come to her with impure motives, whether they be wizards or nobles. However, the Believers' heresy and all the political machinations associated with it have touched the convent and the naive nuns have become terrified of the Believers—not to mention the wizards. Mother Blanca is above this, but even she is deeply suspicious of anything of unorthodox nature.

Sister **Eleanor**, one of the **nuns**, uses the separation that the convent provides to deepen her devotion to God. She has had mystic visions from time to time, and expresses them in beautiful poetry that is read by many in the Provencal region. Grimgroth is said to admire her work, though he has never met her, and it is rumored he has a complete collection of her poems.

## Foix

The most outstanding feature of this city is the half completed cathedral, which looms over the rest of the community. It is a beautiful, Gothic structure which is being used for services while it is still being completed; the architect estimates it will be finished in about another seventy years. Foix ("fwah") is a large walled city, with over ten thousand inhabitants, and it is this region's center of trade.

Foix is known for the skill of its metal workers, whose proximity to mines in the mountains has generated a whole industry based around iron ore. The jongleurs of the city have also developed quite a reputation, mostly for their bawdy lyrics and sarcastic love ballads; a whole plaza is devoted to their songs. In general the people here are easy and happy-go-lucky, clearly possessing a southern temperament.

Throughout the city one finds the tall houses of guildmasters, merchants and nobility who have moved to the city from elsewhere. Many of the homes are fortified and a few sport towers—there is much rivalry between families, and violence is not uncommon.

The **Count of Foix, Sebastia** of the St. Gilles family, is not often at his castle just outside of the city, for he spends much of his time at his castle near Toulouse, to the north, where he also holds much land. He is a decadent and slothful man, much given to feasting and poetry, Sebastia considers himself something of a troubadour and is renowned for the ballads about chivalry he has composed and frequently performs. The Count is not an entirely untalented performer. He is unconcerned with religion, but has allowed the Bishop to take control of Foix, so as to keep on the good side of the Church.

Once per year, during the week of October 23, the convent comes in contact with the outside world. October 23 is the Day of Sante Fabia, who was born in the village near this convent, and performed great miracles in the valley. Her remains lie within the reliquary of the convent. Miracles of healing have been granted to those who ask her to intercede for them, so the celebration of her day is quite popular. It has, in fact, turned into a carnival of sorts with sword swallowers, vendors, and souvenir hawkers setting up shop in front of the gates. People come from as far as Toulouse, Barcelona, and even Paris to ask Sante Fabia to intercede in their lives. The nuns have mixed feelings about opening their gates to throngs of pilgrims, many of whom are simply tourists, but they feel it is their duty to provide the people with what blessings Sante Fabia can grant them.

In the hills to the east of the convent are a large number of hermits who live ascetic lives of sacrifice and prayer, dwelling in scattered caves and hollow oaks. Among them are both Believers and those of more orthodox faith. Quite a few of them have True Faith. The Dominion here is 5, because Sante Fabia met her end near here.

Ever since **Bishop Merdici** was sent from Rome to this place, he has methodically garnered political power, and now, ten years later, he has become quite influential. He is the true ruler of the city; the town council, made up of influential burghers, is little more than a student council (for Foix does not yet have a charter, the Count is its nominal ruler). As an outsider, the Bishop finds the Believers' heresy revolting and has warned again and again that Rome will not long stand for its continuation. He is also dismayed at the state of the local clergy, many of whom have given up spiritual concerns to see to their temporal wealth. Bishop Merdici was a noble's son in Italy, and the urge to rule still runs through his veins. As Bishop, he has many chances to exercise that urge.

Among the Bishop's **canons**, who advise him on political and religious matters and help govern the diocese, is **Ramon**, Baron D'Uverre's nephew. Ramon sympathizes with the Believers, having almost considered himself one before entering the hierarchy of the Church, but his attempts to soften the Bishop's stance must be extremely subtle. When the Bishop and the Baron wish to address one another, they use Ramon as a messenger. Though the two of them have their differences, the Bishop still sends Ramon to investigate matters for the Church, for Merdici knows him to be an honest and devout man. He is a friend of the wizard Clavius, and maintains an extensive correspondence with him. Indeed, when he was younger he spent two years at Mistridge as a guest scholar.

**Balinger**, a prominent **guildmaster** and member of the city council, has given in to the Bishop, even though he is a devout Believer at heart. He abstains from sex with his wife, and eats no eggs and no meat but fish, but his beliefs have not hindered him from competently managing his wealth. The activities of the Bishop

worry him little, for he sees how little has changed in the people's lives and their beliefs since the prelate arrived.

Dominic is a short, squat man, the leader of thirty Frankish mercenaries who have come to Foix in hopes that their services will soon be needed due to the growing religious conflict. He and his men have hired out as town guards, and they are brutal in carrying out justice against outspoken Believers, partially in hopes that this will quicken the outbreak of war. Though they are something of a scourge on the city, carousing and taking advantage of their power, the Bishop supports them because of their tough stance on the heresy.

### Louis, a Town Guard

A young man with rough features, wears a heavy leather hauberk and carries a sword and a club.

Age: 24

Prs -2 (rough features) Com 0

Cnf 1

Belligerent +2

Combat Stats

Club:	1st +3	Atk +5	Dam +5
Sword:	1st +7	Atk +8	Dam +11
	Fat -3	Def 0	Soak +5

#### Important Abilities

Broadsword Atk 4	Subterfuge 3	Speak Provencal 3
Club Atk 2	Intimidates	Folk Ken 2
Dodge 3	Charm -1	Athletics 1

In one of the plazas, a visitor is likely to find a wide assortment of people. Balnatio, a jongleur, is often in a plaza with his rowdy troupe of entertainers, trying to milk some silver from the crowd with his bawdy slapstick and ballads. He occasionally attempts more dramatic roles, working out the kinks in hopes of a performance before the Count's court. He holds common folk and even artisans in contempt, seeing himself as above the rabble, but has an intense interest in meeting anyone unusual or exotic. He would be fascinated by magi. His easy-going, well-practiced manner can gain him a conversation with just about anyone he chooses. Balnatio's hilarious mockery of the brutal guardsmen has won him much applause, thrown silver, and more than a few sound beatings.

Marcelli, a mountebank, also plies his trade here, selling slivers of the True Cross ("It's real! I pledge on my mother's honor!") by day and love charms ("Guaranteed, if you have a pure heart.") by night. His travels have also given him the wisdom to advise people on matters of medicine and herblore (for a price). In a moment of hubris he may even try to pawn something off on the wizards. One of these days he may just come across something valuable.

Easily noticed due to their brightly dyed clothing and loud voices, a small gang of rakes often patronize the various plazas. They are led by Berenguer St. Gilles, of the extended St. Gilles family that includes the Count of Foix. Berenguer and his friends frequent crowded areas where there are plenty of women to watch, beggars to insult, merchants to hassle, and fine foods and wines to

buy. The one thing they enjoy most is goading someone into a fight; they know full well how to use the swords at their sides. The town guard often has to intervene to prevent them from maiming yet another honest citizen, but the rakes are beyond legal reproach as long as they don't go too far. The town guardsmen, for their part, would gladly wring their smooth, clean necks if they thought they could get away with it (and if the political situation worsens, the guardsmen just may get their chance.)

Berenguer's gang is often followed by a streetwise gang of urchins, street waifs for whom adventure means getting at the rakes however they can. They filch the rakes' money pouches, hurl filth at them from the roofs of buildings, and call them names from the anonymity of a crowd. Berenguer knows they are after him, but he's too ashamed to admit that a band of unwashed children could cause him unease. However, he knows that they know the city and its ways better than he ever will.

Servants of the wealthy (merchants and nobility who live in town) spend a lot of their time shopping here and socializing. You can tell the houses that servants belong to by the colors of their

### Towns and Cities

The cities are the centers of trade and commerce, of religious and intellectual thought, and of dissent and gradual change. Though not as large as we would imagine today, cities are crowded and bustling places where the technology of an increasingly complicated society is crafted and sold.

Squalor and opulence live side by side, as beggars sleep in garbage-ridden alleys while wealthy guildmasters own fortified townhouses. Because a city's growth is constricted by its terribly expensive town walls, the homes within tend to be small, but tall, and often they lean over the city streets.

Fires and disease plague the densely built urban areas, and occasionally one of the two sweeps through a city, killing off a large number of the poorer inhabitants. But they are soon replaced by others who are constantly flocking to the city from the countryside. Serfs who live in a chartered city for a year and a day become free.

Many cities have been granted charters by the king or a local lord, and are thus effectively outside of the feudal system. Such cities are ruled by a council of burghers selected from the various guilds. Sometimes a city is ruled by a bishop, and others are still under the control of a baron or count.

Gaining a free charter and escaping from the bonds of the clergy and nobility is a common desire of the urban folk of the Middle Ages, and is a constant source of strife between the different groups, sometimes even leading to warfare. The awakening commercialism and the growing education of the burghers in the cities is a force often in direct societal conflict with the older feudal, land-based society around it. It is only the interdependence of the feudal and the guild systems, and the unity provided by the Church, that prevents more frequent conflicts than those that already occur.



clothes. The servants often mimic the rivalries of their masters, and fights are not entirely uncommon.

Countless beggars also congregate here, hoping for scraps of fallen food, if nothing else. A watchful observer might notice that some of the "crippled" beggars are healthy people in disguise. An even more astute observer might (but probably won't) notice a single baby in the arms of different mothers at different times. A baby can bring in double the normal take, and those who have them rent them out to those who do not. These beggars have developed a community of sort, and some even have traditional spots where only they can beg, a privilege passed down from parent to child.

More daring than the beggars are the cutpurses who prowl the squares, relieving travelers of their heavy sacks of silver. They're good, but they're not professionals. The most flamboyant among them is Roland, an arrogant and crude fellow who has earned himself a fortune. He has in his possession a large number of fern seeds which give him invisibility when he eats one, for as long as he holds his breath. The fern seeds, of course, are invisible themselves. Roland was told where to find them by a demon who has been interested in him as of late.

Near one square is the Eagle's Egg Tavern (The sign has no words, just a silver egg). Wine is in great supply here, but if you want food you'll have to buy it out on the square and bring it in. The Blue Barrel is an inn for travelers that provides food as well as drink. A room for four with supper and breakfast for all costs 8 deniers, but you can sleep on the common floor for a farthing. (Just don't have anything worth stealing.)

Down one lane are the glassworkers. Isidre, known for his intricate glasswork, has a thriving shop on this lane. It is his wares that Jon-Luc buys and then sells to the magi. Isidre's guild controls such crafts in the town, seeing to it that the members enjoy healthy profits for their skill and labor. Isidre's youthful apprentice, Miquel, seems to have an innate talent for the craft, and already Isidre's fellows jokingly refer to the shop as "Miquel's Glass-ware." Recently the magi have been provided with some exquisite laboratory equipment, all of it made by Miquel. Isidre is jealous of Miquel's skill and is making his apprenticeship difficult and his life miserable.

In the Jewish Quarter one can find moneylenders who are the center of finance. Since the Church has declared charging interest on loans to be usury and thus sinful, the task of lending money falls upon the Jews. Aaron is a prominent moneylender, and as a result he has gained a sizable fortune. He has provided investors with the capital needed to construct several profitable mills on the river. The Count and the Bishop, however, tax him very heavily, mostly because they know that the Jews do not have the power to object.

## Montsegur

A large, sturdily built castle high in the mountains above Foix, held by the Baron DuSeguer, a strong supporter of the Believers. His castle has become something of a stronghold for the Believers; indeed they use the castle itself as a meeting place. Perhaps a thousand or more of them live in caves dug into the cliffs around the castle. There is no farmland or villages near the castle, just barren mountain wilderness, a few shepherds, and some isolated

## Money

This is a list of common prices for goods being sold in Foix. It is provided to help you visualize the transactions that might take place in the saga and give you a sense of the relative value of things in the Middle Ages. Of course actual prices may vary from time to time; this list is only a general guide. These prices in no way imply that anyone with the money can purchase these items. You cannot simply buy a castle, or even a suit of chain mail. Wealth is measured through status and breeding, not by hoards of coins. If your players want to keep track of prices in the saga, it shouldn't be hard to create a full money system from the prices and guidelines given here.

The basic coin is a silver penny, which is called a denier (d). Twenty deniers make a golden sou (s), and twelve sous make a livre (L, a "pound"). A silver penny is sometimes cut into fourths, with each part called a farthing.

### Price List (in silver deniers)

Joint of meat	1/2
Pint of wine	1/4
10' of rope	2
Private room in an Inn, for two	2
Pint of vintage wine	3
Dagger	3
Bribe for a town guard	3
Banquet meal for one	5
Oil lamp	8
Large book, 50 pages	14
Carpenters set of tools	42
Holy relic of local saint	3-70
Real relic of local saint	70
Gold cross	105
Tunic of silk	120
Bastard sword	154
Riding horse	214
Peasants cottage	300
Full set of chain mail	420
Material for a magus' lab	800
Merchants ship	3,500
Fortified manor house	5,000
Large castle	125,000

iron mines. It was built to defend France from Moorish invaders, and it overlooks one of the major trails to Aragon. The tolls the travelers pay support the upkeep of the castle and provide the Baron with a substantial income — his castle is a place of some luxury. The Baron has a strong antipathy towards the Baron d'Uverre, due to a "difference of opinion" when they were fighting the Moors in Spain twenty years ago.

## Creating Your Own Covenant

You may create your own covenant rather than using *Mis- tridge*. Following are some guidelines for designing your covenant; they describe a young covenant, one in which perhaps only the player-characters are members. Follow your own inspiration if you have a covenant concept that goes beyond these rules.

### Arcane Library

For 7 of the 15 arts, roll a stress die to determine the score (maximum: 20).

### Mundane Library

Roll a simple die and divide the result up among at least 3 knowledges to get their scores (maximum of 6 in any one knowledge).

### Grogs

The covenant has a simple die + 15 grogs. They can have standard or inexpensive armaments only. The covenant lacks the resources to hire or maintain more grogs or to give them better armaments.

### Magic Aura

This determines how strong a magical area your covenant is in. It will play a vital role in the research and enchantments the wizards will be making.

Roll	Magic Aura
botch	0
0	+1
2-5	+2
6-8	+3
9	+4
10+	+5

### Raw Vis

Throughout the land are places where recurrent supplies of raw *vis* can be gathered, such as from magic trees or pools. Roll a simple die to determine the pawns of *vis* that are available to your covenant annually from such a source. It can be any kind of *vis* you choose. Magi from other covenants are likely to be interested in what you consider to be your *vis*, so you may have to fight for it.

### Fortress

Design your fortress with the tone of the saga in mind. You could inhabit dank caves that riddle a barren cliff, the ruins of an ancient castle, a lone tower, a sprawling collection of small buildings, or a small fortress. As a young covenant, you do not have the resources to own or maintain a castle.

### Equipment

Your covenant has the equipment most commonly used in day-to-day life and on wilderness expeditions, including torches, tents, rope, possibly a mule, and so on.

### Money

Decide what source of income supports your needs, such as taxes on a road or river, a mine, or mills. You have enough spare silver to fund occasional adventures, but not to invest massive amounts of money.

### Older Magi

Older magi might live in your covenant. If so, they probably play an important role, perhaps they even send the player-characters out on dangerous expeditions.

### Covenfolk

Your covenant hires servants and workers to take care of mundane tasks, such as cleaning, cooking, repairing armor, and so on. Detail a few and give them interesting personalities.

### Status in the Order

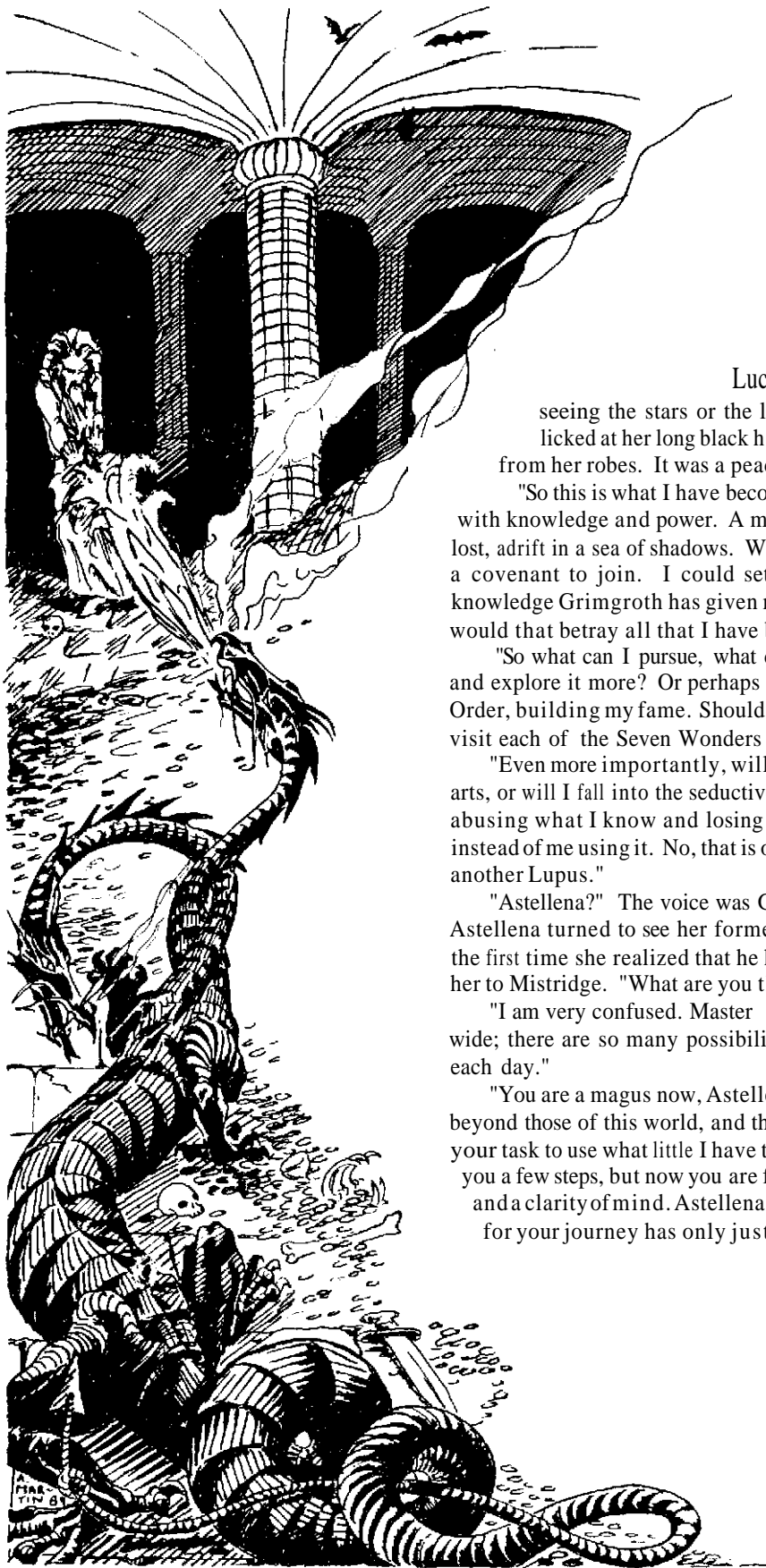
Other magi know little of your covenant. To win their respect, you must perform deeds of value to the Order and make a good showing at Tribunals.

### Mundane Relations

Determine how well you get along with various segments of society. You might be sworn enemies of the nobles in your area, on good terms with the guildmasters of a nearby town, feared but respected by the peasants, and barely tolerated by the Church. Invent relations that will make the saga interesting for you. Be sure to include individual enemies, allies, and friends in the outside world.

### History

Invent a detailed history for your covenant. Who founded it, and when? Why have the player-characters come here? What major events have occurred in the covenant's past? are your current goals?



Lucienne looked out into the night without seeing the stars or the lights of Javielle down the hill. A cool breeze licked at her long black hair, flicking it at the high collar which thrust up from her robes. It was a peaceful night, and she was thinking.

"So this is what I have become, risen from a simple waif to a magus filled with knowledge and power. A mighty wizard am I, with a new name, and I am lost, adrift in a sea of shadows. What shall I do now? I must find a new home, a covenant to join. I could settle my feuds here before I leave, using the knowledge Grimgroth has given me to sate my appetite for petty vengeance, but would that betray all that I have been taught?

"So what can I pursue, what can I do with my life? Go to the faerie woods and explore it more? Or perhaps I could become involved in the politics of the Order, building my fame. Should I travel to distant lands? If I desired it, I could visit each of the Seven Wonders of the World.

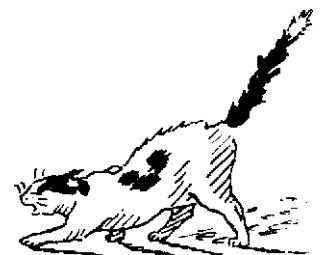
"Even more importantly, will I continue to grow in my understanding of the arts, or will I fall into the seductive trap of power as Grimgroth has warned me, abusing what I know and losing myself in the process? Letting magic use me, instead of me using it. No, that is one thing that I must be sure of, I cannot become another Lupus."

"Astellena?" The voice was Grimgroth's, and he was using her new name. Astellena turned to see her former master looking upon her with sad eyes. For the first time she realized that he had not aged in the years since he had brought her to Mistridge. "What are you thinking about?" he asked gently.

"I am very confused. Master I mean, 'brother.'" she replied. "The world is wide; there are so many possibilities, it was easier when you would guide me each day."

"You are a magus now, Astellena, a peer to me. As a magus, you have powers beyond those of this world, and the will to use them as you deem best. It is now your task to use what little I have taught you to continue on your path. I have led you a few steps, but now you are free to stride ahead. You have strength of heart and a clarity of mind. Astellena, and I will miss you, but I envy you, Astellena.

for your journey has only just begun."



# Storytelling

**I**n much the same way as Lucienne, you have reached the end of your education; your basic understanding of the Art of Magic is complete. This chapter contains rules and advice for creating and playing your own stories and for inventing and sustaining a saga. This is in some ways a very

difficult task, full of complications and problems. However, it provides the reward of an outlet for your imagination and the pride that accompanies exercising it. In this chapter we give you advice on how to get the most out of Ars Magica.

## Being a Player

As a player in Ars Magica, you have the responsibility of deciding the actions and words of your character(s) and participating productively in the story. Do not underestimate the influence, good or bad, you can have on the story simply through your playing style. If someone role-plays well it is an excellent impetus for others to get into character,

Remember that each character plays an equal role in an Ars Magica story, even if they are not equal in power. Imagine each story as being an episode in a soap opera, in which the central plot revolves around the same group of people, but with about four or five ongoing sub-plots at any one time. The story (or sub-plot) of each character is equal in importance and interest, grog or magus, but the sum of these stories makes up the plot of the adventure. When you role-play, attempt to appreciate the stories being told about the other characters as much as you appreciate the story of your own character. Often, different conflicts are important to different characters. Does the wizard manage to retrieve the staff of Askatangasey? Does the companion manage to overcome her fear of heights? Does the young grog manage to prove his bravery and win the respect of the other grogs? These sub-plots can make your entire role-playing experience a great deal more satisfying, and if all the other players watch closely when you role-play, it will provide you with an appreciative audience when important things occur in *your* characters' lives.

### Deciding Which Character to Play

In a story, your first task as a player is to determine what character(s) you will play. Each of the three types of characters has different demands, and offers different rewards. The troupe's goal in every story is to have a balanced group of characters whose abilities and personalities match the challenges they will face and whose players can handle the roles they are playing.

The roles within the group are partially determined by character type, thus allowing players to find their niches in the group quickly. Magi are the leaders, grogs are the fierce warriors who risk their lives at the magi's commands, and the companions are the loyal but free-spirited experts who aid the magi in various ways.

This is a very hierarchical system, and it may be difficult to adjust to at first. The magi have the final voice on most decisions and the companions are the practical leaders, while the grogs must generally do as they are told. Have fun playing out your role within the hierarchy, and use your limitations to explore new situations for role-playing. It may be fun to play a cynical veteran grog who makes fun of the wizards' foibles behind their backs — and has so much bravado that he doesn't care much if he gets caught.

In our troupe we hold a council meeting of the magi at the start of each story. This has resulted in some truly remarkable role-playing and has provided a strong sense of continuity throughout the saga. It also gives all the players the chance to role-play their magus every story, at least for a while, allowing for consistent and uninterrupted character development.

### Playing a Magus

The magus is the most demanding character type to play. For one thing, you must be familiar enough with the magic rules to make fast decisions about using spells. The difference between well-used and poorly-used spells is enormous, so if you try to play a magus when you are not familiar with your capabilities, you might jeopardize the mission and lives of every party member. As a magus, you are also the focus of the story. The goals of the mission are primarily yours, and the others are along to aid you. You have authority over the grogs, and you command respect (at least) among the companions. While the thrill of leadership can be enticing, it is a large responsibility, and it can be more relaxing to play a character without that power.

Do not force your leadership on other characters if it will spoil the fun for the players involved. Flaunting your power by punishing other characters might be going too far, even if it makes sense in the story. Remember that even if an action is "in character," you, the player, bear full responsibility for the effects it has on the other players because you created that character in the first place.

Be sure not to make any other characters feel left out or useless. Avoid leaving the rest of the party sitting around with nothing to do, such as by turning into a bird to scout the surroundings or by

conversing with a tree for an afternoon. (On the other hand, the other characters should feel free to take such times to play out rivalries, friendships, and other character interactions among themselves and thereby stay in the action. There's always a way to role-play even when the story doesn't present "something to do.")

Remember that you will play your wizard for a long period of time so you should try to make the character as well rounded as you can. Wizards tend to have peculiar idiosyncrasies which make them especially intriguing characters to play. They are not like normal people, and often magic has warped them somehow, both physically and mentally.

### Playing a Grog

Grogs demand something completely different of a player: obedience and loyalty. Covenants do not hire or retain grogs who are insubordinate to the magi, so to play your character right, generally you must follow orders. Role-playing an interesting character without being extraordinarily powerful can be difficult, especially for less experienced role-players, but it is also rewarding. Think of grogs as the Marine grunts of the saga, the characters who dig the trenches and rush the enemy line. In movies these are especially vivid characters, in role-playing they can be as well.

One way to have fun with grogs is to play up their quirks. If you made your companion insufferably stubborn, or really hammed up your low intelligence, role-playing that character would get boring after several stories. But you can play out a grog's stubbornness or spiteful temper with boundless enthusiasm, knowing that you won't have to act the same way next time you play. You will find some of the most well-defined and enjoyable characters in your saga to be grogs.

Since grogs are less demanding to play than companions or magi, it is common to play more than one grog, or to play a grog while playing a companion or magus as well. The companion or magus would be the character you role-play fully, while the grog is used mostly during combat when you probably need an extra sword anyway. A grog is a good secondary character if your primary character is a magus or a noncombatant companion. In the grog-magus combination, the grog can be assumed to always be by the magus, bodyguarding.

People playing grogs almost inevitably make up for their character's lack of power by playing the grog obnoxiously and thus attracting attention to themselves. Try to resist this tempta-

### Beginnings and Endings

The time immediately before and immediately after a story is important for keeping track of the progress of the characters and of the covenant. Here are our suggestions for how to use this time.

Before: determine experience for time that has passed, and role-play a magi's council meeting to share ideas and introduce the story; in winter, roll for aging.

After: assign experience and reputation, divide treasure, recover from wounds, make plans for the future of the covenant, record relevant notes from the adventure for the "covenant library."

tion for the sake of your fellow players. Attention-grabbing seems to be the bane of most role-players, and we should all try to keep it to a minimum.

### Playing a Companion

Companions are perhaps the easiest characters for most gamers to play because they are so much like characters from other role-playing games. They do not hold the legendary powers of the magi, nor are they hired and under direct orders from superiors like the grogs. Companions also have enough virtues and abilities to make them extremely interesting characters to role-play.

As a companion you must decide what your relationship is to the covenant and to the magi who are leading the group. Are you obedient like a grog, or free-spirited? We know that the temptation is always to be free-spirited; role-players cringe at the thought of obeying orders. But see if you can play out the role. Having a superior does not mean losing all your free will, it merely means playing a different role from what you have normally played. Don't let your egotism get in the way of the story.

Companions have the important role of mediating between the magi and "normal folk," even the grogs. A wizard's magical nature disturbs most mortals, and the magi in the party will often call upon your resources for dealing with people and the rest of the real world.



## Relations Within the Troupe

With the power differences that separate characters in Ars Magica, the temptation to abuse power (and people) is strong. You must overcome it. The rules for personality sometimes encourage conflicts between the characters (and players). If these conflicts are part of the story, play them out, but don't let them go too far. The storyguide should be ready to step in and focus everyone's attention on the story to prevent any problems.

## Make Sense of the Story

The players must also respect the storyguide. If the storyguide says something happens, it is up to you, the player, to make sense of it. You should make the way you imagine the world or picture the scene fit in with what the storyguide says; you should never try to correct the storyguide. In "real life" things often happen that we do not understand, but we accept them as a matter of course. Do so in the game world as well. In the task of telling a truly good story it is vital for all the players to trust the storyguide. Without that trust the world never becomes real and complete, but remains a fragile extension of the player's preconceptions.

# Being a Storyguide

Being a storyguide for Ars Magica is as much a challenge and a delight as being a gamemaster in most other role-playing games. There are some specific things to keep in mind, however, when you run Ars Magica:

- Be aware of the characters' special abilities. Some ability or flaw that you are not aware of can ruin a story or make it inconsistent, or at least spoil a scene. For instance, you might spring a trap on the characters, roll the damage dice, and start describing wounds, only to have one of the players say, "My hunter has Premonitions, I get to roll to see if he sensed danger." Even if he misses the roll, it ruins the momentum you had. Look over the characters before the game and make notes of things you should keep in mind.

- Go beyond the rules. The rules are for keeping characters in line. If your imagination is superior to the rules, use it. Especially for non-Hermetic magic, you should let your imagination roam free.

- Keep all the characters in mind. Provide something for everyone to do. If only the magi get to go talk to the duke in his private chambers, set the scene for the grogs to trade boasts and insults with the duke's men down in the courtyard.

- Use personality traits. Even if you don't call for rolls, set up situations in which one's interests, traits, virtues, flaws, and reputation make a difference.

## Multiple Story guides

Since players switch characters, it is easy to switch storyguides from story to story as well. Doing so keeps the world large and

## Using Whimsy Cards

If you choose to use Whimsy Cards, a role-playing aid sold by Lion Rampant and designed for use with Ars Magica, here are some ways to do so with these rules and setting in mind:

- At the start of the game, you get one card if you are playing a magus, two if you are playing a companion, and three if you are playing only grogs. This evens character imbalance a bit.

- Use Whimsy Cards to describe the unpredictable effects of magic. Unpredictable events, almost by definition, cannot be covered in the rules, but Whimsy Cards can add a bit of color and variety to a magic system that the wizards *think* they understand.

- Take into account reputation and personality traits when using your cards. The structure of the personality rules and the freedom of the Whimsy Cards make a dynamic combination.

- Use Whimsies to hint at a story that you intend to run next time you play.

- Players may overuse Whimsy Cards until they get used to them, so the storyguide should be ready to veto many cards at first.

- The Number One rule with Whimsies is: Make the story better. As a storyguide, be strict and veto any use of Whimsy Cards which makes the story less enjoyable.

unpredictable, rather than being entirely contained in one person's mind.

To keep another storyguide from ruining your plans, reserve areas of the world for your sole control. If you say, "I get Duke Pere and his lands," then you can create that background without other storyguides interfering. And you can concentrate on the type of play you enjoy, such as politicking with nobility, and leave it to the other storyguides to run faerie forests, dark caverns, and intra-Order plots.

If a storyguide is out of control and does something that upsets the progress of the saga, the other storyguides can repair the damage when they are running their stories.

## The World

You need a world that the characters can believe in, to have a good saga. With each story you run, define the world a bit better. Add details of geography, custom, language, and so on. Build it bit by bit, at whatever pace you choose.

As a general setting we suggest northern Spain or southern France in the 13th century. The Christians have beaten back the Moors, Barcelona is growing, the troubadours are inventing the modern ideals of love, heresy is widespread, and the forbidding Pyrenees provide refuge for those people, beasts, and wizards that want to distance themselves from civilization. It is an interesting time and place that we will detail in our published supplements, but these supplements will be easy to adapt to other locales as well, so use whatever setting you prefer.

# Stories

Designing the story is the storyguide's main task. A story generally has conflicts or problems that the characters can, with effort, overcome within the time available in the typical playing session. If your saga is detailed and rich enough, the characters will be able to find something interesting to do without your planning ahead of time for them. They may indeed insist upon pursuing their own obscure aims. Until that point, however, you will need to devise stories for their amusement.

Stories can often be conducted with just a few notes and some good ideas, but players can tell when you have put extra preparation into a story, and they appreciate it. Mark is famed for his off-the-cuff stories that can lead anywhere inside his detailed background, while Jonathan plans his stories out carefully. Mark's arc more free-flowing, while Jonathan's seem more real. If you are desperate for a story to conduct, encourage the players to let loose with their Whimsy Cards and slow the characters down with interesting distractions, lengthy role-playing, and side detours. If the characters do not achieve their goal, then you will have a story ready for the next playing session, when the characters try again. In the meantime, you can add whatever detail you like to the probably excellent ideas you and the players concocted the previous session.

Encourage players to set their own goals and create stories to fit them, especially if they are from a Spring covenant. Just ask them what they want to do ahead of time, and then prepare the way. Wizards *pursue* magic, knowledge, and power; they don't just wait for it to show up. Let them guide their own development.

The best stories in *Ars Magica* do not follow the "you pay it, we slay it" school of adventuring. Here are guidelines for how to use the *Ars Magica* setting in ten different types of stories, from simple straightforward stories to more challenging and intense adventures.



- *Vis Hunt.* Magi need raw *vis* for their spells, magic items, studies, and (ever increasingly) for their longevity potions. A good basic *Ars Magica* adventure is a search for *vis*. First, the characters must learn of a potential *vis* source. Then they must gather members of the covenant to investigate the source. In their travels, they may overcome difficulties and encounter danger, but most of the danger is likely to be in the magical place where the *vis* is to be gathered. Indeed, the *vis* might be in the body of a dangerous monster. A simple search and loot story, ideal for beginning sagas.

*Story:* A fire drake is roaming the countryside eating horses and terrorizing the peasants. If the magi can drive it back to its lair and follow it there, they can loot the magical caves where it lives. The caves contain several small fires with coals that burn perpetually within them. The coals are worth 12 *Ignem vis* total. (But how will the magi transport them?)

- *Traveling.* The characters travel long distances to gather information, trade magical goods, or attend a tribunal. Most of the fun is in the journey itself. A major decision will be how the characters present themselves. Do the magi travel incognito, or do they show off their wizardly status? Unless the travel is through dangerous areas, most of the encounters will be mundane: pickpockets, bandits, town guards, innfolk — role-playing is emphasized. Be sure to include details on how weather, customs, plant life and so on are different from area to area to give players a sense that they really have travelled. Companions with abilities in guiding and dealing with people are vital. This is a simple, linear story that lets the players get a feel for the world they live in and for the society around the covenant.

*Story:* The characters must travel far to consult a wise hermit on troubles they are having with demons. A demon in spirit form follows them, causes people and beasts to turn against them, and finally poses as a guide and then leads them into a trap.

- *War.* Sometimes in the course of human events the most extreme and destructive measures must be taken to protect one's interests. Though it is rare, wizards sometimes become embroiled in such conflict. They will muster all the grogs that can be spared, call forth their allies and go forth to do battle. It's a bloody, dirty business, but it'll leave the grogs who are left telling grandiose stories of bravery and cunning. Be sure to give some special powers to the opposition to keep the wizards' spells from imbalancing the battle. This is a story for the tactically minded, so be sure to let planning help win the day.

*Story:* The characters discover a non-Hermetic wizard who has been building a small army of living dead in a magical canyon in the Pyrenees. They must move quickly and decisively to obliterate the threat before the wizard gains more power or escapes to renew his evil plot once again.

- *Exploration.* There are always dark ruins and damp caverns that hold rewards for the brave and lucky. Wizards venture there out of curiosity, and the potential for gain that any exploration entails. Be sure to give the place a feel all its own, not just a slew of random beasties guarding random treasures in a pit. Is the place haunted? Used by diabolists? Cursed because of the terrible uses to which it was put years ago?

## Story Timing

How much time passes in between stories? This is no idle question. Every season that passes is another season of study for the magi, and every year that passes is another year closer to death for all the characters, so you will need to determine how much time is slipping by. If stories come quickly, magi will not progress far in their arts and spells, and age might never strike those who begin the saga young. The more time that passes, the faster magi will progress, and the faster companions and grogs will deteriorate. You can vary the time over the course of the saga as you see fit.

One way to determine the time is simply to set a standard, such as one story per year. You could also have a standard die roll to determine the number of seasons that pass. A more complex system would be to resolve a string of connected stories quickly, one after another, after which would follow a few seasons to several years of lull. If you have no standard, each storyguide can decide how much time has passed before the story that is to be played. Remember that none of the characters make their livings by adventuring; adventures are the exceptional activities that, thankfully, happen only once in a long while.

*Story:* Explore the ruins of a diabolists' fortress that appears in the mist on certain nights. They find skeletal guardians, miserable ghosts, and demons in spirit form who are dismantling the fortress stone by stone. Possible loot includes raw *vis*, gold and jewels, magic items (which might be unholy and cursed), occult lore, and secrets of diabolist schemes.

- **Faerie Forests.** Want a wild and exotic adventure? Venture into a faerie forest, which is so magical that the normal rules of the universe can be bent and nearly anything can happen. Give each forest a different feel, some dark and gloomy, others bright and lively, others eerie — but always make them interesting. Emphasize color and imagination over combat and logic, faeries tend to be frivolous. Everyone can have fun in a faerie forest, activities can include: bizarre combat, rambunctious role-playing, exotic magic, puzzle solving, or just partying.

*Story:* The characters search a faerie forest for a rare plant needed for arcane purposes (such as enchanting a staff with a special power). They're attacked by faerie beasts, berated by talking trees, befriended by sprites, and invited to dinner by the elves.

- **Troubleshooting.** Something threatens the covenant and the characters go off to deal with it. This involves finding the problem, figuring out how to overcome it, and eventually defeating the menace. The threat can be social, economic, military, or magical. This type of story is a little more involved, but it still has a basic format.

*Story:* Rescue a redcap messenger and teach her captors a bitter lesson. The captors are rogues in the hire of a local knight, who, in turn, is in league with a powerful dark faerie.

- **City Adventures.** Magi sometimes venture into the heart of the Dominion, the city. Here, where magic is especially botch-prone and the magi are outnumbered by potentially hostile people,

the characters will have to get their way through role-playing instead of head-bashing. Learning who to trust and who to avoid is a fun task for the players. It's also a great place to introduce enemies and/or annoyances to the saga. Characters can become pretty weird living in an isolated covenant, and city stories are opportunities to show just how different they have gotten. They are on the home ground of the mundane people and *have* to learn to get along with them (for a change). There are many possibilities for conflict and role-playing in a city.

*Story:* A magical animal (a potential familiar) is secretly for sale in the city. The wizard must find it and beat another magus in *certamen* in order to get it. Meanwhile, the grogs and companions have time to carouse.

- **Trouble on the Home Front.** Sometimes the story comes home to the characters. Having the characters move through the covenant trying to solve a problem or capture an intruder gives them a better sense of the place they live. It also keeps them from sleeping so easily in their beds at night.

*Story:* Dark faeries have cursed the food brought to the covenant, and those who eat it start racing around the covenant obsessed with obscure aims (give every character a temporary +5 to any one personality trait). Have the players actually role-play out these obsessions. Some are breaking things, others attacking people, while others just screaming and carrying on. Characters who recover to sanity must use a combination of brawn, magic, and sweet-talking to restore order.

- **Mystery.** A rewarding plot involves a mystery that develops from story to story. Dark secrets among the older magi or magi from other covenants are excellent devices for these plots, as of course is a murder. Perhaps one of the wizards in the area is a diabolist, or maybe one of them has gone insane and is crafting a fiendish plot. Be sure that Intellego spells don't give everything away and that the mystery threatens or otherwise involves the covenant. The characters must also be given a chance to defeat the menace, not just to figure out what's going on. This is a very challenging and intricate type of story.

## Stats to Remember

In order to keep track of all the variables and possibilities inherent in magic and in other aspects of the game, these rules have many numbers for storyguides to keep track of. Here is a list of some stats you might want to have prepared ahead of time in your stories:

### For Opponents:

1st, Atk, Dam, Fatigue, Def, Soak, Cnf, Size (and body levels), Ability Totals, Magic Resistance, Brawling Totals

### For Magical Effects:

Technique, Form, Level (or equivalent). Magic Penetration total

### For Role-playing Encounters:

Reputation, Personality Traits, Prs, Com, Cnf, perhaps a quirk or attitude

### For the Area;

Type and Strength of Supernatural Influence, Penalties and Extra Botches (due to darkness, etc.)



*Story:* A magus in the covenant (or one nearby) is a diabolist and is secretly trying to eliminate those who have nearly found him out. He frames another magus as a diabolist and sends demons to attack this magus' enemy to throw investigators off his trail- He turns his powers on the characters as they uncover the plot.

\* Tribunal. Magi from the covenant, usually not more than three, must travel to a tribunal to represent themselves and the other magi. Give everyone who is not playing a player-character magus some other character who is at the tribunal and let them all talk, conspire, befriend, and double-cross each other to their hearts' content. Have room for people to walk around and talk in private. Emphasize role-playing and diplomacy over dice-rolling and physical violence. Be sure to present some conflicts so they'll have something to fight and scheme over. A perfect story for a large group; you may even want to invite people who don't normally play with you to make the story *really* complicated.

*Story:* In addition to normal squabbles over land and alleged wrongs perpetrated by various magi, the tribunal addresses the problem of a baron hostile to the Order who is gathering power and is "secretly" planning to attack nearby covenants. The tribunal is divided on what to do, so the characters' words, actions and votes count. The covenant most likely to be attacked first is an unpopular one, perhaps even that of the player-characters.

## Travel

Travel time between important scenes is generally played through quickly. Minimum rules are given here for quickly resolving travel: determining how long it takes the characters to get somewhere and how tired they are afterwards.

First, you must rate the difficulty of the travel, based primarily on the terrain and the weather. Travel time is gauged by the slowest member of the group.

The difficulty category is your subjective evaluation of the difficulty of the day's travel. Here are some examples:



## Travel Chart

Difficulty	Foot	Horse	Wagon
Easy	25/1	30/1	15
Light	20/2	25/1	10
Medium	15/2	20/1	8
Hard	10/3	12/2	3
Very Hard	5/3	3/2	
Terrible	2/3	1/2	

The first number is miles traveled in a day. The second is the number of long-term fatigue levels lost. A Fatigue roll of 6+ lets the character lose one level less.

You might require other rolls for the characters to accomplish the day's journey, such as a Survival roll from the navigator when moving through wild terrain.

Easy- The best circumstances, such as travel on a straight, level Roman road with a cool, gentle breeze. A rare condition.

Light- The best that most travellers hope for. Travel along a good road (by medieval standards) with pleasant weather.

Medium- The typical conditions for road travel. On a standard road, with holes, rocks, and ruts caused by rain and wagons. Could also be for travel on a better road, but against hostile weather, such as heat or snow. Could be for travel through the wilderness, if the terrain is free of obstacles and the guide is competent.

Hard- Travel on a typical road with disagreeable weather, or travel through the wilderness.

Very Hard- Wicked weather, such as a blizzard, or horrible terrain, such as sloping rock fields.

Terrible- As "very hard," but the weather and the terrain problems combined.

## Settings

You must determine the locations where the story takes place. Maps can help set the scene, especially for encounters that involve combat. Scenes can take place in a great variety of places: taverns, heaths, swamps, castles, bogs, ruins, mountains, faerie woods, villages, mines, covenants, cathedrals, and town squares, to name a few. The better you describe the environment, the better the characters will be able to interact with it and the more real it will seem. Be sure to use the senses of touch, taste, and smell to make your descriptions seem more real.

You must decide which supernatural force (if any) holds sway over each area and how powerful the force is there. See the Supernatural Powers section of the Magic chapter. Also, you should determine what effects the environment has on combat and other actions. For instance, in a noisy marketplace, characters might suffer -2 on hearing rolls, allowing assassins to sneak up on them. See the Special Combat Considerations section in the Combat chapter for ideas of how the environment can affect combat.

## Enemies, Friends, and Bystanders

While characters have a lot of *fun* interacting with each other, they get most of their excitement by interacting with other people and with various non-human things. Remember, the players will not always be killing things. Spend some time to detail other characters as well. The more detail a character has, the better. A great deal of fun can be had simply talking with interesting people, and a little politics and intrigue don't hurt either. Use the Character, Saga, and Bestiary chapters for guidelines in creating the various entities that populate the world and can interact with the characters. If you intend enemies to pose a serious threat to the magi, give them some way to withstand some of the effects of magic; most people simply cannot stand up to it.

## Treasures and Other Rewards

Whether the object of a quest or the side benefit of a dangerous encounter, treasure is a tangible way to show the players and their characters that they have succeeded. Some treasures, such as books of spells, are valuable only to magi; while others, such as jewelry or magic devices, can make companions and grogs feel like they, as well as the magi, are benefitting from putting their lives on the line. Give characters enough treasure to keep the saga moving and characters progressing, but hold back enough that they keep wanting more. Finding the right balance for your saga is essential to the players' satisfaction.

### Raw Vis

Raw *vis* is universally valuable: Wizards use it for many purposes and it often has magical properties of value to other characters as well. To design raw *vis*, decide on its physical form, the art to which it is linked, the number of *vis* points it has, and any magical properties the material has. (See the examples below.) Raw MS is often found in the bodies of supernatural creatures, the fruits of magical trees, and the natural objects in a magical area. Some *vis*, such as that obtained from magical plants, replenishes itself each year, but if too much is harvested at one time, the

### Example Sources of Vis

Apples from a Magic Tree, 2 Herbam *vis* per apple. If half of the apples are not allowed to fall and rot at the base of the tree, it will bear less and less fruit each fall until it dies (3 years).

Quartz Crystals, 1 to 4 Intellego *vis* per crystal, depending on size. Grants +1 on rolls involving sight if worn as an amulet.

Healing Berries, 4 Creo *vis* each. Heals the eater 1 body Level (must make Stm roll of 6+).

Examples of *vis* from the bodies of various magical creatures are given in the Bestiary, Chapter 8.



magical plants may die or lose their power. Doom-sayers predict that some day (soon?) the supplies of *vis* will run out or be severely curtailed, and then, they say, bloody days will come to the Order.

Since raw *vis* largely determines how quickly magi grow in power, letting characters find too much or too little will cause problems in the saga. The covenant should have enough raw *vis* to progress, but not enough to satisfy the magi's cravings. In the beginning, **5 points per magus per adventure** (as an average) is about right. Build up from there as you see fit, but remember that balance is essential. Too much *vis* or too little *vis* can destroy a saga. If some of your storyguides are too chaotic in how they reward characters, assign one player to check all rewards given to make sure they don't unbalance the saga.

### Gold, Silver, Jewelry, Precious Stones, and Other Valuables

Sometimes covenants or characters need cash to survive or to fund special projects, in which case mundane treasure can simply provide that cash. More often, however, getting money is secondary to the mission. Concentrate, therefore, on the esthetic qualities of the treasure, let characters find interesting things: hoards of gleaming gold and silver covered with cobwebs, jewelry boxes inlaid with gems (polished but never faceted), scintillating necklaces, thick bracelets of precious metals, and maybe even a royal crown. Impress the characters visually and they will keep their

treasures to glory over rather than hurrying them off to the nearest jeweler for quick cash. Mundane rewards like these can make the companions and grogs feel like **they**, as well as the magi, have gained something tangible for their troubles.

And don't forget that valuable jewelry or even whole treasure troves can be cursed, blessed, or haunted.

## Tomes

Tomes can help a literate character learn knowledges, spells, magic arts, or the techniques of fashioning magic devices. (They also look impressive on a bookshelf.) Players will be able to add new tomes to the covenant library, thereby raising the library's score to a higher amount.

To read a tome, one must have a minimum score of 3 in Scribe, and Speak the appropriate language (almost always Latin, except for tomes from past ages or far lands). Additionally, some tomes, especially magical ones, are in a code which must be deciphered before the tome can be read, or at least the information is so filled with personal shortcuts that an outsider cannot make immediate use of it. To break the code, roll Int + Scribe Language (ease factor between 6 and 20), one roll allowed per season. Sometimes written spells have "traps," such as extra formulae that do not belong in them. The author knew which sentences or sections to ignore, but the reader will have to make a Magic Theory + Int roll of 15+ to notice the problem. The spell, with the extra, useless sections, might be impossible to learn, or it might produce a spell with dire consequences. Other information besides spells might be similarly guarded.

A tome that teaches a mundane knowledge has a rating in that knowledge, generally from 1 (introductory) to 6 (encyclopedic). These tomes can become part of the covenant library. When adding a tome to the library, compare the score of the library to that of the tome being added. The new score for the library is the higher of the two.

A grimoire contains spells from the Spells chapter or (better yet) made up by you. A magus studying from the tome could learn the spells according to the rules in the Laboratory chapter. Since learning a spell is easier than making up your own, this can be a great boon to magi. Some spells are meticulously described by their authors, while others are described only by a title. In any case, keep stats, such as the Level, to yourself and let the characters find out details through trial and error. Some spell descriptions are not accurate, suffering from the author's egotism, humility, or poor choice of words.

Information on the magic arts is treated like information on mundane knowledges, except that the numbers are usually higher and study is quicker. Information ratings usually are 10 to 20.

If the tome has hints for making a magic device, it will take the form of a bonus on Lab totals when making this specific item (usually limited to +2 to +7).

## Magical Artifacts

Often magi find magic devices in their expeditions, some constructed by other magi, others created by dwarfs, gnomes, elves, demons, or even more mysterious beings. Give non-Hermetic devices whatever powers you wish; leave the rules for making magic items to the player-characters.

Keep in mind that many magic devices do not go away. They can accumulate over the course of the saga and eventually unbal-

## Example Tomes

*Quaelarius' Treatise on the Arts of Healing*- Medicine 5. A large, leather-bound book written in Latin by an 8th century physician. It details his knowledge of medicine, including treatment of those afflicted by magical curses.

*The Grimoire of Halosk of Milsogne*- Intellego 16, Corporem 12, Tracing the Trail of Death's Stench (InCo 30), Trail (InCo 30). This Latin book is part of a departed magus's magical library. In addition to expounding on the theory behind detection and the magical manipulation of the human body, it has two of Halosk's spells. One of them, Tracing the Trail of Death's Stench, has become generally known in the Order of Hermes, but the other, Trail, is unique. Trail allows the caster to unerringly follow a certain subject, whose hair the caster must possess. The spell lasts until the caster actually touches the subject. The description of the spell omits the need for the subject's hair, as Halosk took this necessity for granted. When the new owner of the spell finds out that it does not work, a Magic Theory roll of 13+ will let the magus figure out what is missing. The grimoire is written in code, which has an ease factor of 15 to break (rolling Int + Speak Latin once per season).

A Scroll of Thoth- This papyrus scroll comes from ancient Egypt and is written in hieroglyphics, so one would need magic or secret knowledge to read it. Though the magic is not Hermetic, it details a powerful ritual spell that a magus could learn. The spell, Ra's Mighty Gaze, causes the sun to beat mercilessly on a town for a year so that the ground dries up and cracks. A Hermetic spell that does this would be Level 60, but this is only Level 30 because the magic used is especially suited to this use. Casting the spell, however, is always stress with twice the normal botch rolls because it uses non-Hermetic concepts.

ance the characters. (Have you ever played in a game in which you own so many magic items that you forget about some of them?) In legends, magic items are awe-inspiring, powerful things, not gadgets. Having a saga heavily peppered with them will remove the mystery that should rightfully surround magic of all types.

One way to keep magic items from accumulating is to give characters one-use items, such as potions or powders, and to strictly limit the number of unlimited magic items found as treasures. Generally, fewer and more impressive items are better than more and less powerful ones. A well-designed magic item makes a character (especially a companion) more interesting; a bad magic item overshadows its user. Don't be too tight-fisted, however; try to put artifacts in your stories for grogs and companions. It gives them something to work for and it gives their character a certain interest.

Once characters get a magic item, they have to learn how to use it. Some powers are obvious, such as a cape that makes the wearer invisible. Others are hidden, requiring intense research in the laboratories. A good trick is to give an item several powers, some obvious and some hidden. The characters might use a humble wooden ring or copper pendant for years without discovering the deeper powers hidden within.

## Example Magic Items

Each of the items below has a number in parentheses that indicates what a magus must roll while investigating the item to understand its power. The Ring of the Dark Soul has two powers, each with a separate roll to be made. (See p. 107.)

### Salve of the Stone's Strength

When rubbed over one's naked body (you can wear clothes once it's on), it grants strength and resistance to damage. Add +3 to effective Str and +6 to Soak till the next full moon. (In water, the wearer also sinks like a stone, but the dwarfs who made it don't know this. The characters will have to find out some day by accident.) After the salve wears off, the user is extremely hungry and drops two fatigue levels. Created by the dwarfs for occasional trade with magi and other mortals. A great item to give a grog or companion. (20)

### Cape of the Roguish Brethren

Trapped in this worn wool cloak are the souls of several of its former wearers; anyone who dies while wearing the cloak is trapped in it as well. The last three people to be trapped can speak to the mind of the wearer and use the wearer's eyes and ears as their own. A magus originally designed it to hold the soul of a valuable companion, an accomplished thief and scout, so that his knowledge would not be lost with his death; but when that companion died and was trapped in the cloak, he convinced the next wearer to slay the magus. The cloak has changed hands many times and captured many more souls since then. If a thief or other criminal wears the cloak, the souls inside give hints on how to be a better thief or thug. If anyone else wears the cloak, they speak sinister things in the wearer's mind, convincing him to get rid of the haunted thing. Thus it is always criminals that use it and criminals that are trapped in it.

The trapped souls can give hints that help a character doing thievery things: +2 on rolls involving stealthy criminal activity. Other associated powers of the cloak may present themselves during the course of the saga.

(35; a magus who rolls this while investigating in the lab can also speak with the spirits in the cloak.)

### Arrows of the Icy Grip

These three arrows of yew wood have heads of iron and fletching of eagle feathers. The head is always cold to the touch. When fired, an arrow of the icy grip causes magical ice to form almost instantly on what it strikes, creating a crackling sound. If the arrow hits a creature of human size or smaller, the creature is encased in ice and immobilized. The arrows can also be used to seal doors shut, extinguish fires, and freeze a stream so it can be crossed. The ice melts normally, leaving those who may be trapped in it chilled but, amazingly enough, unharmed. (That's magic for you.) (20)

### Ring of the Dark Soul

This copper ring was forged in Hell and given to a diabolist centuries ago, but it has passed through many hands since. After wearing the ring for a day, one gains visions of others' sins. The character must look intently at the target and then make a Folk Ken + Per roll of 6+ to gain a vision, which shows some sin or dark secret of the target. This power is useable once per day. Furthermore, a character wearing the ring is unable to *see* virtues in others. If the character tries to use a social ability to learn something about someone, the roll automatically fails if the thing to be learned is positive.

(Vision of the Dark Soul: 25, Blindness to Virtue: 45)

### Shield of the Red Lion

This wooden shield with a red lion's face painted on it was crafted by faeries. The lion is alive, but only interacts with those who impress it. If a character acts bravely while using the shield, the lion speaks to the character later during a time of quiet, preferably when others are not around. It says, in words only the chosen character can hear, "Greetings, valiant warrior, I am Andriste, and I am your loyal companion. Call on me, and I will put forth a roar to bring fear to the hearts of others. Call on me, and I will watch over you while you sleep. Call on me one time, and one time only, and I will step out of this shield, and we will fight your enemies side by side. I am Andriste. Call on me in your need." From that point on, the character (only) can see the lion's eyes move, but Andriste will not talk anymore. No one else can befriend the lion until it gives up on this character (see below). The character using the shield gets +3 on all Brave rolls. Once per day the chosen warrior can call on Andriste to roar, and all who hear it and are not the chosen warrior or the warrior's friends must make Brave rolls of 6+ or become afraid. At night, the character can ask Andriste to keep watch. It then roars if it sees enemies of the character (Alertness 10). This roar is separate from the roar that causes fear. The character may also call Andriste out of the shield, in which case it will fight to the death with its companion, and then bid the character farewell and leave forever, leaving his companion with only a blank shield by which to remember his former comrade. (Combat stats: Faerie Might 22, 1st +7, Atk +9, Dam +18, Fat n/a, Def +5, Soak +15. Body Levels: OK, 0/0/0, -1, -3, -5.) The character must call on Andriste by name. If the character ever acts cowardly while using the shield, the eyes no longer appear to move and the lion will never again respond to the character. At this point some other character has the opportunity to befriend Andriste.

(A magus who rolls 25+, while investigating the shield in the lab, contacts Andriste, who will explain something of himself, but not necessarily all.)

**-Horace**

## Last Words

When we look back at the time and effort we have poured into *Ars Magica*, we wonder why we have done it. Why, for that matter, have you picked up this book? Why do we role-play at all?

We each have our own answers, though few of us would agree—What is sure is that, for some reason, we all love this pastime, and somehow, through our passion, role-playing becomes more than "just a game."

For those of us who take it seriously, role-playing gives us access to great moments: hard-won conquests, unearthly perils, journeys fraught with terror, friendships forged in danger and glory, grief at the loss of what we love, and a sense that our choices and efforts really make a difference. Though we seem to escape to another world, we are reenacting stories that arc lodged deep within us, stories about our own lives and who we are. This potential makes role-playing more than just a hobby—it is what makes it *ars*. We hope that, with this game, you have one

more tool to help you tell the stories you most need to hear.

Enjoy gaming, savor the adventure, and become a storyteller in your own right. You have the creative potential; use it. Role-play your heart out. PAX!

Mark Rein-Hagen & Jonathan Tweet  
Lion Rampant  
P.O. Box 621  
Northfield, MM, 55057

## Let Us Hear From You...

Send us your interesting spells, including descriptions of the magi who invented them. We'll put the best into an upcoming spell supplement. Your magi and the spells they invent could be immortalized in the pages of a *Lion Rampant* product.

Also, if you have any ideas about magic items, beasts, combat options, botches, interesting charts, or if you've got any comments, advice, or even (horrors) criticism, drop us a line. Your input is most valuable.

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Comprehensive rules for designing and developing your covenant, four sample covenants (including *Dois-Setep*), and several story sketches. Due out fall of '89.

### Houses of Hermes

Details the schools of magic (Houses) within the Order. Also, new spells (including those exclusive to certain Houses) and rules for Wizard's Twilight. Due out fall of '89.

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