



Pendragon

# Blood & Lust



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**Heroic Adventures in  
King Arthur's Britain,  
Detailed Map of Anglia,  
Gamemaster Tips & Hints**



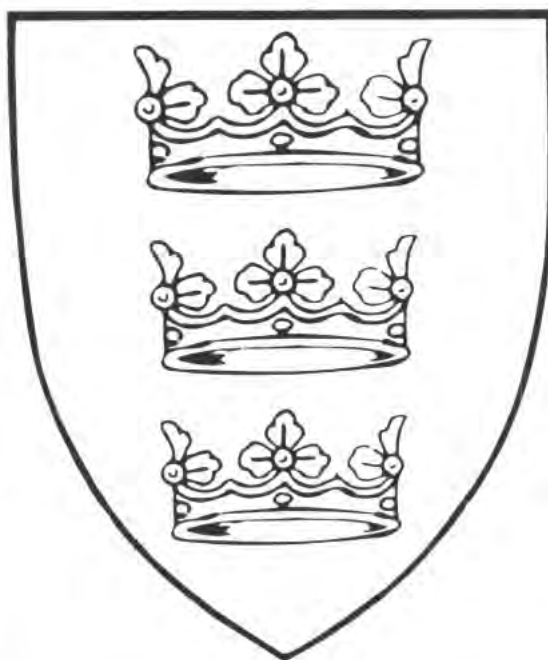
# Blood and Lust

Heroic Adventure in King Arthur's Britain

REWARD US WITH HONORS AND LANDS;

LET US WIN GLORY FOR OUR KING, WHO WILL

AND THE DEVIL TAKE THE HINDERMOST!



\* KING ARTHUR PENDRAGON \*



# Blood and Lust

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For Arthur and Glory



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# Introduction

## *How to use this book to run a Pendragon Campaign*

**B**LOOD AND LUST contains gamemaster material and adventures that can be used together to run a medium-length *Pendragon* campaign. The adventures take place in the third and fourth phases of the *Pendragon* timeline, and are set across the isle of Britain in Cambria, Logres, Anglia, and elsewhere. Any competent group of player knights can participate in them.

The four full-length adventures: "The Adventure of the Heart Blade," "The Adventure of the Castle of Tears," "The Adventure of Morgan le Fey's Challenge," and "The Adventure of the Stygian Stallions" are intended to be played in conjunction with the introductory handouts and the shorter adventures in the rear of the book. They can all be played independently in your regular campaign, or you can use the handouts and the unique structure of "The Adventure of the Heart Blade" to tie all the adventures together into a campaign theme.

The suggested order of playing is this: For the first session, run the "Contest for the Queen's Knights," from the short adventures. This introduces the player knights to Sir Amren, the subject of a later adventure. As they engage in the contest, give them the handout explaining who Sir Amren is. The following Winter Phase, give the players the handout concerning Amren's murder. Play one more short adventure and give the handout about the death of Lady Liawen, Sir Amren's wife.

Following this you are ready to begin the first half of "The Adventure of the Heart Blade." The first half is intended for a single knight, who meets and falls in love with Ahvielle, the daughter of the vanquished Sir Amren. A selection of handouts comprise a unique Lover's Solo for the Ahvielle's suitor, to be handed out one per year as the lover-knight pursues his Amor in parallel with the other adventures in this book. Normal handouts also exist, to be given out regularly during the course of adventuring. Some of these handouts presage events to come, while others reflect upon the past actions of the player knights. Run "The Adventure of the Castle of Tears," "The Adventure of Morgan le Fey's Challenge," "The Adventure of the Stygian Stallions," and selections from the shorter adventures as necessary, until Ahvielle's suitor comes to his final task. Then he should gather up his companion knights, and set off in search of the Heart Blade in the second half of "The Adventure of the Heart Blade."

### Possible Order of Play

Bulleted items are adventures. Italic items are handouts to be given out during the course of play. If Ahvielle's suitor completes his tasks more rapidly than projected here, then fewer short adventures need be played.

- Contest for the Queen's Knights  
*Meeting Amren*  
*Heart Blade 1*
- Selected short adventure  
*Heart Blade 2*
- The Adventure of the Heart Blade, first half  
*Solo task 1*  
*Heart Blade 3*
- The Adventure of the Castle of Tears  
*Solo task 2*  
*Heart Blade 4*
- The Adventure of Morgan le Fey's Challenge  
*Solo task 3*  
*Heart Blade 5*  
*Castle of Tears*  
*Stygian Stallions 1*
- The Adventure of the Stygian Stallions  
*Solo task 4*  
*Heart Blade 6*
- Selected Short Adventure  
*Solo task 5*  
*Heart Blade 7*  
*Stygian Stallions 2*
- Selected Short Adventure  
*Solo task 6*  
*Heart Blade 8*
- Selected Short Adventure  
*Solo task 7*
- The Adventure of the Heart Blade, second half  
*The Heart Blade*



# Gamemastering Tips

*Suggestions for conducting a Pendragon campaign, by Greg Stafford*

**T**HE APPARENTLY PRE-ORDAINED Arthurian history seems as though it would create many restraints on your campaign and on the options provided for player knights. It seems that events, especially the most important ones, have already been decided. If true, this would seriously hamper player knights in any circumstances which involve important and well-known characters.

You, the gamemaster, must determine within what limits you will allow the story to change. Some restraints are necessary in your campaign, but I recommend that you allow considerable latitude with everything which is not critical.

I think the only critical characters are Arthur, Guenever, Lancelot, and Mordred. Anyone else's role can be altered without changing the main story. Your decision can be different — perhaps you do not even desire to maintain the principle story! At least one long medieval story, Perlesvaus, does just that: the son of Arthur and Guenever is killed, Arthur goes Grailquesting, Guenever dies, Kay rebels, and the Grail King dies and his castle is occupied by evil forces. You may not want this many changes, but the choice is yours. You do not have to make the decision early, but you will have to some time; you should be prepared.

You never have to tell the players what your plan is. The play of the game reveals the plot. Since such a large part of the game is experiencing the surprise of unexpected beauty and the shock of horror, let them discover what is real as they go. Since most of them probably know parts of the story already, imagine their surprise when they manage to kill Sir Agravaire or Tristram, or find that they are the first knights to find the kidnapped queen!



## How Close to Arthur?

One of the critical questions of a campaign is how close the characters will be to Arthur. Every gamemaster is tempted to put his characters close, perhaps as liegemen of the High King, brothers-in-law to Gawaine, and so on. I suggest that you resist the urge, at least at first.

The troubles with making everyone close to the king are multiple. First, the events of court are dramatic and overwhelming, and putting characters consistently into a situation which is already decided (in the literature) squelches their chances to grow and to do what they wish. Second, always being at the king's beck and call provides too much opportunity to gain glory by being on the High King's missions. Third, living at court cheapens the effect of Camelot and its magnificent surroundings by breeding familiarity. Finally, getting close to the king is an objective of the game: giving immediate access loses many game goals.

Most characters should hold land from one of Arthur's vassals, and work towards becoming close to Arthur. Most knights, even those already accepted to the Round Table, visit Camelot or the king's court only every 4-7 years.

## King Arthur's Knights

Who are King Arthur's knights? King Arthur is the center of many circles. Knowledge of them may help you decide where to direct your campaign's knights. Hundreds of knights move within those circles, providing pathways towards fame and adventure as well as important social contacts. Below are some of the varieties of King Arthur's knights.

### Logres Knights

King Arthur is, among his other titles, King of Logres, the biggest kingdom in the land. The knights of the land have a special relationship with Arthur which other, subvassaled kingdoms, do not have. Two types of knights from the kingdom are close to Arthur: his household and his vassals.

The household knights of Logres are headed by Sir Bedivere, Arthur's oldest and most trusted companion. A dozen or so specially picked knights are the select bodyguard for the high king, and also command the twenty or thirty knights who travel with the royal retinue. A further twenty or thirty household knights are not present, either escorting officials about, carrying messages, or acting as a military reserve to garrison castles, rushing to a battle, or hunting down bandits in the kingdom.

The barons of Logres are mostly great dukes, earls, and bishops. Only a few knights hold land directly from Arthur



himself, for the Pendragon family keeps their demense directly without permanent vassals.

### **Round Table Knights**

The Round Table is a fraternal organization which transcends all national, tribal, and religious boundaries and binds its members by an agreement which supersedes their vows of fealty to all other lords.

Membership is determined by chivalry and good deeds, and indeed that is true. Many knights receive membership because they are just, upright, merciful, and serve as examples of Arthur's bright idealism. But at other times Arthur's choice seems arbitrary, such as when he makes Sir Tor rather than Sir Bagdemagus a member; or even unjust, as when Sir Ironside, who hanged many good knights, was made a member. But part of our negative response stems from misunderstanding; membership is NOT just a measure of virtue. Membership on the Round Table is determined by King Arthur's whim, and his decisions are sometimes beyond our understanding.

Once admitted to the Round Table a knight remains until proven felonious, or otherwise offends the manners of the membership. No one quits (until the end of the era).

Player knights can qualify for Round Table membership if they are Chivalrous and have enough Glory. In general, reward a character who has acquired 8,000 Glory with membership on the Round Table if his Traits approach those of Chivalry. Arthur, like historic kings with similar organizations, uses the Round Table as a reason to keep some individuals close to him, under his eye. At the end of Arthur's reign, long after events in this book, it is much harder to get on the Round Table.

Unless specifically ordered to do so, most knights of the Round Table do not live at Arthur's court. Most of them have greater duties to tend to: kingdoms or counties to run, hunts to pursue, or private wars. Thus full attendance, even at the Pentecost, is rare. I would estimate that no more than half of the 150 knights regularly attend the Pentecost, and fewer during other annual meetings. Active attendance is higher when Arthur's reign is young, but attendance drops as the Round Table knights grow old and Arthur succumbs to the Enchantments of Britain in the Fourth Age.

When petitioners come to court to ask for help from the High King, the Round Table knights naturally get first choice. However, only about one third of them are present at any time, giving about 50 in attendance. About half of them must remain behind as personal bodyguard to the king and to run his business, leaving about 25 to answer petitions. They often go on the quest in groups of 2-4, averaging 3 per trip. Thus only the first 8 requests can be filled by

Round Table knights. The other quests may be left to player knights to fulfill.

### **Young Knights**

Before the formation of the Round Table, a free-wheeling band of cavaliers gather about the king in an ad hoc group called the Young Knights. The most important individuals join after Arthur conquers the rebels. Many of the other Young Knights are also disenfranchised sons of the conquered kings. In the chronology in *Boy King Sir Galeantis* is given as an example of one of these knights.

These men are the result of Arthur's conquest, which is not entirely benevolent. During his wars Arthur conquers several kingdoms, and several of their kings are slain. Although he surely treats the conquered with mercy he does not apparently return the kingdoms to the heirs. The most obvious example is that of Sir Gawaine who, we would think, would become King of Lothian, yet is never named as such. Returning his conquests to heirs, even friendly heirs, was not required from a good king.

The Young Knights did not join the Round Table en masse. The Vulgate records one tournament where the Young Knights, led by hot-headed Sir Gawaine, fought against the newly appointed Round Table knights. The subsequent bloodshed and ill feeling caused Arthur to vow to never let his knights fight each other again.

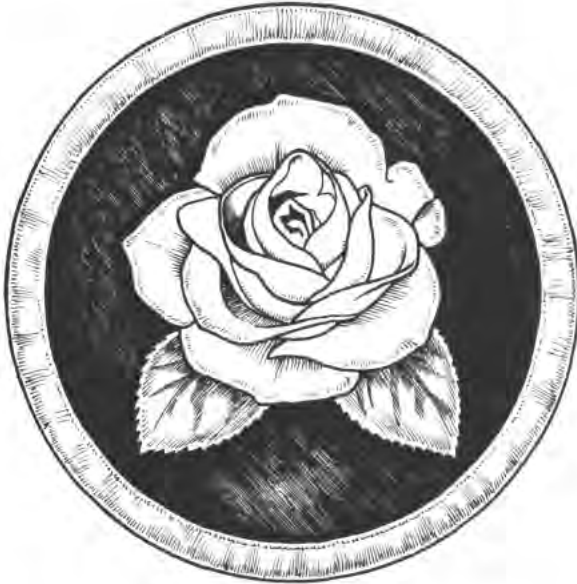
The Young Knights fade from the story as they are absorbed into the Round Table, die, or get old. However, during their heyday the Young Knights provide an excellent place for knights to make friends and seek adventure. Gamemasters may wish to maintain the group to provide an organization which is common to diverse player knight types.

### **Queen's Knights**

Queen Guenever institutes the frail arts of love and romance to the court of warriors. Refinement and courtly practices come to knighthood, supported and fostered by the gentle queen.

Knights are needed to serve the queen. Her royal person must be guarded from brigands and evil knights. Yet not anyone is suitable to stand in her presence, and Guenever chooses her guards by her own preferences.

The Queen's Knights are chosen by contests in courtly skills each winter. Any knight may enter the contests, where Glory can be gained and lost as surely as if in combat. The winners in each category, which may change each year according to the Queen's whim, serve for one year and wear the white rose badge to mark membership in the special unit.



The courtly skills in which would-be Queen's Knights commonly compete are: Compose, Dancing, Gaming, Play (instrument), and Singing. Competitions are held during the winter feasts, when knights may compete with the skill of their choice. Each participating knight rolls an opposed resolution of his skill against all the other competitors. *Some competitions* are spread over several feasts, and winners may be called upon to defend their standing from later challengers.

### King Arthur's Companions

Many men become Companions of Arthur because they are inspired by Arthur's ideals and are thereby loyal to him. After the establishment of this institution it is a prerequisite to other organizations close to the king.

The extremely rigid and harsh conditions for membership which are given in *Pendragon* page 69 are to be used when players are determining membership outside of play, without gamemaster approval. During normal game play knights can qualify much easier if their activities during play warrant it. The organization of King Arthur's Companions is intended to be inclusive, not exclusive like the Round Table. Minimal requirements are to prove to a sponsor that they have the right knowledge and chivalrous intentions. This could mean correctly answering questions about Arthur's ideals and the proper roll of a knight. Furthermore the penitance's traits should approach the chivalrous ideal, although the knight need not qualify for a chivalry bonus.



## Keys to Success

The key to running a successful *Pendragon* campaign is to co-operate with the players to co-create a story.

Your *Pendragon* campaign must be shaped and styled to suit the needs and desires of both you and your players. The gamemaster's task is to co-ordinate these diverse aims and shape them into a cohesive whole, and to add depth and color to bring the wondrous realm alive.

The players will do their part, which is necessarily limited in scope and scale. They have only to focus on one character at a time. You, the gamemaster, have the awesome privilege and responsibility of taking care of the rest of the Arthurian realm.

Before starting to play, talk to your players and ask them what they want out of the game. See where their interest lies, how much they want to contribute, and what their expectations are. Only experience will reveal their playing styles.

Here are some guidelines culled from my experience:

- Co-operate with Players: Talk to the players and ask them what their expectations are. Ask them what type of game play they prefer: Storytelling, roleplaying, power gaming, war gaming. Occasionally set up various adventures to cater to these different objectives.
- Share the spotlight: Make different player knights the center of action for each adventure.
- Ad lib: About 50% of what the gamemaster does is improvised from materials at hand applied to an immediate situation generated by the player characters. Players almost never do what is easy for the gamemaster, but almost always do something which is challenging.
- Entertain, and be entertained: Roleplaying games are to have fun. Roleplaying games are a type of entertainment, and everyone should do their best to contribute to the whole. Gamemasters, with superior chutzpa and (usually) knowledge should set the example.

## Multiple Characters

Urge players to have more than one character. Because everyone dies, they will have to have more later anyway, but even early in the campaign players will need new characters. Sometimes there is no choice: the character is killed, or disabled in the middle of an adventure, wherein the player must get a new character if he wishes to continue in the game. Sometimes, though, it is a player choice.



First characters should be from Salisbury, as recommended in *Pendragon*. But after a few sessions players will have enough experience with the game, characters, and interaction between them to know whether they like this first character. The gamemaster should allow a new knight to be generated using *Knights Adventurous*, within his limits. Sometimes a player will have to "try on" several characters before he finds one which is comfortable.

I recommend, based on my experience, that players have three characters, which I call Starter, Alternative, and Emergency characters.

The Starter is my favorite. He is the preferred character, usually the most famous and, since most played, the most Glorious. This is the scion of my longest-lasting player family, a banneret and one of Arthur's Companions. He strives for chivalry, but in a pinch is practical. Sometimes, however, he is an inappropriate character, or is taken away by duties. The gamemaster might, for instance, say, "Your rich guy is too powerful for this adventure. His liege lord summons him for advice, so he can't come."

In such circumstances I play my Alternative. He is a household knight of a petty lord in Sugales, a head-hunter in the old tradition, but otherwise a lackadaisical convert to Christianity, and very Chivalrous. He is committed to remaining unmarried until he weds an heiress.

Emergency characters are generated as needed. Perhaps you are in some foreign land and your character was killed. There is no reasonable way to get your alternative character here, and so you make up a local fellow just to keep with the adventure. Afterwards you may want to keep playing this guy, or just keep him on file someplace for another emergency.

Finally, sometimes a character may become so successful that he outstrips all others in skill and ability. These are usually those with 8,000 or more Glory. When such a character is in your campaign, have him retire to his lands for a while and have the player create a new one. Congratulate him on having "won" the game. Get this character out of retirement when there is an obstacle too great for the normal party, or when many of them have gained this level of status.

## Using Traits and Passions

Gamemasters should always look for chances to apply Traits and Passions. The mode of feeling is important to *Pendragon*, and is one of the unique characteristics of the game.

Whenever player characters are engaged in activity, always ask the players what their characters feel, then ask what they do. Alternately, just tell them to attempt the appropriate Trait rolls when that emotion is challenged. Refer to the rules on page 118-119 of *Pendragon* for the game mechanics.

Finally, the bonus provided by a successful Passion roll is a great advantage to player knights. Gamemasters should encourage players to use their Passions to gain advantages as often as they wish, but remind them of the consequences of a failed roll.



## Regular Events

Regular, common events make up the bulk of the activity in a campaign. Not every adventure is a world-saving, block-busting quest.

Common events form the fabric of the campaign. Here are some of the things from which to weave a story of *Pendragon* knights. Do not demean these simple tasks. They give perspective to the rest of the campaign.

## Getting Married

Families are one of the great motivators of the *Pendragon* campaign. Advantageous marriages, which bring property, title, or connections into the family, should be played out. A woman's marriage partner is almost never chosen according to her wishes. Usually the father, or the liege lord if she is an heiress, controls the marriage rights of the woman. Hard bargaining is often the cost of a wife. If the suitor is in love with the woman it is usually perceived by the liege lord as a weakness to be exploited in the negotiations. Qualifications are important, and tests may be demanded of suitors.

## Family Problems

A brother or sister may come and ask for help. It might be help for anything: a neighbor is raiding, a pesky suitor needs discouragement, a lord may be grasping greedily for undue taxes, peasants might need to be reminded that Might makes Right. Perhaps it is more difficult: A sister needs an alibi to see her lover, an uncle knows when the nearby guildsmen transport their funds to the local chapter house, a brother has been accused of robbing a nearby abbey. These, on questionable moral ground, make problems more complex and interesting.

## Neighbor Problems

Bad neighbors are a constant problem. Maybe they are stealing sheep or cattle from the manor's peasants, perhaps from the knight's own herd! They could be fishing in your lake, or have dammed up your stream. Imagine the problem



if the next-door lord has set up a tax post and the peddlers are refusing to come to your manor now. The lord of the nearby manor might be an ambitious fellow who insists on coming around every Wednesday to joust someone. It is even possible that the neighboring knight just doesn't like your way of speaking, the color of your horse, or the design of your coat of arms. Imagine how your own bad neighbors would act if they had a lord's prerogatives.

## Help at Home

Something is going wrong at your manor. Maybe the peasants are rebelling? Are the faeries doing something bad, and you don't know why? Are the peasants failing to show up for work? Did the commoners send all the bad piglets as payment this month? Is a robber harassing the commoners from the nearby woods?

## Love

The pursuit of Love is a worthy objective. Romance is expected to take years to reach fruition. Gamemasters should generally allow players to handle this over the winter using the Lover's Solo. Sometimes, though, events may be large enough to center around an adventure or two. Gamemasters might allow the lady's Reluctance to wear away faster if it is played out. Troubles in the affair are always more fun if they are played out in the open.

## Sightseeing

Britain is full of interesting sights, and when enchanted it is even more entertaining. Knights may just hear about a wonder and go to visit it, taking whatever they meet in stride as they travel.

## Aid and Advice

Liege lords summon their vassals for military aid and for sage advice as needed. Traveling to a lord's holding is a regular task for vassals.

## Surprises

Vary these everyday tasks occasionally to use these apparently mundane tasks as a doorway for greater adventure:

- the bride-to-be is actually in love with someone else!
- the "bandit" harassing your brother is actually an important figure at court.
- the neighbor next door is getting married to your worst enemy.

- Your home problem is not unique, but is actually widespread across the shire.
- Your lover abruptly, and without explanation, announces an end to the affair.
- The sight you are seeing is different this time.
- Your liege chooses you to head a dangerous mission.

## Asking For Help

An unusual, but always possible, activity is for player knights to ask for help. Here are some guidelines of normal expectations, and advice on how to handle the story.

### Favors

A favor is a special obligation which one person owes to another. It is different from helping someone out of normal obligation. Normal obligations are necessary, and demand nothing special in return. A favor demands reciprocation.

For instance, a vassal may have a personal grudge against a neighbor and ask his lord for help. The lord may agree to send his army, but the vassal will owe a favor to his lord, who will later require the vassal to do something extraordinary, beyond his normal obligations. Likewise, a vassal may perform some extraordinary act for his lord, in which case he can expect to be repaid later.

Favors are especially notable when they are done for someone who has no obligations to the person. Questing knights often do things to help strangers, then receive a favor from whomever is helped.

Many times in Arthurian literature we see women helping imprisoned knights who have given them aid sometime in the past. This is the reciprocation of a favor done without the expectation of its return.

Asking for a favor is sometimes a risky business, for the person asked may find it to be in conflict with his other desires or obligations. Another problem is in asking for a reciprocation which is not of the same magnitude as the original action performed. A lord, for instance, might feel that a knight who saved his wife is asking too much to be allowed to lead the lord's men into battle, for instance. These types of conflict are the stuff from which legends are made.

### ...From the Manor

The manor is the source of ordinary upkeep. It provides food, clothing, and basic equipment. It does not supply armor or chargers, but it does include armor and weapon repairs, and most horses smaller than a charger.

Manors can also supply unusual or one-time requests, including:



- **Ransom:** Vassals are obliged to raise money to ransom their lord.
- **Other Universal Aids:** Vassals are also obliged to raise money for knighting the eldest son, the marriage of the eldest daughter, and for a crusade.
- **A mob:** The men may volunteer to follow their lord to war. Despite the best intentions, these create a mob at best (which may be enough to handle the fellow next door).
- **Extra money:** Peasants can be squeezed for money by imposing an *impost*. It can be for anything, but lords usually lie and say it is for something important when it is for something really quite arbitrary.

### ...From Neighbors

Neighbors have no obligations to each other, save for what is clearly in their common good, and then only out of common sense, not law.

### ...From the Lord

Every lord owes his vassals protection and help in war. If a knight's manor is in danger he can expect some help from his lord. On the other hand, the lord might decide it is a small problem and not worth his trouble. In fact, failure to take care of it indicates remission to his duty on the knight's part!

### ...From Vassals

Vassal knights are obliged to spend a third of their time in castle garrison duty, and 40 days for war, outfitted at their own expense. They must also spend whatever time is needed defending their own lands.

Household knights, of course, spend their entire time waiting on the lord, and are on constant beck and call.

In quest of plunder, they might agree to campaign for a longer time under their lord's leadership.

### ...From Friends

Friends are a tremendous variable in any power equation. Friends have no legal obligation to help each other, but might do so simply because of their friendship. Help might even be granted without any expectation of returned favors. But friends should always remember that any help they lend is likely to permanently embroil them into the affair, complicating their lives considerably.

### ...From Family

A knight's family is one of the most reliable sources of help, but also one which must be carefully guarded against abuse.

To get his family to help, a knight must go to the head of his family and ask for it. The procedure is:

#### Decide on the reason.

He will have to convince his kinsmen that it is in their interests to assist him.

#### Go to head of household.

He decides if it is something which automatically demands family honor. If so, he sends word for all the family to come.

Two types of reasons to fight exist, mandatory ones and voluntary ones. Mandatory reasons are those which demand family presence. They include unlawful murder, rape, and anything which dishonors the family. Everything else is voluntary, but some reasons hold more weight than others. Important reasons include ransoming the family, protecting property, and taking a job at court.

However, everyone in the family also has responsibilities to some authority other than the Family. A mandatory reason gives them considerable weight in leaving their liege lord to do this elsewhere. A voluntary reason is not such a sure thing.

#### See if each individual can come.

For each family member roll a d20, where success is any roll equal to or less than the average Love (Family) value. Success indicates the family member will come. The average Love (Family) equals 15. Possible modifiers to the passion include a mandatory reason (+5) a non-mandatory reason (-5).

#### Prepare for rejection.

The proposal can be rejected by the family, with varying intensities of rejection. The simplest type, with the least impact, is a simple refusal. This means that the knight can continue to pursue his desires however he wishes. Next in importance is a refusal with warnings, meaning that the family has said they won't come to the knight's aid in this matter if he gets in trouble. Finally there is censure, in which the knight is forbidden to continue in this foolishness. To continue to pursue it is equivalent to throwing himself out of his family, probably forever. To do so gets an immediate loss of 5 Honor points, and all family members receive a -10 modifier to their Love (Family) when dealing with the offending character.

### ...From Strangers

Strangers often lend help, though usually not any more than they are obliged to lend until they know who they are helping, and why. Minimal assistance, however, is very commonly granted to strangers who arrive at the doorstep needing help, including:

- hospitality, room and board
- healing
- refuge and protection



# Getting About

*Travel and Encounters for Pendragon, by Greg Stafford*

**T**HE MOST COMMON mode of travel in Arthurian Britain is on horseback over a fairly good road system built by the Romans. Several types of roads are distinguished and affect movement rates. This is an expansion of the information given on page 79 of the *Pendragon* rulesbook.

## Methods of Travel

**Royal Roads:** Few in number, these are well known and marked. They are regularly patrolled by knights and thus the safest. Royal Roads are protected by the laws of the High King. Crimes committed by anyone on the royal road are treated as an offense against the king — High Treason. They link large population centers, and are thus the most heavily traveled. They are always bridged. If a road is not under the king's protection, then it is a trade road.

**Trade Road:** A trade road is a raised dirt or stone road, repaired occasionally. These are the most common type of road, often marked by ruts worn by cart wheels. They are commonly known to merchants. Trade roads are not as well patrolled as Royal roads; travelers may encounter some trouble upon them.

**Local Roads:** Local roads are dirt tracks wide enough to allow a cart or wagon to travel along with little difficulty. Roads connect villages to towns, and towns to cities.

**Paths:** Paths are dirt tracks usually only wide enough for a single horse or narrow cart to travel. These are local routes of travel. Villages are connected to nearby villages by paths.

Paths may also extend between widespread towns, or even through the woods, but become overgrown and lost if not frequently used. They can disappear with a big rain and a few weeks growth, or especially over a wet winter.

**Tracks:** Tracks are barely discernable marks, usually through wild country. Usually wildlife routes, tracks are often erratic and disappear without warning or reason. They are notoriously unreliable and very difficult to follow. How well can a horse follow the path of a fox, after all? Even deer paths are slight when compared to the needs of a horse with a rider.

**River Travel:** Small boats plying rivers can carry horses. A normal barge carries two steeds and riders, if lightly loaded. Travel times on a river via poled raft or barge equal riding rates if traveling upriver, and double riding rate traveling downriver.

**Sea Travel:** Sea travel is very dangerous due to the irregular weather of the Irish and British Seas. Rapid wind and cloud shifts make it treacherous. Normal passage from Britain to Ireland is 1-10 days, while passage to the continent is 3-30 days. If close to the opposite shore, time is spent in waiting for reliable weather for the passage. Longer distances require the captain to wait for the best available weather, and hope to be fortunate enough to miss storms and swells.

Many journeys are hapless despite the best precautions. In Malory, Sir Tristram travels often by ship, and often suffers the difficulties involved. He and Isolt are becalmed one time, another time he and Sir Kehydus are shipwrecked on Isle Servage, and still another time his ship is forced ashore at Castle Pluere.

Sea storms can blow the travelers far from their course. On one voyage, Sir Tristram sets sail from Brittany for Cornwall, but ends up in Wales.

Gamemasters must determine the difficulty of sea travel. In some scenarios it might only be an irritating diversion to have characters blown wide of their intended landing. But the player-characters' being in a storm and landing in an unexpected location can be the source of excellent adventure. A sea storm can be useful to divest unusually-rich characters of accumulated wealth, equipment, or horses.

### Roman Roads

The Roman roads were built during centuries of Roman occupation to facilitate rapid army movements and to aid trade during peacetime. In rural areas, Roman roads have deteriorated now, and some lead nowhere; the original destinations have been abandoned since the Roman departure, leaving ruins and overgrown fields.

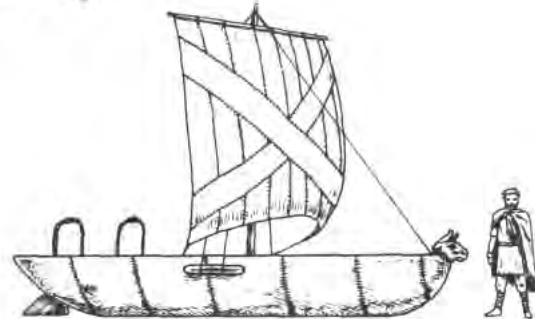
Traveling on a Roman road offers no special benefit, since many are greatly deteriorated to the status of a local road or even a path. The royal roads, however, are all located on the old Roman roads.



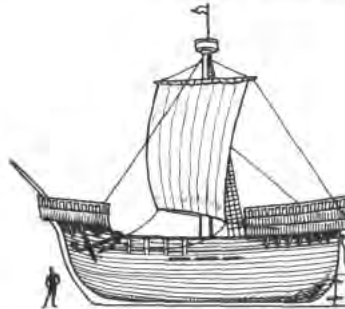
## Arthurian Ships



**Longships** are used exclusively by Saxons, both on and off Britain. They are long and wide, and carry a complement of 20-50 raiders. Player-character Saxons begin with some Boating skill, which can be used to pilot these craft. They are propelled by rowers and a single square-masted sail.



**Curraghs** are made in Ireland. They are very light boats of simple construction. A wooden frame of keel, gunwale, and possibly some ribs is covered with cowhide shaped and sewn to size. A light leather sail can be hoisted, steering with an oar. They get as large as 20-man raiding crafts. These small craft can cover great distances, and historically were used by Irish monks to travel from Ireland to Iceland.



**Tradeships** are the most modern ships in the "now" of Pendragon. A square sail propels these ships, with long sweeps used in port and when becalmed. They are built like longships, but larger, with crenelated towers fore and aft. In the stern castle are the first proto-cabins. Several horses can fit on the deck, as well as knights and their equipment.



**Rafts** are common on rivers, and can be any size, depending only on the river and propulsion. Propulsion is by sweeps, poles, or a tow by oxen or men. Rafts often travel only down-river; when the journey is ended, they are broken up and sold for timber.



**Coracles** are round boats of hide over a wooden frame. They are used throughout Britain and Ireland on lakes and rivers for fishing and light transportation. They are too small to transport horses, but can ferry a couple of knights and their equipment around. Two or three peasant fishermen pilot the craft, which always stinks of fish, usually leaks somewhat, and offers no physical comforts.



## Exploration

Exploration of unknown territory is a common practice for knights. It is like travel, but into areas with which the travelers are not familiar. This has been touched upon in *Pendragon* (p79). A synopsis of the exploration rules, and a complete list of modifiers, are given here.

### Preparation

Gamemasters should review, or prepare, a map of the area to be covered. Woodlands make the travels easy since riding limits the routes to be taken. Simply chart out possible paths, noting the available roads. Determine over what quality of road the group is traveling. Next, break the route down into day-long intervals. For each day of exploration, a Hunting roll is made to determine how far they have progressed.

### Determine Modifiers

Modifiers are applied to the group's or individual's Hunting roll. This is a complete list of modifiers from all sources.

#### Exploration Modifiers

Modifier	Terrain
+10	King's Road
+5	Trade Road
+5	Your Home County
+4	Clear ground, wastes
+2	Populated forest
0	Forest
-3	Dense Forest
-5	It is raining
-10	It is raining heavily
-15	It is snowing
+5	Light snow is on the ground
-8	Heavy snow is on the ground
+5	Fresh Spoor
-3	Hilly area
+5	Populated area
-15	Mountainous
-20	Marsh or swamp
-10	You are lost
+3	You were here before
+5	You are returning to yesterday's camp

### Attempt to move

Attempt Hunting skill with a d20 roll. For each day of exploration a Hunting roll is made, with modifiers, to determine how far the group or individual has progressed. Additionally, the gamemaster can roll on the encounter table suitable for the type of explored terrain.

#### Exploration Results Table

Critical = Move at normal pace.

Success = Move at leisurely pace

Failure = Character is confused and must stop the trip to get his bearings. Lose from an hour to a half day, at the gamemaster's preference.

Fumble = Character takes the wrong direction and is thoroughly lost.

## Rates of Travel

The rates below are for mounted and foot travel. They are reprinted from page 79 of the *Pendragon* rulesbook.

### Traveled Distance (in miles per day)

	royal or trade road	local road	path	track
leisurely pace	15	10	5	2
normal pace	20	15	8	3
hurried pace	30	25	12	4



## Encounter Tables

Knights errant often wander about the countryside in search of whatever random adventure reveals itself. Wanderings often consist of days of travel interspersed with days of being lost.

When a knight travels about the countryside, a game-master may choose to use the random encounter tables (below), but you should ignore results which send him off table when inappropriate.

If you, as the gamemaster, do not wish to preplan wanderings, and also do not want to travel along the *Pendragon* map, then you can use the following tables to chart such adventures.

## Instructions

Seven encounter tables are each keyed to a particular type of terrain. The gamemaster should roll a d20 once each half-day of travel to discover any encounter. Often nothing happens, while sometimes disaster after disaster will occur.

### Royal Road Encounters

The ancient highways of the Roman legions cut across Britain in bands four wagons wide, paved with cut stone, set on good foundations, and engineered to stay dry. They link the cities with each other, and are heavily traveled wherever they exist.



d20	result
1-3	light traffic
4-10	moderate traffic
11-14	heavy traffic
15-18	challenge knight
19	toll station: 1 D/steed, 1 D/person
20	road ends: next turn roll on Settled Lands table

Traffic on these roads contains all or some of the following: nobles with their entourages, messengers and heralds, traveling priests with entourages, wandering monks, peddlers packing their wares, hawkers selling food, merchants with horse-loads of goods, farmers with carts, shep-

herds with flocks, farmers driving ox teams, wandering lone knights, squires on business, etc.

### Settled Lands Encounters

Places which are densely populated offer little variation in their inhabitants. However, the dense regions are small and widely scattered.

d20	result
1-10	village
11-13	town
14-16	manor
17-18	small city
19	large city
20	wastes

Settled lands have many villages and towns, each surrounded by vegetable gardens and barley fields, that are separated by sparse waste woods. Knightly manors are abundant, and castles or keeps are often visible. Dirt roads connect towns, paths connect villages. During daylight, commoners can always be seen working about the settled lands.

### Open Lands Encounters

Open lands are composed of worked fields, interspersed with clumps of thick brush and trees. Both flat and rolling lands are open. In rolling lands, valleys and other rough ground, the earth is often covered by thick brush and woods.

d20	result
1-3	good road: next roll use Settled Lands table
4-6	village
7-8	town
9-11	manor
12	small city
13-14	bandits
15-18	wastes; empty lands
19-20	nothing: next roll use Woodland table

#### Challenge Knight Table

d20	result
1-4	average knight
5-8	good knight
9-12	excellent knight
13-16	special encounter (see below)
17	roll twice, treat further rolls of 17-20 as "average knight"
18	roll three times, treat further rolls of 17-20 as "average knight"
19	roll four times, treat further rolls of 17-20 as "average knight"
20	roll five times, treat further rolls of 17-20 as "average knight"

Special Encounter indicates that the challenge knight is a famous personage. Roll d20 and use the following tables.

Two tables are given. Gamemasters are urged to tailor their own lists according to need and character statistics available. Characters listed below all have statistics given as complete non-player-characters, or have a handy substitute listed.

These characters are usually accompanied by an appropriate entourage of squires, knights, and ladies. The game-master should decide what their business is: personal, family, or court. Alternately, the knights may be wandering alone as knight-errants, perhaps even with blank shields.

#### Special Encounter During Earlier Phases (2 to 3)

1. Agravaine	11. Kay
2. Arthur	12. Lak
3. Balin le Sauvage	13. Marhaus
4. Brastias	14. Merlin
5. Breuse Saunse Pitie	15. Morgan
6. Cadoc	16. Nimue
7. Carados	17. Pellinore
8. Gawaine	18. Samson (use Cadoc's statistics)
9. Griflet	19. Tor
10. Guenever	20. Ulfius

#### Special Encounter During Later Phases (4 to 5)

1. Agravaine	12. Mark
2. Arthur	13. Mordred
3. Breuse Saunse Pitie	14. Morgan
4. Cadoc	15. Nimue
5. Gawaine	16. Percivale
6. Griflet	17. Samson (use Cadoc's statistics)
7. Guenever	18. Tor
8. Kay	19. Tristram
9-11. Lancelot	20. Turquine (use Carados's statistics)



Humans live in scattered towns and villages of varying size. Towns are connected by dirt roads, barley fields cover many acres, and castles are found at the center of every town cluster.

### Woodland Encounters

Most of Britain is covered by woodland. Trees and heavy clay soils make farming impossible. Settlements in distant clearings are self-sufficient and without regular communication to the nearest city. Dirt roads are often overgrown, and are usually impassable in winter. Paths here belong to animals and run between water and nowhere.

<i>d20</i>	<i>result</i>
1-2	nothing: next roll use Open Lands table
3-7	village
8-10	town
11-14	manor
15	bandits
16-17	nothing: lost, go nowhere
18	wild animals
19-20	nothing: next roll use Dense Woods table

Riding through these woods is slow, but possible. Routes can be found through thin areas, often from clearing to clearing, some of which have human habitations. Beware of faerie folk.

### Dense Woods Encounters

Thick growths of oak, ash, and thorns make some woodlands nearly impassable to mounted knights. Only a slow walk leading a horse is usually possible. Animal trails are often overgrown. Nonetheless, occasional meadows and clearings offer relief from the oppressive shadows.

<i>d20</i>	<i>result</i>
1-2	nothing: next roll use Woodland table
3-4	village
5	town
6-8	manor
9-11	bandits
12-13	wild animals
14-15	monsters
16-17	nothing; no paths available
18+	nothing: next roll, add 1d6 to result on this table

Sometimes a cluster of habitations can be found in a clearing, ruled by a proud lord or lady, isolated and backward, eager for news.

### Uplands Encounters

Uplands include moors, rough broken ground, and mountainous terrain. In general, Britain's mountains are flat-

topped, covered with grass and shrubs, and cut by steep ravines which restrict travel on horseback. Ravines are often filled by dense woods. When an upland is poorly drained, it is usually covered by peat bogs and is called a moor. The only paths are animal trails.

<i>d20</i>	<i>result</i>
1-2	nothing: next roll use Open Lands table
3	village
4	meditating hermit
5-9	no Path: go nowhere
10-12	bandits
13-17	wild animals
18-19	monsters
20	nothing: travel deeper, add 1d6 to die roll next time

Uplands are almost empty of human habitation, and only rarely traversed by adventurous knights. Nomadic peoples seasonally graze herds here, and the ancient dwarf race of Pechs hide here.

### Marsh Encounters

The low-lying coasts of Britain are covered by marshes. Carved by streams and rivers, dotted with islands and tracts of treacherous boggy ground, these areas are uncrossable except by the local peasants, who hold their secret routes dear.

<i>d20</i>	<i>result</i>
1-2	nothing: next roll use the Open lands table
3-5	village
6-7	town
8-11	manor
12	small city
13	bandits
14-16	wild animals
17	monsters
18-20	bad path: go nowhere

Amid this wild land are islands of farms and even small cities, isolated and safe for the local lords.

## Explanations

Bandits — these robbers give a bad name to varlets, villains, and knaves. They are often on foot, and are usually more poorly-armed than knights. Some, however, can be formidable. Bandits will not usually attack knights except with superior odds: 1d6 per knight is average. Bandits in the Uplands are probably wild, tattooed Picts.



**Challenge Knight** — these knights are looking for a joust for the day. They are usually jousting for love, unless the local custom is otherwise. Roll d20 on the Challenge Knight Table to determine the quality and number of opponents at each meeting with challenge knights.

**Hermit** — these solitary meditators may be Christian or pagan. They are usually glad to share their humble meals and abodes with any visitor.

**Large City** — these habitations usually have a rich and noble castle nearby. They always have a challenge knight nearby.

**Manor** — a manor is a knight's dwelling, where lives his wife and children, extra horses, and servants. Near it are usually a village or two, a mill, a church, and so on. Manors are not usually fortified, but they are increasingly likely to be so in less-inhabited country.

The lord of the manor sometimes waits at a ford, bridge, spring, or crossroads as a challenge knight.

**Monsters** — monsters occur only in the wildlands far from humans. You should choose any appropriate creature to appear to the characters. Most of the fairy types are classed as monsters by player characters, but not all encounters need involve combat. Roll 1d20 when monsters are encountered, and consult the table:

**Monster Encounter Table**

monster	dense woods	uplands	marsh
Avanc	—	—	1-2
Barguest	1-2	1-2	3-4
Boobrie	—	3	5-6
Dwarf	3-4	4-5	7-8
Faerie Knight	5-7	6-7	—
Giant, small	8-10	8-9	9-10
Giant, large	11	10	11-12
Giant, huge	—	11	—
Hippogriff	12	12	13
Lion	13-14	13-14	—
Manticore	15	15	—
Questing Beast	16	16	14
Redcap	17	17-18	15-16
Wyrn	18-19	—	17-18
Wyvern	20	19-20	19-20

**Small City** — a small city usually has a formidable castle nearby, and a garrison of knights who rotate as challenge knights.

**Toll Station** — toll stations can appear anywhere that the gamemaster desires. They appear regularly on well-traveled roads. Standard toll is 1D/horse and 1D/person.

**Town** — towns are larger settlements of peasants, often with a manor nearby, usually with a challenge knight, and often with a toll as well.

**Village** — peasants live in clusters of buildings and barns. They are usually humble and dirty. Knights would stay in a village only if there was no other recourse.

**Wastes** — these lands are usually covered with forests, scrub brush, and rock. The locals use the area for firewood, wild foods, and grazing their pigs.

**Wild Animals** — these include common herbivores, carnivores, and some monster types. Decide what is appropriate. Roll d20 and consult the table below.

**Wild Animal Encounter Table**

animal	woodland	dense woods	uplands	marsh
Bear	1-3	1-2	1-2	1-3
Boar	4-6	3-5	3-6	4-8
Deer, Fallow	7-10	6-8	7-13	9-13
Deer, Red	11-14	9-11	14-15	14-16
Horse, Faerie	—	12	16	17
Lion	15-16	13-14	—	18
Panther	17-19	15-17	17-18	19-20
Unicorn, Greater	—	18	19	—
Unicorn, Lesser	—	19	—	—
Yale	20	20	20	—





## *The Adventure of* **THE HEART BLADE**

*By Leonard Wilson*

**T**HE TALE IS TOLD among the folk of Logres of a weapon of surpassing beauty and magic: the Heart Blade, so named for the heart-shaped rubies set into its hilt. Missing now for some time, the Heart blade last belonged to Amren Gwallt Eurin (Amren Golden-Hair), a Companion of the Round Table, second only to Gawaine or (if played in later years) Lancelot among the Queen's Knights, and renowned for championing love in all its forms. He was slain treacherously by Sir Bertelot, the less infamous but no less villainous brother of Sir Brus sans Pitie, and afterward the Heart Blade was never found. It is rumored that Amren's young daughter, Ahvielle, secreted the sword away, but Ahvielle herself has never answered such rumors with an absolute yea or nea.

This adventure, which revolves around Ahvielle and the Heart Blade, is divided into three major sections: An introductory adventure in which the player knight meets Ahvielle and falls in love; a unique Lover's Solo between Ahvielle and her suitor; and the quest for the Heart Blade, in which all the knights may participate. The wooing of Ahvielle requires an unwed player knight (she's looking for marriage, not an affair) whose personality traits display some modicum of devotion to the virtues of love.

The first part of the adventure can be played singly or with a group of knights. The six interim love solos are intended to be handed out yearly to Ahvielle's chosen Amor during the course of other adventuring, as the knight pursues his wooing of her. Once he has completed the sixth task, the seventh requires he gather up his friends for a group adventure in search of the Heart Blade.



### **The Virtues of Love**

Love plays a uniquely strong role in this adventure, not just as a motivation but as an underlying theme. One of the player knights romances Ahvielle, the daughter of a man who de-

voted his life to furthering love, and the lady's heart can only be captured by a man willing to follow in that tradition. This sets up a whole new set of ideals for the knight to ascribe to, similar in nature to the chivalric virtues.

**Forgiving, Generous, Honest, Just, Merciful, and Trusting** are the six virtues of love.

Ascribing to love's ideals holds little tactical benefit. There is no threshold above which a knight gains any extra glory or any special abilities. The importance of these virtues is that they're valued by Ahvielle and that only a knight who follows them religiously will be able to use the Heart Blade to its full potential — rewards which many knights would find adequate.

### **Selecting a Suitor for Ahvielle**

While it's technically possible to use this adventure at nearly any time with any set of player knights, unless one or more of them is already fairly devoted to love's virtues before introducing Ahvielle, it's unrealistic to expect her to wait around for any of them to measure up to her standards. There's surely some non-player knight able, eager, and available to give her what she wants.

Before introducing Ahvielle into the campaign, make sure that an appropriate love interest is available for her from among the player knights. To be considered appropriate, a knight should meet the following requirements:

- Be unmarried and possess no Amor or Love for another woman, or if such an Amor or Love exists, be willing to put it aside for the sake of Ahvielle. Ahvielle wishes to marry for love, not to have an affair, and definitely not to enter into a loveless marriage.
- Possess a minimum total value of 65 points in love's six virtues.

The combined 65 points in love's virtues is the bare minimum to offer a chance for success in the story in a reasonable amount of time, and is also a very realistic level to expect player knights to achieve, even unintentionally. The overlap of religious virtues, both Christian and Pagan, and chivalric virtues with those of love means that if the



players have spiritual aspirations for their knights, then at least one of their characters is going to reach the desired level.

If more than one player knight is able to meet these minimum requirements, and all eligible appear to be interested in Romancing Ahvielle, the gamemaster may wish to let them compete for her favors to begin the adventure. Let the better role-played or the strongest Amor passion win out with a demure and proper invitation to Amor from Ahvielle. Best would be if there were only one suitor, as this adventure is written in that cast. In any case, allow a willing knight to pursue Ahvielle's love. Do not try to corral an unwilling one into the task.

For ease of reference hereafter, throughout the adventure, the knight singled out for the romance with Ahvielle will be referred to as "Ahvielle's knight" even before any actual relationship develops between them.

## Foreshadowing the Adventure

The gamemaster should plan to foreshadow this adventure by having the player knights encounter Sir Amren and the Heart Blade beforehand. The "Contest for the Queen's Knights," in the short adventure section at the back of this book, is perfect for this. It gives the player knights an opportunity to meet Amren before he is killed. Run that first, and then during the following Winter Phase give out the introductory handout concerning Amren's murder. Play out this first half of the Heart Blade solo adventure with the selected knight, and then give out the lover's solo handouts and the further introductory handouts over the winter phases as you run the other adventures in this book. Finally, once Ahvielle's suitor reaches the final task, run the second half of the Heart Blade adventure with the entire group of player knights.

When introducing Amren, examine Ahvielle's personality to get a feel for what her father is like, and be sure to portray a strong friendship between Amren and Gawaine; the two knights encounter each other frequently and have much in common. Such a bond is natural.

Player knights who already possess a friendship with Gawaine may quickly develop a friendship with Amren through him. The reverse, of course, is also true. It would add considerably to the adventure if the player knights did befriend Amren — both because it would be a lead-in to the story here and because it would give them a personal score to settle with Amren's murderer.

Last year (or so), Sir Bertelot murdered Amren. After Amren's death, Ahvielle and her mother, Liawen, leave their demesne in Wuerensis in the hands of a steward and travel to Brittany to stay with relatives there while in mourning. The next time the player knights hear of Ahvielle

should be when she meets her future suitor at the beginning of this adventure. In the interim, Liawen has died of an illness that struck while she was still weak with grief.



## The Major Characters

### Ahvielle Alarch ferch Amren

Ahvielle's epithet, Alarch (meaning swan), is a reference to her gracefulness. Ferch means daughter of.

Since her father's death, Ahvielle has grown into a beautiful, dark-blue-eyed woman of eighteen, petite and willowy, with curly, black hair that hangs to her waist. She has all her court gowns fashioned of red silk and trimmed with golden threads, and always wears a gold, ruby-adorned locket (worth 10£) as a memento of her father.

Very warm, personable, and likeable, Ahvielle smiles and laughs easily. She enjoys life and makes no secret of that fact. If anything about her is irritating it's her stubborn resolve to keep her own counsel—even when it becomes obvious that that counsel was wrong. She feels no obligation to confide her plans to anyone, and once she finds herself taken with a course of action, she becomes nearly as loathe to part with it as with her own life.

Though Ahvielle hasn't the least desire to take up arms as a profession, she's taken time to learn a bit about sword play from the women of nearby Kenilworth Castle, as helplessness is a feeling she prefers to avoid.

### Ahvielle Alarch ferch Amren

Ahvielle is a beautiful Pagan Cymric woman from Wuerensis. She is the first daughter and heiress of Amren Gwalt Euren, recently murdered by the brutish Sir Bertelot. She has devoted her life to the service of love's virtues as her father did before her, and hopes to find a knight worthy of his legacy.

SIZ 8	Move 3	Major Wound 16
DEX 18	Damage 3d6	Unconscious 6
STR 8	Heal Rate 2	Knock Down 8
CON 16	Hit Points 24	Armor 0
APP 25	Age 18	Glory 500

Attack: Sword 11, Dagger 6.

Significant Traits: Chaste 10, Energetic 16, Generous 17, Honest 18, Proud 19, Merciful 20, Forgiving 17, Pious 15.

Significant Passions: Love (family) 20, Hospitality 16, Honor 17.

Significant Skills: Chirurgery 12, Courtesy 10, Flirting 17, Romance 20.



When her father was murdered, Ahvielle spirited his sword away and entrusted it to her mother's sister, Blevine, a reclusive sorceress, to keep it safe from thieves. It's Ahvielle's intention to marry a man who will carry on her father's tradition of championing love, and to pass the Heart Blade on to him.

As heiress to her father's estate, Ahvielle holds Stoneleigh, a banneretcy in north Wuerensis with two demesne manors, five enfeoffed manors, and a couple of villages that together provide 7£ annual income.

Stoneleigh Manor (M-17) is a beautiful and restful place. Extensive orchards and flower gardens dominate the grounds, while the hall itself is sumptuously appointed with embroidered tapestries, tiled and carpeted floors, glazed windows, and even a private bedroom for the lady of the manor.

### Sir Bertelot



If there is any other knight in Britain who can match the villainy of Sir Brus sans Pitie, it's his brother, Bertelot. Unlike Brus, however, Bertelot has been known to let ambitions and passions override his sense of self-preservation. It's a fault which has been the end of many an outlaw knight, and it's sure to be the end of Bertelot sooner or later.

Bertelot's involvement with the story of the Heart Blade can be traced back to the lust he once held for Ahvielle's mother, Liawen. He called it "love," but it would be a lie to say Bertelot could ever care for someone other than himself. That Liawen rejected all his advances, and was savvy enough never to leave him an opportunity to rape her, angered Bertelot. When in the end she married Amren, it enraged him. He harbored a deep hatred for the couple ever after.

Bertelot decided to act on his hatred the day he learned that the magic of the Heart Blade could be corrupted into a power he was sure he could master. Bertelot promptly arranged an ambush for Amren, claimed the Heart Blade for himself, and marched to Stoneleigh to kidnap Amren's family in order that he might draw their blood and fulfill the prophecy. But rather than meekly submit to the knight and his thugs, Liawen proved an absolute hellcat that night. The sight of the Heart Blade in Bertelot's hands, and knowing

### Sir Bertelot

Sir Bertelot is a villaneous, outlaw knight in the vein of his more famous brother, Sir Brus Sans Pitie. He hails from Kent, and is Cymric Christian. He desires the Heart Blade, since he knows of a prophecy that can turn it to serve the virtues of evil. He is a scoundrel, and owes loyalty to no liege.

SIZ 17	Move 3	Major Wound 16
DEX 18	Damage 6d6	Unconscious 8
STR 21	Heal Rate 4	Knock Down 17
CON 16	Hit Points 33	Armor 12 + 6 pnt. shield
APP 13	Age 36	Glory 4,025

Attack: Sword 18, Axe 21, Lance 18, Battle 15.

Significant Traits: Lustful 18, Prudent 15, Vengeful 17, Selfish 20, Deceitful 19, Arbitrary 15, Cruel 16.

Significant Passions: Hate (Ahvielle) 21, Honor 3.

Significant Skills: Awareness 12, Dancing 16, First Aid 11, Heraldry 18, Intrigue 15, Horsemanship 13.

Horse: Charger, 6d6 Damage.

what it meant about the fate of her beloved, drove Liawen to take up arms and lead the small estate garrison into battle. She fought like a woman possessed, and long before the sent-for help could arrive from nearby Kenilworth Castle, the last of Bertelot's mercenary followers lay dying. Bertelot himself had escaped with his life, but not with the Heart Blade.

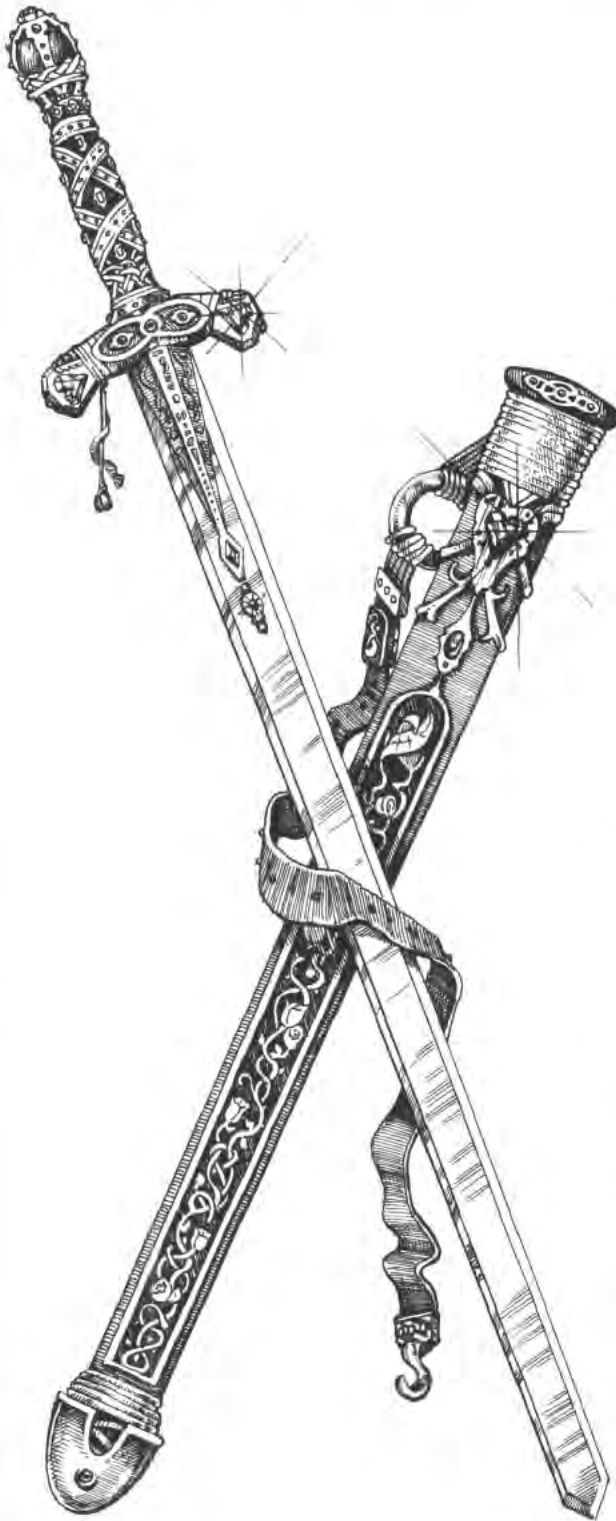
When Amren's body was brought back to the manor, Liawen fell upon it weeping, and thereafter remained somberly mute for the rest of her days.

Ever since that day, Bertelot has been biding his time, waiting for a chance to find some clue to what Ahvielle has done with the Heart Blade. His hate for Amren and Liawen has transferred itself to Ahvielle, and he only suffers her to live for the day he'll be able to corrupt her father's sword by burying it in her breast.



## Meeting Ahvielle

Details on some of the settings, characters, and even events surrounding the happenings of this first part of the adventure have been left intentionally vague. This is because, ideally, these encounters should be integrated into other adventures and used as a campaign subplot. This story focuses entirely on the romance between Ahvielle and her knight, and while the romance will be a much more meaningful one if the world doesn't stand still around the lovers while their



## The Heart Blade

The Heart Blade is a wondrous magical artifact, a sword dedicated to the championing of love in all its forms. The blade, though strong and sharp as the finest steel, shines like silver. The hilt, though equally strong, seems of the finest worked gold. A pair of enormous heart-shaped rubies are set into the hilt, one on either end, and they glow with an inner light whenever the Heart Blade is drawn by a man truly dedicated to love's virtues (i.e.: worthy of the sword's magic, as described below). For its jewelry value alone, the Heart Blade would fetch a price of 20£. Its actual worth, of course, is inestimable.

The Heart Blade has been wrought so excellently that any knight who wields it does so at a +2 bonus to his Sword skill, but its real magic can only be achieved by a warrior worthy of being love's champion. In order to be deemed worthy, the wielder must maintain a combined total of 80 or greater in love's six virtues: Forgiving, Generous, Honest, Just, Merciful, and Trusting. In the hands of such a man, the sword's skill bonus increases to +5 and it causes an additional +1d6 damage with each strike. Further, those bonuses double for him (+10 Sword skill and +2d6 damage) against any opponent inspired by a Hate passion.

The Heart Blade does have one minor drawback: its owner must be careful never to draw on a Hate passion for inspiration while wielding it. If he does, the sword glows red hot as if it had just been pulled from the heart of a forge, searing him for 2d6 damage each round until dropped. It cools instantly when released, but re-ignites just as quickly at the touch of any Hate-inspired character.

### The Prophecy of Hate

A prophecy concerning the Heart Blade tells of how its magic could potentially be corrupted to evil: "If ever this sword, while within a circle of traitors, tastes the blood of one who is without hatred, it's power for caring shall wither, and a new power of unyielding hatred shall grow in its place. The blade shall become a tool which may only be mastered by the most jaded of hearts." If this prophecy is ever fulfilled, the sword's magic responds ever-after to the traits of hatred (Vengeful, Selfish, Deceitful, Arbitrary, Cruel, and Suspicious) in the same way it originally responded to the virtues of love. Likewise, it will have the same effects against those inspired by Love or Amor that it once had against those inspired by Hate.

For purposes of the prophecy, assume that any character who would be virtuous enough to invoke the magic of the Heart Blade and who possesses no Hate passions qualifies as being "without hatred".

While most of the rest of the history of the Heart Blade should be available to any knight who pries into the matter and makes enough Intrigue rolls, don't reveal the prophecy to the players until called for in the adventure itself. Hinting that there is a prophecy about how the Heart Blade may be warped into a thing of evil would make for effective foreshadowing, but revealing the details too soon could spoil the dramatic flow of the adventure.



tale is being told, you as gamemaster will have to orchestrate those larger-scale events in order to maintain the smooth flow of the campaign.

If all else fails, use the Grand Events section in *Knights Adventurous* (page 112) to flesh out the social events at which Ahvielle and her player knight meet on the mentioned occasions.

## A Hunt at Camelot

The story of the romancing of Ahvielle begins at Camelot just before a grand tournament. It can be played using a group of player knights, although most of the provided material focuses on Ahvielle and her suitor. The purpose of this hunt is only to bring Ahvielle and the chosen knight together for their first meeting.

The player knights have arrived early enough to spend some time enjoying the diversions and pleasures ever-present there before the tournament itself begins. For a map and description of Camelot, see *The Boy King*, pages 114-115.

During the days before the tournament, the player knights are offered the chance to participate in a fairly large but informal social hunt in Camelot Forest, initiated by Gawaine, who, too long idle at court, has found himself anxious to get out and burn off some excess energy while waiting for the tournament. Ambitiously enough, he's set his sights on bringing back a unicorn, and however unrealistic that may be, it's become the goal of the hunt.

Luck is very much with the hunters, and on only the second round of searching, the trail of a Lesser Unicorn is spotted. Run the hunt using the standard procedures from pages 120-122 of *Knights Adventurous*, except that a lesser unicorn is the type of animal rolled in step 2, and a critical or successful Hunting roll in step 3, Chase, leads to step 5, The Kill. Have each player knight roll independently. Allow time for seven rounds during the day. If the player knights don't bring down the unicorn, no one does.

Whatever happens, fudge the unicorn's evasion die rolls to keep it from becoming cornered until after Ahvielle's knight has been eliminated from the chase. If this doesn't happen before the last round of the hunt, the unicorn darts into a maze-like thicket, criticals its evasion roll, and causes all knights still following it to become lost and separated from the others.

**Glory:** 125 for bringing back the unicorn dead or alive, plus 100 if the unicorn lives and the knight thinks to offer it as an addition to the royal menagerie.

## Ahvielle's Introduction

Lost and alone in Camelot Forest, Ahvielle's knight hears the dainty complaints of a woman ahead, and soon arrives to find a damosel (Ahvielle) perched on a fallen tree, nursing her twisted ankle. She is excruciatingly lovely, with long dark hair that falls in curls about her waist.

Seeing the knight, she smiles a smile that charms, even dimmed as it is by her immediate pain. "Please, my horse wandered off through those trees when she threw me." She points to a nearby stand of trees. "Would you fetch her for me? I've not been liking the thought of having to walk back to court." She declines any offer of First Aid, saying that she's "in pain but intact." "I'll be fine."

From where he stands, the knight can make out a horse grazing just beyond the indicated trees. If he goes to fetch it, Ahvielle returns to massaging her ankle and doesn't look up again until he leads the horse back to her. The horse turns out to be a beautiful Arabian palfrey with a coat of purest white. When Ahvielle sees it, she frowns prettily. "This isn't my horse — though I daresay whoever lost her will be glad she's found." She limps up to the horse, strokes its mane, then mounts. "You know what they say about beggars and choosers. Still, I don't wish to abandon my own mare out here. Would..." Before she can finish her sentence, the horse bolts off through the forest with Ahvielle holding tightly to its back in obvious fear of a second spill.

The palfrey is actually a shape-shifted pooka which, looking to have a little fun at Ahvielle's expense, shoos her horse away.

### Pooka

Pookas are tricky shapeshifting hobgoblins who dearly love a good laugh at a mortal's expense, but are otherwise very benign and industrious creatures, often acting as caretakers for mortals' farms in much the same manner as the more famous (and numerous) brownies. There's no saying what pookas really look like, as they can turn invisible whenever they please and can change their form at will.

One of the pooka's more famous tricks is the Will-o-the-Wisp game in which it leads travelers astray. Unlike true Will-o-Wisps, though, pookas never lead their victims into deadly situations—just frustrating ones.

For a pooka's attributes, use those of whatever form it happens to be in (any creature up to a maximum SIZE of 30; no magical abilities are duplicated, and the pooka possesses 30 hit points regardless of its form), but most of the time pooka statistics are irrelevant. Pookas have no interest in fighting and always use their natural powers to escape from any brawl a knight might offer them.

Capturing a pooka alive would be worth 100 Glory, but is a feat only a magician should be capable of accomplishing.



Assuming the knight follows, the pooka leads him on a merry chase through the forest. Have the knight roll [Faerie Lore. Success = faerie horses who pull such tricks as this are often deadly dangerous creatures. Critical = the aimless path the horse takes probably isn't one that would be chosen by a malevolent creature really out to elude him, and that the beast is probably just a mischievous faerie.]

Keep track of the distance that separates the knight and the pooka on an abstract hunt/chase track with two spaces between the two of them at the outset. If the player wishes, allow his knight a chance to start the chase with a vault into the saddle. The vault requires a roll of [DEX. Success = the knight begins only one space behind the pooka. Failure = he starts three spaces back.]

In addition to simply trying to outrun the knight, the pooka also attempts to lead him into obstacles if it feels he's getting too close. Each round the knight starts immediately beside the pooka or in the space immediately behind it, roll on the Pooka Chase Obstacle Table, below. Failing any obstacle roll unhorses the knight, setting him another three spaces back in the chase and causing normal 1d6 falling damage.

*Pooka Chase Obstacle Table*

Roll 1d6

1-2	Low branches: DEX roll
3	Jump a stream: Horsemanship roll
4	Hidden ditch: Awareness roll
5-6	Thick brush: horse's DEX roll

Each round of the chase, the knight must make a Horsemanship roll opposed by an evasion value of 20 for the pooka. If the knight fumbles, the pooka pulls two spaces away from him. If he fails, the pooka advances one space. A partial success means neither party advances this round, while a success means the knight draws one space closer and a critical means he gains two spaces. Once he draws alongside the pooka, the knight must succeed in a Strength roll in order to safely lift Ahvielle onto his horse. Failing the roll means only that he didn't manage the trick, and may try again next round.

If at any time the knight succeeds in rescuing Ahvielle, the pooka shapeshifts into a small bird and flits away with a chittering laugh.

If the knight has not rescued Ahvielle by the time 10 rounds have passed, the pooka tires of the chase and heads for what looks like a clearing over a nearby rise. Just as the pooka disappears over the hilltop, Ahvielle lets out a shriek. Allow the knight an Awareness roll (made at +1 for each

space he trails the pooka by) and then a Horsemanship roll at the same bonus if he succeeds. If he makes both rolls he keeps his saddle as his horse comes to a very abrupt halt in the brush at the top of the rise. Otherwise, he's thrown off his horse and after the pooka as it leaps from the sudden drop-off on the other side of the hill.

Fortunately for the knight and for Ahvielle, the drop isn't that far and a small forest lake waits below to receive them. In mid-fall, the pooka changes to the form of a bird and flits away with its chittering laugh, leaving its victims to plunge into the lake unharmed.

### Eyes of Midnight Blue

Whether the knight lifts Ahvielle from the pooka's back or helps her out of the water, mention in an off-hand manner how he notices her eyes are the most remarkable shade of midnight blue, then immediately go about shuffling your notes or flipping through this book as if you were looking for pertinent information before continuing. After a while, if the player hasn't urged you to continue, set the papers aside and just look thoughtful for a while without making eye contact. Maybe toss a die or two, only half-interested in the meaningless results. Finally, if the player still hasn't called for your attention, prompt him with a glance. Assuming the player allows any decent pause before interrupting your playlet, end it with a comment to the effect of, "Are you done staring into her eyes, then?"

Whatever the knight's reaction, Ahvielle, who has likewise absentmindedly done nothing to break eye or body contact, finally glances aside self-consciously and pulls away to a more proper distance. Don't call for it to be made, but if the player volunteers a Flirting roll for his knight at this moment, any success causes Ahvielle to blush and turn away to regain her composure.

Even if the knight failed in "rescuing" Ahvielle from the pooka, she thanks him with a kiss on the cheek for his gallantry in trying.

The pooka turns out to be a thoughtful fellow, even if his sense of humor leaves a bit to be desired, and he leads Ahvielle's horse, a white but otherwise typical palfrey, to a place where she and the knight happen on it soon. He also returns shortly in bird form to alight on Ahvielle's horse and, with a good-natured chirp, leave her a small purple wildflower as apology for any fright he gave her.

"It seems someone's been having fun with us," Ahvielle says. She makes her Forgiving roll and smiles despite her possibly bedraggled condition.

Shortly after the pooka flits away for the last time, Ahvielle and the player knight hear the sounds of others from the hunt and are able to rejoin them as they straggle back to court.



While it should be ridiculous to expect a problem with ungallant behavior toward Ahvielle from her knight, if there is, have Gawaine arrive to answer any calls she might make for help, and nix the character's future romance with Ahvielle in favor of some other player knight. The knight might be ready for it; his player obviously isn't.

**Glory:** 10 for heroically vaulting into the saddle to set out after the pooka. 25 for rescuing Ahvielle from the creature's back.

## Feasting at Camelot

In addition to anything which might happen as part of another adventure before the tournament begins, allow the player knights Intrigue rolls opposed by Ahvielle's Romance skill of 20. Success indicates that, despite Ahvielle's best efforts to be discreet, the knight learns she's been asking around about the man she met in the forest.

At the feast after the first day of the tournament, Ahvielle's knight sees her there on the far side of the hall. If he goes to her, she greets him warmly, introduces him to the friends she's with, a number of knights and ladies from Wuerensis, and proceeds to tell them the story of the pooka.

If the knight doesn't cross the hall to meet her, she excuses herself from her friends and comes to him, making small talk, asking to be introduced to his companions, and finally putting in her two denarii's worth on the pooka story, "Your friend was most gallant!" She tells the story from start to finish if for some reason her favored knight hasn't told his friends about it.

About this time, the musicians in the hall are tuning up for a dance. If Ahvielle's knight picks up on the cue and invites her to join him, she gladly accepts. If not, and if no one else invites her, she picks the handsomest of the other player knights and asks him to save her from the ignominy of a partner-less dance. Allow Dance rolls for all who participate, though nothing of real note is accomplished by any of them.

As the dance is finishing, Ahvielle excuses herself from the floor and comes back to stand with her knight. "Your friend is nice," she says casually, "but I've danced with better." She lowers her voice and giggles. "I swear I've got footprints on my skirts." She really does, but unless her dance partner fumbled his roll, it was the fault of some other clumsy oaf, and she'll admit that freely if the subject is pursued. She's just doing her best to coax her knight into inviting her to the next dance. If he still doesn't take the hint, she asks him outright.

Assuming she can ever get her knight out on the floor, the dance is to a lively tune, and by the time it's through Ahvielle is quite winded. She makes a minor show of being hot. "I could really use some air," she says, and linking her arm in the arm of her knight without asking, she "lets" him escort her from the hall, out into the night air.

## The Garden of Love

While Ahvielle and her knight walk, she asks him about himself and his adventures, "I hear good things about you." His responses will probably earn him either a Modest or Proud check. For her part, Ahvielle would rather hear honest pride than false modesty. If he knew her father and she finds out about it, she asks the knight to tell her about him, too, "I didn't know him as long as I'd have liked." She'll be especially receptive to any glowing account the knight gives of Amren. She loved her father dearly, and goes to great efforts to live up to his memory.

This, or any later, conversation with Ahvielle would be a good time to impart some knowledge of her past to the player. Don't be afraid to ad-lib any unwritten details of her history that the knight asks about — or any details you feel inspired to make up on your own initiative. The more Ahvielle seems like a real, three-dimensional person with thoughts and feelings and a life of her own, the more this whole adventure will mean in the end.

When the conversation between Ahvielle and the knight comes to a lull, the couple emerges onto a terrace overlooking a courtyard flower garden spread out before them, breathtakingly beautiful in the moonlight. Delighted, Ahvielle hurries down the steps at once to immerse herself in the heady sweet scents of the place. The garden is a marvel of exotic flowers, with paths that criss-cross the neatly trimmed lawn, running between bushes, beds, and vines thick with blossoms, under spreading, verdant trees, and past tiered fountains of sculpted marble.

The courtyard is Guenever's Court of Love.

## Into the Maze

"My parents adored this place," Ahvielle says. "I've been here a couple of times. Never at night though. And never with..." She glances at the knight and then away, but otherwise lets the thought that she's never been here alone with a man go unfinished. To avoid any awkward follow up, she takes his hand and, with a sudden burst of enthusiasm, starts to hurry him further into the garden toward a small topiary maze. "What'll you wager against a kiss that says I'll beat you to the center of the maze?" She accepts any similar



### Maze Event Table

Roll 1d20

- 1-3. Roll Awareness. Success spots a hidden path which can be followed deeper into the maze—roll again immediately at +3.
4. Paths lead nowhere fast, but add +1 to roll next round.
5. A songbird, awake past its customary bedtime and perched high in the hedge, serenades the passing character. If the knight thinks to return the favor, roll Singing. Success means the bird leads the way to the nearest topiary figure (15-19 below; go there next round instead of rolling).
- 6-10. Dead end. Round wasted.
- 11-13. Hear Ahvielle hurrying past on the other side of a hedge wall. Add +1 to roll next round.
14. Meet Ahvielle coming the other direction. She hurries by with only a quick greeting, obviously enjoying (and intent on) the game. Add +2 to roll next round.
- 15-19. Enter a small chamber in the maze, dominated by a large topiary figure (roll on the Topiary Figure table). The figure looks somehow menacing. For a brief moment its eyes seem to flicker with a red light, and the knight feels dizzy and light-headed. (Resolve test of wills described hereafter.)
- 20+. Encounter a topiary figure (15-19 above) at the same time as Ahvielle. She hurries by. Add +3 to next roll on this table.

small but meaningful token as a bet, preferably something romantic. A rose plucked from the gardens would satisfy her nicely.

Once the couple are inside, they quickly find that the maze is much larger than it first appeared. As should be expected in the Queen's garden, the maze is not an ordinary one, and finding one's way through has little to do with luck or memory, as the pathways are given to rerouting themselves when no one is watching. The labyrinth is supposed to be representative of humanity's circuitous, unpredictable, and sometimes hopeless-seeming wanderings through life in search of love.

As the knight attempts to navigate the maze, use the Maze Event Table to determine what he finds each round of searching. The knight has a number of rounds equal to the total value of his STR plus his DEX (the statistics that determine his movement rate) in which to win the race. On the round following, Ahvielle reaches the center of the maze. If the knight joins her that round, the race is a tie. Otherwise, Ahvielle has won, the maze ends its shifting, and the knight can easily find his way through. If the knight arrives at the center before Ahvielle, the maze accommodates her passage instead, and she soon joins him.

### Six Topiary Figures

The topiary figures in event 15-19 are the guardians of the maze, the evils of hate which are ever-present stumbling blocks in the search for genuine love. Attempting to destroy the figures by any physical means is futile; they magically restore themselves the moment the knight leaves sight of them. Their influence has to be overcome by personal resolve. Each time the knight encounters a figure, roll on the Topiary Figure Table to determine its shape and the virtue needed to overcome its influence. The outcome of the conflict is determined by rolling an opposed resolution of the knight's appropriate personality trait against the guardian's trait value of 12.

If the knight wins the resolution, the menacing air of the figure vanishes along with the disorienting feeling it gave off; the guardian has returned to being a simple thing of sculpted foliage.

Once a guardian has been defeated, the knight will never encounter it again. If a die roll indicates that he does, reroll on the Topiary Figure table until the result is a guardian he hasn't met. Once all six guardians have been defeated, the way through the maze is open. The next time a topiary figure is rolled on the Maze Events table, the knight finds his way to the center of the maze instead.

Failure to defeat a guardian causes the thought described on the Topiary figure table to enter his head unbidden. These thoughts range from the fairly harmless to the extremely unchivalrous, but nothing compels the knight to

### Topiary Figure Table

Roll 1d6

1. Boar (Win Forgiving-based resolution or feel a flash of anger and frustration at being run in circles through the maze.)
2. Lynx (Win Generous-based resolution or feel an urge to withhold Ahvielle's prize whether she wins the wager or not.)
3. Serpent (Win Honest-based resolution or consider the possibility of claiming victory in the race even if Ahvielle wins, saying you found the center but went back out to look for her.)
4. Robed and hooded man carrying a scythe (Win Just-based resolution or entertain thoughts of claiming the kiss whether you win or not.)
5. Hawk (Win Merciful-based resolution or the thought comes unbidden that you and Ahvielle are alone out here, with no one to interfere in anything that happens between you.)
6. Wolf (Win Trusting-based resolution or be inflicted with the suspicion that Ahvielle already knew her way through the maze when the bet was made.)



act on them unless his player decides it. If he does act on them, Ahvielle neither believes any lies he tells nor stands for any dishonorable actions he takes. She uses her high DEX to evade him if necessary and escape back into the maze. Being a magical part of the Court of Love, the maze facilitates her exit while it confounds the offending knight, leaving him wandering in circles 'til the morning. Ahvielle will have nothing further to do with the knight if he betrays her in this way.

### **The Heart of Love**

The center of the maze is a broad circular area. A moat-like pond surrounds a small island at the center of the chamber, and the island and the foot bridge running to it are the only dry surfaces here. A ring of lilies circles the foot of the

islands, and the water is filled with a host of lights that shimmer on and off like fireflies.

All bets are immediately payable on reaching the island, and Ahvielle smiles in satisfaction whether she's won, lost, or tied. In the case of a tie, she insists that both contestants are winners, deserving of their respective rewards.

Once all bets are paid, the exhausted Ahvielle drops to the grass to lie back and stare up at the stars. Unless he can make an Energetic roll, the knight joins her involuntarily,

### **Amor in the Garden of Love**

Ahvielle and her knight enjoy a peaceful moment in the Guenever's Garden of Love





though any man who would choose otherwise should be checked for a pulse.

As they linger in their stargazing, Ahvielle questions him about himself again, this time dwelling more on his opinions and feelings than on his adventures. She culminates her queries with a number of philosophical riddles, "What do you think...?" The paired traits and passions with each argument given below represent the two major sides to it, and Ahvielle plays devil's advocate in the discussion, taking whichever side the knight does not. Roll the opposed values as appropriate to each argument to determine which character is more convincing, and give the winner an experience check for his efforts.

- A man defiles a site sacred to your faith, enraged that the priest there allowed his brother to die because his people worship gods the priest says are evil. The priest insists that you slay the defiler for his transgression. Do you? (Merciful vs. Pious)
- Without meaning to, a friend insults you in front of the whole court, revealing a lapse in your honor when you did something you now regret. He realizes his error, but refuses to make more than a token private apology, having only stated the truth. Do you accept this small recompense or demand more for your forgiveness? (Honest or Forgiving vs. Proud)
- A man accused of slaying members of your lord's family is innocent, and you know this beyond any doubt, yet there is no evidence other than your own testimony to clear him. Your impassioned lord, crying for vengeance, is blind to the virtue of your word and demands that you slay the man. Do you? (Just vs. Loyalty (lord))

Ahvielle doesn't care so much how well the knight argues as what decisions he argues for. She wishes to hear him argue the case of love: Merciful, Honest or Forgiving, and Just. If he doesn't do so in at least two of the three arguments, her growing affection for him cools, "We'd better be getting back inside." and any further pursuit of the romance is up to him. If he argues for love twice, her attitude toward him remains affectionate, if not exceptionally so. She remains with him, walking for a time in the garden before suggesting they leave, and in the mean time continues to flirt.

If the knight argues for love three times, Ahvielle is obviously pleased. If he out-argued her every time or argued with critical success at least once she's positively radiant in her pleasure. If he never met her father, she says that, "Father would have liked you. I like you," or if he did know Amren, says, "Father always said you were a good man." She kisses him, then unclasps the golden locket from her neck and places it in his hand. "Wear this at the tournament for me," she smiles. "Please?" Even in the dim light, its

easy to see the ruby-adorned trinket is worth the price of a charger. This is the locket she keeps as a memento of her father. A player knight's passionate declarations of love are wholly appropriate at this time.

If the knight wears Ahvielle's locket at the tournament the next day, there is no small amount of whispering among her friends, and any successful Intrigue roll from a player knight learns that, while Ahvielle has granted her favor to a knight or three in the past, no one can remember ever seeing a time when she wasn't wearing that locket close to her heart.

#### Generate an Amor (Ahvielle)

If he hasn't already volunteered for it by this point, have the player roll 3d6 to establish an Amor (Ahvielle) for his knight. Add bonuses from the following table to his starting total.

#### *Knight's Starting Amor Bonus Table*

Bonus	Reason
+1d3	If he successfully flirted.
+7	Ahvielle is an heiress with lands of 7£ value.
+5	She is stunningly beautiful, with a 25 APP.

With this encounter resolved, get on with the tournament, and let the player make what he will of his knight's relationship with Ahvielle. For detailed information on running a tournament, see *Knights Adventurous*, page 115. King Arthur is hosting a Regal size tournament in the Classic style.

**Glory:** 10 for making the wager with Ahvielle a romantic one. 15 for wearing Ahvielle's locket at the tournament.





## Wooing Ahvielle

### *A Lover's Solo for "the Adventure of the Heart Blade"*

**W**INNING AHVIELLE'S HAND is accomplished by following the general procedures of Fine Amor outlined in the Lover's Solo (*Pen-dragon*, page 176), but with the exceptions noted below.

This lover's solo is intended to be played out over several years alongside the gamemaster's regular campaign. It is designed so that the gamemaster can hand the wooing knight a note at each winter meeting, until he completes the first six tasks set to him by Ahvielle. For the seventh task, Ahvielle's knight will need to assemble his companions for a knightly quest. This final task can occupy at least one group session, and probably more.

#### **STEP 1: Passionate declaration of love.**

By the end of the Garden of Love episode, the knight should have established an Amor for Ahvielle, and hopefully declared his passionate love for her.

Ahvielle also generates a starting Amor (knight) for her suitor, equal to  $3d6+6$ , plus one point per 1000 glory he possesses.

#### **STEP 2: Virtuous rejection by the lady.**

Enchanted as she may be by the player knight, if asked for her hand, Ahvielle explains that she will only marry a man who has proved himself worthy beyond all doubt to champion love in her father's stead.

Ahvielle begins the courtship with 7 Reluctance points.

#### **STEP 3: Wooing, by proof of deeds.**

Each winter, or perhaps other times during the year if the two meet more frequently, when the knight and his amor are together, the wooing may proceed.

**The Task Imposed:** No dice are rolled to determine the task imposed. Ahvielle has her own very specific thoughts on what qualities she wants in a husband and sets her tasks accordingly, as detailed below. If a task is failed, Ahvielle reassigns it the next year. The knight must repeat each task until he either succeeds at it or gives up his suit.

Whether a success was normal or critical, it reduces Ahvielle's reluctance by 1 point only. Keep a running count of any deeds performed with critical success, however, as each will increase the Love she will hold for the knight if and when he finally succeeds in winning her. For each criti-

cal, add +1 to her Amor (knight), beyond the value given in Step 1.

#### **The Tasks**

The following tasks are to be assigned to the knight, one per year, over the course of the wooing. They are included as handouts at the back of the book. Make copies of them and cut them out before beginning play. As Ahvielle assigns each task to her suitor, give his player the appropriate hand-out.

**Task 1: Mercy.** Ahvielle asks the suitor to successfully plead leniency for an offender at his own lord's court. Roll Merciful. Glory for completing the first Task: 50.

**Task 2: Generosity.** At Ahvielle's request, her Amor must give away a year's income to peasants. Roll Generous... and give the money away. Glory for completing the second Task: 100.

**Task 3: Honesty.** Ahvielle's suitor must tell a tale of own comical ineptitude (everyone has fumbled at least one skill roll at court) to entertain at a feast. Roll Honest opposed by Proud. Success also yields a chance to Orate. Glory for completing the third Task: 150.

**Task 4: Justice.** This task may require some brief interaction between the gamemaster and the player of the wooing knight. Sometime during the year, Ahvielle, the player knight, and the player knight's most bitter rival are all in attendance at the same tournament. If it seems the knight has no rival, think again, harder; making enemies comes with the territory. If the knight's "most bitter rival" is totally evil, without a shred of virtue or honor, select another man from among the knight's enemies instead, or else some of the later tasks will cease to be tests of the knights capacity for love and become tests of his capacity for stupidity.

While Ahvielle and her suitor are alone on a balcony of the castle, they become witnesses to the knight's Rival meeting for a tryst with a daughter of the castle's lord in the garden below. They're also witness to the fact that the lady has been followed by another of her lovers. About to be caught in a compromising position, the lady sees her second paramour just before he sees her. Whatever the inclination of the lady's heart, her greed is set on the advantages of marrying this second, richer knight, and she begins screaming and playing the innocent-assaulted-by-the-lecherous-



knight. A fight ensues as the rich knight rashly draws his sword and assaults the Rival with murderous intent.

Other knights arrive and break up the fight before anyone is hurt, but the rules of hospitality have been breached. The lord of the castle isn't about to fault a knight for rushing to his daughter's defense, so the blame for the whole event is placed on the Rival.

Since no actual harm befell anyone, the lord decides the Rival is simply to be disqualified from the tournament and turned out of the castle, but his reputation has been unjustly blackened. While seducing his host's daughter may be impolitic, it's hardly a transgression in the same league as forcing himself on her.

If the knight goes to his rival's defense before Ahvielle can even suggest it, he is critically successful at this task. Make a note of the fact for later reference and reduce Ahvielle's reluctance by one, then have her assign him Task 5 this year in place of this task, which she never actually got to ask of him. He still must face the challenge of Task 4b, though.

If he does not step forward on his own initiative, then for this year's task, Ahvielle charges the player knight to speak out in his Rival's defense. Allow the player to make up his own knight's mind at this critical juncture, granting him a check in either Just or Arbitrary in accordance with the decision.

The whole of the romance hinges on this event. A knight who fails to do the Just thing here is given no second chance. Ahvielle tells him in no uncertain terms that she will have nothing further to do with him. Though she's too forgiving to remain angry over the event for long, any interest she might have had in the knight is dead, and no amount of pleading or cajoling can revive it.

If he does defend his rival, then give the player the hand-out for Task 4b. Glory for completing the fourth Task: 200.

**Task 4b: Ahvielle's Decision.** If Ahvielle's suitor defers to her judgement, then give him this handout

**Task 4c: A Challenge.** Defending his Rival, the Just decision, results in a challenge at the tournament from the lady's second lover seeking to defend her honor. The challenge is with any weapon on foot to first blood, and is against a Famous Knight successfully inspired by his Amor for the lady. The Honor Passion would be appropriate for the player knight's inspiration in this combat. Should he win, start him on the next task this year. Glory for winning the challenge: 25.

**Task 5: Forgiving.** Ahvielle asks her Amor to make peace with the Rival who appeared in task 4. He must Invite him to a feast and seat him at the head table as an honored guest. Have him roll Forgiving to get the rival to accept. If the player knight has a Hate (Rival) passion, the Forgiving roll must also overcome an opposed Hate roll for him to extend the invitation to his Rival in the first place.

If the player knight has no holding at which to give the feast, Ahvielle makes her own table available for the event. Glory for completing the fifth Task: 250.

**Task 6: Trusting.** The suitor is asked to stay as a guest at one of Ahvielle's manor's for a year and entrust all wealth and holdings to the Rival from tasks 4 and 5 during that time. Roll Trusting... and hope he's an honorable man! Glory for Completing the sixth Task: 300

**Task 7: Recover the Heart Blade.** Ahvielle sends for her suitor to meet with her at her manor. Play out their initial embrace, after which the player knight must gather up his companions to ride in search of the Heart Blade. Go on to the next section, "In Search of the Heart Blade."

## In Search of the Heart Blade

**A**S THE YEAR SPENT on Ahvielle's land (task 6) is coming to an end, Ahvielle sends for her knight to come to Stoneleigh Manor. When he arrives, he is told that the mistress is out walking in her gardens and has said she'll receive him there directly.

Ahvielle greets the knight with a smile, and takes only time enough to shoo away the servant who showed him into the garden before favoring him with an embrace and a long, soulful kiss.

"I haven't the strength to doubt any longer," she smiles. "Kneel before me and pledge to me you'll take up my father's mantle as love's champion, that you'll never set it

down, and then no force on earth or anywhere beyond will keep us from being married."

Once she's evoked the knight's pledge, she continues: "Then it's time for the champion to assume the trappings of his office. The Heart Blade, my father's sword, is yours by right. Go and fetch it while I make ready. The day you return with it girded to your waist, we'll be wed."

"Years ago, I entrusted the Heart Blade to Blevine of Morgaine Forest, my closest living cousin. She too wished to see that it went only to the best of knights, and can better protect it than I. Ride west from Sarum until you find Grovely Castle. Search there for a track that will lead you



through the hills and into the forest. It will take you to Blevine. I can't say what protections may be there, though, and the forest is a wild place. You could do worse than to take friends along when you ride to meet her."



## A Web of Deceit

The quest to recover the Heart Blade would be a fairly simple and straightforward matter if not for the unseen hand of the villainous Sir Bertelot in the matter.

A few years ago, after ambushing and slaying an unknown knight for the sheer devilry of it, Bertelot was dismayed at his great blunder of having not recognized the man's coat of arms: that of Sir Cynfeln, heir to the kingdom of Somerset. Had he recognized it in time, Bertelot could have held Cynfeln for a spectacular ransom. As it was, his only choice was to conceal the deed. Yet, he decided, if he concealed it in an imaginative way, he could still profit from his mistake, so he traveled to Somerset incognito to feel out the atmosphere and learn who in a position of importance there might be most easily manipulated by the circumstance of Cynfeln's disappearance.

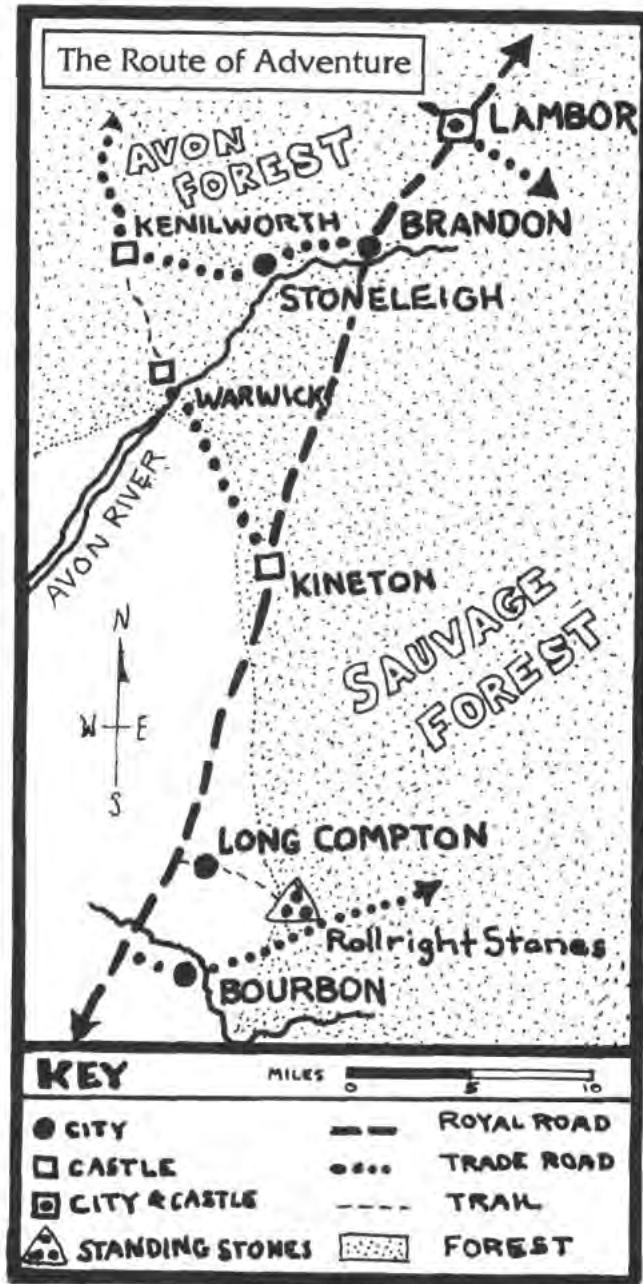
In the end, Bertelot decided it best to work his deception on the Somerset court indirectly, by telling his first lies not to a native noble, but to Jonathia, the beloved of the late Sir Cynfeln and a daughter of the Praetor of Dorset. Driven quite to distraction that her beloved had gone missing, Jonathia was ready to grasp at any ray of hope Bertelot might offer her.

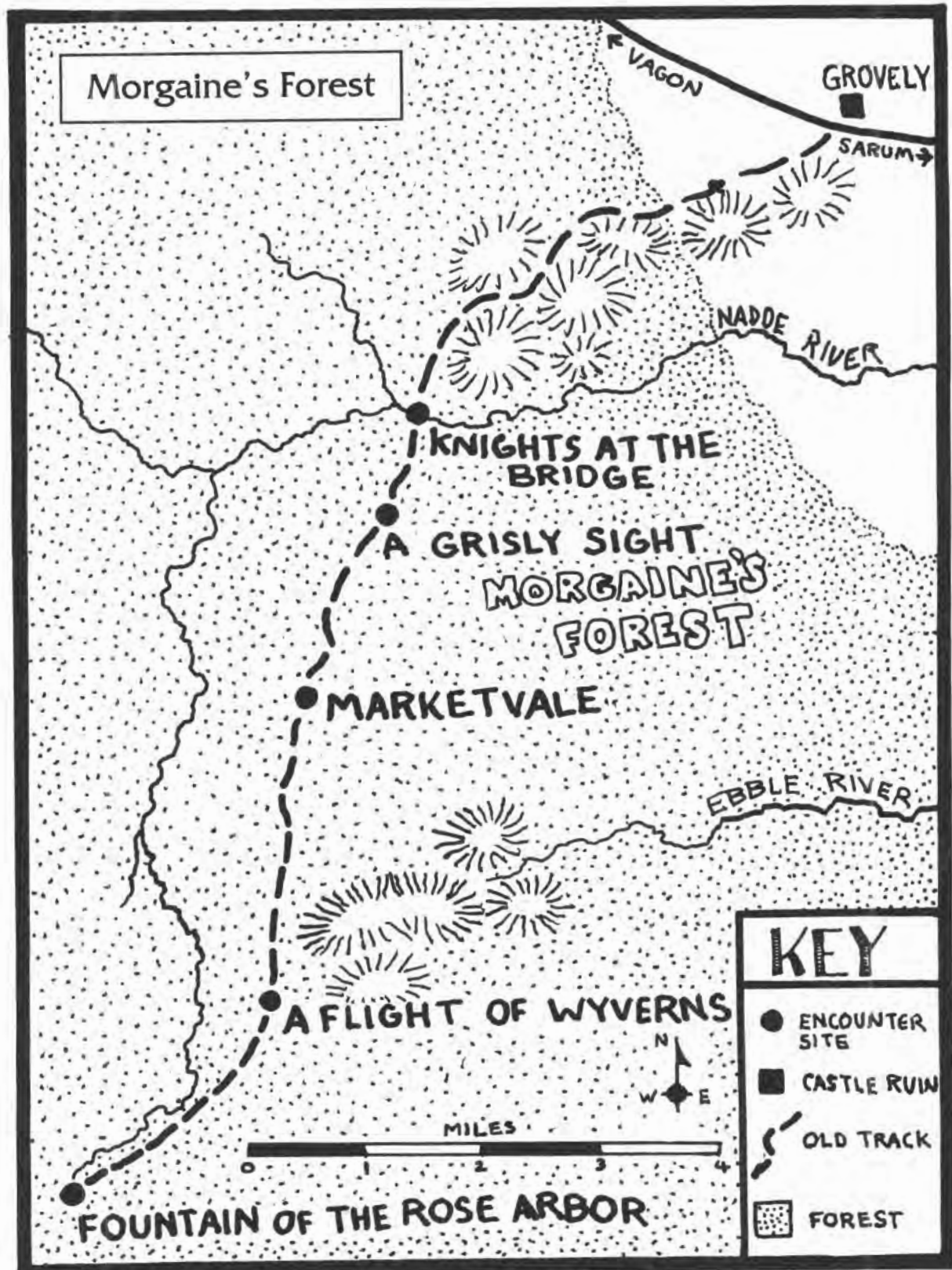
### Bertelot's Lie

Approaching her with tokens lifted from Cynfeln's body, Bertelot told Jonathia that he had come on her beloved's behalf, and that Cynfeln was being held ignobly prisoner and that there was but one chance to save him. Bertelot painted the portrait of a knight who he invented to be the villain of the story, telling of him as a man full of secret hate for the royal family of Somerset, who kept Cynfeln alive only so that he might know the pain of being forever denied his dear Jonathia. This villainous knight, Bertelot said, would kill Cynfeln rather than ever surrender him to either ransom or force of arms. The only way to rescue Cynfeln was to strike at the villain through his beloved: a woman whose family (or so Bertelot lied) had owned the Heart Blade until it had been stolen from them by Amren Gwallt Eurin. The damosel had sworn she would marry only the man who delivered the sword back into her family's posses-

sion—and therefore this knight would surely ransom back Cynfeln in exchange for the Heart Blade.

Bertelot claimed to have approached Amren's daughter to plead for the chance to purchase the Heart Blade, but no amount of cajoling could move Ahvielle to part with that piece of her father's legacy for any cause. Yet unless the Heart Blade could somehow be gained, there was no hope of bargaining for Cynfeln's life.







In the end, with Bertelot's guidance, Jonathia hit on the plan to establish herself in a position of confidence in Ahvielle's household in order that she might be on hand to overhear any mention of the Heart Blade. Jonathia fled her home and, posing as a noble's daughter who had run away from her family to escape an arranged marriage, was able to find employment as one of Ahvielle's handmaidens.

The day Ahvielle told her suitor where to find the Heart Blade, Jonathia was close by, listening. She rode at once for Somerset as fast as her horse would carry her, bartering with her jewelry and her current palfrey for a fresh one whenever the horse she was riding grew tired. At Somerset, she confided in King Cadwy all that had transpired and begged him for love of his son, her beloved, to send his knights into Camelot Forest to recover the Heart Blade without delay.



## Riding to Adventure

Finding Grovely castle (L-20) presents no problem for the player knights, and a brief search of the area is all it takes to discover the trail Ahvielle spoke of. Southeast of Grovely the path becomes more difficult to discern, slowing the knights to a pace of three miles a day.

Early on the second day out from Grovely Castle, the player knights come to an old, neglected stone bridge spanning a stream and the shallow gorge it runs through. On the far side of the bridge, an encampment has been set up.

## Knights at the bridge

As the player knights approach, a young squire crosses the bridge to meet them. "My masters send you a challenge," he says. "They claim this bridge as theirs, and any knight who would cross must prove himself worthy of that right by single combat. They would fight for love with rebated sword. The winner of each challenge is the knight left on the bridge."

The fight is expected to be on foot, and the object is to knock one's opponent into the water using the blunted swords freely provided to the player knights by their opponents.

The masters the squire speaks of are Ordinary Knights equal in number to the player knights plus one. Use the attributes from *Pendragon* page 192, with the addition of a 7 Swimming skill. Have the players roll [Heraldry. Success = these are knights of Somerset.] Cadwy, their king, has ordered these knights to stay here and delay the player knights as long as possible to prevent them from interfering with his attempt to

gain the Heart Blade and rescue his son. He hopes this challenge will weary the player knights and eat up a good part of their travelling day in long, drawn-out battles.

If asked directly, the knights admit that they are from Somerset, but of their reason for being here they say only that they entered the forest looking for adventure.

The gorge here is too steep to be crossed by horses at any point other than the bridge. Unless the player knights want to either leave their horses behind or waste the rest of the day going around the gorge, they have to fight their way across. The bridge is only wide enough to accommodate one pair of combatants at a time.

Assuming the challenge is accepted, each combat begins with one of the Somerset knights walking out to meet the appropriate player knight halfway across the bridge. Whenever a knight is knocked down while fighting on the bridge, he must make a second [DEX. Failure = he falls into the stream below.] If he does manage to stay on the bridge, he remains particularly vulnerable as he scrambles to his feet the next melee round; during that round, any attack which would normally require him to make a knockdown check automatically knocks him from the bridge.

A knight who falls from the bridge suffers only 1d3 damage from the fall. The stream is only a few feet deep, so no swim roll are required to reach the bank. Player knights who reach the far side of the stream this way aren't prevented from coming ashore, but aren't allowed to have their possessions brought across the bridge unless they go back and fight the challenge over.

The Somerset knights are trying to drag out the encounter for as long as possible. They fight accordingly, resorting to the frequent use of defensive tactics. On any round in which a player knight begins knocked down, his non-player opponent fights normally, looking to press his advantage against the prone foe. Otherwise, roll a d6 at the start of each melee round: if the result is 3 or greater, the knight uses defensive combat tactics.

The non-player knights take turns fighting the challenges. Any Somerset knight reduced to less than half his total hit points retires from the challenges entirely.

The challenges continue until either all player knights have won their way across or given up and turned back, or until all the non-player knights are reduced to half their hit points or less. In the latter case, the non-player knights forfeit all further challenges, and the player knights are allowed to cross.

The bridge marks the entrance into Morgaine's Forest (K-20, L-20). From here on, the trees and brush grow thicker.

**Glory:** 10 for each player knight who successfully fights his way across the bridge.



## A Grisly Sight

About noon of the following day, the player knights come abruptly on the half-eaten carcass of a warhorse lying in the middle of the trail. Shortly beyond, roll [Awareness. Success = the knight also spots the remains of a knight dangling high above, his shield and shield arm caught in the fork of a tree.]

The face of the shield is not visible from below. Anyone wishing to climb up to the body must roll [DEX. Failure = fall for 2d6 damage, without armor.] The body has obviously been savaged by wild beasts.

This man was one of King Cadwy's knights, killed by wyverns when misfortune led him to become lost and separated from his fellows. [Heraldry. Success = the shield belongs to a man of Somerset. Critical = He is a household knight of King Cadwy.]

A Found Shield



## Marketvale

Still early in the next morning, the player knights emerge onto a hilltop overlooking a broad forest clearing centered around a crossroads. The clearing appears to currently be the site of a large rural marketplace, abustle with merchants, shoppers, and folk just using the event as an excuse to make merry. A number of parties of dancers and musicians have gathered in rings about the edge of the clearing.

Six different pathways radiate out from the crossroads here, though only one trail actually passes through this site on the map. The others paths exist magically for this market day alone, and will disappear at dusk, leaving any knight following them lost in the forest.

Moving into the marketplace, the knights may notice something odd. [Folklore. Success = The folk here seem to be of the slight build characteristic of Picts, yet possessed of a dress and manner that mark them as Cymric.] Musicians and farm folk, knights and ladies, all dressed in brilliant blues, reds, and greens, stroll among the stalls. The array of goods offered up for sale is incredible for such a small, remote marketplace.

This is actually a faerie market, held at this site, called Marketvale by those who come here, at intervals generally

unpredictable by mortals. Almost all of the people here are faerie folk.

Attending this market when it does appear is one of the chief joys of Dame Blevine, Ahvielle's cousin. It's no coincidence that she's taken up residence nearby. Blevine is here when the player knights arrive, but that fact is irrelevant, as neither party has any way of recognizing the other in the crowd.

## Faerie Goods

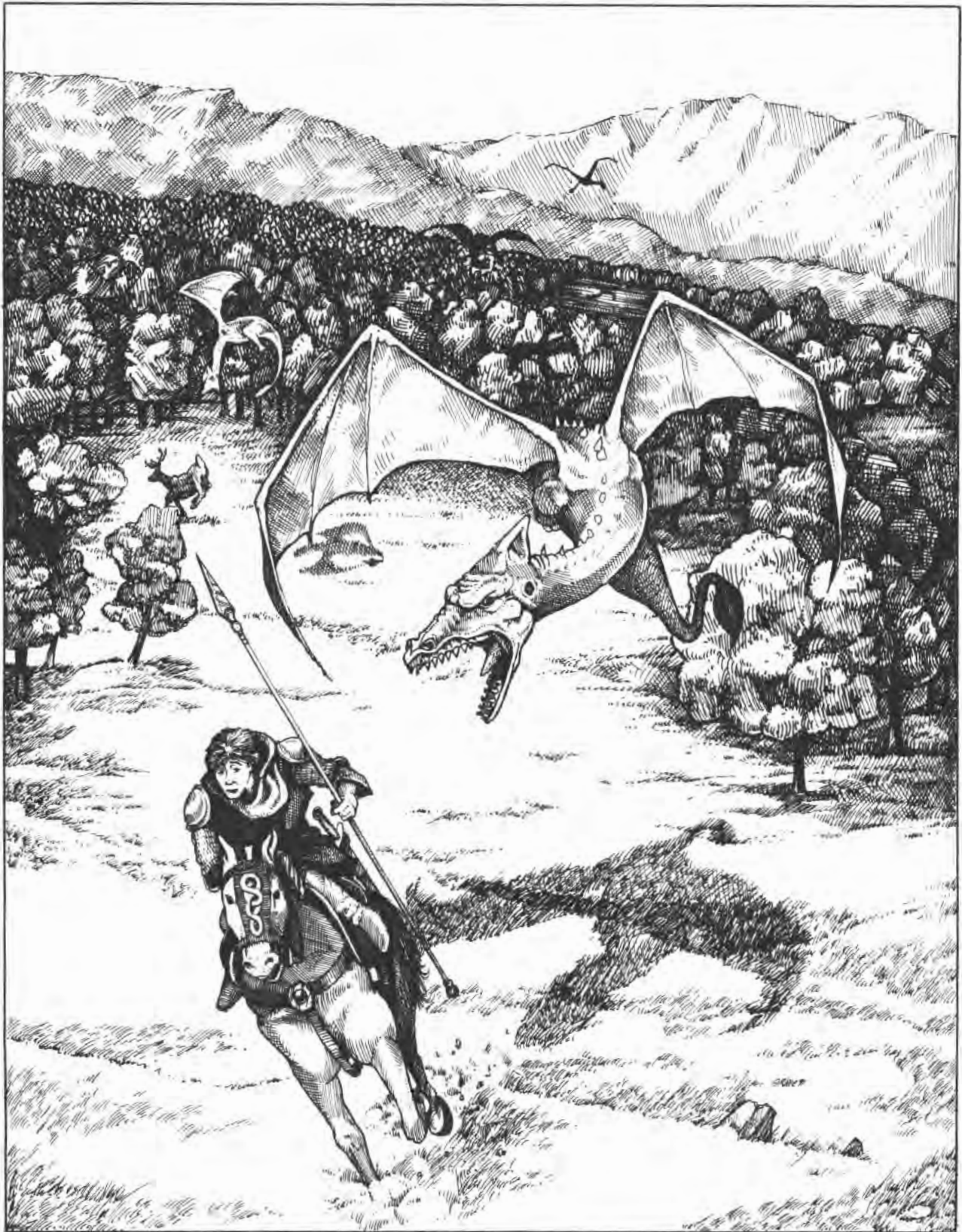
Any goods or services from the Great City price list (*Knights Adventurous*, p.102) may be bought or bartered for here, excepting those listed under the headings of Inns, At the Abbey, Professional Women, Port Authority, Waterfront, Lawyer, or Chirurgeon. All purchases the player knights make here are at half the normal list cost, but abusers of faerie generosity had best beware; items bought for hoarding or resale are eventually found to be worthless bits of straw or wood, rough undyed cloth or base metals, and even animals purchased in greed become old, feeble specimens, of no use or value to anyone.

Things bought and actually used as personal luxuries or necessities remain no more and no less than what they seemed to be when purchased, while items bought as gifts for others are found to be things of spectacular craftsmanship and beauty when they're presented, worth about five times their expected value. For example: a poor knight who managed to scrounge together the 120 d. here to buy a plain gold ring (1£ normal value) for his lady love would later be greeted by her gasp of appreciation as she admired the exquisite, ruby-set gold band worth 5£. This "gifts" rule never applies to practical things—tools of the knightly trade such as weapons, armor, and war horses—only to frivolous pleasantries that make life more enjoyable.

The folk here are all friendly and helpful, but value their privacy like all faerie folk, and will not put up with being cross-examined by presumptuous mortals. Asking any of them where they're from or why this market is held in the middle of the forest is a serious breach of faerie protocol. Such questions are unworthy of being answered, and the asker is treated with open disdain. Persistently nosey knights are asked bluntly to leave, and, if it becomes necessary, are escorted out by a large troupe of faerie knights. Any knights ejected for such rudeness find themselves lost in the forest the moment they leave the clearing, even if they left by a trail. Player knights who resist being thrown

## A Flight of Wyverns

*The Adventure of the Heart Blade*





out by force of arms must fight a combat with a number of faerie knight (with attributes equal to those of the one described on p. 203 of *Pendragon*) equal to the number of knights in their own party. If the player knights win, the whole marketplace vanishes around them, and they find themselves lost in the woods.

Inquiries after Dame Blevine are not met with this same cold reception, and some of the folk do know of her, but those that do all answer with some variation of a single sentiment: "Your search for her can wait. Today is to be enjoyed, and for now all roads lead to market. Tomorrow, I'm sure, your path will make itself clear."

When the faerie folk say that all roads lead to market, they mean it literally. For the time being, any knight who leaves the clearing by any path will find an hour later that he's ridden around to the far side of the clearing and come out overlooking the market again. If the knights wish, they may keep up this activity all day, always with the same results.

### Feasting After Market

Assuming the player knights give in and spend some time at the market, once they've done any shopping they care to a group of lovely and petite damsels introduce themselves, and insist the knights come join them in the games at the edge of the clearing. Music, dancing, and informal feasting are the order of the day there. Fine food and fine wine seem always at hand for the merry-makers, though whatever servants bring them manage it so unobtrusively that no player knight ever sees them. Temperate/Indulgent rolls are in order for any knight who joins the festivities. All knights are also allowed, and vigorously encouraged, to take the chance to demonstrate their skill at Dancing, Play, and Singing.

Compare all Play and Singing rolls among the player knights in one opposed resolution, and whoever wins has his efforts recognized and rewarded by one of the damsels with a kiss on the cheek and a chain necklace of wildflowers. The reward is one given out of personal appreciation, not for any sort of organized contest; in case of a tie, different damsels award each winner equally. Assuming the winning knight keeps his necklace, he wakes the next morning to find it's become a fine gold neck chain worth 3£

In reality, the "day" at the market lasts one month exactly, a symptom of the warped time of Faerie. During that time, King Cadwy and his knights retrieve the Heart Blade, arrive at the market, which didn't exist when they passed through ahead of the player knights, and get caught up in the festivities on the other side of the clearing from the player knights. When the market "day" ends, Cadwy and his men continue their homeward journey without ever realizing how close they were to the player knights.

The market breaks up at dusk, but the music and dancing continue long into the night, with vendors and shoppers straggling outward to join the revelry. Eventually, one by one, the player knights drift, exhausted, off to sleep. When they wake to the light of early morning, there's no sign that the faerie folk, the marketplace, the clearing, or even the crossroads ever existed, other than those goods and gifts the knights carried away with them from the market.

Unless they wandered into the woods, or were on one of the phantom trails when the "day" ended and it disappeared, the knights are back on the trail where they started. Lost knights are each allowed one Hunting roll per day to find the way back to the trail.

The trail continues on along the stream for another day with no significant encounters.

**Glory:** 10 for winning the musical contest. Glory for giving gifts purchased from here is based on the final value of the gift, not the purchase price.

### A Flight of Wyverns

The only warning the knights may have against this encounter comes with a successful Awareness check. As the player knights are passing through a small clearing, have them roll [Awareness. Success = the knight feels a sudden chill gust of wind, hears the heavy beating of wings, and notices the swiftly growing shadows cast over the group as a flight of wyverns dives down from out of the sun.] Any successful Awareness roll gives the knights just enough time to draw weapons and ready shields; otherwise the wyverns make their first attacks with surprise, unopposed.

The number of wyverns in the flight is equal to two-thirds the number of player knights, rounding fractions up.

#### Wyvern

This dragon-like creature is two-legged and winged. It is smaller than most of its draconic kin, and usually lives in family groups of 2-6 individuals.

SIZ 20	Move 13 (fly)	Major Wound 20
DEX 60	Damage 5d6	Unconscious 10
STR 25	Heal Rate 5	Knock Down 20
CON 20	Hit Points 40	Armor 8

Avoidance: 30

Modifier to Valorous: 0

Glory to Kill: 100

Attacks: Bite @12; or (while flying) two claws @15, 3d6 damage each.



The statistics of a typical wyvern are reproduced at the bottom of this column.

Unmodified Valor rolls are required to face the shrieking onslaught of the wyverns. Knights that fail the roll ride immediately for the cover of the forest. One round passes before they reach it, in which wyverns can still swoop down to attack them from behind. In that round, one wyvern attacks each knight who stands to fight; any remaining wyverns attack fleeing targets.

Knights who use spears to meet the initial diving attack of the wyverns receive a +5 to their weapon skill that round, negating their half of the Wyvern's reflexive +5/-5 modifier for attacking from above.

Each round of combat, each wyvern is equally likely to attack with either bite or claws, determined randomly.

When a wyvern is reduced to half its total hit points or less, it turns tail and attempts to fly away using its Avoidance value of 30.

**Glory:** 100 for each wyvern killed, plus 10 for each wyvern driven off.

## Fountain of the Rose Arbor

Two days past Marketvale, the path finally ends at a low, leafy tunnel leading into an otherwise impenetrable thicket. The stream the path has been following flows out from the tunnel and takes up its entire width. Only a narrow walkway of stepping stones provides a dry route inward.

Beyond the thicket, the tunnel emerges into a sunlit glade. Just inside the glade lie the bodies of a pair of lions, seemingly recently dead. In truth they were killed almost a month before, but the magic of the glade abhors ugliness, and has not allowed decay to set in. A number of broken weapons, two spears, an axe, and even a splintered shield, lie scattered near the bodies. [Heraldry. Success = the shield belongs to a knight from a family prominent in Somerset.]

Beyond the battle site, the glade is dominated by a broad pool which feeds the stream at the entrance and is fed in turn by another stream which issues from a hillside spring. The glade seems kept like a well tended lawn, and the air is perfumed by a variety of flowers that grow at the perimeter. A rose arbor stands at the bank of the pool, sporting roses that glint in the sunlight; some as if they were made of silver, others of purest gold.

Assuming the player knights do not immediately take their leave before pausing to examine anything here more closely, their examinations are interrupted by a rustling in the thicket at the far side of the glade as a beautiful, dark-haired woman, Dame Blevine, emerges unscathed and unruffled from the wall of thorns. [Recognize. Success = the

knight notices a strong family resemblance between Blevine and Ahvielle.] Blevine's magic deals primarily with plants. It also extends to some small amount of general Glamour and the ability to speak with any beast natural to the earth. This glade is Blevine's private retreat. The lions were her friends and her guards for the Heart Blade.

Immediately on seeing the dead lions, Blevine rushes weeping to their bodies and, assuming the player knights have slain the lions, reproaches them. "What have you done?!" Despite the incriminating circumstances, including the fact that the knights may bear tooth and claw marks from their fight with the wyverns, Blevine dries her eyes and listens patiently to the knights if they try to explain the situation to her. If they don't go on to explain why they've come, Blevine then asks them to do so.

"If you are who you say," she says to Ahvielle's suitor once she's heard them out, "then pluck a rose from the arbor there. If you can, then I shall believe you. But take care, for the thorns are poisoned with hatred. If hate is ever your master, best to leave now and not even try."

Closer inspection of the roses proves they really are of gold and silver as they appear.

## Of Rose and Thorn

The thorns attempt to prick any knight who tries to pluck a rose. Six thorns representing the six sins against love (Vengeful, Selfish, Deceitful, Arbitrary, Cruel, and Suspicious) "attack" the knight using his own values in those Traits opposed by their opposite virtues. The knight must successfully evade all six thorns by winning the opposed resolution rolls before he can pluck a rose. All attacks occur simultaneously, and if even one scores, the knight reflexively withdraws his hand without reaching the rose.

Once evaded, a thorn has no further chance to prick the knight, but the knight may have to try for the rose repeatedly in order to bypass the thorns to which he is most susceptible. He may make as many attempts as he likes so long as he remains conscious. He may wish he hadn't, though, as the thorns hold a poison that takes a long time to heal. Blevine understands the nature of the thorns' poison wounds, and will explain it to a wounded knight so that he may work off the effects over time.

As ornaments, the gold and silver roses are each worth 5£ or 1£ respectively if plucked intact. Any knight who attempts to take more than the one Blevine invited Ahvielle's knight to receive a Selfish check for the act. All told, there are 10 gold and 40 silver roses on the vines.

If Ahvielle's knight fails in plucking a rose, Blevine comes to the conclusion that either Ahvielle has chosen unwisely or that the knights are lying. "You are unworthy of



the Heart Blade," she says, "and I suppose that is just as well, for these noble lions were its guards. Someone has beaten you at your quest. What you've come looking for is no longer mine to give. Please leave, now. I must arrange for the burial of my friends." So saying, she turns and leaves through the wall of thorns.

If Ahvielle's knight does succeed in plucking a rose, Blevine smiles her approval. "You are a good man. It pains me to tell you that the Heart Blade is no longer in my possession — these noble lions were its guards. I'll offer you any help I may in recovering it, though."

Assuming the knights still express an interest in finding the Heart Blade, Blevine picks up the broken shield found beside the lions and hands it to them. "Seek out this knight if he still lives, and seek any who knew of him if he does not."

"I'm ashamed to admit," she says as an aside, staring at the bodies of the lions, "part of me hopes he does not."

"There can be no coincidence the blade was stolen just before you arrived, and that makes me fear the worst. The

thieves could not have learned to come here save through treachery of some sort, and in treacherous hands the Heart Blade may be twisted into a mockery of everything it now stands for."

"For now, stay the night in the shelter of my arbor. Rest yourselves and your horses. Drink from my fountain; its waters will ease your weariness and may help other pains, a thing you may become grateful for in the days ahead. I must go now to arrange burial for my friends, then to find out what I can of the fate of the Heart Blade. Do not wait for me. I'll seek you out when I can and tell you what I've learned." So saying, she leaves through the wall of thorns.

Drinking from the fountain (i.e.: the spring which feeds the pool) eliminates all fatigue and road weariness for both knights and horses when coupled with a good night's rest. Any wounded knight who drinks from the fountain should also make a roll against each of love's virtues. For each roll he makes successfully, he heals two points of damage overnight. If he succeeds in all six Trait rolls, he awakes to find all his non-poisoned wounds completely healed.

Water from the fountain loses all its healing properties once taken from the glade.

Shortly after nightfall, any knights still awake who make an Awareness roll notice that the bodies of the lions have vanished.

**Glory:** 100 for successfully plucking a rose from the arbor, 10 for making the attempt but failing.

### The Poisonous Thorns

Injuries from the thorns cause no outward damage of note, but inject a venom which inflicts one hit point of damage in the form of a wound that time alone can never heal. In order for the poison to be purged, the wounded knight must first purge the evil (i.e.: the personality trait) that inflicted it; thus it becomes important to keep track of how many wounds each thorn inflicts. For each point the offending personality trait of the knight is lowered from the value it stands as of this encounter, one point of long-term poison damage is healed. If the offending trait is ever reduced to 0, all wounds associated with it are immediately healed, no matter how many were taken.

*Example: Sir Blaine deftly bypasses most of the thorns, but finds he has a real problem with his vengefulness (his Forgiving/Vengeful values stand at 8/12), and he is pricked four times by the Vengeful thorn. Until Blaine does something to remedy the situation, his normal hit point total of 32 will be reduced to 28.*

*After winter experience checks, Blaine's Vengeful is raised to 13. He spends the winter working off that one-point gain, but as his Vengeful only returns to the original value of 12, none of his poison wounds are healed by it.*

*The following year, Blaine's Vengeful is reduced by experience checks and winter training to a new value of 10, and he is able to heal 2 points of poison damage.*

*The next year, Blaine backslides to an 11 Vengeful. The previously healed damage doesn't "unheal", but he'll now have to work off two points of Vengeful (down to 9) before the next point of damage can be healed. Blaine can only be fully healed when his Vengeful is reduced to 8, 4 points less than the 12 it started at.*

## Continuing the Quest

The player knights are, of course, free to give up on their quest at this point. However, if such an admission of defeat is made, Bertelot successfully acquires the Heart Blade, kidnaps Ahvielle, and murders her in the circle of Whispering Knights — the conspirators against the King Stone at Rollright Stones — thus fulfilling the prophecy and perverting the Heart Blade to his own ends. Bertelot should become a powerful, recurring villain in the campaign to taunt the knights for their failure, and give them a chance to eventually make him pay for his crimes.

Even if Blevine refuses to help, finding a way to continue the quest, by following any of a number of heraldic clues, should not be difficult. Even if they failed to identify any of the Somerset shields along the way, the player knights should end up with at least one shield actually in their possession which they can take to someone who can identify it.



All Somerset knights who were in Morgaine forest for the quest were household knights of King Cadwy, so the trail leads inevitably to Bath.

## The City of Bath

Bath (K-19) is abustle with activity when the knights arrive, while outside the walls, the lists are being prepared at the nearby tournament field. There can be no doubt that preparations for a grand celebration are in full swing. If the knights stop any of the townsfolk to ask why, they're told that the king's eldest son, thought dead for some years, is expected home from his adventures within the week.

Player knights inquiring after any of the knights of Somerset and their activities in Morgaine Forest are directed to the old style castle which dominates the city.

The celebration currently being planned was not of King Cadwy's instigation. Reserving some doubts about the whole situation, Cadwy resolved not to get his queen's hopes up and has told no one about his quest to rescue his son. Jonathia, on the other hand, has reached the point that she would go quite out of her mind if she let herself think for a second that Cynfeln might not be coming home. She's been abubble with happiness since the day Cadwy stopped back in Bath with the Heart Blade on his way to see to his son's ransom personally. Her un-concealable joy, contrasting with her constant fretting and pacing while she waited for Cadwy's return, piqued the curiosity of Queen Celemon to a point not to be denied, and despite Jonathia's promise of silence to Cadwy, she quickly broke down and confided in the queen. After that, the news refused to be contained, and Celemon has had the city preparing ever since to celebrate her son's homecoming in the most regal of styles.

### Arrival

When the player knights arrive at the castle, use the Visits to Court system from *Knights Adventurous* (page 112) to determine how long they're kept waiting before being escorted in to meet Queen Celemon. Apply a -15 modifier for court being in full session.

Queen Celemon is not a young woman, but still quite lovely despite her years, and exceedingly gracious. She greets the knights warmly and apologizes that her king cannot be here to receive them, saying for the moment only that he is away on urgent business. She then asks the knights the reason for their visit. Whatever their answer, she invites them to remain as guests for the coming celebration. "Cynfeln, my son, is coming home at last. I'd be honored if you'd stay and share in my joy."

Celemon knows nothing of the business with the Heart Blade. All Jonathia told her was that Cynfeln was alive, and

that Cadwy had gone to see to his ransom personally. If asked about any of the knights who were in the Morgaine Forest, Celemon can say only that they accompanied her husband as part of his entourage when he went abroad several weeks back. They returned about a week ago with several of the entourage dead and many wounded from some great adventure. Cadwy would not linger to explain what had happened. He only stopped in Bath long enough to leave the bodies of the slain and say that a hero's burial was to be made ready for them.

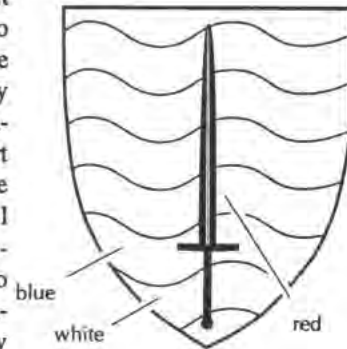
The knight whose shield was found in Blevine's retreat is numbered among the dead. All the knights who survived the adventure left with Cadwy. They took the south road out of town, but would say nothing of their ultimate destination. "Still," Celemon says, "I expect them back any day now. My lord promised that this time he would return well within a fortnight." The more urgent the player knights indicate that their business with Cadwy or his knights is, the more Celemon urges them to wait in Bath for him. "Whatever my lord has gone to do is surely done by now. If you go out looking for him you'll only run the risk of missing him on the road."

Once the audience is ended, Celemon invites her guests in to dinner—actually a small celebratory feast being held in anticipation of Cynfeln's return. A similar feast is held each day the player knights remain at Castle Brun. For each feast a knight attends, grant him one roll on the standard Feast Events table (*Knights Adventurous*, p. 114).

Additionally, while they remain, the knights are offered free use of the Roman baths for which the city is named. Their waters are amazingly healthful, and any knight who avails himself of the opportunity to use them may obtain a full week's healing at the end of his stay in Bath, despite the fact that the adventure calls for him to remain only a few days.

The atmosphere this first night in Bath is a merry one, with no shortage of song and dance at the celebration. Allow all knights Dancing rolls, as well as their choice of either Play or Singing. During the entertainment, call for Recognize rolls from the player knights. Ahvielle's suitor receives a +5 bonus to the Recognize roll. [Recognize. Suc-

King Cadwy of Somerset





cess = The knight notices a woman coming through a door across the crowded hall, and recognizes her as being one of Ahvielle's handmaidens.] Even though he recognizes her, he can't recall ever hearing her name. (It is Jonathia.)

Jonathia sees the player knights at the same time they see her. Obvious recognition registers in her eyes, and she turns at once to leave the way she came in. By the time the player knights can follow her, she's disappeared. Her appearance is not distinctive enough that anyone will know who the knights are asking after if they try to find out her name or where she went.

### Bath, Day 2

The festive mood continues the morning of the second day with a social hunting expedition into the fringes of the Campacorentin Forest. Use the standard hunting rules from *Knights Adventurous*, with the object of the hunt being deer of any kind.

If the player knights failed to see Jonathia at the feast the night before, and even if they did, allow them another Recognize roll to notice her in the morning while the hunting party is gathering in the courtyard. Success indicates that a knight spies her watching the proceedings from a window of the castle's central tower. Again, this is a case of mutual recognition. Jonathia quickly withdraws from the window and disappears, and none will know who the player knights are talking about if they inquire after her.

The weather for the day's hunt is ideal: clear, beautiful, and pleasantly warm. Only as night approaches do a few clouds appear on the western horizon.

The hunting day lasts for seven rounds, but a non-player knight corners and kills the deer the fourth round after picking up its trail if the player knights don't beat him to it. The hunt may continue after that if any daylight remains, but new prey will have to be found.

Use a Hunting skill of 17 (terrain modifiers already included) for the main hunting party each round it spends searching for prey.

Glory: 15 total glory for bringing down the deer, plus standard glory for any other prey brought back.

### Bath, Days 3 and 4

The third day at the castle dawns to find a misty rain hanging over the area. The rain lasts throughout that day and well into the next, rising and falling irregularly from showers so fine that they're more felt than seen, to heavy downpours. Queen Celemon organizes a Tabula (backgammon) tournament to pass the time, and anyone who wishes may participate.

#### Tabula Opponent Table

d6	Result	Skill
1	Novice	1d6
2	Poor	1d6+3
3-4	Experienced	1d6+6
5	Excellent	1d6+9
6+	Master	1d6+12

The tournament is single-elimination and played in six rounds: two the first day, four the second. Each round a player knight participates, roll 1d6 on

the Tabula Opponent Table to determine the Gaming skill of his opponent and add a cumulative +1 to the die roll for each round past the first.

During this time, player knights who make an Awareness roll notice on day four that the Queen is becoming distracted. She pays increasingly less attention to the festivities as the rainy days pass and spends more and more time staring out the tower windows. If questioned, she says that she never much cared for rain, and now finds it more depressing than ever, as it seems to have delayed the return of both her lord and her son.

Glory: 1 for each victory at Tabula, 5 more for winning the tournament.

### Bath, Day 5

Though the sky had cleared late in the afternoon before, day 5 dawns as wet and miserable as ever, and both the rain and the queen's somber mood have dampened the spirits of the court. Still, what begins as a storytelling session around the fireplace among a few friends blossoms into the day's diversion of choice at the castle as its residents attempt to stave off rainy-day boredom.

The player knights, as both outsiders and adventurers, find their stories in great demand, especially if they're able to speak eloquently of the marvels they've seen on their travels. All player knights have a chance to Orate here, with a bonus of +1 per 1000 Glory — not so much because the audience is impressed with the knights' reputations as because a glorious knight has surely seen far more marvels than an ordinary one.

Midway into the afternoon, a sudden commotion out in the courtyard brings the gathered court pressing to the doors and windows to see what's happening. King Cadwy has returned, and he's not in a good mood. He storms into the hall, shouting orders right and left that soon make it clear he's intent on marching his entire army to war. Once his knights have gone scurrying to armor up, Cadwy settles down to bellowing out a single name, "JONATHIA!" until the damosel appears before him, cowering in bewildered



fear. Allow Recognize rolls for knights who haven't already recognized her. He clamps a hand on her arm so tightly that she winces in pain, and Cadwy starts up the tower stairs with Jonathia in tow.

As should be quite obvious, this is not the time for the player knights to approach Cadwy. If they even try to follow him upstairs, he snaps at them viciously to be gone from his presence. If they're presumptuous enough to ignore his command, he orders his knights to throw them out of the castle.

Cadwy's bellows from above are audible, if unintelligible, for some time.

Allow the players to roll [Recognize or Heraldry. Success = the knight spots several of the Somerset knights they met at the bridge in Morgaine Forest, newly arrived back at court with Cadwy.] None of Cadwy's knights feel free to speak about their adventures, however, and insist that the truly curious should speak with Cadwy himself when the opportunity arises.

## Blevine's Messenger

If the player knights failed to enlist the aid of Dame Blevine at the Fountain of the Rose Arbor, this event doesn't take place. Skip ahead in the adventure to "Jonathia's Confession."

If the player knights did enlist Blevine's aid, call for Awareness roll from the knights while Cadwy and Jonathia are still upstairs. [Awareness. Critical = The knight notices a starling flit in from the rain to land in the shelter of a window sill, carrying something small and shiny in its beak.] Whether the starling is noticed or not, it glances around until it spies Ahvielle's knight, then flies to his shoulder, shakes the water out of its feathers, and drops its burden before him — a pair of rose petals, one of silver, the other gold. After the knight has had a moment to examine the petals, the starling flits away a short distance and chirps insistently. By the way it hops and flits about, continues to chirp and harasses the knight if he ignores it after that, it should quickly become apparent that the bird wants to be followed.

If for some reason the knights refuse to follow the starling, Blevine will be murdered. Later on, when the knights do leave Bath, half an hour north on the Royal Road they find her with a spear driven through her back, deep into the mud where she was carelessly left to die.

The starling waits impatiently while they gather any equipment they wish to take. Knights who follow it are led out into the rain, which is currently at a lull, misting only with practically no wind, then out of both castle and city along the north road. Once the knights are well on the road,

## Bandit

These are sample bandit statistics for the battle of the Whispering Knights.

SIZ 12	Move 2 (+1)	Major Wound 12
DEX 10	Damage 4d6	Unconscious 6
STR 12	Heal Rate 2	Knock Down 12
CON 12	Hit Points 24	Armor 4+ shield
APP 2		

Attacks: Great Spear 8, Light Crossbow 8 (1d6+10), Dagger 8,

Significant Traits: Cruel 13, Valorous 8, Suspicious 16.

Significant Passions: Hate (knights) 12

Significant Skills: Awareness 18, Hunting 16.

the starling flies on ahead and forgets them, disappearing from the adventure.

The rain picks up again soon, limiting visibility and making the already unpleasant trek along the muddied road even moreso. Less than half an hour out from Bath, the player knights hear a horse on the road ahead. Moments later, a figure hidden by a heavy travelling cloak and riding a palfrey at full gallop comes into view from out of the rain. Reaching the player knights, Blevine swoons and slips from the saddle, an arrow protruding from her back.

She now lies unconscious and in need of Chirurgery. First Aid wouldn't hurt, either, but will not wake her up. So long as she's attended to, Blevine will live, but for the time being she remains incapacitated.

## The Pursuers Attack

The knights have just enough time available to dismount and ascertain that Blevine still lives before her pursuers arrive on the scene. All the player knights may remain mounted and wait (or even flee) rather than tend to Blevine, of course, but receive Cruel checks for the act if they do.

Blevine's pursuers are a band of mercenary knights in Bertelot's employ. They come riding out of the rain en masse, the hooves of their chargers kicking up great clods of mud. There are two typical mercenary knights for each player knight, and they attack without a moment's hesitation, two-thirds readying and lowering their spears for the lance charge, while the other third hang back to rain arrows onto unengaged player knights.

When half or more of the mercenary knights lie dead or disabled, the rest of them attempt to flee back north. Their poor chargers only have a movement rate of 7, however, and may be overtaken by the good mounts most player knights possess. If the mercenaries attempt to escape from knights mounted on horses of equal speed, use opposed



Horsemanship rolls to determine whether those escape attempts are successful.

Captured mercenaries freely admit that they are in the employ of a man named Bertelot. [Heraldry +4. Success = the knight has heard of Bertelot, an unchivalrous knight of ill fame.] What they don't admit is that Bertelot ordered them to kill Blevine, a "dangerous sorceress," outright. They maintain instead that they were simply intent on capturing the lady to prevent her from revealing their employer's plans, whatever those plans were. They're under the correct impression that Blevine overheard things Bertelot hadn't bothered to tell them. They parted company with Bertelot and the rest of his army, a force of about 30 mercenary knights, near Cirencester when he ordered them after the fleeing Blevine, who had been spying on their camp.

It's obvious that Blevine is now in immediate need of medical attention, and should be taken back to Bath without delay.

**Glorify:** 35 for each mercenary knight defeated, plus 100 for rescuing Blevine and bringing her back to Bath alive.

## Jonathia's Confession

If the player knights never left Bath to aid Blevine, about half an hour after Cadwy dragged Jonathia upstairs the player knights are summoned into Cadwy's presence. Otherwise, even as the knights are carrying Blevine in through the door of the tower, they're told that Cadwy has been looking for them. The ladies of the court volunteer to see to Blevine, and the knights are hurried into Cadwy's presence. Cadwy, who's been downstairs organizing the coming military march, leads the player knights up into the top level of the tower where Jonathia is still waiting, and the explanations begin.

Cadwy sternly introduces Jonathia to the knights. "You may have met her before, but I expect you do not know her. This is Jonathia, daughter of Jonathel, the praetor of Dorset — and Jonathia has a story to tell you."

Jonathia has obviously been crying, and seems close to bursting back into tears throughout the conversation. "I pray you'll forgive me, good knights, for what I've done. You know as well as I that Ahvielle could never refuse to marry you just because the Heart Blade was no longer where she sent you for it. So to you it was just a sword. To Cynfeln, my beloved, King Cadwy's son, it was life itself." She looks dejectedly at the floor. "Or so I thought."

"When Sir Dwn came to me, bearing his tokens, he said he was Cynfeln's friend, and I never thought to doubt him. Dwn said that my love was held captive by a knight who hated him with a bitterness so deep that he kept Cynfeln

alive just to torture him by holding him forever apart from me, and that the villain would never ransom Cynfeln for aught but the Heart Blade. That's why I ran away from my home and became a servant for your lady—to overhear when she spoke of the sword. But it's clear to me now that Dwn himself is the villain, and he never meant to free Cynfeln for anything."

Cadwy picks up the story from there. "On the trail, while Dwn was supposedly leading me to the castle where Cynfeln was imprisoned, he poisoned the wine of my men and put a sleeping potion in my own cup, hoping to ransom me as well as my son, no doubt. Most of my entourage would now be dead, and I prisoner, if not for the intervention of the good Dame Blevine. She arrived at the camp after Dwn's poisons had taken hold, but in time to administer an antidote before any had died. Dwn, though, emerged from the tent with the Heart Blade before we had fully recovered. We took up our swords to chase him, but remained too weak from poison to follow as he rode off to the north with the Heart Blade.

"Blevine said she knew where he would go, and that Dwn was actually the villainous Sir Bertelot, brother of Sir Brus sans Pitie. Now that the Heart Blade is his, he is certain to indulge his hatred for Ahvielle of Stoneleigh in an effort to twist the magic of the Heart Blade to his own ends. There was a prophecy surrounding the Heart Blade, Blevine said..."

Cadwy goes on to relate the prophecy of the Heart Blade, as given with the description of the sword at the beginning of this adventure. Blevine didn't ride with them when they left, saying she knew shortcuts they couldn't take, and that she would use her magic to try to slow Bertelot and to warn Ahvielle.

If Blevine has been rescued by the player knights, she becomes briefly conscious and calls for them as they are preparing to ride. She knows Bertelot's plan, she says: to fulfill the prophecy he intends to murder Ahvielle at Rollright Stones (M-18) in the circle of the Whispering Knights — traitors to the King Stone.

Blevine hired a messenger to ride on ahead to Stoneleigh and carry a warning letter to Ahvielle, but had not counted on the unexpectedly foul weather which caused him to dawdle, ignorant as he is of the messages full urgency, while Bertelot, knowing himself soon to be hounded by all of Somerset, pressed on with great haste. And while it would be technically possible for Blevine to send a bird messenger to Ahvielle as she did to the knights, the storms and the short attention span of most birds make the flight to Stoneleigh with a letter an unrealistic option.

Blevine is certain that once Bertelot has kidnapped Ahvielle, he will approach Rollright Stones along forest trails,



rather than risk meeting Cadwy by coming back along the Royal Road. The only way to be certain of thwarting Bertelot is to be waiting at the stone circle to meet him. Meanwhile, Blevine says, even if she's captured, Ahvielle will be perfectly safe: Bertelot won't do anything which might kindle real hatred in her before he can sacrifice her to his ambition.

If the player knights failed to rescue Blevine, they will not know to go to Rollright Stones to rescue Ahvielle. Bertelot kidnaps Ahvielle and plans to murder her in the circle of the Whispering Knights, thus fulfilling the prophecy and ending the adventure in tragedy. Hopefully the player knights will ride to Stoneleigh to head him off. They will be too late, but should pick up his trail from there to the circle of Whispering Knights in time for the final battle. If they do otherwise, then they will be too late.

## Return to Stoneleigh

If the player knights are on their way to Rollright Stones, skip ahead to the Battle of Whispering Knights. It is possible that if the player knights have failed at some point along their adventure, they will return to Stoneleigh to meet with or to rescue Ahvielle, or to search for some indication of how to proceed. This encounter can serve as a pointer to get them headed into the correct direction, and at the gamemaster's discretion, can provide them with some support for their upcoming battle with Bertelot and his mercenaries.

Even with the proper information, the player knights could decide to come here before going to the Circle of Whispering Knights, but in doing so they risk arriving there too late to rescue Ahvielle.

The player knights, and Cadwy if he is present, arrive at Stoneleigh to find it the site of a recent and small but bloody battle. Bertelot's men killed warriors and innocents indiscriminately. What servants remain saw Bertelot ride back toward the Royal Road along with the captive Ahvielle, and heard him boast of his plan to sacrifice Ahvielle within the Circle of Whispering Knights. [Folklore. Success = The Circle of Whispering Knights is a circle of standing stones at Rollright Stones. It is said that they were once knights who conspired against their king.] Before the knights have a chance to act on this information, a small army comes riding hard toward the manor from the west

## The Women Knights of Kenilworth

As Bertelot's men attacked, one of Ahvielle's handmaidens rode to Kenilworth castle (M-17) for help. She has returned with 30 female knights. A number of foot-soldiers are also on the way, but they'll arrive much too late to be of any help, especially considering the forced march to come.

Seeing Cadwy's standard, the army slows as a lone warrior rides ahead to the manor. [Recognize. Success = there is something uniformly peculiar about all of these knights. Critical = these knights are all women!] [Heraldry. Success = the one in front is their leader, Adriana Not-a-Lady.] "Hold!" Shouts Adriana Not-a-Lady, "Are you friend or foe of Lady Ahvielle?"

At the game master's discretion, the women of Kenilworth may volunteer to accompany the player knights to Rollright Stones. It is suggested that the game master does not send the knights of Kenilworth along if the player knights already have Cadwy and his men with them, as they will too seriously outnumber their foes in the next encounter. In that case the women knights of Kenilworth stay to help at the manor.

Whatever the outcome of this encounter, the player knights have lost the lead to Bertelot by coming here instead of heading straight to Rollright Stones. Their only chance to save Ahvielle is to ride to Rollright Stones without delay. The trip will have to be a forced march if they are to beat Bertelot to the Circle of Whispering Knights. Fortunately, Bertelot is keeping to the less-travelled but slower forest paths.

## The Battle of Whispering Knights

Whether the knights arrive at the Rollright Stones coming directly from Somerset or after a visit to Stoneleigh, the total force of the army they're with is about 30 knights, plus the player knights themselves. Cadwy could hardly muster his entire army on almost no notice, and the knights of Kenilworth are not with them unless for some reason Cadwy and his knights remain at Bath.

As it's crucial to have the player knights arrive on the scene, require only one CON roll for each of their horses if they're involved in the ride to Stoneleigh and back. [Horse's Con. Failure = The horse collapses, exhausted, *after* arriving at Rollright Stones. Fumble = The horse dies of exhaustion after the battle.]

For his part, when Bertelot arrives he's added a number of bandits to the modest army with which he attacked

Sir Adriana Not-A-Lady





### Mercenary Knight

Use these sample Mercenary Knight statistics for the fight against the player knights.

SIZ 13	Move 2	Major Wound 15
DEX 10	Damage 4d6	Unconscious 7
STR 13	Heal Rate 3	Knock Down 13
CON 15	Hit Points 28	Armor 10 + 6 pnt. shield
APP 10		

Attacks: Lance 13, Sword 13, Bow 10.

Significant Traits: Selfish 15, Valorous 13.

Significant Passions: none.

Significant Skills: Awareness 10, Horsemanship 9.

Stoneleigh. He plans to set straight out from Rollright to revel in the might he expects the Heart Blade to give him, by sacking a number of small demesnes in the area. His motley army now consists of about 35 mercenary knights of mostly poor quality, and 40 bandits.

Whatever route Cadwy and the player knights use to arrive at Rollright, they have time to deploy about the Whispering Knights before Bertelot arrives, with two full day's grace period if they came here straight from Bath.

When Bertelot does arrive, riding at the head of his army, he halts at the bottom of the hill and stares up at Cadwy's knights. His exact reaction is impossible to judge at such a distance.

"You've lost, Bertelot!" Cadwy calls down. "You'll never reach the circle alive."

Bertelot is silent for a moment, pondering his reply. "If I don't," he finally yells, "your son will never return to Bath alive."

Cadwy is obviously taken aback.

"I don't have to kill the woman," Bertelot continues. "I only have to spill her blood. Pull away from the circle. Let me fulfill the prophecy. I keep the Heart Blade, but you get both Ahvielle and Cynfeln in return."

Cadwy is quiet for a time, during which he'll listen to any advice the player knights have to offer. If the knights argue not to trust Bertelot, to attack him then and there, Cadwy can only be swayed to it by a critical success at Orate. Each knight may present his own argument, thus giving everyone a chance at Orate. Knights may wish to apply suitable Passions to this roll, including Honor or Amor (Ahvielle). Otherwise, though he debates with himself for some time about the wisdom of it, in the end Cadwy commands everyone to withdraw to the bottom of the hill. If the player knights refuse, he warns them that he has no choice, and he'll order his own knights to kill them if he must. "I'd much rather you were with me. I still don't trust

him any further than a sword's reach, and it's best we have all the swords we can on hand to be sure he keeps his bargain." Bertelot and his men ride up to the circle. Cadwy orders his army to block all trails leading away into the surrounding forest.

If Cadwy is not present, or if the knights have convinced him to attack, skip ahead to The Battle.

### Treachery Among the Whispering Knights

This scene takes place if the player knight are unable to talk Cadwy into attacking Bertelot. Ahvielle is brought forth from the midst of Bertelot's forces, a knife held at her throat to dissuade her from struggling, and shoved to her knees in front of Bertelot. As Bertelot stands behind her and draws the Heart Blade, he calls down to Cadwy. "While I've got you're attention, Your Highness, there is one thing I've been aching to tell you: Cynfeln died on my sword years ago." With that, Bertelot raises the Heart Blade, and unleashing all the hatred he bears for Ahvielle, prepares to plunge it through her breast.

Bertelot has decided he's better off trying to break through Cadwy's lines now, with his own army intact, than risk having his lies revealed later, when Cadwy may have him at an even greater disadvantage. The one thing Bertelot is not prepared for, though, is the Heart Blade's retaliation against his hatred for Ahvielle, which he drew upon in hopes that it would carry him through the coming battle. Before Bertelot can deliver the fatal stroke, the sword flares red-hot, and drops to the ground as he dances back reflexively clutching his burnt hand.

Ahvielle lunges for the fallen Heart Blade, which cooled before it even hit the ground, and hurls it down the hill in the direction of Ahvielle's knight. In his passion, Bertelot forgets about the Heart Blade, draws his own sword, and buries it in Ahvielle's back, delivering her a serious, perhaps mortal wound.

### The Battle

Chaos breaks loose and the battle is joined on all fronts, and passions flare for all involved.

Bertelot is inspired by Hate (Ahvielle) to a +10 Sword skill for the coming battle. In his impassioned state he is unable to use the Heart Blade, and drops it now if he has not already done so. Should the knights be charging up he hill from below, he turns his attention to them and fails to complete his plans to murder Ahvielle.

If the battle was sparked by Bertelot's treachery rather than the player knights talking Cadwy into the charge, this is certainly a moment for passions to flare among all involved. If he has not already done so, Ahvielle's suitor may wish to roll his Amor (Ahvielle). At the same time, urge



Honor rolls from all other player knights. Even the bandits on the hill, desperate at the straits Bertelot has left them in, each call on their Hate (knights) passion in hopes of inspiration. Roll only for those bandits who actually engage the player knights.

Each player knight is subject to a crossbow shot from bandits as he charges up the hill, or down it, if the battle started early. A second is fired at anyone who pauses to pick up the Heart Blade. Being closest, Ahvielle's knight is the first one with an opportunity to do so. If he passes up the chance and other knights fight for it, use opposed DEX rolls to see who gets there first.

After that, Each player knight finds himself engaged by an experienced mercenary knight and a bandit who, in desperation at the strait's Bertelot's left him in, attempts a Hate (knights) roll to inspire him for the battle. Sample attributes for mercenary knights and bandits are given nearby.

Insane with rage and hatred, Bertelot arrives in the third round to join the combat against whoever holds the Heart Blade. He will fight to the death in the attempt to regain the sword. If he can defeat that knight, or if the Heart Blade still lies on the ground unclaimed, he tries to pick it up again, and, his Hatred still inflamed, is unable to. Realizing his cause is lost, Bertelot's thoughts turn to self-preservation and he attempts to flee the battle. If a player knight does not intercept him and force him to stand and fight, he escapes.

In the end, Cadwy's forces defeat Bertelot's very decisively.

As for the mortally wounded Ahvielle, she has been reduced to a Hit Point total of -1. Without either healing magic or sufficient First Aid, and subsequent successful Chirurgery, she will die.

**Glory:** 40 for talking Cadwy into attacking Bertelot outright. 10 for each bandit defeated, 50 for each mercenary knight, 250 for defeating Bertelot. 250 for recovering the Heart Blade, thus completing the quest.

## The Aftermath

If Bertelot died without revealing Cynfeln's true fate, one of his mercenaries captured in the battle can testify to it, and can even show Cadwy to the grave.

Regardless of what else occurs, Jonathia goes mad (in a manner much like Hamlet's Ophelia) on learning that her beloved Cynfeln has been dead all these years.

If both Ahvielle and her knight are slain, their story ends in tragedy. Similarly, if Ahvielle's knight was slain but she was not, their story ends tragically as she, weeping over him, draws his dagger and plunges it into her breast in

attempt to join him in death and keep her vow that no force an earth would keep them from marrying.

If only Ahvielle is slain, she lives long enough to whisper to her beloved a fragment of the vow she gave him at the outset of the quest: "Or anywhere beyond..." She then dies, leaving a weak kiss on his lips. If she died because of Cadwy bowing to Bertelot's demands, with tears in his eyes, Cadwy penitently approaches Ahvielle's knight, wordlessly places his sword in the knight's hand, kneels, and bares his neck for the knight to strike off. [Love (Ahvielle). Critical = he strikes the blow. Otherwise he may choose.] If the knight refuses, raise his Forgiving and Merciful both by one point then and there. If he does kill Cadwy in retribution, remember that the king has many powerful relatives and friends who will take the killing as an affront, and will most certainly quest to bring retribution upon their king's killer, despite his apparent final wishes. Assuming he lives, Cadwy leaves for Bath, still soberly silent, with all but four of his knights, who remain to escort Ahvielle's body back to Stoneleigh.

Ahvielle is buried at Stoneleigh, amid much grieving by all who knew her, Gawaine and Queen Guenever included. At her funeral, Earl Artgualchar of Wuerensis offers Ahvielle's knight the banneretcy of Stoneleigh. Afterward, if the knight spared Cadwy's life, a messenger arrives from Somerset bearing Cynfeln's seal ring. "King Cadwy gifts you with this token of his indebtedness. Present it to him and he will grant to you any favor within his power." says the messenger.

## Beltane Meeting

On the Beltane of the following year, wherever the player knight is, he hears Ahvielle's voice calling nearby, and she then approaches him—as alive and beautiful as ever. She smiles radiantly and reaches out her hand. "Come with me, my love. I have a promise to keep."

The knight must successfully oppose his Amor (Ahvielle) with a Suspicious roll if he wishes to resist. If he refuses to go with her, she leaves crying and disappears forever. If he follows, she leads him to the nearest lake, pond, or coast, and descends with him into the water, spiriting him away with her to Faerie, where they live together forever in happiness.

After only a month's time has passed on earth, thanks to the distorted time of Faerie, the son and only child of Ahvielle and her knight comes to earth as a full grown man, age 21. He is in no position to reclaim any of his parents' earthly possessions, land or otherwise, and must seek out a lord to knight him, but has been provided for with an inheritance equal to Outfit Six. He also carries the Heart Blade, which his father took with him into Faerie, and possibly the



ring given to his father by King Cadwy. His traits exactly duplicate those of his father, save for love's six virtues, which are each raised two points. His statistics should reflect those his father began with (if the player knows what those were), with a bonus of +2 on each to reflect his faerie heritage, and he receives a bonus of +10 to his Faerie Lore skill. In all other ways, generate the character normally.

### **The Wedding**

If both Ahvielle and her knight live, she begs him to put off the wedding for a couple of months while she either tends to the wounded Blevine or mourns for her death. When the wedding does come, it's held in spectacular style at Camelot itself. Queen Guenever has demanded the chance to play host to the wedding of Amren's daughter, and King Cadwy

has donated nearly a king's ransom to the wedding. He had offered it to Blevine for saving him and his men from the poisons of Bertelot, but she had no desire for wealth, and asked instead that he use the money to make Ahvielle's wedding a day never to be forgotten.

Make the most of the wedding, and don't hesitate to develop it into an adventure in its own right. Perhaps the whole romance cycle begins anew here as some other player knight is introduced to his lady love. Whatever

### **Beltane Meeting**

On Beltane Adriana comes from faerie to bring her lover back with her.



## *The Adventure of the Heart Blade*



else happens, include an Elegant Style Regal Tournament, a number of Large Regal Feasts, numerous cameos by important knights, and a chance for Ahvielle, her groom, and their closest friends, including Blevine and all the player knights, to dine daily with Arthur and Guenever.

If Ahvielle's knight ends this adventure with more than 8000 Glory, Arthur's personal wedding gift to him is an appointment to the Round Table, effectively filling the void left by Amren's death, though Amren's actual seat at the table was taken long ago. If not, the knight at least

has Arthur's attention as a future candidate for the appointment.

**Glory:** 1000 for a glorious death, either at the Battle of Whispering Knights or in the combined marriage/death of following Ahvielle into Faerie. 500 for marrying Ahvielle on earth, plus 100 to each of the couple for the pageantry which surrounds the event and 350 to Ahvielle's knight for successfully completing a seventh year of romance. Glory should also be awarded normally for events at the wedding, remembering that the knights have royal attention for any successful courtly skill rolls they make.





## The Adventure of THE CASTLE OF TEARS

by Garry Fay

**T**HIS ADVENTURE CAN BE set at any time during the third or fourth phases of the Pendragon Campaign. It is designed so that it can fit into an ongoing campaign or be played as an adventure in itself. The meeting with the knight on the bridge can occur as player knights are travelling to or from a tournament, or are simply riding across the land in search of fame and glory, etc.

The adventure is designed around one of the main incidents that occurs in the tale of Sir Tristram and the Lady Isolt at Castle Of Tears, called Castle Pleure by Malory. If the gamemaster is running his campaign so that the Pendragon legend is unfolding around the players, it is recommended that this scenario is set before Tristram and Isolt visit Castle Pleure. It will also be necessary in this case to either have Sir Brewnor and his wife escape the wrath of the player knights at the end of the adventure, or have another knight take over Castle Pleure and reinstate the onerous custom of Sir Brewnor after the adventure has concluded.



### Introduction

This adventure is set in the land of Cardigan, along the Western coast of Cambria. Away from the coast the land is fairly mountainous and savage Irish tribesmen inhabit the higher regions of the area. The nominal ruler of Cardigan is King Heidyn. He is vassal to no one. The Irishmen of Cardigan are organized into tribes which constantly quibble and war among themselves. On occasion they join for a short while to repel invaders.

To begin the adventure, the player knights are riding along the Cardigan Coast. They can be riding knight-errant in search of adventure, shipwrecked here as in the original Tristram story, or simply using the only north-south highway in Western Cambria.

### The Bridge Of Forgetfulness

The early morning mist has begun to recede as the knights ride along the Cardigan Coast. A small flock of swallows is startled into the air as the knights ride by. Ahead, outlined through the mist is an old stone bridge, which crosses the Aeron river. Visible across the bridge is a mounted knight. He holds up his hand and calls out a challenge to the approaching knights. [Heraldry. Success = the knight is Sir Diarmait, an Irish knight from Estregales.]

"If you wish to cross the bridge Sir Knights, you must first joust with me and unseat me from my horse. I have no wish to anger you Sir Knights, but it is my curse to challenge all knights that seek to cross this bridge and tell them of my tale."

"I am Sir Diarmait of Estregales and I am trapped here by the sin of pride. I first came upon this bridge as I was riding to Llanbadern Fawr with my betrothed. Saint Padern, head of the abbey there, was to marry my beloved and I. Upon this bridge I was so filled with love that I made a boast I now regret. 'There is none more beautiful in this world or other,' I said, 'than my own betrothed.' And she

#### Sir Diarmait

Sir Diarmait is an Irish Christian knight from Estragales. He has been trapped on the bridge over the river Aeron for many months while he has awaited the return of his betrothed.

SIZ 17	Move 3	Major Wound 18
DEX 11	Damage 5d6	Unconscious 9
STR 14	Heal Rate 3	Knock Down 17
CON 18	Hit Points 35	Armor 12
APP 16	Age 22	Glory 2370

Attack: Sword 16, Spear 17, Lance 16

Significant Traits: Chaste 17, Forgiving 16

Significant Passions: Honor 17, Amor (Kathleen) 20

Significant Skills: Awareness 19, Compose 14, Courtesy 16, Romance 18.

Horse: Charger, 6d6 damage



Sir Diarmait



Whenever knights such as yourselves approach, the words of challenge escape my lips and I must do battle. This is where the curse upon me becomes crueler still. Every time I am defeated, another memory of my lady is taken from me. My heart is still filled with love for her, yet I remember not her name, her face, or the times we spent together. Such is my tale, a tale I fear I am doomed to repeat until the end of days."

Sir Diarmait completes his tale and lowers the visor of his helm. The joust is for love. Sir Diarmait's Lance skill is 16. He will joust against the player knights as often as they wish. Glory for defeating Sir Diarmait is 10.

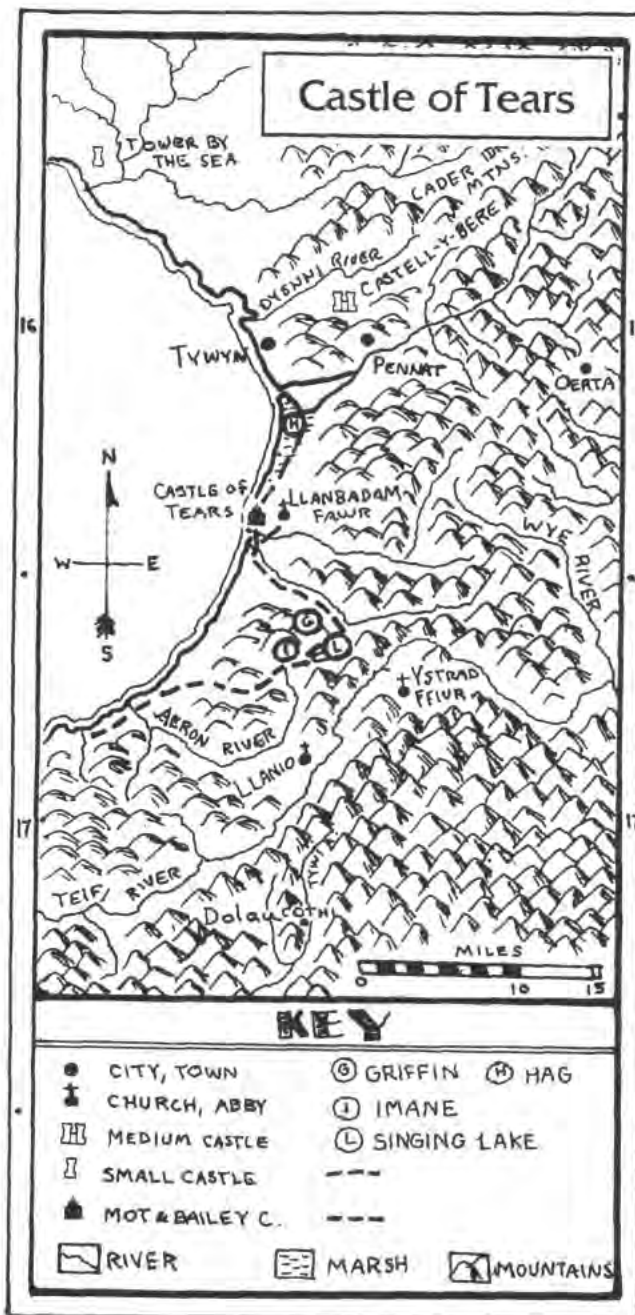
Player knights that defeat Sir Diarmait have a memory stolen from them. This is indicated by the player knight losing 1 point from any one of his skills, at the gamemaster's discretion. The memory lost is replaced by the image of a beautiful, red haired Irish lass named Kathleen. The player knight is entranced by the vision of loveliness that has entered his head. Her hair smells like fresh heather on a spring morning, her eyes sparkle like the moon on a clear lake and her voice is as soft as the dew kissed grass of the rolling hills. The player knight gains an Amor (Kathleen) at 3d6.

Player knights that gain a passion then make a [Merciful. Success = the knight tells Sir Diarmait the lady's name and describe to him her beauty. Failure = the knight may keep this knowledge for himself if he wishes.]

Sir Diarmait cannot break the curse that has been placed upon him until he is reunited with his betrothed and is married to her upon the bridge. Unfortunately, Sir Diarmait does not know this. It is up to the player knights to find this out, an opportunity they will have in the course of the adventure.

replied, "You speak the truth my love, for there is none fairer than I."

"Both my lady and I crossed the bridge, but upon reaching this side I found I could ride no further. I tried to break the geas that was laid upon me, yet it was to no avail. I am trapped here and can go no further. My lady went off to get aid for me...she never returned. I have been here for several months now.



## Two Brothers

The bridge fades in the distance as the player knights ride on. They continue riding for several hours before coming across two men heading towards them down the road. One man is afoot and leading an old sway-backed horse. The other is atop the horse. He is slumped against its neck, coughs, and moaning loudly as though in pain. Both men are dressed in peasant's clothing.



### The Hag's Breath

The breath of the Yr Hen Wrach confers the wasting disease upon those predisposed toward cruel behavior. When breathed upon by the hag, a victim must roll [Cruelty. Succeeds = he contracts the wasting disease.] The victim develops a black and swollen mass in both armpits, a sickly yellowish complexion, a disturbing cough, exceptionally foul breath, and generally failing health. Each morning the victim loses 1d3 hit points. Once he has taken enough damage from the wasting disease to equal one-and-a-half times a major wound, he becomes bed-ridden and cannot rise. When hit points drop beneath the unconscious level he falls asleep and never awakens, finally dying when they reach zero. First Aid and Chirurgery are of no help.

There is no cure, other than finding the Yr Hen Wrach and removing the faerie thorn. Once the hag is cured, the victims of the wasting disease will be cured also, and will recover hit points at their usual rate.

The peasant pulls his horse to the side of the road as the knights come closer. He fears that he has angered the knights by baring their path. As they approach, the player knights make [Awareness. Success = the knight notices a yellowish complexion on the man upon the horse.] Those who succeed may roll [Chirurgery. Success = the affliction appears to be the plague, or some similar disease.]

The peasant leading the horse is named Gwynn, and the man slumped against the horse's neck is his brother, Pwyll. Both men are farmers from the village Borth, at the mouth of the Dovey River.

When spoken too, Gwynn stutters a little, out of fear. The stutter gradually disappears as his confidence grows.

"S-S-Sorry Sirs," he says to the approaching knights, "I d-d-didn't mean to get in your w-way. I's just t-taking poor Pwyll here to the wise woman. He's sick you s-see. No n-need for you to fear though s-sirs, tis Hag's Breath. It isn't contagious."

Having gained the knight's interest, Gwynn continues his tale. "Twas the night before his wedding that it happened. She comes to people in their sleep, you see. Sneaks up and breathes her foulness on them. You can't never tell who she's going to do it to. She breathed on me, but I didn't get the disease. Takes 'em a long time to die too. Took Math over two weeks before he went. I couldn't let that happen to Pwyll. That's why I'm going to Imane. If she can't help him, then he's dead for sure."

If asked, Gwynn tells the player knights that Imane is the local wise woman. She lives in a small hut at the foot of one of the nearby mountains. "Been there for years," he adds. "There's nothing that goes on in these parts that she don't know something about. I can show you the way, if you care to come."

Gwynn can lead the players to Imane, or give them directions to follow on their own.

### Imane The Wise Woman

The trip to the hut takes about six hours along a steep path. Rocky outcrops and thick brush cross the way to the hut, making riding here almost impossible. If they insist on riding, then have the players roll [Riding. Failure = the knight's horse stumbles.] Those who fail roll [Horsemanship. Failure = the player knight is thrown for 1d6 damage. Fumble = the horse has gone lame.]

Thin tendrils of grey smoke rise from the hut at the base of the tall peak. The tiny hut has been constructed from the debris of the surrounding wood. An old crone stands stooped outside of the fragile dwelling, gathering twigs and leaves. She looks up at the sound of the approaching knights and hobbles to the front of the small hut. "What do you want?" she demands in a cackling voice.

Have the players make [Awareness. Success = the knights notice that white cataracts cover the eyes of the old woman. She is blind.]

Once the player knights make their introductions and inform the woman of the reason for their visit. "Very well," she says begrudgingly, "I'll tell you what I can. Come in...and bring some wood with you."

### Inside The Hut

A large pot hangs over a pile of glowing embers at the far side of the hut. Its thick, putrid smell fills the inside of the tiny dwelling. Imane walks to the simmering concoction, gives it a stir, tastes it, and adds several leaves to the pot. She hobbles over to the Pwyll and places a withered hand upon the young man's brow. Imane gently opens the young man's mouth and hovers over him. Finally she turns to Gwynn. "There is nothing I can do to aid your brother man of Borth. The Yr Hen Wrach has breathed her blackness upon him and it is beyond my power to cure him. I shall give you something to ease his pain and allow him a pleasant death if you wish. More than this I cannot do."

Imane turns to the player knights. "What would you have of me Sir Knights. I don't think you came here simply to see to the needs of the young farmer."

Imane nods knowingly as the knights recount their meeting with Sir Diarmait upon the bridge. When the player knights finish their tale, Imane stands and wanders over to the simmering pot.

"There is not much I can do for you either Sir Knights, except grant you what little knowledge I have." The old crone fills a small earthen bowl with the foul smelling brew. "Will you join me Sir Knights?" she asks. After offering her



## A Night Encounter

Any night that the player knights camp along the road, they are visited as they sleep. As each knight comes on watch, he must roll his [Energetic. Failure = he falls asleep]. If no watch is set, or when everyone on watch has failed and the entire camp is asleep, then the Yr Hen Wrach strikes. She silently creeps into camp, leans over the knight on watch, and breathes her fetid breath into his face. The victim must make roll his [Cruelty. Success = he catches the wasting disease from the hag.] If he fails his Cruelty then have him roll [Awareness. Success = he wakes to the image of the hag's gaping mouth, breathing a fetid black cloud into his own.] The hag continues from victim to victim until someone awakens and shouts a warning.

The hag uses her avoidance of 30 to escape confrontation and run into the dark, where she cannot be found. The Yr Hen Wrach returns each night that they sleep outdoors to try again. Do not be dismayed if somehow the knights slay her at this time; come sunrise her body has magically disappeared, and she returns the next night whole and healed to strike again. The player knights may want to put multiple people on each watch each night to ensure that at least someone stays awake.

The next morning, inform any victims of the wasting disease that they are feeling sickly, and have them mark off 1d3 hit points.



broth to the knights, which tastes as bad as it smells, Imane walks back to where she was sitting and continues. "I am an old woman and have seen a great deal. What you tell me of sounds like a faerie curse. It was most likely laid upon your brother knight by one of the faerie folk in payment for their prideful words."

"The curse can be broken simply enough. The knight and his lady must be reunited and married upon the bridge. But the lady has been hidden, for she bore the curse also. Her love was twisted to hate and her true self hidden by glamour. The Lady Kathleen is now the Yr Hen Wrach, the hag of Borth that preys upon victims in the night. I can tell you how to return the Lady Kathleen to her true form, but there is a price."

"Further around this mountain is a beautiful clear lake, and on the shores of that lake grow the most succulent blackberries in all of Cambria. I love them dearly, and wish to gather them, but cannot, for upon the mountainside has come to roost a fearsome griffin. If you will travel there and slay the griffin and return with a baskets of blackberries, I will tell you all you need to know."

"Travel around the base of this mountain until you come to a small lake. From the lake leads a ridge up the mountainside. Follow that and you will find the griffin nest. One warning though, do not tarry there overnight, because sometimes it is said you can hear the faeries singing beneath the moonlit waters."

### At the Lake

Imane takes the player knights to a small narrow path that runs along the base of the mountain. The path twists and turns around large outcroppings of rock. After riding for about four hours, the player knights arrive at the shore of the Singing Lake. The lake is about 300 yards wide. Toward the mountain side of the lake is a small clearing where the knights can rest their horses. Growing up the mountainside is a thick bramble of blackberry bushes. The woods grow thickest upon the shore across from the clearing. The waters

of the lake are clear and still. All is silent within this area. No birdsong is heard and no wind blows through the surrounding trees. Beside the clearing is a small outcrop of rock that provides them with an ideal place to rest and plan.

Have player knights who explore the area roll [Hunting. Success = the knight can find no large game tracks, nothing over the size of a squirrel.] The berries are easy enough to pick, requiring only two hours to fill a basket, but the griffin will be more difficult to deal with.

### The Griffin

The knights may elect to climb after the griffin, or may try to entice it to the clearing where they can fight it from horseback. Staking out a horse or other large game would work. In such a case, roll a d20 for each day that the horse is staked out. On a result of one through five, the griffin is hungry that day and will come to claim its dinner.

With a great shriek the griffin announces its arrival, swooping high above the trees. The griffin circles the horse once, then stoops to the attack. It tries to fly off with the bait to the mountainside, but if the horse has been securely tethered, the griffin is unable to do

so. Instead the great beast sits atop the dying horse and rips out great chunks of horseflesh with its beak. If knights attack it will defend its prey. Should a knight be knocked from the saddle, the griffin takes the opportunity to steal his mount instead and flies up to its nest with the terrified horse. If at any point the griffin's accumulated damage totals more than half its hit points, it gives up the fight and flies up the mountainside to its nest, forcing the knights to climb after it.

### Up the Mountain

Horses cannot follow the difficult mountain path to the griffin's nest, and must be left behind in the clearing. If the knights fear a griffin attack in their absence, they may think to tether their horses in the thick grove, which by day is fully of this side and not the other. The climb to the griffin's lair takes two hours of laborious trekking, made the more difficult by the weight of the knights' armor. Finally the





## Griffin

SIZ 40	Move 14 (fly)	Major Wound 25
DEX 20	Damage 8d6	Unconscious 16
STR 40	Heal rate 7	Knockdown 40
CON 25	Hit Points 65	Armor 10

Avoidance: 30

Modifier to Valor: -5

Glory to Kill: 250

Attacks: 2 clawed paws @ 17 each against one or two targets; or 1 grapple @ 10, whereupon it flies upward and drops the hapless foe. Both forms of attack are done while swooping from the air.

path breaks onto a gently-sloped clearing, at the far end of which is visible a great nest of boulders and uprooted trees woven into a wall twenty feet high. The knights have a few minutes to catch their breath and plan their next action. If one of them climbs the nest, or in a short while when the breeze changes to blow their scent toward the griffin, the great bird will awaken.

A loud screech suddenly shatters the silence of the mountainside as the griffin emerges from its nest. It lifts its monstrous head and bellows once more. With a swift leap the beast launches itself into the air. It stretches its wings and glides upon the winds high above. The eagle eyes of the enormous beast look downwards and spy the knights standing outside its lair. Another screech fills the air as the griffin extends its long claws and soars towards the knights.

Refer to the griffin's statistics nearby to conduct the fight. The combat should prove difficult, although not impossible. Once the griffin receives half its hit points in damage, or if it has already been so injured in a prior fight, it breaks off the attack and flies up into the air to land further up the mountainside, where it preens and licks its wounds. Require Energetic rolls if the knights wish to climb after the griffin. [Energetic. Failure = the knight is too tired to climb right now.] If any knight manages to draw near, the griffin lifts off into the sky again and comes to rest in a different spot, still within view of its nest. Have any knight who has climbed above the height of the nest roll his [Awareness. Success = he sees a young griffin chick in the nest.] The chick would be obvious to any knight who actually climbs into the nest itself.

As with eagles, its more mundane cousins, the griffin will protect its young. This is the key to getting the griffin to stay and fight. The griffin will attack any knight who enters its nest, and remain to fight to the death. Knights who wish to climb into the nest must spend 1d3 minutes and make a Dex roll, minus ten for wearing armor. Those who succeed

make it within, while those who fail fall for 1d6 damage and must try again. Knights could of course climb without armor, but they will have to face the griffin in that state. The griffin attacks as soon as any knight enters the nest, and attacks exclusively those knights in the nest. The chick is unable to defend itself; there is no glory reward for slaying it. Possibly the knights may think to offer it for Queen Guenever's menagerie, but that is outside the bounds of this adventure.

**Glory:** 250 for defeating the Griffin.

## Triumphant Return

When the griffin is defeated, the knights can climb back down to the lake and return to the hut of Imane. Without some token to prove they have defeated the Griffin, such as the head or a claw, Imane will not believe they have slain the beast. In such a case she denies them the information they seek and sends them out again to complete their task.

Assuming they return triumphant, Imane is very pleased to greet them. "Thank you knights for the service you have done me. Now in answer to your questions, you must confront the Yr Hen Wrach by day in order to defeat

## The Singing Lake

Should anyone wait by the lake on the night of the full moon, they may find themselves drawn to the Other Side. If the knights spend a night there and the game master is not certain whether it is the full moon, roll 1d20. On a result of 20, the moon is full.

On such a night the full moon rises upon the horizon, its light bathing the still lake in its silver glow. Long ribbons of moonlight stretch across the surface of the lake towards the outcropping where the player knights sit. The waters of the lake begin to ripple, the silver ribbons of moonlight dancing upon the water's surface like the fluttering wings of butterflies. A small breeze blows across the water, and with the breeze comes the singing. Strange, sweet songs seem to rise from the lake itself. Sad songs of lost love seep from the cracks of the silent stones and songs filled with loss and longing waft upon the evening breeze. The songs and singing fill the clearing, washing over the player knights in rhythmic waves of harmony.

Players must roll [Prudent. Failure = the knight is magically enthralled, and yearns to find the source of these wonderful voices. He is drawn into the lake by the faerie song.] [Fumble = he is obsessed with entering the lake, and will fight anyone who tries to stop him.] An enthralled or obsessed knight's companions can try to prevent him from entering the lake by holding him down, tying him up, or knocking him unconscious until the sun rises in the morning. Each round a knight is in the lake he must make a DEX roll to remain afloat, or he suffers 1d6 drowning damage. Metal armor subtracts 10 from this DEX roll.



her. She dwells near the cliffs of Cardigan Bay. Northeast of here you will find a river. Follow it to the Cardigan Coast, and then head north. Take the left fork just before Llanbardern Fawr and search for her there. You will not be able to conquer her by force of arms alone. More I do not know. Journey well, Sir Knights."

It is a day's ride from along the river to the main road. The player knights can either take the river route, (Riding rolls needed to reach the coast by nightfall), or they can return via the southwest route to the coastal road, which will add an extra day to their travel. Either way they must spend a night camping along the road.

## The Fork In The Road

After several hours riding upon the Cardigan Coast road once more, the player knights finally come to the fork mentioned to them by Imane. The main road leads straight ahead and appears well used, the left hand road is rough and overgrown with weeds. It is as though no-one has journeyed along this road for some while.

The main road leads to Llanbadarn Fawr, an abbey headed by Saint Padern. It is common knowledge among the knights of Arthur's court that St. Padern and Arthur do not like each other. This animosity stems from an incident in the king's early years of rule when he once tried to seize a cloak from St. Padern. The monk called upon God for help, and Arthur was sunk into the earth until he apologized.

## Llanbadern Fawr

Llanbadern Fawr (116) is the name of the abbey headed by St. Padern. St. Padern is an extremely pious man and has little time for those that do not express the same love of God as himself. St. Padern dislikes knights, and likes even less those that serve Arthur. If the player knights visit Llanbadarn Fawr they receive a courteous, yet cold reception.

They are invited in and given food, and allowed to sleep on the tables in the main hall if they request hospitality. That evening before dinner, Saint Padern denounces pagan pride and selfishness. He tells the story of Androcles and the lion. It is a story of kindness repaid, in which the slave Androcles happens upon a wounded lion and plucks a thorn from its foot. Later, when Androcles is captured by the Romans and thrown into the lion's den, Androcles encounters the same lion, who refuses to harm him in repayment for his earlier merciful deed.

The player knights are also informed that St. Padern has banned anyone from riding along the western road, in order to protect them from the evil that dwells within that part of the country.

St. Padern's order refers to the evil pagan influences of that area, which manifest themselves both as the hag in the swamp and as the onerous custom of castle Pleure. The local priests do not go into details, merely warning them to, "stay away from there. It holds nothing you could want." No one here knows anything of faerie curses, seeing only the evil that dwells in man himself.

## Asking for Help

It is possible that by this time the knights have contracted the wasting disease from the breath of the hag. Or they may return for Saint Padern's advice as the disease progresses and they grow more desperate.

Padern tells them that it is their cruelty that is killing them, and asks them if they learned the lesson of mercy from the story of Androcles and the lion. If they recount the story of their search for the hag, then he tells them that they must find a way to show mercy toward her.

## A Meeting On The Road

Small clouds of dust rise from the hooves of their horses as the player knights ride along the old left fork towards the Cardigan Coast. The thunderous roar of crashing waves can be heard over the sound of the galloping hooves, yet another sound emerges also.

The players roll [Awareness. Success = they hear the sound of barking hounds coming from ahead of them.]

Three large, brown wolfhounds come racing down the road toward the knights. A man on horseback gallops behind them, calling for them to 'heel.' The three hounds come to an abrupt halt directly in front of the player knight's mounts. They bare their long, white teeth and growl from deep in their throats. [Horsemanship. Failure = the horse leaps and skitters uncontrollably.] Those who fail roll [DEX. Failure = the knight is thrown from the saddle for 1d6 damage, and his horse flees into the distance.]

Sir Brewnor

The hounds continue to stand in the center of the road and growl at the player knights and their mounts. The man who had been galloping after the hounds rides up to the knights and orders the hounds to 'heel' once more. He is dressed as a noble in hunting leathers. Several freshly caught





## Lord Brewnor and Lady Melior of Castle Pleure

### Lord Brewnor

Sir Brewnor, the lord of Castle Pleure, is a knight of Pictish Pagan origin. He owes his fealty to queen Margawse of the Orkneys, although his loyalty is not very strong. His strong pagan faith demands that he continue the maiden-judging custom of Castle Pleure, lest he and his wife fall victim to an evil faerie curse, or so he believes.

SIZ 19	Move 4	Major Wound 16
DEX 17	Damage 6d6	Unconscious 8
STR 18	Heal Rate 3	Knock Down 19
CON 16	Hit Points 35	Armor 12 + 6 pt shield
APP 19	Age 41	Glory 4217

Attack: Sword 19, Mace 17, Lance 19

Significant Traits: Lustful 19, Arbitrary 18, Selfish 17, Pious 16

Significant Passions: Love (Melior) 18, Hospitality 17

Significant Skills: Courtesy 19, Flirting 17, Folk Lore 18

### Lady Melior

Lady Melior of Castle Pleure is an extremely vain woman. She can not abide another woman more beautiful than her, and must always compare herself to others. She compulsively looks at herself in the mirror, searching for some minor flaw which may be her undoing. This is not her fault, however, but the result of her husband's insistence of continuing the onerous maiden-judging custom of Castle Pleure.

SIZ 9	Move 2	Major Wound 12
DEX 14	Damage 3d6	Unconscious 5
STR 9	Heal Rate 2	Knock Down 9
CON 12	Hit Points 21	Armor 0
APP 21	Age 27	

Attack: Knife 5

Significant Traits: Proud 18, Selfish 16

Significant Passions: Love (self) 18, Love (Brewnor) 17

Significant Skills: Play Harp 17

pheasants dangle from his saddle. Two of the hounds obey his command, the third continues to growl. The man dismounts, grabs the disobedient hound by the back of its neck and forces its nose to the ground. "Heel!" he commands once more. The dog finally obeys his master's order and falls silent. The man turns and bows formally. "My forgiveness Sir Knights. The hounds are unused to riders upon this road. I trust they have harmed you not. I am Sir Brewnor, Lord of Castle Pleure. My castle lies further on, allow me to offer you the hospitality of my home in apology for the behavior of my hounds." Sir Brewnor walks to his mount, removes the pheasants from his saddle and holds them aloft. "Besides," he adds, "it has been a fine days hunting for me and I wish to share my good fortune."

Sir Brewnor also offers to send some of his castle staff out to find any of the player knight's horses that have run off. The stable hand returns in a few hours with any errant horses.

Sir Brewnor is an extremely handsome man. As each of the player knights introduce themselves to him, he gives a small bow. The Lord of Castle Pleure has a warm smile and a mischievous gleam in his eyes, almost like that of a little child's. He is overjoyed at the prospect of having visitors at his home. "It has been many long months since any dared to ride this road," he tells the knights. "Since the hag has begun her wanderings, none dare to travel here. My castle has been empty too long and my dear wife craves news of the world beyond our walls. It shall be good to hear new voices in my halls. I shall order a feast in honor of my successful hunt and my guests."

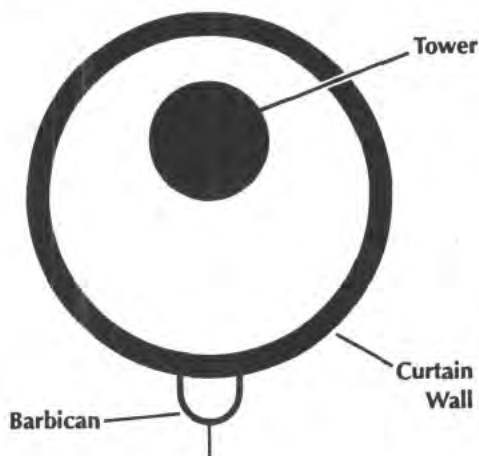
The ride back to Castle Pleure takes about an hour. It is an extremely pleasant and friendly journey. Sir Brewnor continually praises the good fortune that brought the knights to him on the day of his most successful hunt and trades tales of past adventures with them. He also asks the knights for any information they may have about the goings on of any of the royal courts. With every new piece of news gained, Sir Brewnor claps his hands and smiles. "My Lady Melior will love to hear that, Sir. You must remember to tell it to her over dinner."

## Castle Pleure

Castle Pleure (116) is a small castle consisting of a central stone keep built on a motte, surrounded by a round stone wall. As Sir Brewnor and the player knights approach, a call comes up from the rampart announcing the return of Sir Brewnor. The gates are pulled open and Sir Brewnor leads the player knights into his home. A young herald runs across the courtyard from the inner keep to greet Sir Brewnor and the knights. "Rhodri," says Sir Brewnor to the young herald, "take care of these good knight's horses and inform the cook that we shall have guests for dinner. Make sure that word is taken to her ladyship that we have guests also." The young lad runs off to do his lord's bidding. "Come my friends," says Sir Brewnor to the knights, "I have a fine bottle of wine I have been saving for a special occasion. I can think of no better reason to partake of it than to welcome new friends." Sir Brewnor leads the player knights into the main keep.



## The Castle of Tears



The great hall of the keep is spartan and somber. The dark stone walls are devoid of decoration except for a few tapestries stitched in dull shades of brown and grey, and a

single, ornate silver mirror hung upon the wall. Thick wooden beams constructed of dark wood cross the ceiling overhead, adding to the gloomy atmosphere of the inner hall. A large oaken table dominates the center of the room. Sir Brewnor casts his eyes over the great hall. "Light," he calls, "we require light." An old servant runs into the hall from the kitchen. Sir Brewnor grabs an unlit torch from one of the wall sconces and thrusts it at the servant. "We have guests Eudaf, let us shake off the gloom that has sat in these halls for the past months. Light the torches so that we can make these knights welcome. Then I wish you to get Dw-yai. I would have him play for us this evening. Tonight the halls of Castle Pluere shall once more be filled with music and laughter."

The servant Eudaf carries a pitcher of fresh water and bowl as lord Brewnor leads the player knights upstairs to his private chambers. He fills the bowl and lays out several towels for the knights' use. "Come, we shall drink and talk while you clean yourselves for dinner," says Sir Brewnor. [Hospitality. Success = the knight realizes that it is a great honor for the lord to offer his guests the hospitality of his private chambers.]

Eudaf bows to Sir Brewnor and scurries from the room. Sir Brewnor crosses to a large cabinet, opens it and pulls forth some wine and goblets. "There is nothing better to

## The Arthurian Custom

by Greg Stafford

*"Sir," said the old knight, "this is the old custom of this castle, that when a knight cometh here he must needs fight with our lord, and he that is the weaker must lose his head. And when that is done, if his lady that he bringeth be fouler than our lord's wife, she must lose her head, and if she be fairer proved than is our lady, than shall the lady of this castle lose her head."*

— Le Morte D'Arthur, VIII, 25.

Strange and dangerous customs, like those mentioned above, are often found in Arthurian literature. These strange encounters are always unusual activities, usually with beings who operate by rules which are outside of normal human expectations. Everyone in Arthurian literature who encounters these strange customs simply engages it, and usually overcomes it. Abolishing them becomes the entire point of the adventure story. These strange, magical encounters are typically Arthurian. Yet, the origins of these are not clearly known.

The Arthurian storytellers inherited tales which are rooted in ancient pagan practices. Stories of ancient gods and Pagan secrets were retold without the magic. The gods were turned

into superhuman heroes, and adapted to the times. The literary style of ancient days was narrative, and generally did not explain why something went on in a tale. Similarly, participants did not ask "why," except to be told it was a custom. Thus inside the stories, knights encounter these strange things without question.

Outside of the stories, the medieval redactors and copyists did not know the literary or mythical roots of these tales. Maybe the earliest raconteurs who spread their reformed Celtic legends around the Norman world remembered some of the mystical sense. But I do not sense that Chrétien had any conscious idea of the mythic sense of these tales. They were stories, sometimes pretty and sometimes frightening, which were appreciated, I think, without knowing why.

They (whether story knights or real authors) had no need to explain these things, or to understand them. Their task was simply to entertain. The storytellers, however, had it easy. They did not have players armed with modern research and theory to question them, or characters with a free will.

Thus game masters need more information to make it run smoothly. No one really knows where these strange events began. Some understanding can be uncovered with a little bit of modern academic inspection. Put another way, I can make up a plausible explanation. Here it is.

*continued*



welcome new friends with," says Sir Brewnor, "than fine wine. A local brew to be sure, but a fine wine none the less." Sir Brewnor offers a goblet to each of the knights. Player knights who have no wish to drink of the wine must make successful Temperate rolls. Failure indicates that they have succumbed to the heady aroma of the wine and drink of it. Sir Brewnor continues to pour wine in honor of his guests. Player knights that have already had a taste of the wine must make Indulgence checks. A successful Indulgent roll indicates that the player knight continues to drink the wine with Sir Brewnor until there is none left. Sir Brewnor does not have a great supply of the wine, so there is no fear of the player knight becoming drunk before dinner. Indulgent knights are fairly happy by the time dinner begins however.

Sir Brewnor continues entertaining the player knights for an hour or so. He recounts tales of his youth and his early years as a knight. He encourages the player knights to do the same, and to tell the tales of their latest adventures.

### **Dinner At Castle Pleure**

Sunset approaches and Eudaf re-enters the hall. "Dinner is being served my lord," he announces. "The Lady Melior has instructed me to inform you that she will meet you in the great hall."

"My friends," says Sir Brewnor, "now you shall see the true treasure and beauty of my home...the Lady Melior." Sir Brewnor leads the knights downstairs into the main hall.

Fine silverware has been laid out for the lord and lady of Castle Pleure and their guests. A blazing fire has been built in the hearth at the far side of the room, its flickering flames illuminating the room in a dull red glow. Sir Brewnor ushers the player knights into the room and shows each of them where they are to sit. If a player knight begins to seat himself at the table, Sir Brewnor places a restraining hand upon his shoulder. "Please Sir," he says, "it is the custom of my house that none shall seat themselves at my table before my wife. It is a custom I hold dear."

The player knight makes a Courtesy check. [Courtesy. Success = the knight follows the custom described by Sir Brewnor.] Player knights that fail this roll have the option of seating themselves or not. Player knights that do not adhere to Sir Brewnor's custom are treated coldly by him for the duration of their stay and their Courtesy is at -5 for the duration of this adventure.

"I hope I haven't offended you Sir Knights," continues Sir Brewnor, "I should have informed you of this custom beforehand." Sir Brewnor then attempts to steer the player knights into a conversation about the particular customs of their own homes and those of places they have visited. He is

### **Literary Origins**

The method which I use is to act as if literary precedents are an actual magical history. Thus in earlier Pagan times, the events of myth and legend actually occurred. The coming of the Romans and, later, of Christianity divided the mythical world from the normal world. Some of the residue left behind are the customs which are finally destroyed by the Arthurian quests.

### **Pattern**

Customs all follow certain patterns. For instance, they are often imposed upon travellers who seek hospitality. Someone at the site must always warn the traveller that there is an unusual custom practiced here, often called "evil" or "strange" or "ancient." However, no one is obliged to say what the unusual custom is before hand, only that it exists.

The traveller then makes his choice: stay and accept the custom, or go elsewhere. If accepted, he agrees to undertake the custom.

Coercion is sometimes used. The traveller must voluntarily accept this task. The executors of the custom do not have to force others to fulfill it.

Likewise, we see that no knights ever apparently attempt to change the custom in any way except by fulfilling it. And, in fact, the only way a custom ever seems to be defeated is by fulfilling it.

Fulfillment is usually obtained through exercise of a virtue or passion which provides the hero with the necessary edge to win.

### **Analysis**

Viewed from a Pagan perspective, many of these tests, especially those pressed by women from underwater, take on a slightly different meaning.

The customs generally include:

- Anonymity. The host usually does not tell who she is, nor does anyone else. Just as often, the host does not ask who the guest is.
- Mystery. The actual test is never stated until it is time to perform it. People do not know what it is, or may actually be prevented from saying what it is by magic.
- Ambiguity. The test often has something about it, or within it, which is hidden, or unstated.
- Morality. The behavior of the tested person is important. Honesty is foremost, since he promises to undergo the custom.
- Guarantee. Payment is always made for a success, even if it means the death of the host.

When taken together, these can be seen as common components of affairs dealing with faeries. This does not mean that the inhabitants of these strange places are faeries. They are, in fact, the heirs of the faerie customs. They may or may not be Pagans. Ancient magical powers may be given to guardians or other actors in the forgotten mythic drama, but they are humans nonetheless.

### **Are Some Customs Evil?**

The practices often include components which shock civilized and/or Christian morality. Differences in Christian, Pagan, and Heathen morality explain some of these shocking activities.

*continued*



subtle in his direction and tries to get the player knights to agree that visitors to another's home are honor bound to follow the customs of that home.

The conversation continues for several minutes before being broken by the sound of footsteps outside the dining hall. Sir Brewnor turns towards the door and waits. The Lady Melior enters the room. Melior is a woman of stunning beauty. She is dressed in a low cut gown of deep blue velvet. Long tresses of raven locks flow to her hips and her emerald green eyes blaze brightly in the light of the flickering fire. She walks gracefully up to each of the player knights and extends her hand to each of them. "Be welcome," she says to the knights, "I hope my lord has treated you well."

Lady Melior is indeed beautiful. If any flaw were to be raised, it would be that perhaps her ears are a little over-large, but not alarmingly so. If a knight wishes to study her beauty, give his player an Awareness roll. [Awareness. Success = The lady is beautiful, but not to the degree of queen Guenever or Isolt. Her ears, for example, are overly pronounced.]

Sir Brewnor strides to his wife's side and takes her hand in his. "May I present to you, Sir Knights, my wife, the Lady Melior. The fairest woman in Sugales. She is the true beauty of Castle Pleure. All other things of beauty pale

when compared to her. That is why I have none of them within my halls." Sir Brewnor then escorts Melior to her seat. He pulls out her chair and allows her to sit. Once the lady has been seated, he bids the player knights to do likewise. Have the players roll their [Awareness. Success = the lady glances at herself in the mirror, which has been positioned so that she can see herself in it from her seat at the table.]

The meal is magnificent. The player knights are served pheasant coated in an almond and honey sauce, pastries filled with an assortment of fruit and small, spiced cakes. A wine, almost as fine as the one served earlier is also passed around. Throughout dinner Melior asks the player knights about their homes, their families and the news from the various courts. Lady Melior is very interested in the fashions at King Arthur's court. "Tell me," She says, "are the ladies all as beautiful as me where you come from?" The knights may respond as they like, receiving an appropriate Honest, Deceitful, or Courtesy check as their answers dictate.

The dinner ends and Sir Brewnor calls for Dwyai. A portly man carrying a small lute enters the hall. "Sing for us Dwyai," commands Sir Brewnor, "it has been too long since these halls heard the sound of your voice."

Human sacrifice is condemned by both civilized and chivalrous beliefs. Even the danger of human sacrifice is unacceptable. Current human morality does not care that the victim may be a volunteer, or that the welfare of the community and the fertility of the entire land depends upon this practice. Thus any custom which threatens the lives of the visitors is considered to be an "evil custom."

The promiscuous sexual practices of faerie also disrupt the Roman/Christian morality. In faerie, all exercise of generative powers is good, and frequent exercise helps keep nature flowing. But the faerie site which has been dedicated to sacredness of sexuality for centuries becomes a sticky den of depravity for the chaste Christians. The sacred prostitutes there, dedicated to the liberation and celebration of life through ecstatic worship, become for Christians demonic seductresses: lamia and succubae, or other blood-sucking threats.

These are actually neither good nor evil, but possess the neutrality of a mountain. They are magical tests are provided by Nature to scrutinize people, whether human or faerie, for their divine powers. The purpose of the test varies: some prepare heroes for further supernatural adventures; others guarantee the physical well being of the land; others qualify individuals as kings, warriors, poets, or druids.

On the other hand, some tribal morality was quite selfish and at the expense of others. And even the ancients admitted that some dark, corrupt forces existed. These might provide the origin of a more sinister custom.

Finally, the stories mention that the devil often sets up traps for the unwary. These, too, might be customs.

## Ending the Custom

One duty of knights is to end evil customs. It seems that the only way to do this is to actually go through the entire process, and then outdo the test on its own terms.

For instance, during the Quest for the Holy Grail, the questors, including Amide, Percivale's sister, came to the Castle of the Leprous Lady. At this place maidens had to give a dish of blood to let the wicked lady regain her youth. Earlier (Malory 2, 12-16) a maiden had taken the test, but not died. Sir Galahad himself protested the custom, but even he, the Perfect Christian Knight, had to obey the rules of the custom. Amide then had her blood taken, and as a result joined the previous dozen other princesses who had died. But apparently the effects of such a perfect woman's blood was too much for the magic, which broke, causing the castle to fall upon itself, killing all the inhabitants.

Sometimes completing the tasks seems heinous. However, they are actually just, according to the Law of Faerie. No Honor is lost, no arbitrary checks gained, and no evil gained for participating in the custom.

For instance, when Tristram and Isolt are forced into the custom of the fatal beauty contest at Castle Pleure, they obey all the terms, including the final payment: beheading the wicked lady. The dilemma of this particular custom is presented nicely for player knights in "The Adventure of the Castle of Tears," in this book.

## Defying the custom

Knights can refuse to participate. This is unheard of in the literature, but the authors did not have player characters to consider.

*continued*



Dwyai begins to sing, his deep baritone voice filling the hall. After several songs, Lady Melior turns to the player knights. "My lords," she asks, "would you honor us also with some entertainment?" Where appropriate, Lady Melior accompanies the knight with her harp.

Player knights that wish to entertain must make Orate, Singing or Play Musical Instrument rolls. A critical success in any of these rolls will gain the Lady Melior's favor. She will grant the lucky knight a kiss upon the cheek.

When the entertainment has finished, Melior asks the player knights to recount the circumstances that brought them to Castle Pleure. It would be unusual that player knights would not wish to relate their most recent adventures. These tales of glory are, after all, the manner in which a knight's fame and Glory are disseminated. Remind the players of this if they are not forthcoming. It is important that at least one of them is provoked into telling the story of their current quest.

When the knights have finished telling their tale to Melior, she grabs hold of her husband's arm. "This is horrible," she says, "that poor girl. We must aid her my lord."

Melior then turns to the player knights. "Sir knights, when you have freed the maiden from her curse you must bring her back here. I will find gowns and jewels for her. After the ordeal she has gone through you cannot send her to her betrothed in anything less than her true beauty. Your quest is a noble one and I too wish to give my aid." Melior

appears very sincere in her wish to aid Kathleen. If the player knights are hesitant, she perseveres with her request, insisting that, "there are things one woman can do for another that men know little about."

"Promise me this then," says Brewnor, "I will lend you a boat for your trek through the swamp, if you will promise to stop here on your way back through and tell us of your adventure."

The dinner eventually comes to an end. Sir Brewnor offers the knights lodging in his main hall for the night. The night passes uneventfully and the knights enjoy a pleasant sleep. Sir Brewnor and Melior meet the knights at breakfast and give them fresh provisions for their journey. Rhodri brings the player knight's horses from the stable, (horses that ran off yesterday have since been found and returned to Sir Brewnor's stable). Sir Brewnor walks up to each of the knights, grips their hand and places his other hand upon their shoulder. "Good luck my friends," he says, "my thoughts go with you. Follow this road to the north a few hours and you will find the boatman. He will take you wherever you need to go." The knights may notice, as they depart, that they have met no women in the castle except for Lady Melior.

The road from Castle Pleure continues onwards for several miles before becoming nothing more than a narrow, overgrown track. Dank air wafts around the player knights and marshy ground surrounds the narrow track. Travel slows as the hooves of the knight's mounts sink further and

For instance, imagine that Sir André, one player knight in a group, has heard that The Adventure of the Lord of the Bridge is nearby. It is said to be very dangerous, with some strange and unknown custom, and all the local knights avoid it. Sir André goes anyway, and defeats Sir Equinox at the challenge. Sir Equinox then congratulates Sir André. For what? "Why, you are now Lord of the Bridge! It is the custom here!" He explains that Sir André must remain there, defending this crossing for the Lady of the Bridge, until he is defeated, whereupon he will be replaced by the newest victor. In the meantime, Sir André will be treated like royalty by the countess lounging in the pavilion yonder, who enforces this ancient custom. In Malory the knight does the expected, and remains to fill the custom. However, Malory did not have player characters.

"Stay here! Forget it!" says Sir André. "Everyone else is going off to find the Queen, and I'm supposed to sit here and wait for Glory? Forget it. I'm not staying. I'm going on."

What then? No gamemaster with a brain would try to make André's player change his mind. Instead, explain that if he does not do it he will be cursed. It is not the gamemaster's decision, but the natural function of the custom.

In faerie fact, the knight has broken the laws of Nature. Nature warps as a result. The Laws of Contagion indicate that the knight, as center of the unnatural effect, pollutes anything he has connections with. His life just gets more and more difficult, for no apparent reason (at least to the character), until he is persuaded to somehow make good the custom, or dies.

#### A typical sequence of deterioration might include:

- **Bad Luck.** Things just get worse and worse, harder and harder. All die rolls are reduced by 1d6 points per year, cumulative.
- **Physical Deterioration.** Life is hard, physically. Additional Aging Roll each year.
- **Bad Harvests.** Something always goes wrong with the crops before harvest. -1d6 on Harvest Results Table each year, with resultant modifiers to Childbirth, Horse Survival, etc.
- **Monster Attractor.** Bad faeries seem to notice you from a distance, and come to either assault you, to offer embarrassing deals, ask help for evil deeds, or betray you to authorities.
- **Excess of behavior.** This might be lust, hunger, thirst, or even cowardice. Add +1d6 per year to the appropriate Trait.
- **Passion.** A bad one, like Fear (faerie), or perhaps Hate (Liege). Start at 2d6+6.
- **Everyone has a "bad feeling" about you.** Everyone gets -1d6 Loyalty to you, and +1d6 Suspicious.

Other possibilities also exist, and are left to the creative gamemaster.

A word of warning: the intent here is not necessarily to kill player knights, but to provide a natural way of steering the characters within the *Pendragon* realm. Gamemasters should judge which effect is suitable for their campaign, and what precise strength to apply with it.



further into the wet, putrid smelling earth. Further riding becomes impossible. The further into the marsh the knights ride, the more difficult it is for their horses to raise their hooves from the entrapping mud and slush.

## Boating Across the Marsh

About the time that the knights are considering abandoning their mounts, they spy a hut on the edge of a deep, swampy marsh, with a boat tied up next to it. Sitting out front of the hut is a peasant, carving a tree limb into a boat pole. If they ask, he will take the knights into the swamp. The boat is large enough for all the knights and their gear, but their horses will have to stay behind. Let the knights decide whether one of them or a squire or two stays with the horses.

### Lady Melior

The lady admires her reflection in the mirror, perfect in all ways except, perhaps, for the overly large ears.

"So ye are lookin' fer the hag, are ye?" says the boatman, "Mind ye that ye don't let 'er breathe on ye, or ye'll catch a plague and die an awful death." He poles them out near to the lair, then drops them off on a spit of land. "Look over towards that way. Mind ye that ye stay to the path." he says, pointing out over the muddy expanse.

The player knights disembark and continue their journey on foot. The area is well lit by the sun overhead, yet the putrid smell and the cold, clammy mud of the marsh make



### Getting About in the Swamp

Travel in the swamp is very difficult for knights. It is muddy and muck-filled and hopelessly difficult to move about. Horses cannot be taken into a swamp, where they run the risk of becoming hopelessly mired and will have to be abandoned. If a knight insists on riding his horse into the swamp, have him roll [Horsemanship. Failure = his horse is engulfed and must be abandoned.] No amount of pulling can free the horse. Hopefully it was not his best destrier.

Knights should know better than to enter a swamp. Without a native guide they will quickly lose their way in the knee-deep mud and muck.

it an oppressive and gloomy place. After a fifteen minute journey on foot into the dank inner heart of the swamp, the player knights make Awareness rolls. [Awareness. Success = The knight spies a small pile of bleached bones sitting outside a cave off to their left.]

## The Yr Hen Wrach

Upon reaching the pile of bones, the player knights notice that the bones are those of small woodland creatures. Strips of decaying meat still hang from a few of the bones. A loud hiss shatters the silence of the swamp and a rustling sound is heard from the inside of the cave.

A tall, twisted shadow shambles along the cave towards the entrance. It moves into the light and the player knights see the twisted form of the Yr Hen Wrach. Long, thin wisps of red hair flow limply from the head of the gruesome creature, coming to rest upon its drooping breasts. The creature smiles a cruel, malicious smile, her black rotted teeth are long and pointed. "Who disturbs the rest of the Yr Hen Wrach?" asks the black-skinned hag. "Is it more meat for me to feed upon?" A cackling laugh echoes across the cave mouth as the Yr Hen Wrach shambles into the light and confronts the knights. She raises her ugly head, inhales deeply and breathes out a large billowing cloud of black, fetid mist. She then shambles towards the knights, her long, clawed fingers ready to rend them apart. Confronted here at her lair, she will not run away.

Upon sighting the Yr Hen Wrach the player knights make Valorous rolls with a -5 modifier. Player knights that are unsuccessful, are awestruck by the sheer ugliness of the creature and find themselves gripped in terror. They are unable to dodge the foul breath of the hag as she breathes upon them. Roll the hag's breath attack of 12 against all the knights who are temporarily frozen, as they are unable to avoid her. After the first round, knights can react as they wish.

If during this fight any knight is breathed upon and fails his Cruelty check, he may then roll his Merciful trait to

notice a large thorn protruding from a pustulant wound in the hag's foot. If the hag can be bound, knocked unconscious, or even slain, the player knights will have a chance to remove the thorn. To do so, the knight must roll [Merciful. Success = the thorn pulls free and the maiden awakens, tired but unharmed. Failure = the thorn will not come free.] Each knight may try only once.

When the player knights defeat the hag and her still form lies upon the wet earth of the swamp, they may try to remove the thorn. When they are successful, thick, black blood seeps from the wound. The flesh around the wound begins to tear and the flow grows stronger. The image of the hag fades, leaving behind the true form of the Lady Kathleen. Any living people still suffering from the wasting disease are cured, and begin to heal lost hit points naturally at their normal rate.

Kathleen is thin and frail, her beauty tarnished by the long months spent behind the image of the hag. She is very weak and has no recollection of how she came to be where she is. Her last memory is of leaving Sir Diarmait upon the bridge and going off to seek help. Her voice is croaky, her throat parched from lack of fresh water.

Player knights making successful First Aid rolls realize that Kathleen needs several days rest before rejoining her betrothed.

**Glory:** 100 for defeating the Yr Hen Wrach.

### Yr Hen Wrach

This hag seeks out people at asleep at night and breathes into their faces, giving them the wasting disease. She cannot be fought or captured at night, but must be confronted in the daytime. Slaying this hag is not a permanent solution. If she is killed and not cured, she will return again the next night though she were never injured.

SIZ 25	Move 7	Major Wound 30
DEX 8	Damage 8d6	Unconscious 13
STR 20	Heal Rate 5	Knock Down 25
CON 25	Hit Points 50	Armor 15
APP 3		

Modifier to Valorous: -5

Glory to kill: 100

Attacks: 2 claws @ 16 and Hag's Breath @ 12. The victim of the hag's breath must roll his [Cruelty. Success = he contracts the wasting disease.] He loses 1d3 hit points each day, until he eventually dies. See the description of the wasting disease earlier in this adventure.

Special: The Yr Hen Wrach is actually a beautiful maiden transformed by an evil faerie curse. If, during the day, a victim is breathed on by the hag and fails his Cruelty check, he then rolls his [Merciful. Success = the knight spies a large thorn protruding from a pustulant wound in the hag's foot.] If the hag is defeated and the thorn removed by another successful Mercy roll, she reverts back to the maiden Kathleen, unharmed.



## Lady Kathleen

Lady Kathleen is the young amour of Sir Diarmait. She is still weak from her time as the hag Yr Hen Wrach. She must rest before she can travel to meet her betrothed. Kathleen is very beautiful and sheltered, unwise to the world. She comes from Eregales, where she is of an Irish Christian background.

SIZ 10	Move 2	Major Wound 15
DEX 12	Damage 3d6	Unconscious 6
STR 9	Heal Rate 3	Knock Down 10
CON 15	Hit Points 25	Armor 0
APP 25	Age 17	

Significant Traits: Chaste 16, Modest 16, Trusting 17

Significant Passions: Amour (Diarmait) 20

Significant Skills: Chirurgery 17, Singing 15

## Return To Castle Pleure

The trip back to castle Pleure is uneventful. The group arrives as night begins to fall. Upon seeing the wretched state of Kathleen, Melior immediately takes charge of her, fussing over the young woman like a mother hen. The player knights spend several pleasant days in the castle awaiting Kathleen's recovery. Melior allows them to visit the young maiden for a short time each day if they wish. She does not allow them to tire the girl out however. Sir Brewnor takes the player knights on several hunts over the next few days, always remaining the most gracious of hosts.

On the evening of the fourth night after their return to the castle, the player knights are summoned to dinner. When the knights enter the dining hall, they make [Awareness. Success = they notice an extra place has been set upon the table.] If questioned about this, Sir Brewnor informs the knights that Kathleen has recovered well and shall join them for dinner. Sir Brewnor and the knights await the arrival of the two ladies.

## The Maiden Judging

Kathleen has indeed recovered. She enters the hall with Melior and is a picture of health and beauty. Her long, flame hued locks dance around her shoulders and her pale blue eyes shine like the still waters of a magical lake. Sir Brewnor escorts his wife to her seat and motions for one of the player knights to do the same for Kathleen. A magnificent feast is laid out upon the table. Kathleen is shy and demure during dinner. She thanks the player knights for their kindness. The meal finishes and Sir Brewnor taps the table for attention. "Sir Knights," he announces, "when first you dined within this room I told you of one of the customs of Castle Pleure. I shall now tell you of another. It is the

custom of my house that whenever a woman other than my wife sits at this table, she has a champion to speak for her. That champion and myself shall then judge each woman and determine which is the fairer. Which of you shall champion the Lady Kathleen?"

If more than one of the player knights wish to champion Kathleen, have them roll opposed Amor (Kathleen) Passions (which they may have gained at the beginning of the adventure). In the absence of such Passions, they may oppose their Valorous traits.

The champion is selected and Sir Brewnor continues. "Very well, let us begin." Melior rises from her seat and walks to the fire burning in the hearth at the far end of the room. She stands before the fire, its flickering light outlining the shapely curves of her figure. "Come sir," she says to the player knight championing Kathleen, "come closer and drink upon my beauty. Let your gaze wander over me and then try to deny that I am not the most beautiful woman you have ever seen. Speak truly Sir Knight, for nothing less beautiful than I is allowed to exist within my sight."

Have the champion roll his [Amor (Kathleen). Critical = Kathleen is the most beautiful, and he cannot say otherwise. Fumble = despite his amor for Kathleen, the Lady Melior is the more beautiful. Otherwise he may choose.]

## The Custom of the Maiden Judging

The maiden judging custom of Castle Pleure is of greater impact than it may seem to the modern reader. Customs, such as the rules of hospitality, or this maiden judging, are the law of the gods and are enforced by them. Those who break custom are subject to the displeasure of the gods, or of faerie. This is especially true in places where the pagan faith is still dominant.

To refuse to abide by the custom of the maiden judging, as onerous as it is, could bring dire and unpredictable hardship upon the player knights or their companions. In this instance, custom demands that whoever is found the least beautiful between Kathleen and Lady Melior must be beheaded. To participate in the judging, and then fail to behead the loser, invokes the curse of the Yr Hen Wrach, transforming the loser into the hag — this time without a convenient cure.

It is for this reason that Lord Brewnor challenges Kathleen's champion, should he choose her the more beautiful. It is Brewnor's hope that he can reverse the decision.

For the player knights to succeed, they must do two things. Kathleen's champion must choose her the most beautiful, and then must win the subsequent challenge match. With Kathleen the victor, he must then behead Lady Melior, or else she will haunt the demense of Castle Pleure forever as the Yr Hen Wrach.

If through some shortcoming Lady Melior is found the more beautiful, then the player knights must allow the beheading of Kathleen, or else she will become the hag again.



Whichever way the maiden judging goes, Sir Brewnor will issue a challenge to the player knight championing Kathleen. If the player knight judges Melior the more beautiful, then Sir Brewnor announces, "you have judged well my friend. Now we shall cut off the head of your lady so that my wife is not further offended by her plainness." It is anticipated that some player knight will come to Kathleen's defense. If so, then Sir Brewnor will take it as a challenge and offer to meet the knight in the courtyard to decide the issue.

If no one takes up Kathleen's cause, then Sir Brewnor beheads her on the spot, and the adventure is ended. Further combat may ensue, but he player knights have failed their quest to reunite the lovers.

If the player knight judges Kathleen the fairer, Sir Brewnor cries out. "You lie sir. All here can see that my wife is the more beautiful. You have insulted my wife, myself, and my house. I challenge you to combat sir."

If the player knight refuses to have anything to do with the maiden judging, Sir Brewnor accuses him of insulting the custom of his house and challenges the knight to combat anyway, the result of which will determine who among the two ladies is the most fair. "If you will not choose freely sir, then I shall make you fight to decide the issue."

The combat takes place immediately. Sir Brewnor orders servants to build a bonfire in the grounds of the central keep. He then tells the knight to prepare himself.

## The Combat

The roaring fire illuminates the whole of the inner keep. A ring of servants and footmen encircle the fire, creating a large arena in which combatants are to meet. Sir Brewnor strides to the center of the circle. "This knight," he says pointing to his adversary, "has insulted the customs of my house and my family. Now comes the time of reckoning. We shall battle to the death and the life of the woman we are championing shall be forfeit also should we lose. If I lose, then my wife shall die also and this castle shall belong to the victor. If I am victorious, then the life of the Lady Kathleen is mine and the companions of my foe shall ride from here, never to return. That is my decree." Sir Brewnor's words fade and are carried off by the night winds. He marches to the center of the circle, slams shut the visor of his helm and prepares for the coming combat.

The battle rages until one of the combatants lies dead upon the ground. The Glory for defeating Sir Brewnor is 250. Should the player knight be victorious, the gathered crowd erupts in a loud cheer. Melior walks to the knight and kneels at his feet. She throws her head back, showing the knight the pale flesh of her exposed neck. "My life is yours

Sir Knight, do what you will." The player rolls his [Just Success = he knows it is just to slay her, just as Lord Brewnor has slain many other maidens on her behalf.] If the player knight spares her, then Lady Melior screams and runs through the castle gate into the dark, where she transforms into the Yr Hen Wrach. [Awareness. Success = the knight sees her transform into a hag and crawl away into the darkness.]

Should Sir Brewnor be victorious, he commands two of his footmen to bring Kathleen to him. The guards walk towards Kathleen and begin to drag her to their lord. There are twelve foot-soldiers in Sir Brewnor's service, (Use standard foot-soldier statistics), all will fight to the death for their lord if the player knights attack.

As Kathleen is dragged to Sir Brewnor, the player knights have the option of saving her and battling their way out of the castle, or accepting Sir Brewnor's victory by riding away and leaving Kathleen to her fate.

Should they manage to rescue Kathleen from her fated death, they learn the folly of their actions the next night as she turns into the Yr Hen Wrach a second time. It is up to the game master whether the hag should follow to haunt the player knights, or if she will remain in the swamps of the Cardigan Coast. A second cure for her is beyond the scope of this adventure, and could provide the impetus for an entire other one, if the game master deems it at all possible.

**Glory:** 250 for defeating Sir Brewnor in mortal combat. 150 for ending the evil custom of Castle Pleure.

## Epilogue

If Kathleen has been saved by the player knights, she can be easily reunited with Sir Diarmait. A monk from Llanbadern Fawr can be found who will marry them upon the bridge and the curse shall be lifted. The two young lovers offer the hospitality of their home to the player knights whenever they wish. Sir Diarmait also offers his assistance to the player knights should they ever have need of him.

With Brewnor dead, Castle Pleure is abandoned and falls into the care of the player knights to do with as they wish. They need not reinstate the custom of the maiden judging, and indeed it would be cruel to do so. A thorough search of the castle grounds later on reveals the graves of several young ladies and their knights.

If lady Melior lost the maiden judging but was left alive, then she haunts the area of Castle Pleure as the Yr Hen Wrach.

**Glory:** 100 for reuniting the lovers and ending their curse.





## The Adventure of Morgan le Fay's Challenge

by Paul Cockburn

**T**HIS IS AN ADVENTURE which can take place anytime during the second or third phase of the Campaign. It is set in Logres and the environs of East Wood in Bedegraine Forest, near Nottingham (M-16). The player knights are introduced to Arthur's half-sister, the enigmatic Morgan le Fay, and asked to undertake a challenge for the honor of the women of her entourage, with the stipulation that they will be deemed to have failed if any harm or dishonor befalls the ladies of her party. Their quest is not a simple one, however.

Major characters in the adventure are: Morgan le Fay, her ladies-in-waiting, a Papal envoy, a minor lord and his household, a robber knight, an enchantress, sundry bandits and knights at a small tournament.



### An Encounter on the Road

This adventure can be used at any time the player knights are travelling through Logres. It starts with an encounter on one of the royal roads as the player knights come across a large wagon on the verge of tipping over, tilted alarmingly towards a ditch, with one wheel detached from its axle. Beyond, three horsemen dressed in tabards decorated in the arms of the Pope stand by as their horses graze beside the road. Several women are seated in the shade of a tree nearby, along with an impatient-looking gentleman in the red of a Cardinal of the Church. A wagoner stands by his stricken vehicle, scratching his head. As the player knights ride up, a sergeant at arms will step out from behind the wagon to hail them.

"Good knights, my Lord's wagon is in disrepair. It bears gifts from Rome to the Pendragon in Camelot. Could your squires spare a moment to help make repair?"

The player knights' appearance causes much excited chatter amongst the ladies, and some frantic and exuberant flustering in Italian by the Cardinal. It is clear they have suffered a long delay. Getting the wheel back on will not be too tricky once the squires bend their backs to lift the wagon, and the wagoner will be able to fasten the axle-pin sufficiently well to complete the journey to the next halt, where fuller repairs can be made.

Once the wagon is road-worthy, an exquisitely-dressed noblewoman steps forward, and pauses while the player knights bow and pay her due honor. She introduces herself as the Lady Morgan, half-sister to the King of Logres, Arthur. Her character sheet can be found on page 130 of *Boy King*.

"Knights, the accident which befell me here has delayed my arrival at the court of my brother, King Arthur, in Camelot. Since I can brook no further delay, I would be grateful if you would accompany me thereto."

Such a request cannot easily be denied...

During the journey, the player knights learn that Morgan is journeying to Camelot in the company of her ladies-

#### Cardinal Anselm

Anselm is Bishop of Forli, Italy, and is therefore Roman Christian. He is on a mission from the pope, escorting a shipment of goods to King Arthur. He is middle aged, somewhat portly, and always wears fine clothes of 10E value.

SIZ 10	Move 2	Major Wound 14
DEX 10	Damage 4d6	Unconscious 6
STR 11	Heal Rate 3	Knock Down 10
CON 14	Hit Points 24	Armor 1 (clothes)
APP 12	Age 40	Glory 2100

Attack: Sword 8, Dagger 8.

Significant Traits: Chaste 17, Forgiving 16, Temperate 17, Pious 16, Cowardly 13.

Significant Passions: Loyalty (Pope) 17, Love (God) 17.

Significant Skills: Awareness 10, Chirurgery 18, Courtesy 13, First Aid 14, Intrigue 10, Read Latin 13, Religion (Christian) 18.



in-waiting, escorting Cardinal Anselm, Bishop of Forli (a city in Italy) to Arthur's court. The Cardinal is engaged in some diplomatic mission on the Pope's behalf about which the player knights learn nothing. This mission has no direct bearing on the adventure, but might in itself be the starting point of another.

Make the most of the journey to introduce the player knights to the ladies-in-waiting (equal in number to the player knights), who are all courteous, attractive women. During any overnight stops, there is ample opportunity for the player knights to court the ladies along the lines that will ensnare them in Morgan's plan. There is also time for them to gain an impression of Morgan's quick temper, and the feeling that there is more to the visit of Cardinal Anselm than meets the eye.

## Arthur's Banquet

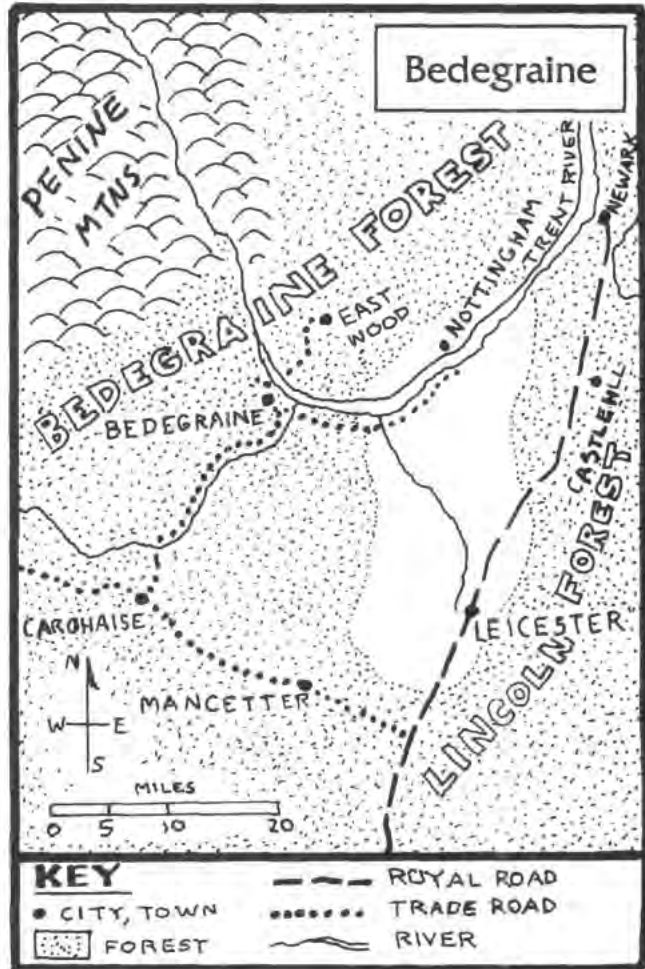
On their arrival, the player knights are given quarters, even though they are unexpected visitors, while more studied welcome is given to Anselm, Morgan and her entourage.

That evening, a welcoming banquet is held. At the high table, Arthur sits with Guenever and his most senior lords, with Anselm close at hand, and Morgan at the Cardinal's elbow.

The Banquet is a large, ornate affair. As special guests of Morgan, the player knights are seated close by the High Table, on the same side as Morgan and her ladies-in-waiting. This is a particularly high honor, and may be the first time the player knights have been hosted in the same hall as King Arthur, much less this close to the high table. As the salt is presented, Arthur acknowledges the presence of his guests and remarks: "... and welcome too to those honorable and courteous knights who found my sister and Cardinal Anselm on the road, and brought them safe to our court. Gentlemen, our royal thanks."

Such fulsome praise draws everyone's attention to the player knights, earning them an immediate Glory award of 10 points each. Nor is all such attention temporary; at any point after this, ask for an Awareness check by any player knight with a Lustful Trait of 10 or greater. [Awareness. Success = The knight notices that one of Morgan's ladies is Flirting with him.]

As the banquet progresses, there are plenty of opportunities for the player knights to become aware of the interest the ladies are showing in them and to respond in kind. Each lady is both beautiful and approachable. During the entertainments between courses, the player knights may seek to show their interest by reciting a poem about love, or may jump in ahead of the professional musicians and show their own skills. Failure at such an attempt would be doubly-em-



barrassing, of course, but they may make checks against Courtesy, Dancing, Flirting, Playing an Instrument or Romance. Succeeding in the presence of King Arthur also brings Glory equal to the knight's skill.

If, on the other hand, a player knight seeking to show romantic prowess towards one of the ladies achieves a Critical Success, allow him to develop an Amor for the target of his attentions equal to 3d6. The lady will not return this affection, though she will continue to Flirt; greater Amor will not come until the conclusion of this adventure.

Meanwhile, as the revelry goes on the player knights become aware of a growing argument among two of the guests on the high table. The Cardinal is doing a lot of shrugging and gesturing. He speaks in a voice just loud enough for others to hear. Morgan le Fay is almost shouting. Before the gist of the argument becomes clear, the player knights are suddenly the subject matter of a tirade directed towards Anselm by Morgan le Fay: "You insult my brother's court with your insinuations, my Lord Bishop!



You deride the prowess of the knights of these isles, when those self-same warriors marched in conquest throughout the whole of France - aye - and to the very gates of Holy Rome itself?!"

All falls silent. Whatever entertainment is in progress ceases, and attention is focussed on the high table. Anselm, in his halting English, splutters his apologies and excuses. It becomes apparent from his reply that he has been commenting on the behavior of the player knights towards Morgan's entourage.

"Gracious lady I meant no offense. Rather, I was complimenting the splendor of this occasion and the gentility of my host's court when I remarked that I thought the behavior of these valiant knights would rival that of the greatest lovers in all Italy."

Arthur is plainly embarrassed by the interruption, and assures Anselm that he has taken no offense. Morgan is not to be deflected, however. She seems sickened that the Cardinal would think English knights could be seen as no more than love-sick squires.

"Know this - in my brother's realm, it is reckoned that a true knight shall win the heart of a fair maiden through feats of arms, not through flattery and sweet-meats. We do not skulk about the bed chambers of our loves; we lay the arms of her foes at her feet. Set any challenge you care to name, and these knights shall prove their worthiness to pay court to the ladies of my household. What say you, gentlemen?"

Morgan's outstretched finger firmly indicates the player knights, and the force of Morgan's oratory leaves them in a very difficult position. If they deny their interest in the ladies, it would be a most discourteous insult; if they deny the truth of Morgan's assertions, they insult her — a dangerous thing to do! Any other attempt to wriggle out of what follows is equally doomed, and should be punished by the loss of 1 Honor Point. The best outcome for the player knights is that they should boldly agree with Morgan's assertions, and wait to hear what she has in store for them.

"Very well, my Lord Bishop," she continues, "I believe you depart hence to visit Lord Briant, the Lord of East Wood, and your kin by marriage. Allow these knights to accompany you. In 14 days there is to be a tournament at Lord Briant's Castle, at East Wood in the Forest of Bedegraine. Seek a place in the tourney for them, under whatever conditions Lord Briant stipulates. Let them prove their worth to the Lord of East Wood, and then they may dedicate their performance at the tournament to my ladies here. If the player knights were to journey thence, and return with the best of the prizes, that would certainly be some achievement!"

Anselm accepts that this would be proof, and agrees to the detour. Morgan, also seemingly satisfied that she has the

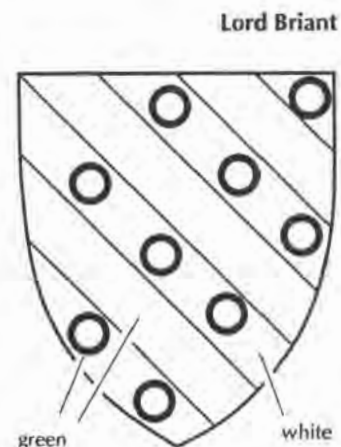
means with which to prove her point, announces that this shall be the challenge, and that the player knights shall bring honor back from East Wood, or come back not at all. Great cheers ring out as she descends to the boards at which they sit to offer her hand. And, in a low voice, she adds:

"Thus you stand in the shadow of Morgan's challenge, knights. Only by satisfying me that you are worthy will you ever be free of it! I shall see my ladies-in-waiting honored, or thrice cursed shall you be. You will never see any of them again, for I shall not allow them to be shamed by your presence. You will never return to Logres, to bring shame upon me in my brother's Kingdom. And, finally, wherever you wander, you shall be known as Knights of Dishonor, and true men shall despise you for it."

Faced with such a challenge, the player knights can only respond in one way, which is to accept it, boldly. A few words addressed to the ladies by means of a successful Orate check should also be spoken. (The omens would not be good if this were Fumbled.) Then, feigning a headache, Morgan withdraws, attended by her ladies, and the banquet continues, somewhat muted, with Morgan's challenge the subject of every conversation in the hall.

## East Wood

The Manor of East Wood lies in the valley of the River Erewas, close by Bedegraine Castle, where Arthur, with the assistance of King Ban and King Bors, defeated eleven kings of the north almost 20 years ago. Lord Briant One-Armed was one of Arthur's knights that day, and was given a small manor in recognition of his bravery and the loss of his right arm. During the Roman wars, he served Arthur again, bringing his household knights to join Arthur's army, though he could not take the field of battle himself. During this campaign, he met, fell in love with and married Anselm's sister.



The journey should pose no dangers to Anselm's party, since the roads north are safe and well-maintained, and Anselm can acquire lodging in church estates along the route. Anselm will choose to go through Silchester and Lambor, staying in both.

The party arrives at East Wood after about ten days, four days before the tournament, for



### Sir Briant One-Armed

Sir Briant is the Cymric Christian lord of East Wood. He lost his arm in the battle of Bedegraine, which is reflected in his modified damage, Hosemanship, and Lance skills.

SIZ 19	Move 3	Major Wound 14
DEX 9	Damage 4d6	Unconscious 8
STR 16	Heal Rate 3	Knock Down 19
CON 14	Hit Points 33	Armor 12, no shield
APP 11	Age 40	Glory 5024

Attack: Sword 22, Lance 13, Battle 18, Horsemanship 12.  
Significant Traits: Vengeful 16, Cruel 16, Prudent 18, Proud 15, Valorous 16.

Significant Passions: Hospitality 9, Hate (Saxons) 18, Hate (Mailcon) 13.

Significant Skills: Awareness 13, Courtesy 9, Heraldry 16, Hunting 18, Tourney 14.

Horse: Destrier, 8d6 damage, Move 7.

which preparations are well advanced. Anselm is greeted by Sir Briant and his wife, Anselm's sister, the Lady Isabella. Sir Briant arranges rudimentary accommodation for the player knights. During the evening meal, which will be a relatively spartan affair, Briant expresses his surprise to Bishop Anselm that he should be traveling with such an obvious escort. Anselm explains that under the High King's rule these are peaceful times, and that the knights have accompanied him merely to prove their worth at the tournament. He also expresses his fear that the journey has proven most uninteresting for them, since it has been without incident.

In response, Briant confesses that Anselm's perceptions of the peacefulness of Arthur's Kingdom may be overstated. "I wish that were true, your grace, though I fear that hereabouts is a brigand who would not hesitate to lay hands upon a man of the Church. Years ago I served King Arthur in battle, wherein we brought 11 rebel kings to grief. That was the day I lost my sword-arm, and retired from such active service. The surviving rebels were chased far to the north, save a few who took to the forests to north and south. One such remains there still, a knight of Gorre named Mailcon mac Cochran, an obdurate fellow who has gathered to him a band of cut-throats and thieves. They live off the forest and whatever they can steal." Briant goes on to say that he has made every effort to discover and apprehend Sir Mailcon, but without success. This is a partial untruth; Briant's household is small, and not such that he would want to fritter it away on combat with a robber knight. Since he became unarmed, Briant knows he cannot expect to command the respect of new knights, and relies on the continuing loyalty of retainers of whom he demands little.

"Furthermore, your Grace, within the last week the bandit was sighted just a day's ride from East Wood. Such an insult must be deliberate, since he knows I shall not chase after him while my household prepares for the Tourney. What would I give for that knight to be bested!"

Anselm is not slow to take up the offer.

"My Lord, I think I may have the solution. Let these knights," he gestures at the player knights, "seek this outlaw and bring him hither to your court. You are still busy with your preparations, and I scarce need their protection while I am within these walls. Let them go and ease the stiffness from their sword-arms."

"Why yes, what a perfect solution. I marvel that I did not think of it myself! If you will do me this service, sir, I shall be most honored then if these brave knights would join our humble tournament. Though it is but a small affair, they may find some sport in it."

The deal is struck. The player knights may have the strongest feeling that they have been manipulated by both men — but this is only the beginning.

## The Pavilion

The player knights are provisioned — ungenerously — for three days and nights in the forest. They are given directions to the location where Sir Mailcon was last sighted, and a blessing by the Bishop, who will wait in East Wood for their return. With these alone they are sent on their way.

Sir Mailcon was sighted last at a crossroads in the forest, close by a wayside shrine, at a point the player knights will reach about dusk on the first day. Just beyond, they find a village. If for some reason the player knights ride in and speak to the inhabitants, they notice the villagers are most reticent on the subject, and there is an undertone of dissatisfaction with the parsimonious Sir Briant.

The knights catch up with the bandits on the second day. From the path they catch sight of a pavilion pitched in a glade. At that moment they are ambushed by Sir Mailcon's followers, three bandits for each player knight. The bandits are fighting to protect their injured leader, but will pull off when they determine that even three to one odds are not sufficient to defeat trained knights.

Though this a tough fight, it is within the player knights' capabilities. Once three or more of the Bandits have been removed from the fight, the others turn and flee into the forest, giving each player knight a free blow. Before the player knights can turn to pursue, they are hailed from the pavilion by a challenge knight.

**Glory:** 10 for defeating each Bandit.



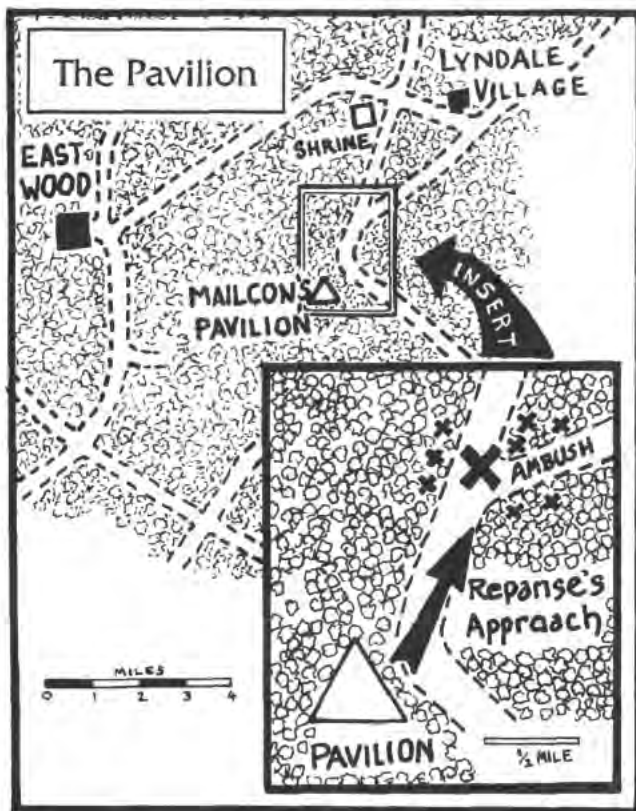
### The Challenge of the Poor Knight

The pavilion that lies ahead is a poor one, frequently patched and unadorned. Outside, old and battered lances occupy a small stand, alongside which a shabby charger stands saddled.

Before the player knights can reach the pavilion, a poorly-accoutered knight emerges, bearing a shield and sheathed sword, and mounts the horse. The player knights may recognize the heraldry on the battered shield. [Heraldry. Success = it is Sir Mailcon.] The knight does not lift the visor on his helmet, nor yet make an reply to their calls. Instead, he couches a lance and rides up to the player knights, finally deigning to speak in a strange voice, high-pitched and with a heavy accent.

"If you seek Mailcon mac Cochran, know then that you have found him. Know too that I will make no parlay or easy surrender. If you be honorable knights, then let one of you cross lances with me. To he who can fight no more let there be mercy and charitable surrender."

Before the player knights can speak, the knight spurs off to the pavilion, turning with lance aimed at them. One of the player knights should accept the challenge; even if they attempt to parlay or gain their way to the pavilion, the impoverished knight will charge.



### Repanse as the challenge knight

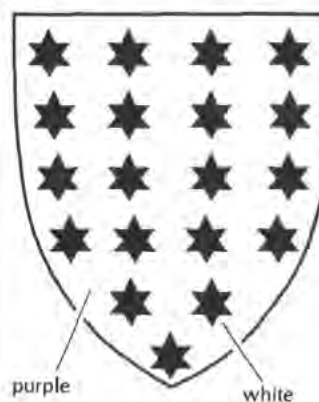
Repanse is a Cymric Christian woman from the Bedegraine area. She has dressed herself in armor to defend her wounded husband, Sir Mailcon.

SIZ 11	Move 2	Major Wound 11
DEX 11	Damage 3d6	Unconscious 6
STR 8	Heal Rate 3	Knock Down 11
CON 11	Hit Points 22	Armor 10
APP 16	Age 24	
Attack: Sword 7, Lance 5.		
Significant Traits: Forgiving 16, Valorous 17.		
Significant Passions: Hospitality 17, Honor 16, Love (Husband) 20.		
Significant Skills: Awareness 19, Chirurgery 14, First Aid 11, Singing 13.		
Horse: Poor Charger, 5d6 damage, Move 8.		

The knight fights first with lance, and then with sword if the lance breaks or is dropped. He will drop his lance to fight with sword if the player knight loses his lance. No blows will be pulled; only debilitation, death or unconsciousness can end this fight.

However, it is more than likely that the player knight will be victorious, for the robber-knight is not Sir Mailcon but his wife, Repanse. Sir Mailcon lies within his pavilion, already grievously wounded from an earlier tussle with some of Briant's men. The exact sequence of events depends upon the outcome of the fight. In the unlikely event that Repanse wins, the lady swoons and falls immediately after the fight. First, it is likely the player knights attend to the fallen foe and discover it is a woman. Then, they should take her back to the Pavilion (she will ask for this if conscious), where they discover the crest-fallen figure of Sir Mailcon.

### Sir Mailcon



Sir Mailcon is bed-ridden, wounded a few days before by a fight with knights traveling to Briant's tourney from an outlying manor. The wound stubbornly refuses to heal, Repanse's skills are not sufficient to aid him, though a special salve she brews makes sure he does not decline any further. When they enter, the player knights



find him propped up on a litter, spittle and blood on a rag beside him. His voice is husky with pain and emotion; he also speaks in a less strained version of the accent Repanse used to challenge the knights outside.

"I prayed it would not come to this. Do you bear my good lady, sir knights? Does she breathe still?"

What follows should be tailored to the health of Repanse. If she is dead or grievously injured beyond the abilities of the player knights to save her, Mailcon begins to mourn her. If she can be made conscious during the course of the day, the player knights hear much of what follows from her. Otherwise, the grieving Sir Mailcon can add little to the tale he begins to tell. If they interrupt his tale to explain their own circumstances, Mailcon is grateful for his life, but insists just as stubbornly that he will not be dragged back to face Briant's "justice."

At its simplest, Mailcon's tale is a pitiful one: "My good Lords, I bear you no malice for what has happened here. Nor do I beg any man's forgiveness for what I have become these past years. I shall surrender my case to God, and hope that he shows me mercy."

"I stayed in these woods after Bedegraine, for I had no home or kin to return to after that bloody battle. Others there were with me also. One by one they were hunted down, save I alone. Lord Briant has hung many a better man than himself from the battlements of his gatehouse."

"I took this lady as my wife three years past. The poor fellows you met outside were just vagabonds who we took under our wing. We stole only enough to survive, and never then from those who did not have it to give. But, a month ago, Briant's knights burned a village that had given us

shelter, and I was sore wounded in the fight. In the past, Repanse's salves have healed my injuries; this time, they merely held me from death's door. We could not travel as before. Two nights ago, we pitched tent here and have not been able to move since. When you came hence, we hoped to chase you away, but you are brave knights, and have us at your mercy."

Allow checks to any knight showing an appropriate sense of Mercy or Justice. Given that he is not their liege, and that they are not acting for Arthur, it isn't improper for them to accept the word of Sir Mailcon that he will leave this part of Logres and seek more honest service elsewhere.

If they release Mailcon, and he recovers, he will be true to his word and make his way to Arthur's court. Allow a Generous check for any knight who offers equipment to the impoverished Mailcon, so that he might arrive at Arthur's court in better condition.

Finally, if she lives, Repanse adds the following: "You are honorable knights, and have done us no injustice this day. For my husband's sake, I thank you for the respect and honor you have shown one whom you have bettered. For mine own, I must be grateful to be alive after the buffeting you gave me! Thus, let me show my gratitude in two ways."

"First, please take this salve, which heals wounds as if you had rested long. Second, take this advice. No matter how things seem on the surface, not everything is so simply reconciled that it will not bear scrutiny underneath. You came hither to fight a man, and found a lamb in wolf's clothing instead. May you always have the strength to make sure that which you fight is truly your enemy. Strike not the killing blow until you have stared your enemy in the face, lest the blow you strike damn thee always!"

The salve will heal 1d6 lost hit points per application. There is enough for four such basalms.

**Glory:** 10 for defeating Repanse.

## Sir Mailcon

Sir Mailcon is a Cymric Pagan robber knight originally from Gorre. He was stranded here after the battle of Bedegraine when his lord and entire family were wiped out. He currently has 11 hit points. He wears old, worn clothes with a value of 2£.

SIZ 12	Move 4	Major Wound 19
DEX 19	Damage 5d6	Unconscious 8
STR 16	Heal Rate 4	Knock Down 12
CON 19	Hit Points 31 (11)	Armor 10
APP 14	Age 40	Glory 4500

Attack: Sword 21, Lance 16.

Significant Traits: Energetic 16, Forgiving 14, Just 15, Worldly 18, Suspicious 18, Valorous 15.

Significant Passions: Hate (Briant) 15, Love (Repanse) 17, Loyalty (followers) 12.

Significant Skills: Awareness 14, Courtesy 8, Heradry 10, Hunting 12, Recognize 6.

Horse: Poor Charger, 5d6 damage, Move 8.

## The Tournament

The player knights should arrive back at East Wood some time on the eve of the tournament. Sir Briant accepts any proof that they have defeated Sir Mailcon's band. The bodies of a few bandits, Sir Mailcon's shield (which he will willingly give) or some lesser proof may suffice if the player knights have let Sir Mailcon depart in peace. True to his word, Sir Briant admits the player knights to his modest tournament; the other participants have arrived while they have been away. They are offered rather better fare than before, and the castle is decked out in its finery ready for three days of merriment. Sir Briant lets it be known that



### **Knights at the Joust**

only one of his expected guests has not arrived, the Lady Dwynwen, who must have been detained somewhere.

On the evening before the tournament begins, Morgan le Fay's party arrives. At dinner, she addresses the other knights present as follows:

"My Lords, good sirs; I thank you for your welcome and gracious hospitality. Let us all pray for good weather on the morrow, so that we may have good sport!"

"To you English knights I say — look to your laurels! My gracious Lord Bishop, Anselm of Forli,

brother to the Lady of East Wood, has journeyed here with these knights. I hope that you prove to them that the flower of all chivalry and prowess grows in the realm of Arthur Pendragon!"

"I myself shall show no other favor. But you should know that these, my Ladies-in-Waiting, have decided to honor our guests. Anselm's visiting knights shall each carry the favor of one of my Ladies! and, I am sure, do honor to them."

The Ladies-in-Waiting rise to bestow their favors on the player knights, each showing a predominant color. Morgan le Fay accompanies them to the place where the player knights sit, and whispers her warning to them:

"The stage is set, gentlemen. For the next three days shall see if you are worthy knights, or fools and caperers all.



You must compete well, for only if all is to my satisfaction shall I name you champions of this challenge. I trust you do well in the joust, and be on the winning side of the melee. And now that the flower of local chivalry is stirred against you, you must also accept any challenge against you, and succeed! Turn not aside from any knight who offers his glove to you, and those who rise on the fourth day shall have won the bet."

"But remember, bring dishonor or harm to the ladies of my household, and my three-fold curse shall be upon you. You shall not evade my wrath!"

The challenge confirmed, Morgan returns to her place, and the ladies with her, and the player knights will spend the evening under the gaze of all those present, silent and shunned, unless they choose to Sing, or show some other courtly skill.

### **First Day of Tourney**

The first day of the tourney brings the joust. The majority of the opposition is formed of local household knights. There will be five rounds, and the player knights may do fairly well, since there is no knight who might be described as Famous or Extraordinary present. To determine the skill of the opponent for each round, roll 3d6, +1 per round; also, roll 1d6. On a 1 or 2, the opponent is from Sir Briant's household. If this is the case, roll 1d6 again, and add 1 for each round that has been completed. On a result of 6, the opponent is Sir Briant himself.

Though one-armed, Sir Briant has had a harness made up to allow him to take part in the joust. Sir Briant is a Famous knight, though his skill is just 12 because of his handicap. In addition to the purse of 1£ for the joust, Sir Briant will pay 1£ to the man who unseats him. The player knights will find the jousting a rough affair, though no rules are broken and no harm should come to them. However, should they defeat any knight apart from those of Sir Briant's household, they receive an immediate challenge to fight to the first blood on the final day. The local knights have had their dander fired up by Morgan's Oratory. Should a player knight be Champion of the joust, he will be additionally challenged by Sir Briant's best household retainer, Sir Caewlin, a Famous knight.

The gamemaster may well find several opportunities to check the Pride and Vengeful Traits of the more hot-blooded player knights.

**Glory:** 5 each for defeating opponents in the joust. 50 for winning the joust.

### **The Second Day**

The second day will be more dangerous. The melee will be contested between Sir Briant's household, with the player knights on his side, and the remaining invited participants on the other, led by a Famous knight. The match will be for Ransom; though no knight is expected to yield unless he has shed some blood. (These provincial knights are not interested in the finer aspects of a tournament.)

Sir Briant leads his group for the initial first charge only, and then rides from the field. Once the jousting lances are abandoned, real weapons are used. Use the battle rules to play out the melee, which should last about 5 rounds. Allow the player knights to form their own unit for the melee, with one of them as the leader.

The gamemaster should contrive at least one situation where a player knight is beset by several brutal opponents. Should a situation arise in which a player-knight yields, allow at least one opponent to strike a (pulled) blow at him thereafter. The marshals will not call a halt at any time when the player knights are in difficulty. But will do so at once to cheat them of victory and reward. Should any player knight transgress the rules, they will immediately receive several challenges.

Sir Briant declares the winner of the melee, picking one of his own knights unless a player knight performs with unparalleled excellence.

The aftermath of the melee should be that the player knights are at the center of several grudge matches for the final day. It will not help that they will probably be in reasonable health, thanks to the salve. Each player knight should be due to fight at least once the following day.

Throughout these two days, the gamemaster should respond to any request the player knights make which follows on from the advice of Repanse. They may demand to see the face of any man they face, and the gamemaster should oblige, perhaps using the opportunity to personalize the growing grudges.

Hopefully, the player knights will do well enough in joust and melee, and will certainly have avoided all dishonor and misdemeanor to keep themselves ahead of Morgan's challenge. Though somewhat battered, they will see that — so long as they face each challenge they are presented with — they should be able to complete the quest the following day.

However...

**Glory:** 8 per successful round, 16 for critical successes. 50 for being declared the champion of the melee.



## The Final Day

During dinner that evening, a messenger arrives, and speaks at once to Morgan le Fay. She then announces that she must return to Arthur's court at once, and will depart at dawn with her entourage. To Bishop Anselm she deputizes the role as judge of the challenge. She also tells the player knights that, if the Bishop judges they have been successful, they may return to Arthur's court under their own colors to court the ladies and seek other fit rewards from her.

The final day dawns. The gamemaster should deal with a few of the challenges, and then a herald's call announces the arrival of unexpected guests. A lady, riding side-saddle, and her accompanying knights arrive at the castle, dusty from the road.

Sir Briant announces the late arrival of the Lady Dwynwen and her party, delayed on the road by brigands and injury to their horses. While they are being fed and rested, he speaks angrily with Bishop Anselm, who then passes the information onto the player knights.

"Gentlemen, it seems the challenge is not yet entirely met. This is the Lady Dwynwen, widow of a gallant knight of these parts, and distant kin to Sir Briant. She has journeyed here for the tourney, but been delayed upon the road by bandits, who injured their horses in the fight. Now Sir Briant believes that you did not defeat the bandits as you said you did, and is most angry on behalf of his cousin."

"You have done well at his tournament, and taken prizes from it. You have eaten in his hall. Though the knights of the other households murmured ill against you, and sought to bring you harm, he did not allow his own men to act so unchivalrously to brave warriors far from home. But now you have brought shame to his household, and he is sore vexed with you."

"Since the lady has traveled so far and at such cost to attend his tournament, he feels obliged to make some provision for them to partake of it. Thus, he offers you this challenge: A melee, on foot; yourselves against all those who still have challenge against you, save that the lady's knights shall substitute for all those infirmed. The stakes shall be for horse and armor. No man fallen is to be attacked, but should a knight choose not to accept the surrender of a foe, then no dishonor shall come to the slayer. It is an ungracious challenge, I vow, since there shall be two of them for every one of you. For myself, I would see no shame in refusing the contest. But, within the bounds of the Lady Morgan's challenge, I do not see how you can turn away..."

The challenge leaves the player knights outnumbered two-to-one, but there is no escaping this melee in such a

## A Sample Lady Knight

These lady knights are actually the handmaidens of Morgan le Fay, disguised as knights for the benefit of her challenge to the player knights. Each carries arms of a solid color, the same as the favor given to the opposing player knight.

SIZ 10	Move 2	Major Wound 15
DEX 15	Damage 3d6	Unconscious 6
STR 9	Heal Rate 2	Knock Down 10
CON 15	Hit Points 25	Armor 14
APP 16	Age 22	Glory 0

Attack: Sword 6, Lance 7.

Significant Traits: Valorous 10.

Significant Passions: Loyalty (Morgan le Fay) 16.

Significant Skills: Awareness 10, Chirurgery 11, Courtesy 12, Faerie Lore 11, Flirting 13, Intrigue 9, Play Instrument 13, Romance 15.

Horse: Charger, 6d6 damage

hostile place. If the player try to turn down the challenge, they will suffer the dishonor of failing Morgan's challenge.

This is the culmination of Morgan's challenge. On the field, lady Dwynwen's knights sit upon their horses, lances couched, swords at their sides. What chance can there be for the player knights to extricate themselves from this perilous situation?

What they do not know — though they may guess, of course — is that Lady Dwynwen is, in fact, none other than Morgan le Fay, her guise and purpose hidden by enchantment and disguise. Along with an equal number of genuine knights, her ladies-in-waiting are accoutered fully as knights of some standing. This is the beauty of her trap; the player knights cannot refuse the match, nor willingly fail, or they will have dishonored the ladies whose favors they still carry. On the other hand, should they injure any of the ladies in any way, they will again be in default of the challenge. Finally, just to make life a little more difficult, mixed among the lady-knights are the real knights of the area, who would be only too happy to see the player knights pull all their blows while they sought to injure or even kill in return.

The player knights do have a way out, however. If they were to defeat the true knights, and, possibly, to subdue the lady-knights through pulled blows, they would succeed in the challenge. Even if the lady-knights were the victors, the challenge would be met if they had fought well and with honor, which is best evidenced by them beating the true knights.



Let them discuss his before the challenge melee. Do not reveal anything they haven't sorted out for themselves, nor the means to their escape. It is vital that they come to realize that the ladies-in-waiting are among their opponents. If any player knight asks about the heraldry of their opponents, have him roll [Heraldry. Success = the knight realizes that half bear individual arms. The others bear plain shields in single colors.] If they think to ask, they can be told that these colors are the same as the predominant colors of the favors the player knights carry. Let them figure that one out for themselves.

Their suspicions may be further aroused if they are following Repanse's advice to look into the eye of their opponents and know who is their enemy. True knights will doff their helmets, the lady-knights will not.

Finally, once combat has begun, knights who can roll [Suspicious and Awareness. Success in both = no grown man inhabits the armor of the lady-knights.]

If they share their suspicions before the combat begins, each player knight can decide freely what to do. Once combat has commenced, be strict about how this information is passed from knight to knight. It might be best to have notes prepared that you can pass to the players at this time. If a player knight suddenly uncovers the truth, and shouts to his comrades, the players will easily hear that which knights in battle would not. So have each knight make an Awareness check. [Awareness. Success = they may talk briefly.] For those who fail the check, provide them with false information about individual opponents, so that they cannot tell who is who.

Initially, at least, each player knight is approached by the lady whose favor he carries and a true knight. It is to be hoped they concentrate their blows on the true knights, and do no more than aim pulled blows at the ladies. Any attempt to circumvent the challenge, by early surrender, say, is a flagrantly unworthy response to the challenge, and since Morgan is the judge you can be as arbitrary as you like on her behalf. At the end, figure matters of material gains normally, but what really matters is the outcome of the challenge.

## The Outcome

The outcome of the melee should be judged solely within the criteria of Morgan's challenge. Any player knight who fought well enough to defeat at least one true knight or at least not be defeated, and who brought no harm to any of the ladies, has succeeded. If all the true knights are defeated, all the player knights have won, unless one or more has injured a lady, in which case that individual alone is

disgraced. In all other circumstances, the player knights have failed.

Fallen knights are first removed from the field, then Briant steps forward, "All debts are paid, and all may now depart in peace."

But even as he speaks, Lady Dwywnwen approaches, and places her hand on his arm. She has, she says, an announcement of her own to make.

Whether or not this comes as a surprise to the player knights, it certainly surprises all others present (save Anselm) when Morgan allows her enchantment to fade, and Lady Dwywnwen stands revealed as the Fay herself

"Yes, it is I, Morgan, sister to Arthur Pendragon. Sir Briant, I do not expect you to understand my motives or to forgive this ruse. Lady Dwywnwen is a guest at my brother's court, where she is to wed a knight truly worthy of her estate. I arranged things thus to bring to climax a challenge I set these knights. Now that it is complete I shall reveal the truth to you all."

And, without delay, she explains the nature of the challenge to the bewildered locals. They are, of course, innocent dupes of Morgan's wiles.

Morgan signals, and, again to the surprise of the onlookers if not the players, the surviving lady-knights doff their helms and stand revealed as her Ladies-in-Waiting. Should any be injured or laid out upon the sward, an even greater gasp arises from the onlookers as one of her sisters gently removes her helm. Morgan then addresses successful player knights thus:

"Now you see the full measure of it. You have succeeded in the challenge I set you and may claim your due rewards. Court these ladies if you will; you will find each owns an identical suit of the armor she wears, tailored better to the stature of a man. They are made of a most rare steel — tough enough to withstand any blow, yet light enough for even a fair maid to bear. I salute you. Henceforth, may you be ever known as the Knights of the Challenge."

The gamemaster can treat this reward as he sees fit, perhaps making it the bait for successful courtship or even marriage of the ladies involved. The suits of armor are partial plate (14 points) but so light that they confer only a -5 DEX modifier.

## To Those Who Failed

Should any player knights have failed the challenge, Morgan addresses them thus: "You understood full well the challenge you were set, and yet you have clearly [injured/brought dishonor to a lady]. Thus, I curse you thrice. You shall bear no lady's favor again, nor marry, nor find service with any lady's household, until you

## The Adventure of Morgan Le Fay's Challenge



have done great penance and been forgiven by me. Finally, I name you False Knight, and as such shall you be known wherever you journey, unable to speak words to disprove the charge, and reviled by all true chivalrous knights throughout the world. Go. None here who witnessed this day shall remember anything of you save that you harmed this lady." The knight will find in the days to come that Morgan le Fay has lain a curse on him, which works as she has described.

The potential spin-offs from this adventure could keep the campaign going for a while. Disgraced knights must seek the most onerous quests to find Morgan's forgiveness, and release from their curse. The Knights of the Challenge have fair ladies to find Amor and Love with, and much

praise awaiting them at Court. And, who knows, now that Morgan's eye is on them, there may be other challenges to come.

**Glory:** 200 for successfully completing the challenge.

For injuring a Lady-in-Waiting or otherwise failing Morgan's challenge: -2 Honor.

### The Challenge Failed

This unfortunate knight failed to recognize his challenger until it was too late. Now he shall suffer the curse of Morgan le Fay.





## The Dukedom of Angleland

by Suzanne Courteau and Greg Stafford

**A**NGLELAND OCCUPIES the northern part of eastern Logres. It is a large dukedom ruled by Sir Hervis de Revil, a famous war hero. The commoners here are from the Saxon tribe called the Angles.



### History

Anglia was originally the land of the pre-Roman tribe called the Iceni. The Iceni nearly overthrew the Romans under the leadership of Queen Boudicca, but succumbed at last. When the many Germanic tribes began raiding the coast, a series of forts called the Saxon Shore were raised. They restored peace until the Roman army departed the island.

The first Angles in Britain had settled farther north, in Sorestan and Deira, many years earlier. New waves came to Britain, driven from their homes by invaders, and seized Anglia as their own. The Angles opposed King Arthur, and were among those crushed at the Battle of Badon in 518. Sir Hervis de Revil received the Duchy of Anglia as a fief held from King Arthur as his share of the spoils.

### Duke Hervis



Duke Hervis is proud of his record, and speaks of it often. He began as a landless adventurer and is now one of the greatest barons in Britain. He led several raids against the Saxons (sometimes even in defiance of the Boy King!) and personally led the assault on Fort Guinnon ten-plus years ago. He fought val-

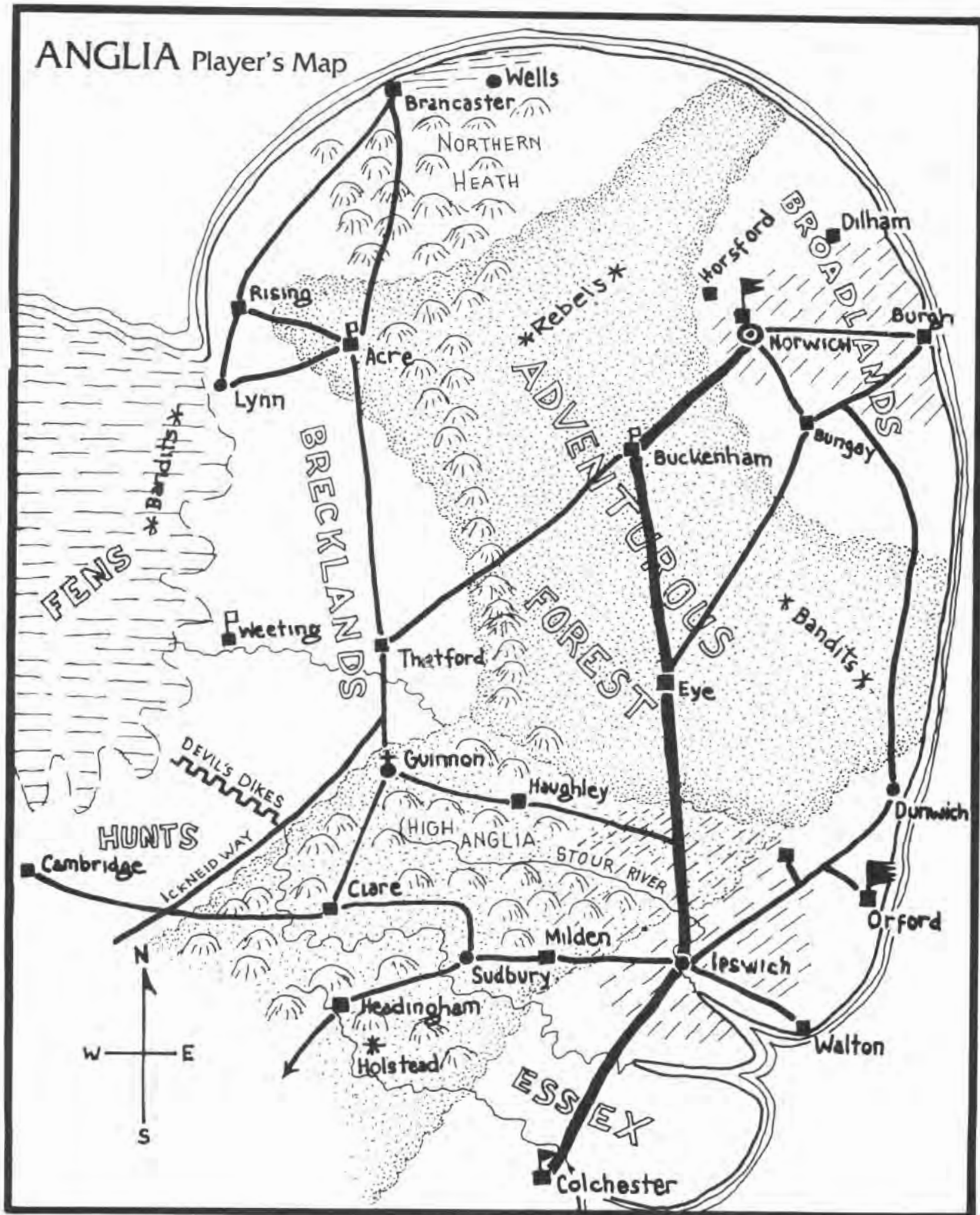
iantly alongside King Arthur against the Romans, but regrets the harm done to his lands by the rebels when he was gone.

His hatred of Saxons is complete (=20). He taxes the peasants mercilessly, and is incredibly rich as a result. He rules with sword and burning brand, and his men are used to treating the peasants with cruelty. He hires many mercenaries in addition to the official 75 knights required of him by the terms of his vassalage to Arthur.

As a result, Anglia is an occupied land, and in a constant state of near-rebellion. Ever since the conquest they have resisted the Cymric yoke. In 520 the Angles rebelled, taking a final stand in Guinnon. They were overwhelmed and slaughtered, and the city plundered with great destruction. Afterwards Hereward the Outlaw led resistance for a while from the Isle of Ely, in the Fens. He, too, was driven from his strongholds into the damp, inaccessible outlaw parts of the Fens.

### Anglia Player's Map Key

	Fens		Castle of
	Dense Population		Baron
	Forest		Count
	River		Duke
	Royal Road		High King
	Trade Road		Abbey, Monastery
			Castle
			Manor
			City





## Geography

Angleland is a relatively flat area, broken only by some low rolling hills and a great forest. It has eight regions.

### Brecklands

This is a bleak region, cut by valleys which have only a few farms. Its many villages survive by fishing and salt collecting, and are clustered along the rivers and fen edge. There is no wood, and the naked heaths are used to graze many sheep.

### Broadlands

This is a very heavily populated area enclosing the fertile alluvial lands of the Yar and other river mouths. The people mainly farm, but also fish the rich marshes.

### Fens

The fens are a marsh, with an insignificant population of people, and a haunting range of demons, ghosts, and marsh monsters. Bandits, too, hide out here.

### Adventurous Forest

Scattered farms can be found through this area, but it is mostly covered with trees which vary in density according to the type of soil present. It is enchanted. See "The Adventure of The Adventurous Forest."

### High Anglia

A range of low hills, averaging from 150' to 200' high, but up to 400' in the west, runs east to west in southern Anglia. They are covered with light forest, and have a moderately dense population living in farms in the valleys.

### Northern Heathlands

This region has a light population, supported mainly by sheep herding. The naked heaths slowly give way to forest in the south.

### Sandlings

The coast is a difficult soil, with inlets with rich alluvial deposits for farming, and many small towns and villages where fishermen live. The stretch of coast north and south of Dunwich is an exception, being badly eroded by the encroaching sea.

### Stour Valley

The valley, and especially the area around the city of Ipswich, is heavily very populated. Ipswich is also a thriving trading port.

## Miscellaneous

### The King's Road

A section of the King's Road runs from Colchester, in Essex, to Norwich, in Anglia. Remember that this road is part of the king's own demesne, or personal property. Offenses committed on it are offenses against him, and thus High Treason and punishable by death.

Despite this, thieves and bandits still trouble people in the Forest Adventurous. Furthermore, its enchanted nature makes travel even more dangerous.

As a result, King Arthur has stationed several Round Table knights, each leading a small band of other knights, along the road. Their job is to guard travellers and guide them. They typically wait until a large party has gathered, and then set off. Thus guarded, they are rarely troubled.

Other roads are not so treated. Travelers are on their own and must provide their own protection. Although a party of knights will rarely be bothered, smaller parties often are robbed and killed.

### Castles

All the castles are garrisoned by knights and many soldiers, and usually on a state of alert. The castles regularly send out patrols to scour the countryside looking for strangers, tracking down bandits, and seeking to surprise the unwary agitators who regularly raise the rabble to riot. Thus the areas within five miles around the castles are pretty safe (for everyone but the native Angles). Knights approaching a castle will usually be met outside it by one of these small patrols, and escorted in.

Four of the castles are not held by Duke Hervis. This makes no difference to the locals, and so the castellans are generally in a similar state of readiness as the Duke's castles. However, these social connections may be important to the knights.

- Acre is a fief of the Earl of Rydychan.
- Weeting is a fief of the Duke of Dorset.
- Buckenham is a fief of the Earl of Kent.
- Orford Castle is also a stronghold of King Arthur. A garrison of knights and soldiers is available for whatever tasks it might need to do for the High King.



## Gamemaster Information

**T**HIS INFORMATION is intended to provide the gamemaster with sufficient background information to support a campaign in the Anglia area. Many independent encounters are provided, as well as the full-length "Adventure of the Stygian Stallions."



### Map of Anglia

#### Key

In addition to roads shown on the map, game masters should assume that local roads also run along the seashore and rivers in populated areas.

#### Places

**Acre (P16):** [Castle Acre] A shell keep (small castle), with a low motte, stone gate tower, curtain enclosing the bailey and the motte, and a stone hall. This is one of the castles of Anglia which is not ruled by Hervis. Ruler: Sir Séven of Dorchester. Vassal of: Earl of Rydychan.

**Anglian Hills (P16, P17):** Includes the heathlands of north Anglia. This narrow string of low hills stretches north to south, much wider in the north, separating the Forest Adventurous from the Brecklands.

**Adventureuse Forest (P16, P17):** [Forest of Adventure] The woods of Anglia have become enchanted since the start of Arthur's reign. This one has the added challenge of being full of rebellious Saxons. See "The Adventure of the Adventurous Forest."

**Ballington Hill (P18):** (Essex) A red dragon with spots lives under this hill, and is a deadly enemy of the Kedington Hill dragon. They fight whenever they meet, but they rarely leave their lairs at the same time.

**Beccles (Q17):** A town. Ruler: castellan. Vassal of: Bungay Castellan.

**Binham Priory (P16):** A mysterious tunnel goes underground from here. Once a fiddler determined to go into it and play until he reached the other end. He has not been seen since, but his fiddle can still be heard.

**Boudicca's Grave (P17):** A grave mound. Here is buried the heroic Queen Boudicca, who died resisting the Roman invasion.

**Brancaaster (P16):** This is a Roman fort, originally one of the Saxon Shore forts, and counts as a medium castle. Ruler: castellan. Vassal of: Duke Hervis.

**Brandfield (P17):** a crossroad town. Vassal of: Guinnon Abbey.

**Breckland:** a hilly area, with tiny farms, and many villages which rely on fishing and salt panning.

**Buckenham (P17):** [New Buckenham] A small castle on the King's Road. It has a large round keep, a stone gate tower, two palisaded baileys, and huge extensive earthworks. This is one of the castles of Anglia which is not ruled by Hervis. Ruler: castellan. Vassal of: Earl Kynniarc of Kent.

**Bungay (Q17):** A medium castle, with a keep with a fore-building, curtain wall, and gatehouse. Ruler: castellan. Vassal of: Duke Hervis.

**Burgh Castle (Q16):** A Roman enclosure guarding the entry to the Yar River. Originally one of the Saxon Shore forts, it now is a Medium Castle. It is also the main mooring for Duke Hervis' private fleet. Ruler: castellan. Vassal of: Duke Hervis.

**Caister (Q16):** [Caister-by-the-sea] A city, originally founded by the Romans, and now walled with a curtain wall. Ruler: castellan. Vassal of: Duke Hervis.

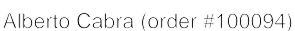
**Colchester (P18):** (Essex) This city and large castle is the stronghold of the Earl of Essex. This city was founded by King Cole, a great hero of old times who is remembered even in modern times as "Old King Cole." Colchester was the capital of the Trinovantes tribe before the Romans came, and taken by them to be their own provincial capital after the conquest of Britain. The city was destroyed by Boudicca, but resettled later. Ruler: Count (Earl) Blioberis de Ganis. Vassal of: King Arthur Pendragon.

**Clare (O18):** A shell keep (small) castle. Ruler: castellan. Vassal of: Duke Hervis.

**Devil's Dykes (O17):** Great earthworks were raised in the time of Aurelius Ambrosius, the first Pendragon. The Angles feared him, making these to mark their border and help in defense against his cavalry.

**Dilham (Q16):** A motte and bailey castle. Ruler: castellan. Vassal of: Duke Hervis.

**Diss (P17):** a town. Vassal of: Eye Castellan.





**Dunwich (Q17):** This is a city in decline. The shore along this stretch is eroding notably, and parts of the city have already fallen into the sea. Vassal of: Duke Hervis.

**East Dereham (P16):** A town, currently with no overlord. Its inhabitants are supportive of the Anglian rebel cause. Vassal of: no one.

**Eye (P17):** A motte and bailey castle, reinforced with a stone curtain wall. Ruler: castellan. Vassal of: Duke Hervis.

**Fakenham (P16):** a village. Vassal of: Acre Castellan.

**Fens:** These lands engulf the western border of Anglia. They are treacherous, and considered to be uncrossable without guidance from one of the local men.

**Flegg (Q16):** This is a very fertile, low island in the Broadlands. Vassal of: Duke Hervis.

**Framlingham (P17):** A medium sized, enclosure castle. It has a high curtain wall with 12 open-backed towers, and a gate tower. It has double ditches, one flooded, and ramparts. Ruler: castellan. Vassal of: Duke Hervis.

**Guinnon (P17):** [Bury-St-Edmunds] A town, formerly a stronghold of the Saxons, but destroyed in 520. Ruler: Abbot Raoul. Vassal of: The Church.

**Harling (P17):** A town. Vassal of: Thetford Castellan.

**Haughley (P17):** A motte and bailey castle. Ruler: castellan. Vassal of: Duke Hervis.

**Horsford (P16):** A motte and bailey castle. Ruler: castellan. Vassal of: Duke Hervis.

**Ipswich (P18):** A thriving trade city. (Incorrectly said to be part of Essex in *Knights Adventurous*, p 26.) Vassal of: Duke Hervis.

**Kedington Hill (P18):** Home of a black dragon.

**Long Medford (P17):** A crossroad town. Vassal of: Clare castellan.

**Ludham (Q16):** a town. Nearby a dragon lives in a cave, and comes out occasionally at night to terrorize the village.

**Lynn (O16):** A port city serving this region. It has earthworks and a curtain wall defending the dry inland approaches to the city. Vassal of: Duke Hervis.

**Mundford (P17):** a village. Vassal of: Weeting castellan.

**Milden (P18):** A motte and bailey castle. Ruler: castellan. Vassal of: Duke Hervis.

**Needham Market (P17):** A crossroad town. Vassal of: Haughley castellan.

**Norwich (P16):** The 4th largest city in Britain, and a center for trade with nations across the North Sea. It has a medium castle, with a square keep and a stone curtain wall. The motte is the largest motte in Britain, with 113 buildings cleared to make room for it. Ruler: Duke Hervis de Revil. Vassal of: King Arthur Pendragon.

**Orford (Q17):** A royal castle, medium in size. It has a unique multi-angular keep, a curtain wall, a twin-towered gate house, and several towers. Note that this is one of the castles of Anglia which is not ruled by Hervis. Ruler: Sir David, an one-armed veteran knight. Vassal of: King Arthur Pendragon.

**Ouse River:** [Greater Ouse] border of Anglia

**Rising (O16):** [Castle Rising] A medium castle, with a keep with corner turrets and a forebuilding, within a bailey, and with 2 outer baileys within 12 acres of ditches and ramparts. Ruler: castellan. Vassal of: Duke Hervis.

**Stoneham (P17):** a crossroad town. Vassal of: Haughley castellan.

**Sutton Hoo (P17):** A town. Nearby is the burial site of a great Saxon chieftain. Ruler: Sigburt. Vassal of: Walton Castellan.

**Swaffham (P16):** A village. Vassal of: Acre castellan.

**Sudbury (P18):** a city. Vassal of: Duke Hervis.

**Thetford (P17):** A city with a motte and bailey castle. The castle is built atop an ancient hill fort, and has the tallest motte in Britain. The city is also a famous horse market. Ruler: castellan. Vassal of: Duke Hervis.

**Walton Castle (P18):** Originally a Roman fort, one of the Saxon Shore, it now counts as a Medium Castle, thanks to its curtain walls and towers. Ruler: castellan. Vassal of: Duke Hervis.

**Weeting (P17):** A small castle, with a palisaded enclosure, wet moat, 3-story tower, and 2-story hall. Note that this is one of the castles of Anglia which is not ruled by Hervis. Ruler: Equites (Sir) Servius, castellan. Vassal of: Praetor (Duke) Jonathel of Dorset

**Wells (P16):** a town. Vassal of: Brancaster castellan.

**Wolfpit (P17):** A huge trap to catch and kill wolves is here.

**Wormegay (O16):** a motte and bailey castle overlooking the Fens. Ruler: Sir Grand the Lesser. Vassal of: Duke Hervis.

**Yarmouth (Q16):** a small town at the mouth of the Yar River. Vassal of: Burgh Castle. (In *Knights Adventurous* this town was incorrectly stated to be the mooring of Duke Hervis' fleet. In fact, that is Burgh Castle.)



## The Adventure of THE FOREST ADVENTUROUS

**T**HIS ADVENTURE IS SUITABLE for any time during the third or fourth phases. It encompasses a series of encounters within the wooded areas of Anglia, specifically in the enchanted Forest Adventurous. It is suitable for use with knights riding errant in search of adventure or exploring unfamiliar territory. Also, knights participating in "The Adventure of the Stygian Stallions" may pass through the Forest Adventurous on their quest. Some of these encounters may prove useful in that adventure.

There are many reasons for knights to visit the Adventurous Forest. They may be exploring or sightseeing, or they may have heard of one of the local adventures such as Old Shuck, fighting dragons, faerie encounters, and hunting Saxons.

### Travel

Due to its enchanted nature, any travel through the Adventurous Forest requires a daily Hunting roll, even if on the King's Road. This roll is modified as noted in the nearby box.

Usually a single guide takes responsibility for the group, and makes the only Hunting Roll. This allows full road movement rate. If several people make the Hunting rolls, travel rates are halved because those looking around must separate to scout the area, then return to compare discoveries. Travel rates are given on page 79 of *Pendragon*, and reprinted in this book on page 15.

### Hunting/Travel Roll Results Table

Critical Success: Travel full distance, and encounter a Black Dog.

Success: Travel full distance without incident.

Failure: Travel half the intended distance, and Roll on Forest Adventurous Encounter Table.

Fumble: Roll on Forest Adventure Table +10.

### Forest Adventurous Encounters

This table is used whenever an encounter is needed, or when a group fails their Hunting roll when traveling through the Adventurous Forest.

d20	Result
01	la Sage Dame
02	Fountain of the Shepherds
03	The Fachan
04	The Faerie Dance
05	Sir Gastronius' Manor
06-07	Monster
08-10	Ambush by Bandits
11-13	Ambush by Rebels
14-16	1d6 Barguests
17-19	1d6 Guardian Black Dogs
20	Old Shuck

### Modifiers to the Hunting Roll

Type of Road (use one)	King's Road	+10
	Trade Road	+5.
	Local Road, path	+0
Woods.	All parts of the	
	Forest Adventurous.	-5, plus:
	Normal Forest	-5.
Variable Conditions (cumulative)		
	Eye to Bungay Road	-7
	Raining	-5
	Night	-10

Speed (use one)	Start the day Lost	-5
	Moving at Fast Rate	-5
	Moving at normal rate	+/-0
	Moving at slow rate	+5
Familiarity (use one)	Your Homeland	+10
	Been here many times	+10
	Been here before	+5
	Been here once or twice	+1
	Returning to the Castle of Bon Adventure to fulfill a promise	+10



## The Encounters

These encounters correspond to the one roles on the Forest Adventurous encounter table.

### A Sage Dame

This old woman, called "the Wise Lady," is said to know all things. For the price of a good meal like knights eat in their hall, she will speak her wisdom.

Her answers vary according to their complexity. If asked something as simple as "Where are the horses we seek?" then she will give a precise answer. But to "What is the meaning of life?" she gives obtuse, poetic answers which often fail to satisfy those who are not of a mystical bent.

If threatened with violence, she is abruptly surrounded by crackling lightning, and then pops out of view. If the people who threatened her ever come close to her home again (i.e.-rolls this encounter on the table again) then she refuses to be seen, and sets her pack of eight Guardian Black Dogs on them.

### Fountain of the Shepherds

Someplace within the Forest Adventurous, perhaps even moving from place to place, is a natural pond surrounding a fountain which throws up a geyser of crystal clear water. Shepherds live around it, tending their flock. They are friendly and unafraid of strangers. These people are absolutely incapable of telling a lie. However, they can speak only of what they already know or have seen themselves. They cannot judge whether something they have been told about is true.

They are careful to differentiate between their opinions and fact.

### The Fachan

A creature of Faerie is plaguing the area. It has one leg, one hand protruding from its chest, one eye in the center of its forehead, and a crest of unyielding hair on its head. It can turn invisible instantly. It carries an iron flail and is protected by a mantle of hard-to-pierce feathers about its body. [Faerie Lore. Success = it is a fachan.] Malice and trouble are the work of this monster, with no good intents for any human.

### The Fachan

SIZ 15	Move 3	Major Wound 30
DEX 15	Damage 7d6	Unconscious 11
STR 25	Heal Rate 6	Knockdown 15
CON 30	Hit Points 45	Armor 20
APP 3		
Modifier to Valor: -5		
Attack: flail @18.		
Glory to kill: 200.		

A fachan is a two dimensional creature which can only be seen from the sides. It's not flat, but actually two dimensional. It cannot be attacked from directly ahead, and can always keep a single foe straight ahead of it. It can attack a foe which cannot see it. However, foes standing beside it can see it and attack.

To see a fachan when facing the creature's front or back, the viewer has to receive a successful Awareness skill roll opposed to the fachan's Hide of 20.

### The Faerie Dance

As the summer sky dims to grey, attempt [Awareness. Success = knights hear a dancing tune coming from nearby.] Only a short travel leads them to a small flowered clearing, where many peasant men and women dance. They wear green coats and red hats.

One of them sees the watching knights and rushes over to them. It is a pretty young girl, her skin asheen with a light coat of sweat. Her eyes and her smile are bright. Her manner bold and inviting.

"Come dance with us," she says, "and put an end to all your worries."

Everyone must attempt their [Lustful. Successful = they want to dance, and get off their horses. Failure = attempt Awareness.][Awareness. Successful = knights see that many of the people dancing have green skin!] Everyone knows this is a faerie dance.

Knights who wish to stop their fellows from dancing must engage them in an opposed roll of their Prudent Trait against the dancer's Reckless Trait. Anyone who wins their Reckless laughs at his overcautious fellows and dashes off with the girl to dance. The others may either stay, whereupon another young woman approaches and begins the process again; or depart and desert their companion here.

### Departing

Anyone who departs spends a cold night camping among the trees. No other event occurs, but their companions cannot be found. [Hunting. Success = the knight locates the



meadow of the dance, but the flowers are not trampled, and it looks like no one was there.]

Knights may delay as long as they wish, but cannot affect their companions' fate.

### Staying

Knights who stay join into the wildest, most enthusiastic dance they have ever been in. [Dance. Success = get 25 Glory for their fine feats.] They do not tire, and will remain OUT OF THE GAME, dancing until Judgement Day if they do not escape. Everyone gets a Dance check, too.

Escape may be attempted once per day. Attempt [Lazy. Success = the knight finally falls asleep. He wakes to find his horse and squire waiting for him, completely unaware of any passage of time.]

Fortunately, the knights need only ride a very short distance and they will emerge nearby their former traveling companions, as long as they are still in the Forest Adventurous. If the companions have departed, then the dancers find themselves at Buckenham, or wherever else the gamemaster desires.

## Sir Gastronius' Manor

As night falls a manor becomes visible ahead. The peasants look up from their evening work and watch, but without the usual suspicion of the Anglian folk. The manor lord, a plump knight, comes out into the yard and welcomes the knights.

"I am Sir Gastronius," he says, "and as long as you honor the rules of hospitality, you're welcome here at Riverford Manor." A couple of servants come forward to help the squires with the horses.

Sir Gastronius shows the knights to the hall, where he invites them to wash up and be comfortable. Dinner is served soon.

Indeed, as the player knights watch, many servants are converting the hall for the evening meal. They unstack boards and legs from stacks behind the tapestry and erect tables with benches to fill the floor.

At the right time Sir Gastronius and his wife, a plump and hearty lady, enter and take their seats. The visiting knights are given seats of honor with the lord and his wife.

Mmmmm! What a dinner! The usual *Pendragon* format would not do justice to the many fine foods served tonight!

### Dinner at Gastronius'

First course: cold whole mudpuppies à l'orange sauce

Second course: crunchy lizard tails *au gratin*

Third course: blackened finger cakes with sardines and melted cheese

Fourth course: braised catfish lips with peppercorns and parsley

Fifth course: candied cat and dog ears

Sixth: boar testicles on a stick

Seventh: marshmallow and bean pasties

For those unfamiliar with medieval food, this stuff is *atrocious!* But

Sir Gastronius and his wife really *dig in*, rolling their eyes over the fare and commenting to each other on its exquisiteness. They also ask each of the visiting knights how they like everything. Gamemasters should elicit a response from each player, then reveal the results.

If the knights spare their host's feelings and say they like the food, they get a Deceitful check.

If they admit that they don't like it Sir Gastronius laughs heartily and says, "You outsiders are always so squeamish," and his wife laughs too and digs out another rat sausage to munch. The knight gets an Honest check.

Everyone gets a Hospitality check for staying at the table, and those who leave lose a Hospitality Point.

The mead is the best thing at the table. If knights use drunkenness as an escape, get an Indulgence check.

During and after the meal, knights may question Gastronius about their needs, recent events, or other typical conversations subjects. Gastronius exhibits an awesome ignorance of local events, and an equally stupendous indifference to the same. "Humph," he says about it, "things always change out there. It's so hard to keep track of things that we just don't even try anymore."

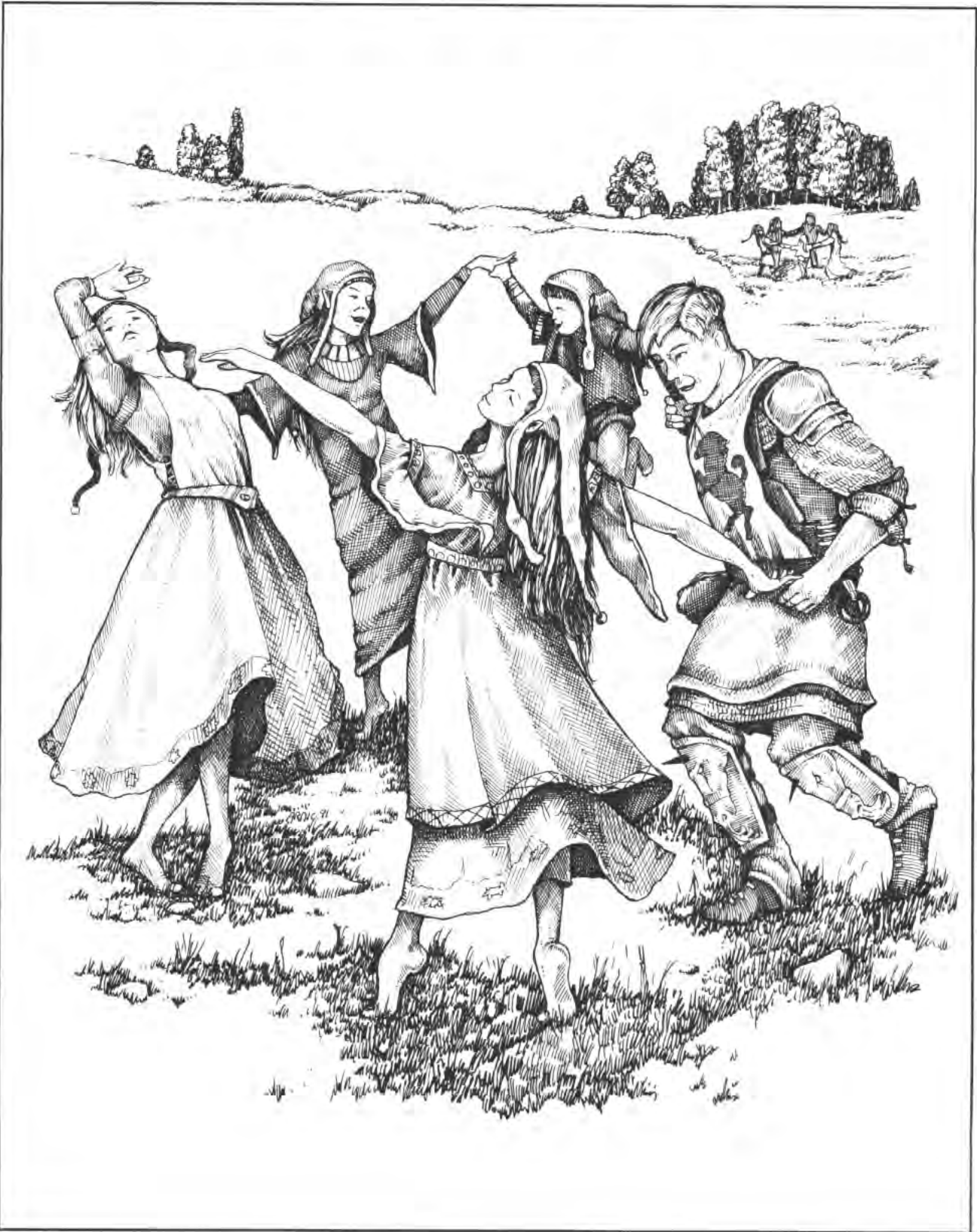
The next day the knights can set off again. Gastronius is bad at directions, and cannot help them get where they are headed, but he can direct them back to their original starting point of yesterday (i.e.-get a +10 bonus to Hunting skill). If the knights do this they get a +5 on their subsequent Hunting roll tomorrow. Alternatively, they can ignore his directions, and begin the turn Lost.

Sir Gastronius



### Faerie Dance

The young knight is seduced by the graceful dance of the faeries, as yet unaware that there may be no way out.





Sir Gastronius' wife thoughtfully prepares a huge sack of food for your day's travel.

## Monster

Several monsters inhabit the Adventurous Forest, waiting to waylay the unwary traveler, or to establish his evil reputation by destroying knights. These creatures lie far outside the pale of humanity, and do not deserve the natural mercy of chivalry.

To discover which monster encounters the knights, roll 1d6.

*Random Monster Table*

1d6	Creature
1-2	Small giant
3-4	Lion
5-6	Manticore

Stats for these creatures can be found in *Pendragon*, page 203.

## Bandits

Angish bandits ambush the party.

There are 1d20 bandits. If they outnumber the knights by at least 2:1, they will attack. They are led by a Saxon Chieftain. They care nothing for horses, and always hurl their javelins at the horses first, then close with spear and axe. They invoke their hatred of knights, and use their bonus for their favorite weapon.

Use the Saxon Warrior stats and Saxon Chieftain Stats (Box, nearby) for the bandits.

## Rebels

Angish rebels ambush the knights. They number 1d20 mounted warriors, plus a chieftain, plus two housecarls, plus one berserker. If the number of rebels is at least equal to the knights, they will attack.

Saxon rebels are just like bandits, but they are bolder and better equipped. Their primary difference is that they have horses to ride. Most are on poor rounceys, but one fourth are on good chargers.

Three other men lead the rebels. The leaders are a chieftain on a charger, and two of his housecarls equipped like him and with similar statistics, but riding rounceys. Also, a berserker accompanies them.

### Saxon Warrior

SIZ 16      Move 2  
DEX 8      Damage 5d6  
STR 14      Hit Points 30  
CON 14      Armor 6 + shield  
APP 12

Attacks: Spear 13, Axe 14, Javelin 13

Significant Traits: Valorous 12

Significant Passions: Hate knights 16, Honor 10

Significant Skills: Awareness 15, Boating 12, Swimming 10

Horse: Rouncy, 4d6 damage.

### Saxon Chieftain

SIZ 17      Move 2  
DEX 10      Damage 5d6 + 1d6\*  
STR 13      Hit Points 30  
CON 13      Armor 12 + shield  
APP 12

Attacks: Spear 20, Axe 21, Javelin 17; Battle 15

Significant Traits: Valorous 17, All Wotanic Virtues 16

Significant Passions: Hate knights 18, Honor 15

Significant Skills: Awareness 15, Boating 18, Swimming 12

Horse: Charger, 6d6 damage.

### Saxon Berserk

SIZ 17      Move 3  
DEX 13      Damage 6d6 + 2d6\*  
STR 17      Hit Points 35  
CON 18      Armor 16 magical points  
APP 6

Attacks: Great Axe 19

Significant Traits: Valorous 22, All Wotanic Traits 16+

Significant Passions: Hate knights 17, Honor 6, Love (Wotanic) 16

Significant Skills: Awareness 5, Boating 3, Swimming 4

\*Wotanic Religious Bonus plus using a Great Weapon.

Also, regularly uses **berserker option** (*Pendragon*, page 89)

## Barguest

This famous type of fairy dog usually first appears as a huge black dog. It can change shape, so it sometimes has horns and huge teeth as well. It is noted for its huge glowing eyes, as big as saucers. When it walks it sounds like chains jangling, and it has hot fetid breath.

Its particular magic is that it must be slain with a single blow. If not, it will take no damage at all, transferring the damage instead to the attacker whose armor *and magical armor* will not help at all. Thus these animals have a reputation of cursing their attackers, who take ill and die afterwards. It also has an unnerving stare which can drive the bravest man to cowardice.



The Barguest can be killed in melee, or exorcised through Worship led by a priest or priestess.

### Barguest

SIZ 15	Move 4	Major Wound 15
DEX 15	Damage 2d6	Unconscious 8
STR 15	Heal Rate 0	Knock Down 15
CON 15	Hit Points 30	Armor 5
Avoidance: 10		
Modifier to Valor: -5		
Glory to Kill: 150		

Attacks: 1 bite @ 10, which always ignores all natural and worn armor; or Stare @ 15. Each round the Barguest can stare at an opponent and pit his Stare against the victim's

### Saxon Berserk

When the spirit of Wotan possesses him, a berserk fights with an incredible battle frenzy. This one has finished with his foes, and now mistakenly has begun on his friends.

modified Valor as an Opposed Resolution roll. Loss indicates the knight receives a Cowardly check and flees in panic from the site for 1d6 melee rounds.

### Guardian Black Dog

Faeries of any type may have one or more of these big things hanging around. They are the ordinary kind of mutt



for elves with dogs. Despite their giant size and the exotic power of disappearing at will, they are just big dogs with a fanatical sense of loyalty to their masters. In the usual elfish way, the feeling is reciprocated and the faeries are inordinately fond, and protective, of their dogs.

Unlike other types of faerie dogs, these Black Dogs are sometimes friendly to travelers. They have been known to lead lost people out of the forest, for instance. The precise mechanism for triggering this friendship is unknown.

### Guardian Black Dog

SIZ 22	Move 7	Major Wound 15
DEX 18	Damage 4d6	Unconscious 9
STR 15	Heal Rate 3	Knock Down 22
CON 15	Hit Points 37	Armor 10

Avoidance: 10, or 39 when insubstantial

Modifier to Valor: -5

Glory to Kill: 50

Attacks: bite @ 10

### Old Shuck

Old Shuck is a demonic creature which usually appears in the shape of a great mangy black dog with huge gleaming yellow eyes. It is always malevolent, and has supernatural

powers, including the ability to breath ball lightning, and to transform its physical shape. Horses are terrified of it and refuse to get close.

### Old Shuck

SIZ 22	Move 4	Major Wound 33
DEX 16	Damage 8d6	Unconscious 14
STR 24	Heal Rate 6	Knock Down 22
CON 33	Hit Points 55	Armor 16
Avoidance: 39 (always insubstantial when moving)		
Modifier to Valor: -15		
Glory to Kill: 250		

Attacks: Bite @30, and breathes ball lightning each round @20 for 15 points of damage; Normal armor does not protect against Old Shuck's fiery breath.

Special: Terrify horses — horses are so afraid of Old Shuck that they become madly unmanageable. Whenever any horse gets within 20 feet of it, whether riding up unawares or at a full charge, the rider must attempt a Horsemanship Roll with a -15 modifier. Failure indicates the horse panics, throws the rider, and bolts for cover. A Fumble indicates the horse fell.

If pressed by multiple opponents, Old Shuck will transform himself to have the horns of a bull. This adds another attack to him each round: Horn Stab @17.

## The Black Dogs of Anglia

Anglian folklore is full of phantom black dogs. In fact, except for the usual dragon or two, most of the supernatural Anglian sites are these supernatural mutts. This indicates a plague of major proportions, hence their regular appearance.

In their current modern state, these legends give many conflicting details about supernatural dogs, even though all are called Phantom Dogs. For *Pendragon* we delineate several different creatures which appear under that ambiguous label of Black Dogs. To keep players guessing, we present these three types of Black Dogs from legend to use in your campaign: Barguest, Guardian Black Dog, and the demonic Old Shuck.

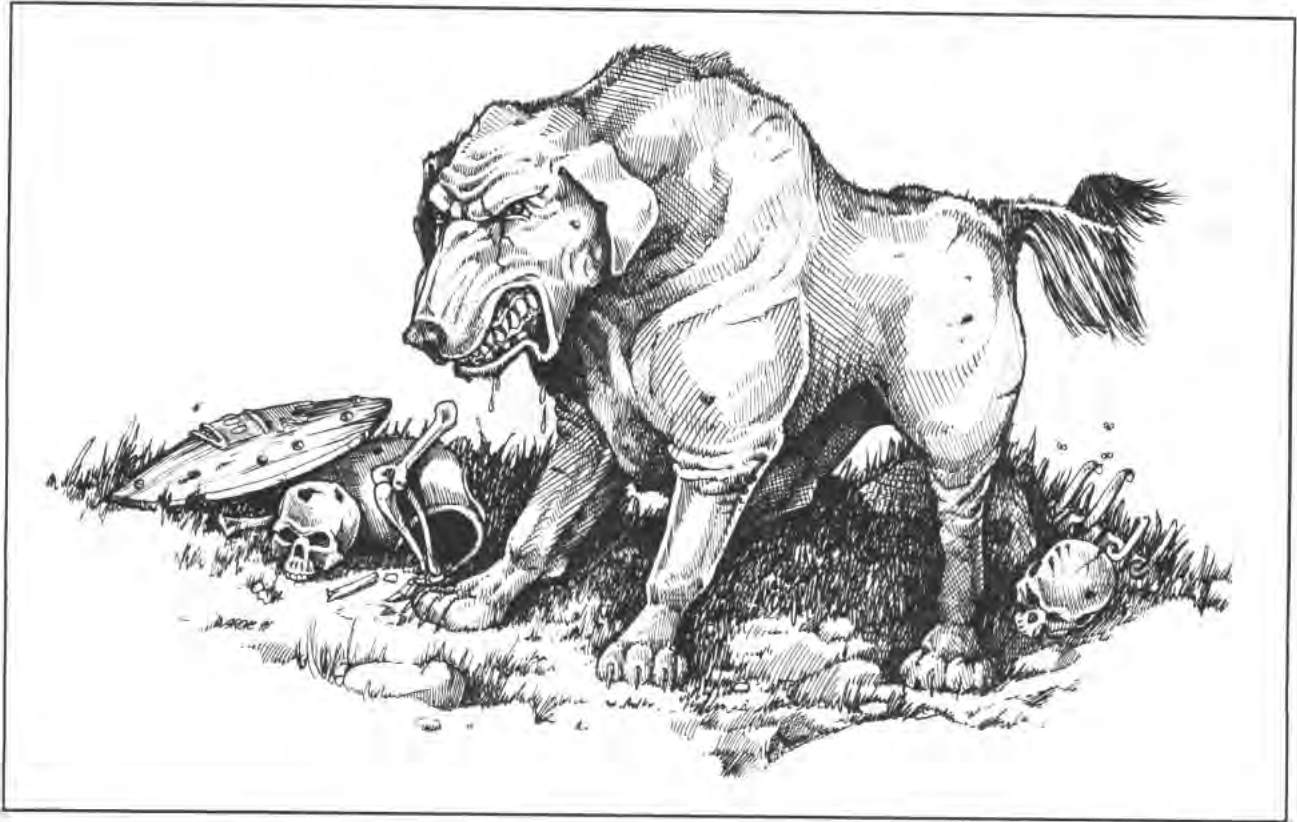
Each encounter with a phantom dog begins the same way, with a scary, distant howl, closing in fast. Usually these cries are indistinguishable at a distance, and so everyone assumes the worst — Old Shuck is coming! Anyone who fails their modified Valor roll wisely heads for cover. Thus:

**ALL FAERIE DOG HOWLS: Modifier to Valor = -10.**

This panic can be stopped only by making a successful Valor roll. The -10 modifier continues in use for the round following the first panic, but after that the distance reduces the modifier to zero. This allows the rider to stop and reassess his position and try to make his Valor roll. Once the panic has passed, to re-approach the howling dog requires another modified Valor roll.

However, the initial Valor roll needs to be made only once to enter and stay in the fight.

If ever actually met, the types of Faerie Dogs can sometimes be distinguished before they rip the living to shreds. Roll [Faerie Lore, Success = the knight knows what type of phantom dog he faces.]



### Old Shuck

Old Shuck is a demonic creature that has taken the form of a dog. Here he has already vanquished some unfortunate knights, and stands ready to do so again.





## The Adventure of The Stygian Stallions

by Greg Stafford and Suzanne Courteau

**T**HIS ADVENTURE TAKES PLACE in the land of Anglia, detailed elsewhere in *Blood and Lust*. The gamemaster should be familiar with that information before he runs this adventure. It can be used in any phase of the Pendragon Campaign. To begin it, three horses, worth a king's ransom, have been stolen from the Earl of Essex. The player knights' search for the horses and thieves leads them into the Adventurous Forest.

Once the initial scene at the Halstead Stables is played, subsequent activities depend entirely upon what the player knights choose to do. The knights witness a robbery, and are perhaps victimized by it. The thieves' escape plans are explained, and the gamemaster is left to co-ordinate the interaction of the fleeing bandits and the pursuing player characters. Several final sections are also given to allow the gamemaster to close the scenario with a satisfactory confrontation, if he desires.



### Starting the Scenario

Several motivations exist to get player knights to Halstead, the opening scene.

- **Interest in horses.** [Horsemanship. Success = you hear about some black war horses being trained at Halstead, and are curious enough to see.]

On the way to the scenario, help the players calculate the value of one of these destriers:

(32£ for a destrier) x 10 (for a horse of perfect noble color) x 3 (for attack training) = 960£ each.

960 x 3 horses = 2880£ in all. Note in *Pendragon*, page 147, that one of the lesser kings of Britain (say, of Estregales) has a ransom of 2150£. That makes these three horses worth, literally, a king's ransom.

- **On the Way Elsewhere.** The Forest Adventurous has several unique adventures which could lure knights, who

may well stop here on their way. See the section on "Angleland."

### Halstead Stables

As the knights come to the manor they are welcomed by Sir Gauter, the marshall. "You've come to see the horses, I expect," he says. He eyes the knights carefully, then asks their names and lords. He finally decides they are safe enough.

"Let me welcome you in the name of my liege, Count\* Bleoberis. Make yourself at home, leave your stuff inside. They'll be coming in soon. You look like you could use some ale." He guides the knights in, and a couple of pages and young girls step up to help them disarm.

*\*Note that he calls Bleoberis "Count" rather than "Earl." Bleoberis is technically an earl, but since he comes from the continent, he prefers to use the equivalent continental title of Count. This is typical of the Ganis clan's general pretentiousness. However, everyone else in Britain (for instance, Sir Harry, below) calls him earl.*

After everyone has disarmed and refreshed themselves, Sir Gauter offers to take them to see the destriers.

"Know anything about these animals? Magnificent! Nineteen hands, all of them, and with thews like bronze. So big you can hardly get your legs around them."

Sir Gauter

He takes everyone to the stables where some rouncys have been saddled. Knights can see their own horses being well taken care of.

"Eduard the Frisian has them out for training. That man must be half horse himself, I swear it. They would probably jump off a cliff for him, they would.







## Stygian Stallion

Use these statistics for all three of the stallions.

SIZ 46	Move 3	Major Wound 12
DEX 10	Damage 9d6	Unconscious 15
STR 41	Heal Rate 5	Knock Down 46
CON 12	Hit Points 58	Armor 5

Attack: Augment Rider's Damage 8, Hoof Attack 12, Bash Attack 11 (see *Knights Adventurous* p107.)

Special: When fighting, the stallion uses its bash attack to knock down a foe, and then its hoof attack to trample the fallen foe.

Never seen anything like it."

He leads the way, riding over the rich green field of a hillside. As they ride, a trio of absolutely stygian horses — the biggest any knight has ever seen — gallop heavily over

the hill top about a quarter of a mile away. They are as beautiful as imaginable. Riding atop one of them is a young man, whom Bleoberis identifies as Eduoard the Frisian.

[Awareness. Success = three men are riding behind the horses, spurring as fast as possible. They are armed, but unarmored. Critical Success = six more men are riding around the hillside, to insert themselves between the stallions and the player knights. Several of them are armored, most not.]

"Jesu Christ!" swears Sir Gauter, "What is this?" He stands in his stirrups to see better.

[Heraldry. Success = two Anglian knights, perhaps brothers, lead the group. Critical Success = One of the knights is Sir Grand the Lesser, a knight of Duke Hervis.]

Several men, one per player knight, ride forward and shoot their bows at the player knights to keep them away. The archers do 2d6 damage with their bows at this range.

## Sir Grand the Lesser

Sir Grand the Lesser is the eldest son of Sir Grand the Great, a Notable Knight of Anglia who served Duke Hervis well during his life, and was amply rewarded with Wormegay Castle, an old motte and bailey fortification.

Sir Grand legitimized his acquisition of Saxon lands by marrying Hildeburgh, a local noblewoman who claimed the right to rule Castle Wormegay. Like many marriages of convenience, this one was only barely tolerable. Two healthy sons did not improve the relationship. Sir Grand went outside of his marriage to find emotional satisfaction, and pursued a vigorous, but chaste, courtly romance with Lady Primrose, a lady-in-waiting from nearby castle Acre.

Dame Hildeburgh also sought satisfaction outside the marriage. When Sir Grand discovered that his wife was pregnant, though they had not even spoken to each other for a year, he was enraged. When Sir Grand went to the local bishop to seek advice concerning a divorce or annulment, Hildeburgh fled with her three sons into the wilds, eventually taking refuge with the bandits. While in hiding, she bore another son to an unnamed lover. She claimed she was visited by Wotan one stormy night, and has raised her youngest son as a berserk.

Sir Grand had the marriage annulled on the grounds of abandonment. His sons were declared illegitimate, and he later secretly married Lady Primrose.

### Castle Wormegay

Castle Wormegay was attacked by Anglian bandits from the Fens many times, usually being raided. But one day they burned the walls, and the site was abandoned in favor of Castle Acre, a stone castle on a more suitable site. Duke Hervis denied Sir Grand the



right to rebuild the ruined castle. Except to collect his annual taxes, Grand never went back there.

### Sir Grand the Lesser

Several years later young Grand came out of the forest one day seeking his inheritance. His father was still alive, and so after showing up at court the son received the nickname of "Grand the Lesser." This name infuriated him, and still does. When so called, he invokes his passion of Hate (anyone who calls him Lesser) and starts a fight.

Sir Grand would have denied his son the inheritance, but Duke Hervis was already angry at Sir Grand over a petty issue, and then became even more enraged at the discovery of the secret marriage. He stripped his vassal of his gift, knighted Grand the Lesser and granted him his mother's land.

Sir Grand was so devastated that he retired from active life. No one knew where he and his lover went. They have not been heard from since. In fact, he retired to the forest and, with a few servants, made a small manor for his wife, who bore him a final son. There, after several years of peaceful life, Sir Grand died in bed.

Sir Grand the Lesser hates his father and anyone related to him. He knows nothing of Primrose and her son Evan, however.

Sir Grand the Lesser left Duke Hervis' court to tend his castle, which he claimed has been badly damaged by encroaching water from the Fen. He has not been heard from since then.

Sir Grand is not famous or well known at all. Other knights, like Sir Harry or the castellans of Thetford, Acre, or Weeting, do not know anything about him except that he got the useless ruins of Castle Wormegay as his gift.



### Intervene or not?

Note that Sir Gauter does not intervene. He draws his sword and rides towards the theft, but not close enough to get into melee with three fully armored knights.

If the player knights are brash enough to interfere in their currently unarmored state, the archers shoot arrows and skirmish, keeping them busy and possibly wounding them badly. The player knights must subject themselves to three rounds of arrow fire in order to get close to the armored knights. If they actually close with their armored foes, then Sir Grand and his brothers have no compunctions about killing the foolish knights. Use archer statistics (*Pendragon* page 193) for the archers. Statistics for Sir Grand the Lesser and his berserker brother appears at the end of this chapter under "Wormegay Castle."

As the knights watch helplessly, the riders circle around the galloping stallions and finally capture them with many ropes. As the rider is dislodged by a heavy back-handed blow from one of the knights, Sir Gauter cries, "They got Eduoard!" The captive is carried across the saddle of one of the riders as they gallop off to the east. If knights watch long enough, they see them reach the road to Sudbury and gallop north at full speed.

Sir Gauter orders his squire to watch where they go until they are out of sight. He turns and dashes back to the manor, shouting for everyone at once. The player knights are all but forgotten.

### What next?

If the unarmed and poorly horsed knights pursue the thieves, the bandits wait until they are far from the manor, then turn and attack. If the pursuers subsequently run away, some of the thieves pursue to cover the destrier's theft.

Most likely the player knights will return to the manor after Sir Gauter. They should use the time to discuss what they wish to do.

Knights who wish to ignore the theft and go elsewhere have missed their chance at adventure. They are OUT OF THE STORY.

Whatever else the participating knights do, the critical decision is on *when* they leave. The choices are: immediately upon arming, or after talking to Sir Gauter.

Sir Gauter hardly has time for the player knights. He has his own responsibilities to fulfill in this emergency. However, he slows himself to dedicate a few minutes to plan with the player knights. Here are some likely questions, and some typical answers.

**Q: What will you do next?**



A: "Me, I'm going right to the Fens," he says. "I have already sent messengers to the Count at Colchester. I'll stop at Clare Castle to get reinforcements. I am sure they will go that way."

**Q: Can we help you?**

A: Sir Gauter turns nasty. "No, never. This is my obligation, and I have already failed. I will not have my honor depending upon strangers. I forbid you to accompany me, and I swear that if I find you along the way I shall beat you into submission." [Honor. Success = the knights know this guy is serious, and this is a matter of personal honor to him. Strong enough, in fact, that he will get to invoke his Honor Passion if needed.]

**Q: How about Duke Hervis?**

A: "Well, he should be notified, if he doesn't know already." [Suspicious. Success = the knights know that Sir Gauter suspects Duke Hervis of being behind this.]

**Q: How about going to the Adventurous Forest?**

A: "I don't think even the Angles are stupid enough for that. The place is full of dangers and enchantments."

**Q: How about going towards Ipswich?**

A: "Useless. Everyone there knows about the count's horses, and are sure to recognize them. The thieves couldn't get two miles through the Stour Valley before being stopped."



**Q: Would they head south or west?**

**A:** "That's stupid. The count's own men occupy every manor to the south and west. Thieves wouldn't go that way."

## Decisions

Player knights need to decide which way to go. It actually doesn't matter as long as they head into Anglia. Knights will probably choose to head north and/or east in pursuit. Go to "First Night Lodging."

Gamemasters should point out that they have about a two-day lead on the majority of the Essex knights who can be counted upon to search. One day is spent with messengers reaching Colchester, another while the knights on hand depart to search. This lead gives the player knights a slight advantage in solving this crime, if it is applied well.

## First Night Lodging

With the remaining day time left to them they can reach Clare, a castle; Sudbury, a city; or Long Medford, a town. Whichever destination the player knights choose, they will require lodging for the night, and there they will meet Sir Harry and his wife Mathilda.

The precise location of this scene is unimportant, except for the size of the hall, the quality of the food, and the nature of the vassals summoned to speak.

### Sir Harry and his wife, Mathilda

The knights arrive shortly before dinner time. Sir Harry is pleased to see them, and insists on hearing news over food. **Favorite Dish:** cinnamon beef.

**Favorite Entertainment:** listening to how the horses were stolen.

The player knights bring the first word of the event, of course. Sir Harry calls his servants into the dinner to question them about whether they saw the horses go past. None have. Sir Harry orders the steward to gather the locals to question them, too, and the steward departs.

Harry and Mathilda speculate on who might have stolen the horses:

- Duke Hervis? Everyone knows that he has a rivalry with Earl Bleoberis, whom he calls "that damned foreigner."
- Orkney clan? They have a jealous streak, and are rivals of Bleoberis clan of de Ganis.
- Ordinary thieves? Unlikely, since they would have trouble selling these animals through any normal black market outlet.
- Saxon Underground? They might have the resources to sell such a hot item, but they probably wouldn't want to antago-

nize Earl Bleoberis and make more enemies. Besides, no knights are part of the underground.

They also make sure that the player knights, who are strangers to Anglia, understand a few things:

- Distrust Angles. They are a totally treacherous lot, born to lie.
- Beware the Forest Adventurous. It has grown enchanted, and many adventures, both odd and dangerous, reside there.
- Thetford has a big horse market. Thieves might try to sell them there, before word gets out.
- A local tournament is being held at Cambridge this week, with the Huntington knights against Anglian knights, so most of the knights from western Anglia will surely be there.

After much discussion over and after dinner, Sir Harry makes a number of opinions and statements.

- He is going to bring the word to Duke Hervis tomorrow. He is probably in Norwich.
- The thieves are probably going to the Adventurous Forest. Since his path takes him through it, maybe he'll find them!

And, almost as an afterthought:

- "You know, you ought to stop in at the abbey at Guinnon, and talk to the assistant abbot, Alfgar. He can be very helpful. He really understands these people." He laughs a bit, "I sometimes forget that he is one of them himself! You know, he even revealed the Eye to Bungay road to us!"

"Well, good night. I must be off early tomorrow, and I am not as young as I used to be. You are welcome to remain here and drink, or sleep, as you wish." He and his wife depart. Player characters are recommended to do likewise.

## Next Morning

Where to go next? The options are the same as above, but with the addition of Guinnon and Thetford. Since the former is on the way to the latter, perhaps both.

Also, how fast to travel? Guinnon is a normal day's ride, while Thetford is the distance of a Forced March.

Sir Harry is up, with a couple of servants and a companion. Breakfast is quick and ample.

Sir Harry





In the courtyard a band of surly Angles lounge insolently about. Before mounting, Harry leads the player knights towards them. "Some of my leading peasants," he says. "from the surrounding villages. Maybe they saw something."

He asks them in brusque terms if any of them saw a trio of giant black horses being led across the countryside yesterday afternoon. None of them have. Nope, nothing.

If a player knight asks how they got here so early, or whether they have been waiting all night, or some similar compassionate curiosity, he gets a Merciful check.

"What? Oh yes, of course," says Sir Harry, "I had my men round them up last night." And makes no further mention of it. (Obviously Sir Harry does not get the Merciful check). If the player knights show kindness to the Angles, they receive a Mercy check and a Folklore Check, along with several bemused comments from Sir Harry.

Go to either "Guinnon Abbey," or "Search the Anglian Hills."

## Guinnon Abbey

On the way to the abbey the knights ride past a large mound, overgrown with grass and weeds, but with many charred timbers and fallen walls still visible. These are the remains of Fort Guinnon, where the rebellion of Gorwin was destroyed in 520.

Guinnon is a small, poor abbey nestled among the hills. It is a Benedictine abbey (Black monks). The fact that Merlin predicted a great king and a great saint will be buried here has not contributed to its wealth.

A number of villages surround it, with nice fields and good pasture. In fact, the stygian stallions were sheltered in a village here during the day after the theft.

The usual procedure is followed when the knights enter the abbey. They have to wait awhile since the monks are at prayer. After a while they are taken to the abbot's quarters.

Abbot Raoul is a kind, holy, ineffectual man. He rambles through the usual greetings, and questions the knights concerning their plans and desires. He is only mildly alarmed by the theft. "That which is owned can be stolen," he says. "We don't have that problem here."

After a while, or if the knights ask, they will be dismissed to see Alfgar.

Alfgar is the opposite of his abbot. He is lean, dignified, educated, and gregarious. He is clearly an enlightened Saxon, and takes the time to say so. He is not intimidated by knights, nor superior to them. He is a man with a job to do: run this little abbey for his abbot so that the Angles from around here have a place of spiritual retreat.

Alfgar takes the chance to explain that the people here are crushed with taxes and belittled by their noble lords.

They are treated with cruelty and disdain, so we can understand their anger and bitterness.

When told about the horses, or asked if he had seen them, Alfgar knows nothing. "I am just a simple monk, but surely I'd remember horses such as that. But you know," he says rubbing his chin, "Yesterday or the day before I heard a knight say he was going to purchase such beasts at Thetford!"

When pressed, he remembers more. "I think it was a knight from Malahaut. Tut, has that king come to terms with being Arthur's vassal yet? He is so petty."

Alfgar is called back to his duties. He shows the knights to a simple room to sleep in, if they stay. Nothing else occurs at the abbey.

The next day the knights depart. Go to either "Thetford," "Search the Anglian Hills," "Adventurous Forest," or "Search the northern Brecklands."

## Thetford

Thetford city sits at the confluence of the Thet and Little Ouse (pronounced ooze) Rivers. The town sits beneath the looming ancient hill fort, atop which stands a motte and bailey castle. The motte is incredibly tall: almost 80 feet!

Knights will probably reach Thetford towards evening, either after a leisurely day's ride from Guinnon, or a break neck ride from Sir Harry's. The horse market, which is in a market square outside the city, has closed for the day. Knights should report to the castellan, as usual.

The castellan of Thetford is absent, having left his assistant in charge while he went to the Cambridge tournament. The assistant is an old man, unwilling to even spare any of his reduced garrison to help search. He will send word to Duke Hervis tomorrow to ask for instructions. If asked, no knight of Malahaut is present here, nor has any come through recently.

He makes the knights welcome and gives them a building in the bailey in which to stay. Meals are simple since so few household members are present.

## The Horse Market

The horse market covers several acres of territory. Many pavilions are pitched, including some exotic tents from foreign lands. Strings of horses and ponies are staked out and well guarded through the market area.

The market opens early in the day, with buyers wandering around looking at their leisure.

Knights will probably go and look around, question people, and generally do their best to find the beasts. However, the market is large, and the people questioned are more interested in selling the horses they have than in look-



ing for missing ones. Even if the knights split up, it takes most of the day to thoroughly search the grounds.

During this search a knight might also take the opportunity to buy a new horse of his own. The prices are really good. It requires the whole day to look the whole market over for a charger, though. The number of ordinary steeds allows the knight to pretty much get the color of his choice.

[Horsemanship roll. Success = they got the horse they expected. Failure = they got an inferior horse, with three fewer points on all stats. This charger does only 5d6.]

If the knight is short of cash, he can see the money-lender (see Other Attractions, below).

### Clever Knights

To search, the players might be cagey at first.

**Q: We want something unusual. Where can we find a unique gift for a noble man.**

**A.** "Ah, sirs, you should go to see Joseph of Kent. He has horses suitable for a king's gift."

#### Joseph of Kent

"Here, sires, are the most special and unique horses in all of Britain. Look at that one there, ever seen such a beauty?"

It is an all white Irish courser.

"Only 30£ for gentlemen like you today. It would fetch me 40 in London, you know." (That's true)

"Or this one: a courser which has been trained to swim in deep water with an armored man on his back! Only 25£." It is a chestnut Norman breed.

"Or this, an offspring of Hooves-of-Wind, the famous Arabian black." It is a sleek piebald crossbreed, lighter of body than the usual Norman horse. It has a movement rate of 9, but is otherwise like a normal charger. "Only 17£."

"Does your lord have a young son? Here's a sight, for you: a Shetland pony, trained as a charger! Have you ever seen anything like it? As fierce as a mastiff, too. Only 17£ — you should see the little guy I had to hire to train him!"

"A Pict hill pony, trained as both charger and courser. Only 22£. Healthy, too." It has +2 to CON.

"Well, if none of these is acceptable to you, I suggest that you try the foreigners. They buy and sell strange animals. Try Sergio of Madrid, down the row there."

#### Sergio of Madrid

"Fine Andalusians, Sirs. See, the finest of Spanish horses that money can buy. I had to sneak these out of Spain so that the king himself would not covet them."

He has several Andalusian breed chargers in the normal range of browns: bay, chestnut, dun. They go for only 15£ here, and 20£ in London.

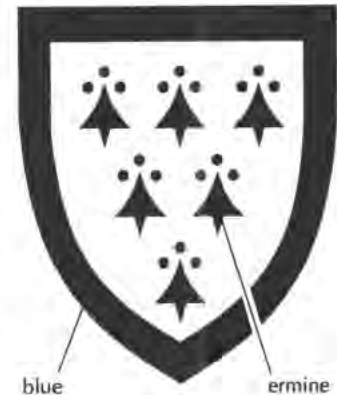
"Fine barbs, too, sirs. Fine animals, healthy and hardy. Look at them, these are trained as chargers! Only 12£ each! They sell for 16£ in London."

#### Abdul of Casablanca

Abdul is an Arab from Morocco. He speaks fair Cymric. He wears his exotic garb, has a desert tent set up, and invites the knights in for a cup of Turkish coffee before any business is discussed. [CON roll. Success = the knight chokes down the most vile brew he has ever tasted. Failure = he spits it out.]

Abdul then leaps up and nearly drags the knights out to see his huge string of barbs. They are all dun, grey, blue dun, and yellow dun. They range in size from ponies (many) to chargers (a few), and in quality from poor (down to 3/4 normal stats) to healthy (normal stats).

#### Thetford Castellán



### Direct Knights

The knights might be blunt and to the point.

**Q: "Have you seen 3 black destriers here?"**

**A.** The first person asked replies, "Why, yes! Everyone is talking about them. They are at the stall of Cliff of Warwick, over the other side of the market there."

#### Cliff of Warwick

When the knights get there, Cliff is glad to show them his horses. "Sure, gladly! A matched set, you know. Three, you say? I have to admit, I am a bit reluctant to break up the set."

"What? What do you mean, 'break up the set'?"

"Well, I have five after all. It's hard to get so many at once. I'd have to raise the price from 50£ each for just three of them."

The horses are five almost-all black Norman breed chargers. Each has only a single white foot. They are probably well priced for such a set.

Cliff of Warwick, when questioned, replies, "Destriers? Oh, you've a taste for quality horse flesh, don't you! You want to go and see Robert the Frisian, on the other side of the market."

#### Robert the Frisian

"Welcome gentlemen, welcome good knights. How can this humble foreigner suit your exquisite need for steeds? I have the biggest and the best."



Three black destriers?

"Oh, my good gentlemen. Don't lump them together that way! You cannot generalize about destriers! Each of them is an individual. Come, let me introduce you to them."

Robert has several good Frisian destriers, one of which is the shade of dark brown which horse people call black.

"They range in price from 20 to 27£," he says. "Good prices!" They are. Destriers normally cost 35£ in London.

"Attack trained, you say? You should speak to Patride of Caen about that! You can find him over there."

**Patride of Caen**

"Good day, how may I help you, good knights?"

Three all black destriers, attack trained?

"Ah, here is one you will like. Trained him myself. He nearly trampled a trainer to death just last week, very fierce. Just 210£, an excellent deal."

It is an almost all-black Norman-breed charger, attack trained all right. When Patride sees the knight's disappointment, he misinterprets it and continues his pitch.

"Maybe if you want one cheaper you can find pleasure with this one, also a trained killer."

It is a bay charger, selling for only 20£, which would cost about 24£ in London.

### **Thetford Horse Market**

Two nobles consider a purchase at the horse market.





### Other horse-dealers of note

#### Gwion of Cardigan

A fine selection of Cambrian ponies, including rounceys and sumpters. 1£ each.

A pair of dapple grey amblers, 8£ for the pair.

A string of Irish coursers, 5£ each.

#### Baldor of Lincoln

Includes a selection of hardy Dale ponies, 1£ each.

Roman breed: rouncey, sumpter, any two for 1£.

Norman chargers, well priced at 8£.

#### Talarth of Silchester

An Andalusian charger, overpriced at 27£.

Norman chargers, 10£.

Matched set of 3 chestnut chargers, precise unto points, 38£.

### Devious Knights

The knights may attempt to find the "underground" at the market. This can be done only with a successful [Intrigue] roll at the castle, to get the name of who to talk to; and another at the market, to find the names of possible contacts.

Knight must pay 1£ for the information, which is to go see Gwion of Cardigan.

**Q: What about something special, unique, perhaps even (ahem) illegal?**

**A.** [Folklore. Success = the knight convinced the peasant to listen. Then attempt [Deceitful. Success = the knight convinced the peasant that he was serious.]]

If both rolls are successful, Gwion of Cardigan takes the knight aside, then glances all around conspiratorially, and whispers, "If this is what you want, go to the abandoned mill over on the Thet at midnight tonight. Bring 50£ with you. Go inside, and call out "Old Robin" three times, and someone will meet you. And go alone: no squires, no friends — ALONE. Someone will meet you." He then goes back to his business, as if nothing happened.

That night, if the devious knight goes to the rendezvous alone, twelve masked, well armed men jump him inside the mill. They are all bandits. They attack three at a time, dropping from the rafters first, leaping from the stairwell second, in through windows third, and from the rafters fourth. All three attack at once, and they all get the bonus of surprise for the first round (+5 each, -5 to the defender). Use the bandit statistics in *Pendragon* p193

Their intent is to rob him of the 50£. They dare not kill him. If four waves have not disabled the knight to unconsciousness, the bandits flee with the knight's horse outside.

If the knight does not have the 50£, the bandits stab him in the chest out of spite. He can be found, with one hit point left, the next day.

If anyone accompanies the knight, or follows (even secretly), then no one is at the mill. The next day Gwion of Cambridge knows nothing, and does not even recall the conversation of yesterday.

**Glory:** 10 per bandit defeated.

### Other Attractions

The large number of people makes this a festive atmosphere, with hundreds of commoners as well as dozens of other knights. Many food vendors and street entertainers wend their way through the crowds. Except for armor, which cannot be bought here, an entire market of other goods is available, but at normal prices (*Pendragon*, page 146).

Saul the Moneylender is here too. He is one of the few reputable bankers in Britain. He lends money at the rate of +10% interest, payable upon delivery of this note (just make your seal there, Sir) at the knight's abode. Even at this usurious rate, *most* of the horses are a bargain.

He hands over the coin, in silver and gold. "I do have the King's own protection for this business, Sir," he boasts. This is also a threat. If the knight is lying, or defaults, the King is responsible for paying up. He will surely collect it from the knight, or his family, or his lord, as necessary.

### Decisions

What next? Alternatives include:

- search in this area: go to "Searching the Anglian Hills," below. Failing all else, the players should probably go to where they think the bandits are and look around.
- Go to the Forest: see "Adventurous Forest."
- Alert more people. Not detailed here, the gamemaster will have to ad lib this. This is a defeatist approach, wasting the little lead time the knights have over the wave of searchers sure to follow the announcement from the earl. By the time the knights reach Buckenham, Sir Harry has already passed. Weeting and Acre are both avid to learn the news, but cannot help.
- Go to the Fens. Another tough route. Discourage this, reminding them that Sir Gauter is there. Also point out that Weeting Castle is not a holding of the Duke of Anglia, and therefore its knights will be maintaining their regular patrols of the Fens there — if the stallions went by, they would capture them.
- Search the area further north. Go to "Search the northern Brecklands."



## Search the Anglian Hills

Players may decide to search likely areas of the Anglian Hills for tracks, fewmets, or other traces, starting with the lands around Sudbury. Gamemasters should apply modifiers to hunt rolls, as provided in the "Angleland" chapter. Success means the trackers have found *some* traces, probably correct. A critical success indicates that a sure clue was found, and the knights can progress another 5 miles or so before it is lost again.

The trail leads into the Forest Adventurous. Once inside the forest, the knights most likely become lost and spend as much time as is necessary to make them desperate. Wasting a couple days of their precious lead time is sufficient to get them to agree to the custom of the Castle of Bon Adventure. In return for a clue Go to "The Adventurous Forest."

## Search the North Brecklands

After checking Thetford for clues, the knights may search the northern Brecklands for any sign of the horses' passage. Use the information in the "Angleland" chapter for information about sites here.

Nothing is encountered. Surly peasants resist helping the knights. Time slips away. At last, when all seems lost, the knights come upon the village of Merton, below.

## The Forest Adventurous

If the player knights go to the Forest Adventurous they can participate in its wonders while they search for the stygian steeds. Of course, gamemasters should not use random die rolls to select an encounter if he would already prefer the use of one or another. The encounter tables are only guide lines, not rules. Instead, fill their days with lost wanderings and discoveries, and their nights with strange noises. After a couple of days of this they reach the Castle of Bon Adventure. Use the encounter below.

### Castle of Bon Adventure

In the late afternoon the top of a tower is visible in the distance. Closer inspection reveals a motte and bailey castle preparing to close down for the evening. At the gate a guard waves the knights in without question. A man approaches them in the bailey and introduces himself as the steward here. He invites them to stay for the dinner meal, but warns that to stay the night they must agree to the custom of the castle. He cannot tell what the custom is, but they will find out after eating. For now, be comfortable and eat. Squires come to tend horses and lead them to a small room in a building in the bailey to refresh themselves.

At dinner time the knights are led to the feasting hall, a large timber building in the bailey.

Sir Victor welcomes the knights to his hall, and invites them to eat with him. But if they wish to spend the night, they must participate in the custom of the castle.

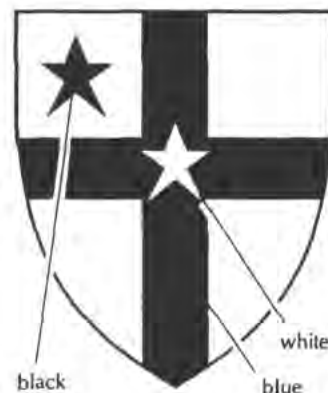
**Favorite Dish:** Broiled venison

**Favorite Entertainment:** The Cymric conteur who tells old stories.

During the dinner Sir Victor listens to news of the outside world. He is very isolated, and knows little of events beyond his own demesne.

If the knights tell the lord about their quest, he tells the knights that he knows where the stallions can be found, and will tell them in return for an unknown future quest. This fits, he says, nicely into the custom of his castle.

The player knights will probably agree to the unknown custom. If not, remind them of the deadline. Upon agreement, the Lord of the Castle of Bon Adventure explains that the stallions are currently at the village of Merton.



Following some after-dinner entertainment, Sir Victor reveals the custom of the castle.

### The Custom

For each night spent in the castle, a knight (or group of knights) must EITHER:

Undertake one of the adventures which Sir Victor lists. In return, a successful knight returned from the quest will be granted the boon of his choice, as long as it does not dishonor Sir Victor or his family.

OR

Ask a boon now, and return within the year to undertake a quest which will be specified at that time. Since the player knights are in a hurry, they will most likely agree to this option.

### The Quests Offered

- Track down and kill the Fachan which has been sighted in the area (page 83 of this book).
- Fight Old Shuck (page 88 of this book).
- Participate in the Adventure of the Adventurous Shield (Pendragon, page 184)



- Participate in the Adventure of the Tomb of Lions (*Pendragon*, page 190)

### The Unspoken Quest

If the player knights took the boon in return for a later quest, then they must return within the year to fulfill their obligation, or they will be in violation of the custom. When they return to the Castle of Bon Adventure, they are welcomed as before. Sir Victor is heartily glad to see them again. After dinner he reveals his request. Choose one from above.

Once the quest is fulfilled, or if they put it off until later, the knights may progress to Merton.

**Glory:** As per quest fulfilled.

## Merton

This scene is provided to give discouraged players hope. Insert it where necessary along the bandits' trail.

The knights come upon an English hamlet nearly hidden in the woods. The villagers are surprised to see the knights, and have not run away in advance like they usually do. They are frozen into place, and if questioned one of them with a red beard steps forward and speaks.

Seen three horses?

"No, we haven't. We are not allowed to own them. There are none here."

[Awareness. Success = the knight sees a huge horse footprint in the square, about two feet from where Redbeard is standing.]

If the knights make immediate accusations most of the people immediately act frightened. The red bearded man laughs and says it is the footprint of Old Shuck.

[Deceitful roll. Success = the knight knows he is lying.]

If the knights force their way, with threats, boasts, or an attack, the Angles scatter without offering any resistance. They can be killed if desired. Common Farmer statistics are in *Pendragon* on page 194.

If the village is subsequently searched (with or without the Awareness success) all players attempt an opposed squire roll. For the winner, his character's squire finds a huge girth in one of the cow byres, and some large horse droppings.

There is no doubt, they stopped here.

The right thing to do is to make Hunt rolls to find the trail out. If they fail one day, they can try again the next, until someone succeeds. Success = the trail is found.

If they just dash off without a trail, they are lost again.

The trail leads to Primrose Manor.

**Glory:** None for killing peasants; it's too easy.

## Primrose Manor

The trail leads close to a small manor in the northwest region of the forest. A few small fields surround it and a poor village of English peasants. The village is called Pickenham.

The lady of the manor, Primrose, welcomes the knights warily. She retreats and leaves it to her steward, an old man, to settle the knights in a small outbuilding near the manor hall. "Dinner will be soon," he says.

Dinner is a simple affair: beef and venison, and only a few common spices. The lady's young son is also present, sitting beside his mother and gawking happily at the knights.

After dinner the Lady Primrose asks the knights' business, and so on. She is saddened by the theft. "When will men learn to live together," she sighs. "Is there not enough sorrow in the world already?"

Knights can ask her story, and after only a moment's hesitation, she speaks.

"I am a widow," she says. "My husband was a wonderful man, a famous knight of prowess and chivalry. But he was treated unfairly by his liege, and we were left with only this little manor to ourselves. He has died, and left me to raise this boy alone."

The boy beams at the knights. "I'm going to be a knight some day," he says somewhat shyly.

"Please Evan," says Primrose, "Don't bother these good men."

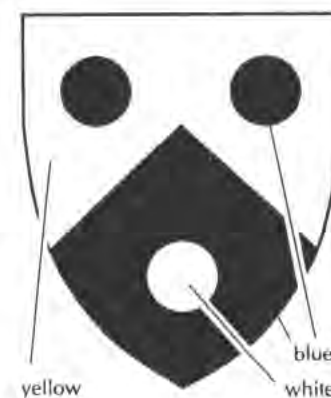
The boy ignores her in his excitement. "Want to see my shield? It's just like my dad's, almost...."

He drags an old shield out. [Heraldry +10. Success = the knights realize this is almost the same as the knight who stole the horses!]

If the player knights question the lady about this she sadly reveals her whole story about her husband Sir Grand,

as related in the box about Sir Grand the Lesser.

Evan



And Sir Grand's other son, where is he?

"Probably at Wormegay," she says, "there is an old pier there that is hardly ever used for shipping. They could be leaving from there."

She also gives directions to get to Wormegay. Knights can set off the next morning.



## Wormegay Castle

The knights probably reach Wormegay around nightfall.

Wormegay Castle is not as battered as it had been. A new palisade surrounds the bailey.

[Awareness. Success = there are the horses!] The horses are being led from the fort to the dock, where a large barge waits for them. A knot of men stand around the pier, and some others escort the horses.

When the bandits see the approaching knights they burst into activity. The grooms hurry toward the barge, while mounted and foot warriors prepare to stop the knights.

It takes three combat rounds for the first horse to be loaded, and two more rounds for each additional horse. This gives 7 rounds until the barge is cast off. It takes 2 more rounds for it to be poled away from the dock, during which a man or horse can easily leap from the dock onto the barge, without needing to roll. For two more rounds a leaping horse [Horse-ship for success] may reach the barge. After that, it is too far to be reached and it slips off into the Fens.

[Battle. Success = the knight realizes they must push on and not get bogged down if they wish to reach the barge in time.]

The first wave of defenders are mounted English warriors (use Rebel stats, from page 86 in the Angleland chapter), with one per player knight. If half of them are killed or wounded in the first charge, the rest run away.

The second wave is a band of foot men with long spears, one per knight. If half of them are killed or wounded in the first charge, the rest run away.

Finally, Sir Grand the Lesser, his knight brother, and his berserker brother are last. They may engage the knights, but if it seems hopeless they will turn and run instead into their fort. Statistics for Sir Grand the Lesser and his berserker brother are nearby. For the younger brother, use ordinary knight statistics.

On the barge are three grooms, Eduard the captive groom, and five English warriors. These warriors will fight until wounded, whereupon they leap off the barge and try to swim away.

If at least one player knight makes it onto the barge, Eduard the groom casually vaults atop one of the stallions and whispers in its ear. The next round, it starts to fight, using its magnificent skills to attack a warrior each round until they are killed.

If the barge gets away, the knights' best bet is to ride to Brancaster and notify Duke Hervis' navy there and hope they can catch the bandits trying to leave the Fens.

If the brothers hide in the fort they are impregnable to the player knights' attacks. The knights should be content to depart and let Duke Hervis deal with his own bad vassals.

### Sir Grand the Lesser

SIZ 14	Move 3	Major Wound 13
DEX 9	Damage 5d6	Unconscious 7
STR 16	Heal Rate 3	Knock Down 14
CON 13	Hit Points 27	Armor 12
APP 14	Age 31	Glory 2075

Attack: Sword 18, Lance 16, Battle 12, Horsemanship 12.  
 Significant Traits: Vengeful 16, Selfish 17, Valorous 15.  
 Significant Passions: Hate (the name Grand the Lesser) 19  
 Significant Skills: Awareness 13, Heraldry 12  
 Horse: Charger, 6d6 damage, Move 8.

### Berserker

SIZ 18	Move 3
DEX 13	Damage 6d6 + 2d6*
STR 17	Hit Points 36
CON 18	Armor 16 magical points
APP 6	

Attacks: Great Axe 19  
 Significant Traits: Valorous 20, All Wotanic Traits 16+  
 Significant Passions: Hate knights 15, Honor 5, Love (Wotan) 18  
 Significant Skills: Awareness 9, Boating 5, Swimming 5  
 \*Wotanic Religious Bonus plus using a Great Weapon. Also, regularly uses **berserker option** (*Pendragon*, page 89)

**Glory:** 10 for each bandit or rebel killed.

75 for killing the berserker.

100 for capturing or killing Sir Grand the Lesser.

500 for returning the horses to the Count, divided among the knights.

## Conclusion

Knights should take the horses back to Colchester. Before reaching there they will undoubtedly meet some Essex knights searching. They provide a suitable (if somewhat jealous) escort.

Count Bleoberis is ecstatic to get his horses and groom back. He throws a big feast to honor the knights.

**Surprise Dish:** Braised Catfish lips ("One of my vassals recommended it!")

**Favorite Entertainment:** The player knights telling of their search for the Stygian Stallions.

The Count also rewards the knights with treasure worth 250£, divided among them. This is a tremendous amount of money, though moderate compared with the value of the stallions themselves.



# Short Adventures

by Greg Stafford

**H**ERE ARE SOME SHORT EVENTS which can be used to fill in a gap in the narrative, or provide quick encounters for the gamemaster in the expected event of an unexpected player choice.



## The Adventure of THE TENT

(From *Perlesvaus*, pages 65-70)

**Setting:** The Field of the Tent. The precise location of this field is up to the gamemaster, and can be fit in anywhere he needs an encounter.

**Problem:** This adventure presents an evil custom, abuse of hospitality.

**Characters:** a dwarf, several ladies (one per knight), The Greek Knight Without Pity, several other Knights (one per player knight), several warriors (one per player knight)

**Glory:** 100 for ending this evil custom, plus whatever is gained through combat.

### Action

A cold rain and unseasonal fog promise a miserable night. Late in the day, the knights enter a wide meadow on the edge of a river. The field is empty, except for a large pavilion standing at the far end. No people are visible anywhere.

The tent is clean white silk all around, and the roof is red samite. The corner poles are each topped with a golden sphere, atop which sits a golden eagle. The cords are of silk, the pegs are ivory.

Inside is a rich couch of silk and gold. Atop it is a sheet, and a coverlet of ermine and vair. Two pillows sit at the head, each of which exudes a most pleasant and seductive aroma which gives +5 to a roll for [Trusting. Success = the knight is relaxed and feels safe enough to disarm. His manner is convincing to others, who all get a +5 to their Trusting as well.]

Two seats of ivory, with thick red cushions on them, sit by the bed. Two candles, in golden tapers, burn at the foot of the bed.

A table is set in the middle of the tent. It is carved from ivory and set with gold. A napkin and a basin of silver are on one side, while around it are places set for each knight. The settings are a knife with an ivory handle, a gold dish, and a gold goblet.

[Stewardship. Success = the knight knows the value of this tent and contents is worth hundreds of libra. Critical = it is worth 250 £.]

[Selfish. Success = you want this, Critical = You really want it.]

A dwarf arrives and offers to serve the men if they will accept the hospitality of the tent. He says there is a custom, but there is no danger here tonight. If the knights wish it to be so, each of them will be as richly entertained as they have been ever in their lives. If asked, he dwarf says only that it is a fight to first blood, and repeating that there is no danger here tonight.

[Trusting, with a modifier; see if Selfish is checked. If so, get +5 modifier to Trusting. Success = you are willing to stay for the custom.]

If anyone does not accept the hospitality, the dwarf politely tells them they must sleep outside the tent (or stand watch, if they are so untrusting).

Knights sleeping outside are enveloped by a miserably bitter cold. The darkness seems greater than night, and the camping knights are entirely cut off from the rest of the party for the night. They do not sense anything unusual, and do not see anything else which goes on that night. All knights must make a [CON roll. Failure = take 1d6 damage from the cold.] They remain there all night, and are out of the story for a while. Back in the tent, the temperature and weather tonight seem quite normal.

The dwarf pours warm scented water from a silver ewer into the basin, inviting the knights to wash up after their

### The Tent

The knights enjoy the hospitality of the women within the exquisitely furnished tent.





### The Greek Knight Without Pity

The Greek knight is a foreigner from far overseas. He is a descendant of Achilles, of the seventh times seventh generation.

SIZ 17	Move 3	Major Wound 19
DEX 11	Damage 5d6	Unconscious 9
STR 15	Heal Rate 4	Knock Down 17
CON 19	Hit Points 36	Armor 12 (see special)
APP 11		Glory 2570

Attack: Sword 21, Lance 19

Special: The Greek knight cannot be harmed through normal combat. The only way that he can be overcome is to first stun him. This can be done by doing 39 points of damage in a single blow. (This is equal to his Armor (12) plus Hit Points minus Unconsciousness (ie-27 points). Then, while he lies on the ground stunned for one round, he can be stabbed through the foot with an unopposed roll, doing normal damage.

Horse: Charger, 6d6 damage

travels. He passes out the napkins as towels. From a chest he takes rich robes for each of the knights to wear at dinner.

A pair of squires approaches from the woods, carrying roasted meats and dainties and wine. They place the food on the table, light torches in the wall, and depart.

The food is exquisite, almost equal to the fare at Camelot. (See also *Knights Adventurous*, "Feasts," page 113-115.) Everyone must attempt a [Temperate/Indulgent roll.]

Women enter the tent as the men eat. One woman for each knight show themselves. "God's greetings to you, good Sirs," they say. The women look like sisters. They have dark hair and eyes. All are pretty, with APP=15+1d6 each, and an additional +3 from the sumptuous gowns they wear.

Some names for the women might be: Alis, Blandine, Cynthia, Dominique, Elys, Frances, Gerra, or Yselda.

"Has everything been pleasing to you, thus far?" asks one of them. "Is there something else you would like to-night, to make this a night of luxury like you have never had before?" The women are, as they will show, ready to grant whatever pleasures the knights may wish, and expertly Flirt with knights if they desire romance. Chaste knights meet chaste women. The knights may withdraw from this activity if they wish, and the women do not press it to the point of being obnoxious or offensive.

After they have been talking for a while one woman says, "May God grant you the force and power tomorrow to destroy the evil custom of this tent!" When questioned about this "evil custom," the women say that anyone who has accepted the hospitality of the tent must fight against the knight who owns this tent. He fights chivalrously, one-

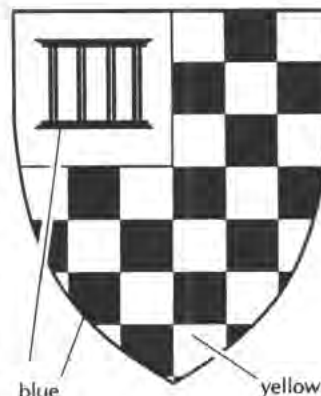
on-one, with high monetary stakes. He will insist on fighting each of the knights present this way, taking several days if necessary.

If the player knights ask whether there is some other way to end or avoid this custom, the women say that a battle is the only way.

Knights who wish to bed down with the women may, in curtained areas at the ends of the tent. Appropriate Lust or Chaste checks are granted.

Knights may generate a Love for this paramour. If they do, then the lady likewise generates one for him. Gamemasters should ask each knight whether they wish to obtain such a Passion, with no further explanation.

### The Greek Knight Without Pity



### Next Morning

The next day the knights rise and arm. The left overs from the night before are sufficient for breakfast. Before long a well armed and accoutered knight rides up to the tent, with another knight and many squires.

[Heraldry. Success = he is a knight from someplace overseas. Critical Success = he is the Greek Knight Without Pity.]

"It is him!" gasps one of the women.

"Sir!" he says, "Pay for your lodging! Last night I did put myself to ill comfort for your sake, and left you the tent and all that is therein for your pleasure. Pay up! No money is adequate compensation for such pleasure!" he says, "Instead you must fight against me on horseback, with sword and shield, until first blood. I propose a worthy wager: all of my equipment — yonder pavilion and its contents, plus my horse and armor — against your ransom."

### The Fight Ensues.

The fight is manifestly unfair to the player knights. The challenging knight is different from any that the knights have fought before. Though he is shaken and knocked about by the blows he receives, he does not take any wounds or bleed, but instead rises again and re-enters the fight, even when his armor is clearly cut through. In fact, his skin can not be penetrated by any weapon.

When a knight is defeated, the Greek Knight Without Pity treats him chivalrously, insisting only upon a pledge to



have the ransom paid over the next winter. In this manner the Greek Knight Without Pity has accumulated the fantastic wealth of the tent.

The additional knights stay out of the fight. They only enter if his liege is jumped by several knights at once. In such a case, all the warriors also join in to protect their lord from foul practices.

### Revealing the Secret

If one of the knights and ladies has fallen in love (i.e. — has a new Passion on their character sheet) the lady rushes forward after a couple of rounds of combat. She shouts, "If you wish to slay him, strike the sole of his foot, or else he will not die. He is a descendant of Achilles, the wicked Greek hero, of the seven times seventh generation."

"Damsel," says the Greek knight, "You have betrayed me! Your love for this visitor has broken your loyalty to me. Never should any knight set his trust on a damsel like you!"

He then swipes at her with his sword. She screams and ducks. "Help me," she cries, "for surely he will kill me if he can." Player knights in love with her may then attempt a Passion roll, if desired.

Even with this information the player knight will probably have a difficult time winning. Remember that the Greek Knight Without Pity can be defeated only if he receives 39 points of damage at once, which temporarily stuns him. In that time his greaves and sabatons (leg and foot protection) can be removed, and he can then be stabbed.

Whether the Greek Knight Without Pity wins or loses against his opponent, his men rush forward to capture the traitorous lady. Player knights who wish to intervene to protect her must attempt a Loyalty (Lord) roll. They realize that she has betrayed her liege, against normal convention. Of course, she may be excused since she did it for love. Nonetheless, if knights try to protect her the whole supporting gang of the Greek Knight's men attacks to get her. Further, to interfere this way gains player knights a loss of 1 Honor point, and a check for Arbitrary. Gamemasters may wish to grant them a further check for their own Love, if they have one, and if they were motivated by it to protect her.

If the Greek Knight Without Pity is defeated, but not killed, his subsequent fate and activity is left to the game-master. Perhaps the player knights return, refuse his hospitality, and simply fight to steal all the goods. Perhaps the Greek Knight Without Pity hunts down the traitorous lady and her lover over the next several years. Perhaps he just quits, knowing he is defeated.



## Adventure of the QUESTIONED HERALDRY

**Setting:** The manor of Sir Edgert, a poor knight, perhaps in a tower or other way station where the player knights stop for a night.

**Problem:** Sir Niddian, a traveling knight, stops at the manor where it is discovered that his arms are very similar to the host knight's. Sir Edgert is outraged and challenges the traveler to either rid himself of the arms or to fight to death on the morrow. Sir Niddian knight cries it is unjust, and offers to be subject to a fair judgement at the knight's own court. The impoverished Sir Edgert has only a couple of old men as knights and courtiers, and asks the visiting player knights to offer their wisdom in settling the question.

**The question:** are the arms the same or not?

Sir Edgert



**Characters:** Sir Edgert, the host knight. Sir Niddian, the traveling knight.

**Solutions:** The player knights must decide whether the arms are similar enough to be called the same. Let the players discuss it. Give priority to player decisions rather than die rolls. Let anyone use die rolls who cannot make up their own mind. Roll [Heraldry. Success = you know that by custom, arms of different men must not be the same, and that these are not exactly the same. Critical success = they are too similar to be judged as different.]

Sir Niddian





Listen patiently to everyone. Give everyone who said that they are different a check for Unjust. (Even if they did not know better, they were contrary to the rules of the time.)

In the final outcome, if the arms are judged to be different, then the two knights are satisfied with the decision. Should they be judged the same, Sir Edgert remains outraged and repeats his challenge to Sir Niddian that he either abandon his arms or fight to the death for the right to bear them. Come dawn the two knights meet in the field before the manor. Use Ordinary Knight statistics for both men, and a player to take the roll of each knight for the duration of the combat.



## The Adventure of THE MERROW

**Setting:** a seashore

**Problem:** A beautiful woman calls, singing, to the knights. She is lonely, and asks them to come to her in the water, very close off shore. [Awareness. Success = the knight sees that she is incredibly beautiful.] If he wishes to resist her invitation into the sea the knight must attempt his Chastity against her Lustful (=20). If her Lustful wins he must swim into the sea to join her.

**Characters:** Merrow (Merpeople)

The women of this race are extremely beautiful while the men are incredibly ugly. They appear on the surface of the sea both before and after storms. Some coastal dwellers say the merfolk cause those storms to drown sailors and fishermen and take both corpse and soul to their cold deep lairs.

The mermaids are beautiful and vain. They are most often seen sunning on rocks after a storm clears, or floating upon the deep sea. They are human from the waist upward and love to comb their long hair. They sing like angels and can incite mens' passions with their songs. Some are powerful, possessing the magic of prophecy, healing, and other pagan faerie powers.

Mermen have green bodies, faces, hair, teeth, and have long red noses. They wear special caps with red feathers, which let them whisk about the sea like birds in the air, and which can be used by humans to survive underwater. They sink ships to take cargo to decorate

their underwater homes and keep the souls of drowned men in lobster cages.

### Merrow (Merpeople)

SIZ 10	Move 4(swim)	Major Wound 15
DEX 15	Damage 3d6	Unconscious 6
STR 20	Heal Rate 5	Knockdown 10
CON 15	Hit Points 25	Armor 5
APP 25 (mermaid) 5 (merman)		

Modifier to Valor: +5

Glory to Kill: 30

**Attacks (mermaid):** opposed Lustful trait against the Chastity of resisting man. If the Mermaid wins the victim follows the maid into the water. A second Opposed Resolution must be attempted, using whatever of the player knight's Traits or Passions is appropriate (such as an Amor or Love for another person). If the Mermaid wins a second time the knight is pulled beneath the water with his new lover, where he drowns if he cannot escape (see solutions).

**Attacks (merman):** trident attack @ 15. A merman will almost never attack a human with a trident. His real power is the ability to create storms to wreck ships.

**Solutions:** If the victim is taken underwater he can resist with force. The mermaid will try to drag him under using her STR against his. The victim can match his STR, or use some other method to escape. Escape may come through threats or injury. Iron might scare her away, or calling upon the name of God may be successful. The gamemaster should decide what is appropriate.

**Another Problem:** If the mermaid is harmed by iron or a weapon, she will try to slip underwater and immediately her brothers will surface to help her. They attack with their tridents until the person who hurt the mermaid is injured in return.

**Glory:** 75 to escape a merrow's embrace; 30 to kill a merman in combat

**Afterwards:** If the mermaid is harmed, the knight will always be in danger from the vengeful brothers while at sea.



## The Adventure of THE ROCK OF MAIDENS

**Time:** Anytime

**Setting:** A tall rock not far from Marterol Castle. The rock and castle can be at anyplace convenient to the gamemaster. Upon it live 12 maidens placed there by Merlin's sorcery. The eldest woman is a sorceress who can predict the future.

**Problem:** The maidens hate Merlin, their rival who trapped them here many years ago. Now they try to entice passing knights onto the rock, where they either remain or acquire a Hate (Merlin) passion equal to 2d6.

**Characters:** The sorceress and 11 maidens.

The sorceress has a Mesmerize Skill of 20.

**Action:** The maidens beg passing knights to come up on their rock, on threat of being cursed by them. They plead with them, explaining how the evil sorcerer Merlin trapped them here long ago. If this fails, the sorceress uses her mesmerize skill to force the player knights to come up onto the rock. Oppose her Mesmerize skill of 20 against the knight's Worldly trait. If she is the victor then the knight goes onto the rock and is trapped. Any knights who willfully go onto the rock are likewise trapped. Those who pass by and avoid being trapped get a Hate (Merlin) passion of 2d6.

**Secrets:** The maidens hate Merlin because he was their rival and trapped them here many years ago. Neither maidens or knights imprisoned upon the rock age nor learn anything while there. They are unaware of the time which passes in the outer world.

**Solutions:** When Gawaine and Marhaus approached the rock they heard of their future deaths (which neither believed, of course) and were taken up onto it by magic. There they lived, apparently quite content, until released by Sir Gaheris, who succeeded only because of secret knowledge. Gaheris discovered the chief maid's brother lived nearby, and he threatened to slay the man unless the knights were freed. Should all the player knights become trapped upon the rock, you could have Gaheris or some other knight come along and rescue them just as he did in the original tale.

**Glory:** 15 for escaping from the rock with a Passion; 25 for escaping without being trapped, and 10 for each prisoner freed by your efforts. (Thus Sir Gaheris would have gotten 45 points.)



## Contest for the Queen's Knights

**Time:** Anytime

**Setting:** At Camelot, or wherever winter court is held.

**Characters:** Queen Guenever, Sir Gawain, Sir Tor, Sir Amren.

**Action:** The Queen is having her annual contest to find the Queen's Knights for the year. This is a contest wherein knights are chosen for her royal bodyguard. It is suggested that this adventure be run as a precursor to "The Adventure of the Heart Blade," as an opportunity for the player knights to meet Sir Amren.

The scenario is designed to provide an opportunity to test many courtly skills. It, alone, is sufficient for a year's worth of adventure. Thus, afterwards follows the annual Winter Phase accounting.

Characters should start with a character just updated from the last winter. Thus all check marks should be absent.

Guenever, the Queen of Love, does not rely upon martial skills, but rather chooses her supporters on the basis of their commitment to Love.

All knights are eligible for the contest. It consists of two parts which test skills and personality, for it is not just *what* you do, but *how* you do it that is important.

Competition is stiff.

Many great knights are competing, but since 50 knights are chosen in all, player knights have a decent chance.

During the scenario, any success gets a check, as normal. However, sometimes a category requires an Opposed Resolution. In such a case Double Checks are used, just to keep track of the winner for later scoring.

Remember, too, that further Glory can be gained by getting a critical success at court. Each gets an additional 30 points.

## The Introductory Feast

The night before the contest begins, all participants are invited to a feast in their honor. Several hundred knights are present. Their squires wait upon them at the low tables. Precedence is ignored here at the low tables: all knights are considered to be equal in Love.

Seated at the high table is the Queen herself, plus the leading knights of last year's contest. They include: Sir Ga-



waine, Glory = 32,000; Sir Tor, Glory = 8,450; Sir Amren, Glory = 9,250.

Lancelot is absent from court, again.

The Queen stands to explain the rules. If this is the first time a knight has seen Guenever, he must make the usual 3d6 roll to achieve a Passion of Amor for her. (See *Pendragon*, page 125, for further details.)

"The rules of the contest are simple. Starting on the morrow the Ladies of the Court of Love and those knights who have served the last year as one of my knights shall pass among you, each with an eye towards a trait which I desire. Some of them shall simply present you with a question. Others shall order you to perform a contest with a fellow, while others shall engage only in idle chatter. I wish each of you the best of luck, and may Love shine in your hearts."

She retires. Squires bring out the best drink served yet. All knights must attempt [Temperance/Indulgent] Results are delayed until next morning.]

## The Contest

Dawn breaks. [Energetic]. Get a -5 modifier if Indulgent is checked. Results: Critical = early; Success = on time; fail = late; fumble, really late! Miss the first event.]

Everyone is outside, in the Queen's Court, whose walls are painted a gleaming, pure white. Many trees provide adequate shade. Groups of knights are gathered beneath them — the player knights can be together to start. The ground is covered with neat, trimmed grass. Each knight's squire serves cold meat, bread, cheese, and light ale as desired.

### Sir Amren

Sir Amren is a lover renown for his courtesy toward women. He is an excellent knight, and is well known for his many significant traits and passions. He is the owner of the Heart Blade, a magical sword that obeys the will of love.

SIZ 17	Move 3	Major Wound 19
DEX 16	Damage 6d6 (+1d6)	Unconscious 9
STR 16	Heal Rate 4	Knock Down 17
CON 19	Hit Points 36	Armor 14 +3 + shield
APP 16		Glory 9250

Attacks: Sword 23 (+5), Lance 21, Spear 18, Axe 18, Battle 18, Horsemanship 20.

Significant Traits: Chaste 14, Generous 17, Honest 18, Proud 17, Merciful 20, Forgiving 17, Pious 15, Prudent 17, Trusting 16, Valorous 18.

Significant Passions: Love (family) 24, Love (Wife) 30, Honor (17). Significant Skills: Compose 15, Flirting 16, Gaming 16, Hawking 13, Orate 15, Romance 20, Tourney 14.

Note: When wielding the Heart Blade, add +1d6 damage and +5 Sword skill. This doubles vs. the Passion Hate (person).

Knights, all of them wearing the white rose of the Queen's Knights, approach each group.

First is Sir Tor, a knight of the Round Table and well-known fop. He is wearing tight hose, striped red and yellow, with a blue and white coathardie with shining coins hanging off the many dags. The liripipe of his hood is so long that it drags in the ground. His moustache is curled up with wax.

Sir Tor engages everyone in a discussion of fashion. Gamemasters may do this simply by explaining what coathardie (the "shirt") and dags (the jagged cut bottom of the coat) are. (Other facts can be found in *Knights Adventurous*, page 109ff.) At one point, Sir Tor asks, "What do you think of this outfit?" [Honest]

Sir Kalahard, another Round Table knight, approaches. A small parade of squires and pages struggle behind him with several *tabula* boards, a number of small tables, and two stools.

"Good morning, gentlemen. You will now display your skill at *tabula*. You, pointing to one player, "and you, play against each other."

*Tabula* is the *Pendragon* name for backgammon. It is an ancient game: the Romans played *Ludus Duodecim Scriptorium* (or "twelve-lined game"), and precursors may be found as early as 3000 B.C.

The games go on as long as necessary to find a single winner. Match player knight against player knight using their opposed [Gaming] skills. Use a single-elimination contest to find the final winner. All successful rolls get a check. The winner gets a second check.

During the games servants bring lunch among the knights, and Sir Kalahard talks with the knights. He is a stern kind of fellow, a bit official in manner. He asks all of them about themselves, and how they got their Glory.

Each player must report the annual Glory which he gets for Traits or Passions over 15, and for all Bonuses (Chivalry, Religious). Instruct the players to note the number on their sheets.

The day ends as the last gamers finish up. It is time to wash and eat. The feast is as uneventful as a feast can be where rare foods and drinks appear on the menu regularly, and entertainers perform apparent miracles between courses.

### Day Two

The knights meet in the morning on a wide, open field south of Camelot. Today's contest is to be in Falconry.

The royal falconers are present, with many assistants. They offer one of two birds for the knights to use: a goshawk and a gyrfalcon. [Hawking, but no check. Success = take the gyrfalcon, an open-field bird.]

Several Ladies of the Court of Love arrive, riding upon amblers, each bearing a merlin upon her wrist. They find a



pre-selected knight, and the party begins its hunt. The morning is bright and cheerful.

All knights attempt an Opposed Hawking roll. If using the goshawk, get a -5 modifier to the skill.

There is much talk, chatter, and laughter among the women and men. They draw out of each of them a story of generosity from their life. Opposed [Generous] rolls.

In the late afternoon, the party takes a break for lunch. Pavilions have been set up nearby for the purpose. Wine flows. A Lady asks for a song, and everyone wants a song competition. Opposed [Singing] rolls.

The chief Lady decides that there will be no more hunting that day, but a dance instead. Opposed [Dancing] rolls.

After a couple hours of dancing and innocent frolic, a cart arrives with a couple tons of wine. Everyone moves towards them, and there is a sudden moment of indecision about what to do. [Courtesy. Success = the knight does the right thing and graciously allows the women to be served first]

However, nearby a knight does the wrong thing.

"What do you think of that!" says the lady softly, and looks at the knight intently [Forgiving].

The party ends as the day draws long. On the way back to the castle knights are accompanied by the ladies, who tell them a story, and ask for a judgement on it:

A knight traveling the country is starving. He sees a fat cow, kills and eats it. It belongs to his fellow household knight, who demands compensation. However, it had wandered far from his lands when it was killed. Should he pay?

Each knights must attempt [Just/Arbitrary]. Success = no, because it was lost and not recognized. Critical = if he had recognized it as being his companions, then he should pay.]

The day ends with another feast, but this time in one of the minor courts of Camelot. The Queen's Knights and Ladies of the Court of Love also attend. Each competitor is invited to tell of one of their own exploits. [Orate], [Valorous], and *any other Trait desired*, which is the trait illustrated in the tale.

The night ends with everyone having a turn at playing the Harp. Any other instrument is not acceptable. Afterwards, everyone retires.

### Day Three

The next day begins with each knight armed in his best, assembled in the court of Pendragon Castle. The judges pass among them, checking on the horses and equipment. However, they expect everyone to be as well armed and accoutered as possible. What's important is how well the squire polished the arms. [Squire roll] If successful, put a check next to the word "Squire" on the character sheet.

The knights then compete with opposed [Horsemanship.]

A lunch follows, of cold pies and warm drinks.

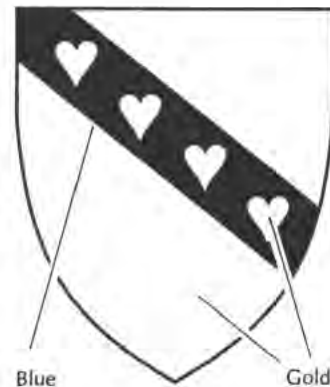
After lunch the knights are each asked to tell a true tale of their lives in which their Trust was tested. [Trusting].

The Queen's Knights grill the competitors about their knowledge of tournaments. [Tourney]

The Ladies of the Court of Love ask theoretical questions about how lovers should act. [Romance] and [Merciful].

A final feast is given, at the end of which the final competitors will be announced.

Sir Amren



### Scoring

For each check on the left side of the Personality Traits, get 2 points. For each double check, get 4 points (9 possible). For each skill check, get 1 point. For each double check, get an additional 1 point (10 skills total). For a check at Squire, get 2 points. Take the Annual Glory number, divide it by 10, and add the points to the total. Anyone with 35 points or more is selected to be a Queen's Knight that year.

Everyone with 30 to 35 points can continue with the contest tomorrow.

### The Last Day

About half of the positions on the Queen's Knights are available to be filled. The semi-finalists will fill them.

Each contestant makes one attempt at: Forgiving, Generous, Honest, Just, Merciful, and Trusting. Keep track of critical, success, failure, or fumbles.

Each critical gets 3 points, each success gets 1, each failure gets 0, and each fumble gets -5.

Anyone with at least six points is selected.

### Conclusion

During the next year these knights get the honor of attending upon the High Queen. Afterwards, she will remember them, and she can provide a contact at court. Further, the serving knights each get 100 + 2d20 Glory.

After assigning Glory, do any individual Solo Scenario, such as "Your Own Land," (*Pendragon*, page 174). Then go to the Winter Phase to update the characters.



# Bibliography

*These are a selection of Arthurian and folk lore sources not mentioned in the bibliography printed in Savage Mountains.*

Anonymous. *Perlesvaus, or The High History of the Holy Grail*. James Clarke & Co. Ltd, 1969. Translated by Sebastian Evans.

This is the "non-canon" Arthurian book which I find fascinating. It is full of episodes which can be taken out and turned into scenarios by the gamemaster.

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Compiled between 1215 and 1230, this was one of the major sources for Malory's work and includes copious material which he did not use.

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Bottomley, Frank; *The Castle Explorer's Guide*. Avenal Books, 1979.

This wonderful handbook consists of hundreds of short entries to explain parts of castles (what is a put-log hole?), customs (what does knight-service mean?), places to find castles (Acre, Holt, Pembrokeshire), and miscellaneous facts (outremer, salt, Walliam the Conquerer).

Burl, Aubrey; *Rings of Stone*. Ticknor & Fields, 1980.

An authoritative exploration of fifty of the most interesting neolithic stone circles in Britain and Ireland, with excellent maps and beautiful photos. (The one of Grey Croft circle, with grazing cows and the nuclear power station behind it is striking, indeed.)

Geoffrey of Monmouth. *The History of the Kings of Britain*. Penguin Books Ltd., 1966. Translated by Lewis Thorpe.

In 1047 this book was a best-seller. It introduced the epic cycle of the British hero to the nobility across Europe and began the meteoric rise of popularity of the Arthurian legend.

Gildas. *De Excidio Britanniae*.

Gildas was a fire-and-brimstone priest who preached that the sins of the British would result in God punishing them again with the Saxon invaders. He names several contemporary kings, and the battle of *mons Badonicus*, but

never names Arthur. Later legend connects Gildas with Arthur, and says the priest's family feuded against Arthur.

Hill, David. *An Atlas of Anglo-Saxon England*. University of Toronto Press, 1981.

Two hundred and sixty maps showing everything most people would want to know about Anglo-Saxon England. Much *Pendragon* information is based upon the *Domesday Book*, which provides the information for much of this book.

Malory, Sir Thomas. *Le Morte d'Arthur*. Penguin Books, 1969 (two volumes). Edited by Janet Cowan.

This book is the skelton for the entire *Pendragon* campaign. Gamemasters are recommended to read it, trying to stay a chapter ahead of their campaign. Many versions of this book are available; the Penguin edition is my favorite, having the right blend of archaic vocabulary and modern spelling.

Matthews, John & Potter, Chesca. *The Aquarian Guide to Legendary London*. The Aquarian Press, 1990.

A collection of essays about the fabulous, magical, and legendary aspects of London. Part fact, part speculation, and part New Age fantasy, this is a wonderful source book for *Pendragon*.

Muir, Richard; *Riddles in the British Landscape*. Thames and Hudson, 1981.

A look at some of British geographic curiosities, with chapters on hill forts, stone circles, the vanished wildwood, engravings in the landscape, and more.

Reader's Digest Association, editors. *Folklore, Myths, and Legends of Britain*.

An extremely complete guide to the thousands of sites of legend throughout Britain, including chapters on peoples and subjects.

Wilkinson, Frederick. *The Castles of England*. George Philip London, 1973.

A very complete listing of the castles from all periods of history, including their known and proposed dates, and important events.

Williams, Guy; *A guide to the magical places of England, Wales, and Scotland*.

A pocket-sized guide to legendary sites, with a very brief explanation of their interest.



# Introductory Handouts

*These handouts can be used in the campaign to provide foreshadowing and information on the adventures to come. Photocopy or cut them out for use during play.*

Below each handout are the instructions for their use. A set of 13 are intended for use before and during "The Adventure of the Heart Blade." Give them out over the Winter Phase, as instructed. Another handout is to be used when the

player knights resolve "The Adventure of the Castle of Tears," and one more is intended to pre-sage "The Adventure of the Stygian Stallions." Left-over handouts may be suitable to give out for successful Intrigues.

## Sir Amren

Sir Amren of Stoneleigh was originally a landless knight from Logres. He is now a Round Table knight, and the banneret of Stoneleigh, a holding in northern Wuerensis.

He gained considerable Glory in his early years fighting in Cambria and Ireland, but is most famous for his heroic adventures. He spent many years exploring the wilderness, encountering many strange people and beasts. He has a known enemy in the brutish Sir Bertelot sans Pitie. He spent many years courting the Lady Liawen, whom he finally married. His best-known adventures are:

The Three Bridges, each being a challenge of martial prowess and pure love.

The Heart Blade, named after its prize: a magic blade which gives great power to Lovers.

The Blue Rose, to acquire an impossible flower from the king of a hidden land.

**Meeting Amren.** Give this to players when Amren is encountered for the first time. We suggest it be used during the "Contest of the Queen's Knights" short adventure.

## Recent News

Have you heard the sad news? Lady Liawen, the brave lady who fought off the evil Sir Bertelot last year, just died.

Sir Amren's wife, I believe it was. She died of a broken heart.

I'll tell you that their young daughter is lucky that Earl Wuerensis is a just liege lord. She'll stand to inherit a fine holding some day.

I heard there was trouble in Salisbury. A band of elves or something came streaming out of Morgaine's Forest, dancing in a circle around a great white lion. The whole country around Grovely Castle went crazy for a week, and then it all disappeared!

I would never feel safe in that forest, myself. It is named after the Old Goddess, you know, and now King Arthur's wicked sister herself is hiding in there.

**Heart Blade 2.** Give this out in Year two of the campaign. The next year Ahvielle can be introduced.

## Sir Amren Murdered!

Sir Amren of Stoneleigh, a valiant Round Table Knight noted for his devotion to the cause of Love, has been most foully murdered by Sir Bertelot, a known dastard.

The craven knight attempted further perfidy, too, by attacking Stoneleigh Manor and attempting to carry off the Lady Liawen. But the plucky woman mustered the commoners and fought back with such fury that five mercenaries were killed, and the famous Heart Blade was recovered from the evil knight.

**Heart Blade 1.** Give this out on the winter phase after Sir Amren was met, before beginning the Heart Blade.

## The Virtues of Love

Everyone is talking about what Guenever says:

A true lover meets many needs. He must be a brave knight, ready to defend all ladies with his strength.

He must also have the virtues of a lover. These are the actions which set a lover apart from an ordinary man.

The Virtues of Love are: Forgiving, Generous, Honest, Just, Merciful, and Trusting.

**Heart Blade 3.** Time this one with Ahvielle's First Task.



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### Recent News

That wicked Sir Bertelot! Did you hear what he did? He and his men ambushed and killed Sir Harnast, nephew of the Earl of Kent. I tell you, it isn't too soon if they ever catch him or his evil brother!

I hope that that handsome young prince finds the dastard! Did you see him the other day?

You mean Prince Cynfeln of Somerset? I did see him, and what a brave lad he looks to be. Some nearby lady, whose name I will not mention, even made a pass at him and did you know, she was rebuffed!

Sir Cynfeln must be a lover, too, with a secret amor hidden away someplace. \*sigh\* I hope I am so lucky some day...

There is some interesting news, too. The women knights of Kenilworth, who call themselves the Daughters of Boudicca, have sent adventurers out in all directions. They have sworn to challenge all men to joust, to put an end to the slanderous rumors that they are cowards simply because they are women. I say good luck to them, too!

*Heart Blade 4. Time this one with Second Ahvielle's Task.*

### More News

Those Kenilworth women did all right! There's more than one man around now who'll show respect for them now:

Well, they lost as much as they won, really. I saw the figures at court. The staticians say...

Status is not a matter of numbers, dearie. They did well, and tried hard, and no one remembers all the men who lost jousts. I even remember that hotshot Lancelot being tossed from his saddle a time or two when he was new at court.

I wish they would go after Bertelot, myself.

That would be an ugly confrontation...

*Heart Blade 5. Time this one with Ahvielle's Third Task.*

### Recent News

Have you heard about the Merrow? They are some kind of water faerie or something. Do you know of them?

Oh, I have heard, I think. Didn't I hear that they are incredibly wealthy, and grant some sort of treasure to their lovers? Maybe that is where the best men are going: seduced by a fish!

You terrible old woman.

You ought to go take a medicine bath or something, and get some of that crotchiness out of your system.

Speaking of Bath, the King of Somerset passed by on his way to Camelot. Did you see how wealthy he is?

And nice too. He has his own medicine baths there in Bath, after all.

*Heart Blade 7. Time this one with Ahvielle's Fifth Task.*

### Recent News

I heard that Sir Gawaine traveled right through Morgaine's Forest. Have you heard more?

Of, of course, dearie. I have heard stories that he encountered lions, great bears, wyverns, twelve or more challenge knights, and a magical fountain where the queen of water faeries waited for him.

What a great knight! No wonder he is a hero!

Don't be so excited, dearie. Don't believe half of it. I'm too old to believe such rumors. Surely they are grossly exaggerated.

Well, say what you like but I'm just glad he didn't encounter his wicked aunt, Morgan le Fay!

*Heart Blade 6. Time this one with Ahvielle's Fourth Task.*

### Recent News

Everyone out west is talking about that handsome Prince Cynfeln who has disappeared. Do you remember him? He passed through here some years back.

What a shame. Sometimes it seems that all the best men are dying. I bet it was that evil knight, Sir Bertelot.

He was son of the King of Somerset, you know. Doesn't that leave the king heirless?

*Heart Blade 8. Time this one with Ahvielle's Sixth Task.*



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### Recent News

A new rebellion has flared up in Anglia.

Again! What does Hervis do, provoke them into fighting each year? Those Saxons are as hostile as wasps, it seems.

There is some new leader, I think. They say he has one eye, and a spear which is invincible.

Maybe Arthur will send the army there this year. They are getting pretty bored, I hear.

A bored army in Logres is fine with me, dearie. I remember when it was otherwise, and peace is far better than war.

**Heart Blade 9.** Use this in case the romance extends on for one year beyond the minimum.

### Recent News

What scandal! Someone has accused one of those Orkney boys of doing ill! Can you believe it?

Well, I can if it is about Sir Agravaire. I think he has more love for the bottle now than he has for his honor or the quest.

No, not even him, though! It was about his younger brother, Sir Mordred.

Mordred? The newcomer? I didn't think he had been here long enough to be known well.

He's got his father's capacity for adventure, I say. And I don't for a moment believe those nasty rumors. I can not believe that anyone from the Orkney clan would hold a grudge against those splendid de Gales clansmen.

Oh, me either...

**Heart Blade 10.** Use this in case the romance extends on for two years beyond the minimum.

### The Heart Blade



Congratulations. You are now the possessor of the magical Heart Blade. This gives instructions on how it works. Staple it to your character sheet.

The heart blade is so excellently wrought that it gives a bonus of +2 Sword skill. In the hands of Love's Champion, who must maintain a combined total of 80 or greater in Love's six virtues (Forgiving, Generous, Honest, Just, Merciful, Trusting), the sword's skill bonus increases to +5 and it causes an additional +1d6 damage.

**The Heart Blade.** Give this to the player upon obtaining the Heart Blade.

### Recent News

Did you know that a terrible custom has been stopped in Cambria? The Castle of Tears, it was called.

And properly named, too. That old lady deserved what she got.

And her husband, too.

I happen to know that it was not just martial valor that did it. Compassion won the day, I hear, and a true love.

**Castle of Tears.** To be handed out the year after the player knights successfully encounter "The Adventure of the Castle of Tears."



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### Recent News

Oh, did you know that some courageous knights saved Earl Bleoberis' fame? Did you hear this?

You mean the Count, and I haven't.

Let me tell you. It was a fierce chase, I hear, with encounters with faeries and elves in the Forest of Adventure. But the knight rescued those huge horses that we heard so much about.

Lucky for Bleoberis! I bet his knights are red-faced now, since it was strangers that captured them.

Probably...

*Stygian Stallions 2.* To be handed out the year after the player knights successfully encounter "The Adventure of the Stygian Stallions."

### Recent News

Is there really another rebellion in Anglia? You would think that Duke Hervis would be able to control his people by now, wouldn't you?

Well, the old war hero must be getting old, I say.

I just heard the most incredible story. Count Bleoberis of Essex has bought some monster horses, each big enough for a giant to ride.

Count? What is he, a mathematician?

No, silly, that's some kind of continental title, almost as grand as our own Earls.

Oh, of course, I knew that. And I know more about those horses, too. They aren't as big as you say, but they are huge destriers.

Destriers? Well, big enough then, I'd say. And maybe enough to carry one of those little giants.

Yes, sure. \*snicker.\* Or maybe one of those huge dwarfs, eh?

*Stygian Stallions 1.* To be handed out the year before the player knights begin "The Adventure of the Stygian Stallions."



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# Heart Blade Lover's Solo

*These handouts comprise a unique lover's solo for use with "The Adventure of the Heart Blade." Photocopy or cut them out beforehand for use during play.*

The following tasks are to be assigned to Ahvielle's suitor, one per year, over the course of the wooing. As Ahvielle assigns each task to her suitor, give his player the appropriate handout. They are explained in greater detail on page 30, in "The Adventure of the Heart Blade."

## Ahvielle's First Task

Over the Winter Phase you meet with Ahvielle. She tells you that to prove your love for her as a true knight, you must plead leniency for an offender at your own lord's court. Roll your Merciful.

☐ Check here if you succeed.

Now hand this note back to your gamemaster.

*Solo Task 1: Mercy*

## Ahvielle's Second Task

When next you meet Ahvielle, she is pleased to hear of your Merciful actions at your lord's court. "A true champion of love," she says, "is as Generous as he is Merciful. I wish you to find a needy person — a peasant, a poor noble, a knight errant — and give him a year of your income." Roll Generous. If you succeed, you may choose to give the money away.

☐ Check here if you succeeded in the Generous roll.

☐ Check here if you give away a year's income.

Now give the note back to your gamemaster.

*Solo Task 2: Generosity*

## Ahvielle's Third Task

Ahvielle is obviously charmed by your generosity when you tell her of giving away a year's income. Later, at a feast, she asks you to step forward and tell a tale of your own comical ineptitude (everyone has fumbled at least one skill roll at court) to entertain at a feast. Roll Honest opposed by Proud. Success also yields a chance to Orate, which you may roll now.

☐ Check here if Honest wins.

☐ Check here if Orate succeeds.;

Now give the note back to your gamemaster.

*Solo Task 3: Honesty*





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### Ahvielle's Fourth Task

During the next year, Ahvielle and you are in attendance at the same tournament. One evening, while you and she are alone on an open balcony, you become witnesses to a rival of yours meeting for a tryst with Leddicia, daughter of the castle's lord, in the garden below. You're also witness to the fact that Leddicia has been followed by Sir Catianus, another of her lovers. About to be caught in a compromising position, Leddicia sees Sir Catianus just before he sees her. Whatever the inclination of Leddicia's heart, her greed is set on the advantages of marrying this second, richer knight, and Leddicia begins screaming and playing the innocent-assaulted-by-the-lecherous-knight. A fight ensues as Sir Catianus rashly draws his sword and assaults your rival with murderous intent.

Other knights arrive and break up the fight before anyone is hurt, but the rules of hospitality have been breached. The lord of the castle isn't about to fault Sir Catianus for rushing to his daughter's defense, so the blame for the whole event is placed on your rival.

Since no actual harm befell anyone, the lord decides your rival is simply to be disqualified from the tournament and turned out of the castle, but his reputation has been unjustly blackened. While seducing his host's daughter may be impolitic, it's hardly a transgression in the same league as forcing himself on her.

Ahvielle asks you what you plan to do. You may decide on your own, without rolling dice if you wish.

- ☐ Check here if you tell no one what you saw.
- ☐ Check here if you come forward in defense of your enemy.
- ☐ Check here if you ask Ahvielle what it is she wishes you to do.

Now give the note back to your gamemaster.

### Solo Task 4: Justice

### A Challenge

Defending your rival, the just decision, results in a challenge from Sir Catianus, seeking to defend Lady Leddicia's honor. The challenge is with any weapon on foot to first blood, and is against a Notable Knight successfully inspired by his Amor for the lady. You may attempt to enflame your Honor Passion before fighting the challenge. If you win you may temporarily add 10 point to your weapon skill, but if you fail you must subtract five points from all skills for the duration of this combat.

Go ahead and play out the challenge against the knight, whose statistics are given to the right. If you win, you will gain 25 Glory. You may attempt to enflame your passion of Amor (Ahvielle), if you wish.

- ☐ Check here if you win the challenge.

Now give the note back to your gamemaster.

#### Sir Catianus of Silchester

A rich knight of some renown.

SIZ 15	Move 3	Major Wound 15
DEX 11	Damage 5d6	Unconscious 7
STR 14	Heal Rate 3	Knock Down 15
CON 15	Hit Points 30	Armor 12 + shield
APP 11	Age 25	Glory 3115

Attack: Sword 28 (includes +10 Passion bonus), Lance 16

Significant Traits: Valorous 16, Vengeful 15

Significant Passions: Honor 17, Amor (Leddicia) 16

Significant Skills: Awareness 12, Courtesy 10, First Aid 10.

### Solo Task 4c: A Challenge



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### Ahvielle's Response

She tells you that you should follow our own heart in this matter, and waits pensively to hear of your decision.

- ☐ Check here if you tell no one what you saw.
- ☐ Check here if you come forward in defense of your enemy.

Now hand this note back to your gamemaster.

*Solo Task 4b: Ahvielle's Response*

### Ahvielle's Sixth Task

"You have performed magnificently," says Ahvielle. "The final trait which a true lover must possess is the virtue of Trust. For your sixth task, I ask that you to stay as a guest at one of my manors for a year, and entrust all your wealth and holdings to your former rival during that time." Roll Trusting... and hope he's an honorable man!

- ☐ Check here if you make your Trusting roll.

Now hand this note back to your gamemaster.

*Solo Task 6: Trusting*

### Ahvielle's Fifth Task

When you meet with Ahvielle, she complements you on the noble defense of your rival. "A champion of love should possess the quality of Forgiveness, as well as justice and martial prowess. For your fifth task, I ask that you put aside your dislike for this rival." She asks you to make peace with the rival who appeared in task 4. You must invite him to a feast and seat him at the head table as an honored guest. Roll your Forgiving to get him to accept. If you have a Hate (Rival) passion, the Forgiving roll must also overcome an opposed Hate roll.

If you have no ~~nothing~~ at which to give the feast, Ahvielle makes her own table available for the event.

You should gamemaster a feast at the next gaming session. Invite the other player knights, and plan out the food and entertainments.

- ☐ Check here if you do as Ahvielle asks.

Now hand this note back to your gamemaster.

*Solo Task 5: Forgiving*

*My Dearest Love,*

*I can doubt you no longer.  
You are the true champion  
of love. Please come at  
once to my manor at  
Stonéleigh, where I shall  
make your final task clear  
to you.*

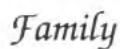
*Your Beloved Ahvielle*

*Solo Task 7: A Note from Ahvielle*



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## History

*Glory*

Total

### *Selected Events*

## Holdings

## Equipment at Home

Army

Alberto Cabra (order #100094)

*Stygian  
Stallions,  
Curses &  
Hags, Evil  
Customs,  
The Witch  
Queen Morgan*

# Blood & Lust

## WHAT IS PENDRAGON

Pendragon is a roleplaying game wherein you and your friends participate in heroic adventures. One player, the gamemaster, presents the story. Everyone else creates knight-characters — the heroes of the tale. Each player verbally responds to the gamemaster's plot and villains, and describes how his or her character reacts. You can face the same dangers and monsters that Arthur and Lancelot encountered, but this time you decide your knight's actions!

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