



DAWN of EMPIRE

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RUMA

DAWN OF EMPIRE

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FOR GABE

YOUR KINDNESS
AND ENTHUSIASM
ARE MISSED.



CONTENTS

I	INTRODUCTION	I
II	PERSONAE	XXVII
III	MUNDUS	CXXIII
IV	ARBITER	CXLIII
V	PERICULUM	CLXV
VI	GRATIAS	CLXXIII
VII	APPENDICE	CLXXXI
VIII	INDEX	CXCVII



I INTRODUCTION

Citizen! The burgeoning Ruman Empire needs your help bringing civilization to the savages.

Ruma: Dawn of Empire is a tabletop roleplaying game set in an alternate Roman Empire where myth and magic are real. The Empire has just begun to push its borders into neighboring lands, only to be met by savage barbarians, murderous beasts, magical forests, and strange horrors. Ruman generals and senators have formed small cohorts of specialized troops to discover and counter these threats. You and your friends are members of such a cohort.

The game is powered by the Apocalypse Engine, created by D. Vincent Baker & Meguey Baker for their game Apocalypse World. The engine also runs many other awesome games, such as Dungeon World by Sage LaTorra and Adam Koebel, The City of Judas by Davide Pignedoli, and Legacy: Life Among the Ruins by James Iles. Ruma: Dawn of Empire owes a great deal to these games, and many others.

Inspiration for Ruma can be found in movies such as 300, Ben Hur, Centurion, Clash of the Titans, The Eagle, Gladiator, and Immortals; TV shows like Rome and Spartacus; and novel series like The Oath of Empire by Thomas Harlan and The Videssos Cycle by Harry Turtledove.

A NOTE ON THE WORLD OF RUMA

The world of Ruma is loosely based on the Roman Empire, but it is intentionally different. The game is set in an alternate world rather than alternate history. Roman history is vast and intricate, and many hold it dear to their hearts. The decision to make Ruma something similar, but not the same, is intended to be respectful of Roman and other real world cultures and history while still providing a basis for the game's world.

RUMAN NUMERALS

The Ruman people use the same counting system as our Romans. The pages in this book are numbered using this system, so if you need it, here's a short primer.

I = 1	L = 50	M = 1000
V = 5	C = 100	
X = 10	D = 500	

Numbers are formed by combining symbols and counting them:

III = 3	XVI = 16	CLV = 155
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Fours and nines are reflected by placing a subtractive value before another value:

IV = 4	IX = 9	XL = 40
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And a few more examples:

XLVII = 47	CDXXXIII = 433	MMXVII = 2017
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HOW TO PLAY

Gather some friends, at least two six-sided dice (two per person is ideal), scratch paper, pencils, and the **playbooks** (which can be downloaded from azurekeep.com/downloads). One person will take the role of the **arbiter**, the others are players. The arbiter's job is to present the world to the players, judge their actions within the rules, and provide the characters with challenges to overcome (see Chapter IV for more information on how to play as the arbiter). Each player takes on the role of a would-be hero (a **character**) from the Ruman legions or supporting elements, formed into a cohort to tackle unknown threats on the edge of the new empire. The players' characters are sometimes referred to as PCs (player characters). Those operated by the arbiter are called NPCs (non-player characters).

If you've never played a roleplaying game before, it is a form of conversation (often called the **fiction**) between the arbiter and the players. Everyone works together to tell a story of the characters and their part within the world of Ruma. The sequence of play usually begins with the arbiter describing a scene or updating the current situation before prompting players with the question "*What do you do?*" Players then describe the thoughts and actions of their characters in response to the arbiter's description. Play then reverts to the arbiter who describes the updated situation based on the character's actions. This process continues back and forth between the arbiter and the players as the story unfolds.



Typically, during the fiction when a player says their character does a thing, the character does the thing. However, sometimes a character will attempt a task for which the outcome is in doubt. When this happens, the fiction will **trigger** a mechanical effect called a **move**. The player rolls two dice and adds the results to a **stat** (usually a number from -1 to +2). If the total is 10 or more (10+), also known as a **hit**, the character does the thing. If the total is 7-9, a **partial hit**, the character does the thing, but there is a complication. The arbiter will tell the player details of the problem. If the roll is 6 or less (6-), a **miss**, the character does not do the thing or suffers a serious consequence, but they learn from the attempt. When a character rolls a miss when making a move, they mark experience.

Some moves will give you **hold**, a currency that can be spent for effects as detailed by that move.

Some moves may say to take a number **forward**, which means you add or subtract that number from your next roll.

Moves may also say to take a number **ongoing**, which means you add or subtract that number from all rolls until an indicated condition is met.

Characters may **advance** basic moves after they have achieved several other improvements. When you advance a move, you gain an extraordinary level of success on a 12+ for that move (also known as a **strong hit**). Prior to advancing a move, the best possible success for that character is 10+.

Characters in Ruma are described by five stats:

ACUTUS - clever, intelligent, perceptive. You roll +ACUTUS when you want to perceive something or recall lore.

FORTIS - brave, cool, willful. You roll +FORTIS when overcoming great difficulty or when facing the terrors of the savages.

IMPETUS - aggressive, violent, trained in combat. You roll +IMPETUS when you are engaging in combat or physically imposing your will upon someone.

LEPOS - charisma, influence, wit. You roll +LEPOS when you are convincing or leading others.

FATUM - destiny, fate, faith. You roll +FATUM when divining the will of the gods, casting an arcanum, or tempting fate.

Characters often have a history with other cohort members. This is reflected by **bonds**, a number that represents how well a character knows or agrees with another character. A higher positive number means the character knows or agrees with the other character very well, while a lower number, perhaps even negative, means the opposite. Bonds are used when attempting to work together, or hinder someone and can lead to experience and improvement when they become too high or low.

Characters will also have a **temperament** and a **credo**. Both are used to guide the character's actions and directly affect the character's ability to earn improvements. More details are found in the improvement section of this chapter and in chapter II.

BASIC MOVES

AID OR INTERFERE

When you **help or hinder someone**, say how you do it and roll +Bond with them. On a 10+, they take +1 or -2 to their roll, your choice. On a 7-9, they take the above modifier, but you expose yourself to danger or retribution. The arbiter will provide details.

Advanced: On a 12+, they take a +2 or -3 to their roll, your choice.



DEBATE A POINT

When you **negotiate**, **attempt to sway**, or **manipulate another**, tell them what you want them to do or think, give them a reason, and roll +LEPOS.

For NPCs: On a 10+, they go along with you, unless or until some fact or action betrays the reason you gave. On a 7-9, they go along with you, but they need some concrete assurance, corroboration, or evidence first.

For PCs: On a 10+, both. On a 7-9, choose 1.

- If they go along with you, they mark experience.
- If they refuse, you mark experience.

Advanced (NPC only): On a 12+, they go along with you. Furthermore, they change their nature towards you until you betray their trust. Choose one:

- Confidante (they give you advice, perspective, or absolution)
- Friend (they back you up)
- Guardian (they intercept danger)
- Lover (they give you shelter and comfort)
- Right Hand (they follow through on your intentions)
- Representative (they pursue your interests in your absence)

EXCHANGE BLOWS

When you **engage in melee** or **trade volleys with ranged weapons**, roll +IMPETUS. On a 10+, you inflict harm (for weapon used) on your opponent. On a 7-9, you inflict harm (for weapon used) on your opponent, and you suffer harm (based on your opponent). If you attack at range and the enemy has no ranged weapons, inflict harm and choose one:

- You must move to get the shot, placing you in danger.
- Your shot doesn't hit precisely, inflict -1 harm.
- You require several shots, reduce ammo by 1.

On a miss, you suffer harm (based on your opponent). If you attack at range and the enemy has no ranged weapons, you also put yourself in danger. The arbiter will tell you how.

Advanced: On a 12+, you inflict harm (for weapon used) +1 on your opponent.

OBSERVE CAREFULLY

When you **study a person or situation**, roll +ACUTUS. On a 10+, ask the arbiter 3 questions from the list below. On a 7-9, ask 1 question.

In either case, take +1 forward when acting on the answers.

- What happened here recently?
- What is about to happen?
- What should I be on the lookout for?
- What here is useful or valuable to me?
- Who is really in control here?
- What here is not what it appears to be?

Advanced: On a 12+, ask 3 questions from the list and decide an answer to one of them yourself, as the fiction permits.



OVERCOME ADVERSITY

When you **stand firm in the face of great danger** or **act despite impending peril**, say how you do it. If you do it...

- ...by using your quick wits, roll +ACUTUS
- ...by sheer strength of will, roll +FORTIS
- ...by forcing your way through, roll +IMPETUS
- ...by talking your way out, roll +LEPOS
- ...by relying upon the gods or fate, roll +FATUM

On a 10+, you do what you say you do. On a 7-9, you do what you say you do, but there is a complication. The arbiter will provide details.

Advanced: On a 12+, you do what you say you do and take +1 forward.

RECALL LORE

When you **attempt to recall something** you have learned, roll +ACUTUS. On a 10+, the arbiter will tell you something interesting and useful about the subject. On a 7-9, The arbiter will tell you something interesting.

In either case, the arbiter may ask “How do you know this?” Tell them the truth.

Advanced: On a 12+, tell the arbiter something interesting and useful about the subject, as the fiction permits.



TAGS

Tags are descriptive elements, often used for gear, which indicate an entity's properties.

n-ammo means the character has n sets of ammunition for their ranged weapon. If the weapon has this tag, it may not be used unless the character has at least 1-ammo.

ap (armor piercing) means the character does not subtract armor from the harm suffered.

n-armor means the item subtracts n harm when the character wearing the armor suffers harm. Multiple sources of armor are not cumulative.

n-barter means n sets of currency (coin, gear, services, valuables) with which other gear or services can be purchased.

close means a little beyond arm's reach, within the distance of a long tool or weapon such as a spear.

far means several hundred feet, or the range at which a weapon such as a sling or bow could be used.

gang means a group of people or creatures.

hand means within arm's reach.

n-harm means the item inflicts n harm on an opponent when a move says to inflict harm.

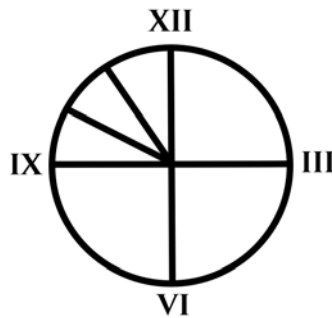
near/nearby means within a few hundred feet. An object can be thrown in near range.

n-stock means the item has n number of uses before it is no longer usable.

stacks means the previous tag combines in value with other tags of the same type. For example, a breastplate (1-armor) and a shield (1-armor stacks) would count for 2-armor when used together.

HARM

Harm is when a character suffers an ill effect such as damage in combat or a natural effect like fire or starvation. Some gear, like armor, can reduce the amount of harm a character suffers. The amount of harm inflicted is noted by a number followed by -harm, 2-harm for example. For each 1-harm a character suffers (after armor), the player marks one segment of their **sundial** (see below), starting with the segment between XII and III and moving clockwise.



The larger segments of the sundial represent less serious wounds/effects, while those past IX are more serious. When a character marks the last segment, between XI and XII, their **life becomes untenable** and they make that move (see Harm Moves below).

Harm in the first two segments (XII-III and III-VI) will heal in time, subject to the fiction. Harm in the third segment (VI-IX) will not get worse or better by itself. Harm after IX will get worse by itself if not stabilized. In any case, harm past VI requires some form of healing, whether it be mundane or magical.

HARM MOVES

SUFFER HARM

When you suffer harm, roll +harm suffered (after armor if you're wearing any). On a 10+, the arbiter chooses one:

- You're out of action: unconscious, trapped, incoherent, or panicked.
- It's worse, take an additional 1-harm.
- Choose two from the 7-9 list below.

On a 7-9, the arbiter chooses one:

- You lose your footing.
- You lose your grip on an item you are holding.
- You lose track of someone or something you're attending to.
- You miss noticing something important.

On a miss, the arbiter may choose one of the 7-9 options, but you take -1 harm.

INFLICT HARM ON ANOTHER PLAYER CHARACTER

When you inflict harm on another player character, they get +1 bond with you for each segment of harm you inflict.

WHEN LIFE BECOMES UNTENABLE

When you mark the last segment of your sundial (XI-XII), your life becomes untenable. Choose one:

- Mark the **shattered** (-1 ACUTUS) debility and say how you got it.
- Mark the **broken** (-1 FORTIS) debility and say how you got it.
- Mark the **crippled** (-1 IMPETUS) debility and say how you got it.
- Mark the **disfigured** (-1 LEPOS) debility and say how you got it.
- Mark the **haunted** (-1 FATUM) debility and say how you got it.
- Change to a new playbook.
- Your character dies. Create a new character.

The arbiter may tell you to erase some harm, as the fiction permits.

RECOVER HARM

When you have time to rest and recuperate and do not have harm beyond IX on your sundial, roll +FORTIS. On a 10+, erase all harm. On a 7-9, erase all harm after III. On a miss, erase all harm after VI.

TREAT HARM

When you have time and materials to stabilize another or heal harm past IX on their sundial, spend stock from a medicinal kit and roll +stock spent. Take +1 to this roll if you are a medicus or have the **Prepared for the Inevitable** triarius move. On a hit or partial hit, they stabilize and erase harm after VI. On a 10+, choose two. On a 7-9, choose 1.

- They fight you and you are forced to knock them out. For how long?
- The pain and medication make them babble. Ask them what secret they spill.
- The treatment requires less stock than anticipated. Recover 1-stock in your medicinal kit.
- They are at your complete mercy. What do you do to them?
- Their recovery teaches you something. Mark experience.
- They owe you for your time, attention, and supplies. Hold them to it.

On a miss, they take 1-harm ap instead.

SESSION MOVE

END A SESSION

Choose one:

- Choose one character who knows you better than they did before this session. Tell that player to take +1 to their Bond with you on their sheet. If this brings them to Bond +4, they reset to Bond +1 and mark experience. Ask them how your relationship has changed.
- If no one knows you any better, choose a character who doesn't know you as well as they thought, or choose any character. Tell that player to take -1 to their Bond with you on their sheet. If this brings them to Bond -3, they reset to Bond 0 and mark experience. Ask them how your relationship has changed.

Once changes to bonds have been completed, take turns discussing whether each character followed their temperament during the session. If the group agrees that they did, that character marks experience.

Then discuss whether each character followed their credo during the session. If the group agrees that they did, that character marks experience.

IMPROVEMENT

Characters change and grow over the course of the story, which is reflected in the game by experience and improvement.

Characters mark experience (fill in one circle on their playbook's improvement track) when:

- They make a move and miss (roll 6-)
- They reset a bond (reach Bond+4 or Bond-3 with another character) during the end a session move.
- They follow their temperament during a session as determined during the end a session move.
- They follow their credo during a session as determined during the end a session move.
- A move tells them to mark experience.

When a character has marked 7 experience, erase all experience and immediately choose one of the available improvements in their playbook. The character gains the chosen improvement immediately, or as the fiction permits.

Each improvement option may only be chosen once. Some options do not become available until the character has chosen 5 of the initial options in their playbook. Further details on some improvement options are below.

RETIRE YOUR CHARACTER TO SAFETY AND CREATE A NEW CHARACTER

When you choose this option, say what happens to your character. Choose another playbook, preferably one that isn't being played, and create a new character following the normal guidelines.

CREATE A SECOND CHARACTER TO PLAY

If the arbiter can control more than one person, so can a player. Choose another playbook, preferably one that isn't being played, and create a second character following the normal guidelines.

Characters who belong to the same player may not aid or interfere with one another, nor do they ever gain Bonds with each other.

CHANGE PLAYBOOK

When you choose a new playbook, transfer everything to your new playbook (stats, moves, gear, bonds, etc.). You do not start with any moves from your new playbook, but may get them as improvements.

CHANGE CULT

Sometimes in the fiction, a character may no longer serve their original god, or vice versa. When you choose to change your character's cult, erase all cult moves for their original cult, erase any improvements which resulted in additional cult moves, then choose a single cult move from their new cult. Characters must earn additional blessings from their new god.

BONDS FOR NEW CHARACTERS

When a new character is created, whether it be a new player joining the group, a second character, or after a character retires, they ask Bond questions as normal. The other characters mark Bond +1 on their sheets if they are acquainted with the new character, or Bond -1 if they aren't.



EXAMPLE OF PLAY

Alex, Chris, and Jess are playing a game of Ruma: Dawn of Empire with their friend Mike as the Arbiter. Alex is playing Sextus Livius Merenda, a hastatus and initiate of Minerva. Chris is playing Lucia Horatia Regula, an augur and initiate of The Sisters. Jess is playing Marcia, a gladiator and initiate of Mars.

MIKE: You enter the clearing in the woods. The sun shines down through the canopy illuminating the scene of a skirmish. Several bodies lay motionless on the grass, some whole, and some dismembered. What do you do?

ALEX: I look around for signs of life. Is anyone still alive?

MIKE: You check the bodies, but none of them are alive. You also see what looks like drag marks leading into the woods to the North.

ALEX: "Maybe someone is still alive," I say and follow the drag marks.

CHRIS: Wait! I close my eyes and concentrate on what Sextus might see in the woods. What Sextus might find.

MIKE: It sounds like you are using your Bonds of Fellowship?

CHRIS: Yes. What do I roll?

MIKE: Roll two dice and add your Bond with Sextus.

CHRIS: I have Bond -2 with him. Hmm, I guess I don't know him very well.

ALEX: You just need get to know me then. I wink.

CHRIS: I retch a little, but continue concentrating. I rolled a 9, minus 2 is 7, a partial hit. So, Sextus gets +1 forward.

ALEX: I get +1 to my next roll?

MIKE: Yes. Lucia, what did you see in your vision?

CHRIS: I see darkness, and pain. Something is hiding in the woods. It might be an animal, or perhaps a feral man. The vision is not clear, other than branches, slashing branches.

MIKE: Awesome. Marcia, what are you doing?

JESS: I follow Sextus. Somebody must make sure he's OK.

CHRIS: I'm coming too. Something tells me it's not a good idea to be alone in these woods.

ALEX: Alright then. I step into the woods with my gladius drawn and shield ready.

MIKE: The drag marks run for about 100 paces, then end. A pair of legs mark their termination, but the rest of the body is nowhere to be seen.

JESS: Can we tell what might have caused this? I kneel by the remains and investigate them.

MIKE: It certainly looks like something wild, and obviously deadly. The legs have been severed from the torso in what appears to be a single jagged cut. Certainly not from a sharp blade. Just as you come to that conclusion, something catches the edge of your vision, movement in the darkness behind the trees. You see what appears to be a branch-like arm swipe out at you.

ALEX: I'm nearby. Can I block it with my shield?

MIKE: You can certainly try. That sounds like your Hold the Line move.

ALEX: Yeah. I rolled a 7, but I have +2 FORTIS so my total is 9.

MIKE: Don't forget your +1 forward from Lucia's divination. Something she said must have prepared you for this.

ALEX: Right, so my total is 10. Lucia's vision mentioned something about branches lashing out so I was ready for it.

MIKE: Awesome. Tell us what happens.

ALEX: I choose two options from my move: No harm comes to the thing I defend, and I force the danger back and away. I leap towards Marcia with my shield out front and block the branch's attack, then swipe at it with my gladius. The branch withdraws back into the woods. I stand there ready for another attack.

MIKE: You all can now see the creature in the gloom. It appears to be something like a quadrupedal tree. Long branches protrude everywhere and form sharp spikes on its body and deadly claws on its limbs. What do you do?

JESS: I roar a call to Mars to bless our battle and charge the creature, my gladius out front.

MIKE: You're exchanging blows with the creature?

JESS: Yes. Since we're not deliberating beforehand, does my Quick to Violence move apply?

MIKE: Yes, everyone gets +1 forward as Mars blesses all of you for this battle.

JESS: Sweet. Uh, oh. I rolled a 3 on the dice. Plus my +2 IMPETUS and +1 forward is only 6. That's a miss, right?

MIKE: Sure is. You charge in, but before you're able to strike a blow on the creature, it lashes out again, this time catching you with a massive claw across your chest. On a miss you suffer harm from the creature.

JESS: How bad?

MIKE: 4-harm ap, which means your armor doesn't help.

CHRIS: Ouch.

JESS: Yeah. Oh, wait. I'm a secutor and used to taking damage when I fight.

MIKE: Awesome. Roll the dice.

JESS: I got a 7 plus my +1 FORTIS is 8. I suffer -1 harm.

MIKE: Awesome. Mark off the first three sections of your harm sundial. You have three left.

CHRIS: I knew it. We're doomed.

ALEX: Stop being so dramatic Lucia. We got this. I join Marcia in attacking the creature trying to put myself between it and her.

MIKE: Are you trying to damage the creature or protect Marcia?

ALEX: Both, but I'd really like to hurt that thing.

MIKE: OK, exchange blows with it.

CHRIS: I want to help.

MIKE: Tell us how.

CHRIS: I'll distract it so it doesn't see Sextus's attack.

MIKE: OK, roll to aid.

CHRIS: Oh man. Bond -2 again. Yay! Double sixes! So, my total is 10. Sextus, take +1 on your roll.

ALEX: Cool. I rolled an 8, plus 1 for my IMPETUS and +1 for Lucia's help. A hit. Take 2 harm creature!

MIKE: You manage to hack away at some of the limbs. The creature looks hurt, but not too bad. This might be a long fight...





II PERSONAE

PLAYER PRINCIPLES

- Be Bold
- Act as Your Character Would
- Address Other Characters by Name
- Tell a Great Story
- Respect Other Players
- Respect the Arbiter

BE BOLD

Characters in Ruma are heroic. They take action. Decide what to do, then do it. Deal with the consequences afterwards.

ACT AS YOUR CHARACTER WOULD

Your character is not you and you are not your character. When considering what to do, think about what your character would do. Consider their temperament, credo, background, abilities. Act on what the character knows rather than what you know.

ADDRESS OTHER CHARACTERS BY NAME

Keep the fiction flowing by calling the other characters in the group by their character's name rather than the player's name.

TELL A GREAT STORY

The primary goal of playing Ruma: Dawn of Empire is to discover what happens. Consider how to make the story better and more entertaining. Be descriptive in your character's words and actions. Respect the tone of the conversation and try to make it worthy of legend.

RESPECT OTHER PLAYERS

Other characters are not their players and they are not their characters. Characters can hold grudges against each other, but players should not. The other players are responsible for their character's words and action, not you. If you think doing something bad to another character will advance the story in an interesting way, ask that character's player if it is OK with them beforehand. Try not to talk over the other players.

RESPECT THE ARBITER

The arbiter is not out to get the players or the characters. They want to find out how the story unfolds like everyone else. Work with them to tell a great story. Listen to what they have to say. Try not to talk over them.

CREATING A CHARACTER

To create a character in Ruma, choose a playbook, preferably a different one from any other player, and follow the Creating An [playbook name] section. Ask the arbiter if you have any questions. When you get to the Bonds section, stop, and wait for everyone to reach that point before proceeding.

A NOTE ON GENDER ROLES

Ruma is a patriarchal society, but it is not unheard of for a woman to hold a position traditionally held by a man. Such women are exceptions to the rule and often exemplary in their ability. Feel free to alter any of the playbooks to the gender of your character concept.



THE PLAYBOOKS

ARCHITECTUS

You are an artist, engineer, and inventor.

The architectus relies upon ACUTUS to plan and implement their designs in support of the cohort.

AUGUR

You are a diviner of the future, whether it be visions and dreams or via reading dice or the entrails of animals.

The Augur relies upon FATUM to maintain their connection to the gods and provide their cohort with guidance and foresight.

DECANUS

You are a non-commissioned officer in the Ruman legions and command a contubernium, a squad of 8 Ruman soldiers.

The decanus relies upon LEPOS to lead troops in battle.

EQUES

You are a cavalryman and noble of Ruma. While the majority of Ruman military might is in the masses of well-trained infantry, cavalry is essential to swift victory on the battlefield.

The eques relies upon LEPOS to maneuver their loyal steed in battle.

GLADIATOR

You are a slave, or former slave, who has fought in the Ruman arenas to the delight of its citizens.

The gladiator relies upon IMPETUS to overpower their foes.

HASTATUS

You are a front-line soldier of the Ruman legions, hearty and strong, armed with your trusty gladius and a strong rectangular shield.

The hastatus relies upon FORTIS to maintain discipline when facing the Empire's enemies and to protect their allies in the second and third ranks.

MAGUS

You are a practitioner of the secret arts of alchemy and arcanum.

The magus relies upon FATUM and ACUTUS to weave the magical winds of the world into dangerous spells.

MEDICUS

You are a medic, physician, or surgeon.

The medicus relies upon ACUTUS to heal their allies and get them back into the fight.

PRAEDO

You are a bandit, thief, or outlaw.

The praedo relies upon ACUTUS to sneak and steal their way through life.

TRIARIUS

You are a veteran soldier of many campaigns, a warrior of the third rank in the Ruman legions.

The triarius does not rely on a single stat, instead using all of them to outwit their enemies and support their allies.

VELES

You are a glory-seeking skirmisher fighting in front of the Ruman legion's ranks.

The veles relies upon IMPETUS to strike fast and disrupt the ranks of the enemy.

VENATOR

You are a hunter and scout, either Ruman or foreign born, armed with sling or bow, and often employed as an auxiliary to the Ruman legions.

The venator relies upon ACUTUS to attack from range and discover ambushes and hazards before their allies fall prey to them.

THE TEMPERAMENTS

Ruman physicians and philosophers believe each person is comprised of four humors: blood, black bile, yellow bile, and phlegm. Imbalance of the humors leads to poor health, but also to an overall personality trait.

- Choleric (yellow bile) – irritable, quick, short-tempered.
- Melancholic (black bile) – analytical, quiet, wise.
- Phlegmatic (phlegm) – peaceful, relaxed.
- Sanguine (blood) – active, enthusiastic, social.

Characters typically display the personality trait of whichever humor is dominant. Playing your character in accordance with their temperament can earn your character experience at the end of a session.



THE CULTS

Almost all Ruman citizens, and many non-citizens, have been indoctrinated into the religious rites of a cult dedicated to one of the Ruman gods. Some cults use the Hellenic name for their chosen god, while others prefer the newer Ruman name. Each cult's credo provides guidance to its members. Playing your character in accordance with your credo can earn your character experience at the end of a session. Feel free to make up your own credo to fit your idea of your character's cult.

DIANA (ARTEMIS)

Diana is the goddess of wilderness and the hunt. She is the patron of many woodsmen and scouts.

Credo: Be one with Gaia, for she governs all.

MARS (ARES)

Mars is the god of violence and murder. Worshipers of Mars tend to be more secretive than their brethren, although some, especially veles, practice openly.

Credo: Strike first. Strike fast. Bathe in the blood of your enemies.

MERCURY (HERMES)

Mercury is the god of travel and messengers. Bards and other wanderers are the most common worshippers of Mercury.

Credo: Be swift and decisive in all things.

MINERVA (ATHENA)

Minerva is the goddess of war and tactics. Followers of Minerva revel in camaraderie and fellowship on the battlefield.

Credo: Duty and honor in battle.

NEPTUNE (POSEIDON)

Neptune is the god of water and the sea. Most sailors, fishermen, and many who live on the coast worship Neptune.

Credo: Water is life, and death, for us all.

PLUTO (HADES)

Pluto is the god of death and the underworld. Like the followers of Mars, those of Pluto often keep their rites and worship to themselves.

Credo: Everything must fall before Hades in judgement.

THE SISTERS

The Sisters, Chance and Fate, are the twin goddesses of luck and fortune. Worshippers of the Sisters come from all walks of life.

Credo: Trust in Chance and Fate, for they are blind to nothing.

TRIVIA (HECATE)

Trivia is the ancient Hellene goddess of magic and witchcraft.

Credo: The natural world is to be molded to your whim.

VENUS (APHRODITE)

Venus is the goddess of love and beauty. Artists and mothers are the most prominent of Venus's followers.

Credo: Create and protect that which is beautiful, for it is a gift from the gods.

VULCAN (HEPHAESTUS)

Vulcan is the god of fire and forge. Most worshippers of Vulcan are blacksmiths or magi.

Credo: Fire purifies the sword and the soul.

THE FAITHLESS

The faithless are those who are not members of a cult, whether through adherence to the powers of reason or simply due to denial of the gods. Faithless rely upon knowledge and logic in their day-to-day lives.

Credo: Without reason, man is but a beast.

CULT MOVES

DIANA, GODDESS OF WILDERNESS AND THE HUNT

- o **Follow in My Steps:** when your cohort mimics your actions in the wild, they take +1 ongoing until they no longer mimic your actions.
- o **Huntress' Hand:** when you exchange blows with a ranged weapon, roll +FATUM instead of +IMPETUS
- o **Wild Sense:** when you spend time to commune with the wild, roll +FATUM. On a 10+, ask 2. On a 7-9, ask 1.
 - In what direction is the nearest game?
 - In what direction is the nearest water?
 - In what direction is the nearest pocket of civilization?
 - Which way is North?

MARS, GOD OF VIOLENCE AND MURDER

- o **Carnage:** when you exchange blows, you may suffer 1-harm ap to inflict +1 harm
- o **Quick to Violence:** when your cohort opts to exchange blows without deliberations beforehand, each member of the cohort gains +1 forward.
- o **Unseen Blade:** when you attempt to inflict harm on an unaware victim, roll +FATUM. On a 10+, inflict harm+1. On a 7-9, the opponent notices you at the last moment, inflict harm-1. On a miss, the opponent notices you before you can attack.

MERCURY, GOD OF TRAVEL AND MESSENGERS

- o **Fleet of Foot:** when you embark on a long solo journey, barring complications the journey takes half the normal time.
- o **Quick Steps:** when you exchange blows, you may opt to disengage from the combat in place of a hit or partial hit's normal results.
- o **Voices on the Wind:** when you whisper a short message to someone beyond far, roll +FATUM. On a 10+ they hear your message clearly. On a 7-9, they hear most of your message. On a miss, they hear what the arbiter tells them.



MINERVA, GODDESS OF WAR AND TACTICS

- o **Back-to-Back:** when you exchange blows while close to an ally, you each take +1 ongoing until the end of the battle or you are no longer close.
- o **Rally the Troops:** during a battle, when you shout commands and orders, roll +FATUM. On a 10+, all allies who can hear you either erase 1 segment of harm if they do not have any beyond IX, or take +1 forward. On a 7-9, all allies who can hear you take +1 forward. On a miss, you take -1 forward.
- o **Survey the Field:** when you have time to observe the field of battle and make plans and/or setup traps/defenses, all allies take +1 ongoing during the battle.

NEPTUNE, GOD OF WATER AND THE SEAS

- o **Like a Fish:** you can swim twice as fast, and hold your breath twice as long, as a normal person.
- o **Sea Legs:** when you make a move while aboard a boat or ship, take +1 to the roll.
- o **Tidal Surge:** when you implore Neptune to push a sufficient body of water at a target close to or in the water, roll +FATUM. On a 10+, they are knocked prone and take 1-harm ap. On a 7-9, they are knocked prone.



PLUTO, GOD OF DEATH AND THE UNDERWORLD

- o **Ancestral Communion:** when you commune with the dead, roll +FATUM. On a 10+, the arbiter will answer three questions, two of which they will answer truthfully. On a 7-9, the arbiter will answer two questions, one of which will be answered truthfully. On a miss, the arbiter will answer one question which may or may not be answered truthfully.
- o **Kiss of Hades:** when you inflict harm, you inflict +1 harm if your target has already suffered harm from you or another member of your cohort.
- o **Spectral Sight:** when you take the time to meditate on your surroundings, you may detect the presence of dead and undead in near range.

THE SISTERS, TWIN GODDESSES OF LUCK AND FORTUNE

- o **Blessed by the Twins:** at the start of each session, gain hold 2 until the end of the session. You may spend 1 hold to upgrade the result of a move from a miss to a partial hit or a partial hit to a hit.
- o **Fortunate One:** when you partake in a game of chance, you gain +1 ongoing until the end of that game.
- o **Luck of the Gods:** when your life becomes untenable, roll +FATUM. On a 10+, erase segments X-XII on your sundial and do not suffer the effects of the **When Life Becomes Untenable** move. On a 7-9, erase segment XI-XII on your sundial and do not suffer the effects of that move. On a miss, suffer the effects of that move accordingly.



TRIVIA, GODDESS OF MAGIC AND WITCHCRAFT

- o **Curse of Hecate:** when you curse someone, roll +FATUM. On a 10+, you and your allies take +1 ongoing against them until the end of the battle/scene. On a 7-9, you and your allies take +1 forward against them.
- o **Hand of Light:** when you create a ball of light in your hand, say what it looks like and how bright it is. You may extinguish the light at-will.
- o **Witch's Charm:** when you debate a point to manipulate someone, take +1 to the roll.

VENUS, GODDESS OF LOVE AND BEAUTY

- o **Alluring Presence:** when you debate a point to manipulate another, roll +FATUM instead of +LEPOS.
- o **Inspiring Beauty:** when in the presence of something or someone of great beauty, take +1 ongoing until no longer in its/their presence.
- o **Selfless Aid:** when you aid another despite potential peril, change any miss to a partial hit.



VULCAN, GOD OF FIRE AND FORGE

- o **Blazing Armor:** in battle, when you wear armor and suffer harm from an enemy at close or hand, the enemy suffers 1-harm ap.
- o **Forgefather's Blessing:** when you call upon Vulcan to bless your weapon in battle, take +1 ongoing with that weapon until the end of the battle.
- o **Vulcan's Caress:** when you implore Vulcan to push a small flame, like a torch or campfire, at a close target, roll +FATUM. On a 10+, pick 2. On a 7-9, pick 1. On a miss, the source flame goes out.
 - Some of their clothes/body catch fire
 - They take 2-harm ap

FAITHLESS

- o **Careful Scrutiny:** when you observe carefully, take +1 to the roll.
- o **Learned Master:** when you recall lore, take +1 to the roll.
- o **Voice of Reason:** when you debate a point, take +1 to the roll.





CREATING AN ARCHITECTUS

You are an artist, engineer, and inventor.

Choose a name, description, temperament, cult, stats, moves, and bonds.

DESCRIPTION

Circle one from each line, or make up your own.

- Ambiguous, Concealed, Female, Male
- Aged face, Burned face, Scarred face, Young face
- One eye, Penetrating eyes, Questioning eyes, Surveying eyes
- Burned body, Muscular body, Tall body, Wiry body

TEMPERAMENT

Choose one:

Choleric, Melancholic, Phlegmatic, Sanguine.

CULT

Choose one cult in which you are initiated:

Diana, Mars, Mercury, Minerva, Neptune, Pluto, The Sisters, Trivia, Venus, Vulcan, Faithless

STARTING STATS

ACUTUS +1, FORTIS +1, IMPETUS -1, LEPOS 0, FATUM 0

Add 1 to a single stat.

MOVES

You know all the basic moves. Choose two architectus moves plus one cult move from your chosen cult.

ARCHITECTUS MOVES

- o **Flames of Vulcan:** you possess 3-stock of flaming pitch in corked clay pots, and can restock when you have time and materials. When you throw one at a target, spend 1-stock and roll +ACUTUS. On a 10+, the target takes 3-harm ap and anyone close to the target takes 1-harm ap. On a 7-9, the target takes 1-harm ap.
- o **Precision Fire:** when you **exchange blows** with a ranged weapon, roll +ACUTUS instead of +IMPETUS.
- o **Prepared Defenses:** when you make camp, have time and materials, and prepare defenses, all allies take +1 ongoing when exchanging blows while close to the camp.
- o **Segmented Armor:** you possess a customized set of segmented armor (2-armor).
- o **Set Trap:** when you have time and materials to set a trap, choose one:
 - When triggered, all creatures close to the trap take 2-harm.
 - When triggered, all creatures close to the trap are knocked prone.
 - When triggered, all allies take +1 forward.

STARTING GEAR

You get:

- A dagger (1-harm hand near)
- Tools
- Camping and mess gear
- 3-barter in Denarii and goods

BONDS

Everyone introduces their characters. Take your turn. List the other character's names. Go around again for Bonds. On your turn, ask at least 1:

- *Which of you would make a good apprentice?*
For that character, write Bond +2
- *Which of you set off a trap I set?*
For that character, write Bond -2
- *Which of you spilled Flames of Vulcan and nearly killed us?*
For that character, write Bond -2

For everyone else, write Bond -1. You are often too preoccupied with studies and creation to take time to get to know others.

On the others' turns, answer their questions as you like.

IMPROVEMENTS

Experience O O O O O O >>> Erase experience and choose one:

- ☐ +1 ACUTUS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 FORTIS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 IMPETUS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 LEPOS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 FATUM (max +3)
- ☐ Get a new architectus move
- ☐ Get a new architectus move
- ☐ Get a move from another playbook
- ☐ Get a move from another playbook
- ☐ Get a new cult move
- ☐ Remove a debility

You may choose from the following after you have taken at least 5 from above:

- o Get +1 to any stat (max +3)
- o Retire your character to safety and create a new character
- o Create a second character to play
- o Change playbook
- o Change cult
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them



CREATING AN AUGUR

You are a diviner of the future, whether it be visions and dreams or via reading dice or the entrails of animals.

Choose a name, description, temperament, cult, stats, moves, and bonds.

DESCRIPTION

Circle one from each line, or make up your own.

- Ambiguous, Concealed, Female, Male
- Aged face, Beaming face, Placid face, Young face
- Clouded eyes, Laughing eyes, No eyes, Piercing eyes
- Bent body, Frail body, Tall body, Wiry body

TEMPERAMENT

Choose one:

Choleric, Melancholic, Phlegmatic, Sanguine.

CULT

Choose one cult in which you are initiated:

Diana, Mars, Mercury, Minerva, Neptune, Pluto, The Sisters, Trivia, Venus, Vulcan, Faithless

STARTING STATS

ACUTUS 0, FORTIS 0, IMPETUS -1, LEPOS +1, FATUM +1

Add 1 to a single stat.

MOVES

You know all the basic moves. Choose two Augur moves plus one cult move from your chosen cult.

AUGUR MOVES

- o **Ancestral Knowledge:** when you **recall lore**, roll +FATUM instead of +ACUTUS.
- o **Bonds of Fellowship:** when you take time to meditate on another's future and tell them about it, roll +Bond. On a 10+, they get +1 ongoing until they have made 3 rolls. On a 7-9, they get +1 forward. On a miss, they get -1 forward.
- o **Divine Protection:** your faith in the gods gives you 1-armor if you are not wearing any armor.
- o **Precognition:** when you **exchange blows**, roll +FATUM instead of +IMPETUS.
- o **Visions of Death:** when you go into battle and observe the mists of fate, roll +FATUM. On a 10+, name one NPC who will die and one who will live. On a 7-9, name one NPC who will die OR one who will live. The arbiter will make your vision come true, if possible. On a miss, you foresee your own death and take -1 ongoing until the battle ends.

STARTING GEAR

You get:

- A dagger (1-harm hand near)
- Camping and mess gear
- 3-barter in Denarii and goods

BONDS

Everyone introduces their characters. Take your turn. List the other character's names. Go around again for Bonds. On your turn, ask at least 1:

- *Which of you have I foreseen your doom?*
For that character, write Bond +2
- *Which of you can I not see your future?*
For that character, write Bond -2
- *Which of you do I dream of every night?*
For that character, write Bond +3

For everyone else, write Bond +1. You see visions of everyone's fate.

On the others' turns, answer their questions as you like.

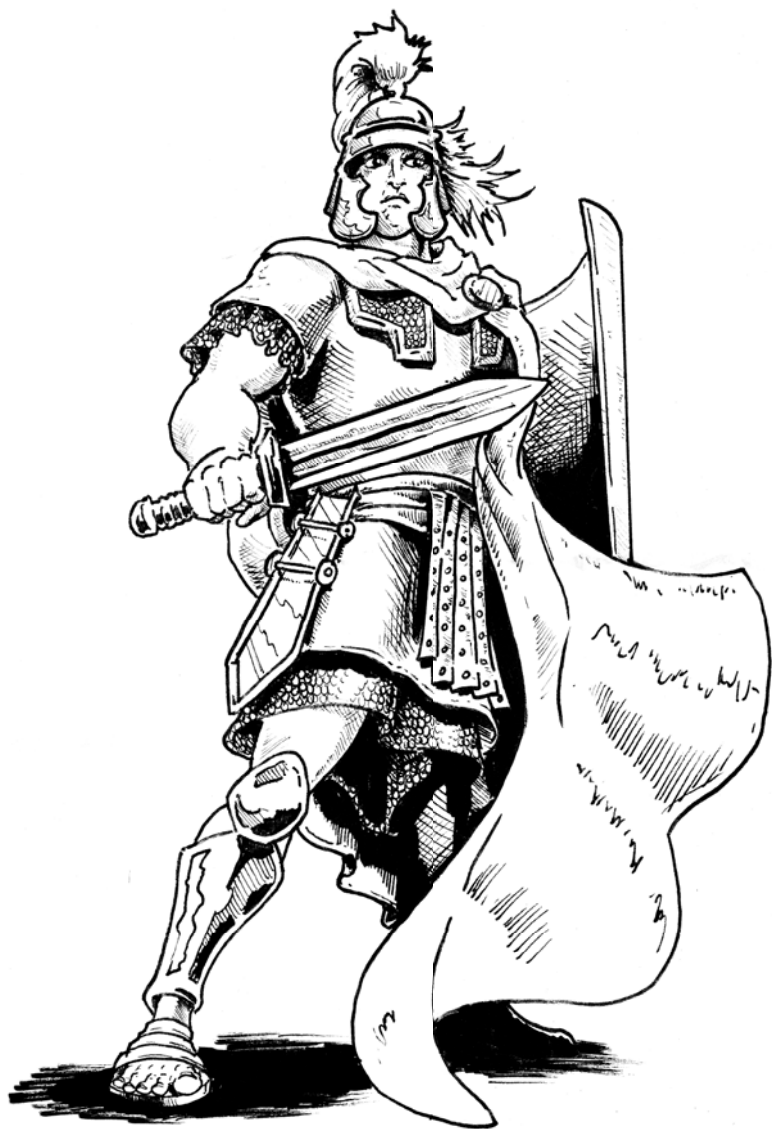
IMPROVEMENTS

Experience O O O O O O >>> Erase experience and choose one:

- ☐ +1 ACUTUS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 FORTIS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 IMPETUS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 LEPOS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 FATUM (max +3)
- ☐ Get a new augur move
- ☐ Get a new augur move
- ☐ Get a move from another playbook
- ☐ Get a move from another playbook
- ☐ Get a new cult move
- ☐ Remove a debility

You may choose from the following after you have taken at least 5 from above:

- o Get +1 to any stat (max +3)
- o Retire your character to safety and create a new character
- o Create a second character to play
- o Change playbook
- o Change cult
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them



CREATING A DECANUS

You are a non-commissioned officer in the Ruman legions and command a contubernium, a squad of 8 Ruman soldiers.

Choose a name, description, temperament, cult, stats, moves, and bonds.

DESCRIPTION

Choose one from each line, or make up your own.

- Ambiguous, Concealed, Female, Male
- Chiseled face, Measured face, Stern face, Worn face
- Frosty eyes, Inviting eyes, Strong eyes, Tired eyes
- Lean body, Muscular body, Stocky body, Worn body

TEMPERAMENT

Choose one:

Choleric, Melancholic, Phlegmatic, Sanguine.

CULT

Choose one cult in which you are initiated:

Diana, Mars, Mercury, Minerva, Neptune, Pluto, The Sisters, Trivia, Venus, Vulcan, Faithless

STARTING STATS

ACUTUS +1, FORTIS -1, IMPETUS 0, LEPOS +1, FATUM 0

Add 1 to a single stat.

MOVES

You know all the basic moves and both decanus moves. Choose one cult move from your chosen cult.

DECANUS MOVES

- **Contubernium:** you lead a small unit of 8 Ruman soldiers (small gang, 2-harm hand, 1-armor) armed with gladius and shield. Choose two to apply to your contubernium:
 - o Affable (LEPOS +1)
 - o Armored (2-armor)
 - o Devoted: when you suffer harm in the presence of your gang, your gang may suffer the harm instead.
 - o Ferocious (IMPETUS +1)
 - o Hardy (suffer -1 harm once per battle)
 - o Lucky (FATUM +1)
 - o Observant (ACUTUS +1)
 - o Phalanx (2-harm close)
 - o Pilums (2-harm near)
 - o Steady (FORTIS +1)
 - o Testudo: in battle, you and your gang gain +1 armor when everyone is in hand range.

- **Leader of Men:** when you order your gang, roll +LEPOS. On a 10+, pick 2. On a 7-9, pick 1. On a miss, pick 1, but you'll pay for it later.
 - They do what you order, even if suicidal.
 - The gang does not disperse in combat.
 - They'll do their best to bring or give you what you ask.

STARTING GEAR

- A breastplate and greaves (1-armor)
- A large shield (1-armor +1armor)
- A gladius (2-harm hand)
- Camping and mess gear
- 3-barter in Denarii and goods

BONDS

Everyone introduces their characters. Take your turn. List the other character's names. Go around again for Bonds. On your turn, ask at least 1:

- *Which of you used to serve in my contubernium?*
For that character, write Bond +3
- *Which of you do I think would make a good second in command?*
For that character, write Bond +2

- Which of you is useless?

For that character, write Bond -2

For everyone else, write Bond +1. You see everyone's usefulness towards the cohort's missions.

On the others' turns, answer their questions as you like.

IMPROVEMENTS

Experience O O O O O O >>> Erase experience and choose one:

- o +1 ACUTUS (max +3)
- o +1 FORTIS (max +3)
- o +1 IMPETUS (max +3)
- o +1 LEPOS (max +3)
- o +1 FATUM (max +3)
- o Get 2 new options for the contubernium move
- o Get 2 new options for the contubernium move
- o Get a move from another playbook
- o Get a move from another playbook
- o Get a new cult move
- o Remove a debility

You may choose from the following after you have taken at least 5 from above:

- o Get +1 to any stat (max +3)
- o Retire your character to safety and create a new character
- o Create a second character to play
- o Change playbook
- o Change cult
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them



CREATING AN EQUUS

You are a cavalryman and noble of Ruma. While the majority of Ruman military might is in the masses of well-trained infantry, cavalry is essential to swift victory on the battlefield.

Choose a name, description, temperament, cult, stats, moves, and bonds.

DESCRIPTION

Circle one from each line, or make up your own.

- Ambiguous, Concealed, Female, Male
- Hawkish face, Narrow face, Noble face, Wide face
- Engaging eyes, Hard eyes, Sparkling eyes, Squinted eyes
- Athletic body, Compact body, Lean body, Tall body

TEMPERAMENT

Choose one:

Choleric, Melancholic, Phlegmatic, Sanguine.

CULT

Choose one cult in which you are initiated:

Diana, Mars, Mercury, Minerva, Neptune, Pluto, The Sisters, Trivia, Venus, Vulcan, Faithless

STARTING STATS

ACUTUS -1, FORTIS 0, IMPETUS +1, LEPOS +1, FATUM 0

Add 1 to a single stat.

MOVES

You know all the basic moves and the Born in the Saddle eques move. Choose one more eques move plus one cult move from your chosen cult.

EQUES MOVES

- **Born in the Saddle:** you possess a warhorse of exceptional quality. Choose a name and looks for your horse. When fighting while mounted, you inflict +1 harm and gain +1armor. Your horse has its own harm sundial.
- o **Daredevil:** when you **overcome adversity** while mounted, and your horse aides your attempt, say how you do it and take +1 to the roll.
- o **Get Over Here:** when your loyal steed is within hearing range and you whistle to summon it, roll +LEPOS. On a 10+, it comes now. On a 7-9, it is delayed. On a miss, it is delayed and injured (1-harm ap) on the way to you.
- o **Horse Archer:** when you **exchange blows** with a ranged weapon while mounted, roll +LEPOS instead of +IMPETUS.
- o **Tall in the Saddle:** when you ride your mount into battle against a gang, you are treated as a small gang when exchanging blows with them.

STARTING GEAR

You get:

- A trained warhorse with bridle and saddle
- A breastplate and greaves (1-armor)
- A medium shield (1-armor +1armor)
- A gladius (2-harm hand)
- A spear (2-harm close near)
- Camping and mess gear
- 3-barter in Denarii and goods

BONDS

Everyone introduces their characters. Take your turn. List the other character's names. Go around again for Bonds. On your turn, ask at least 1:

- *Which of you is afraid of horses?*
For that character, write Bond -2
- *Which of you rides nearly as well as me?*
For that character, write Bond +3
- *Which of you is so common you're not worth my time?*
For that character, write Bond -2

For everyone else, write Bond -1. You trust your steed more than most people, until they prove otherwise.

On the others' turns, answer their questions as you like.

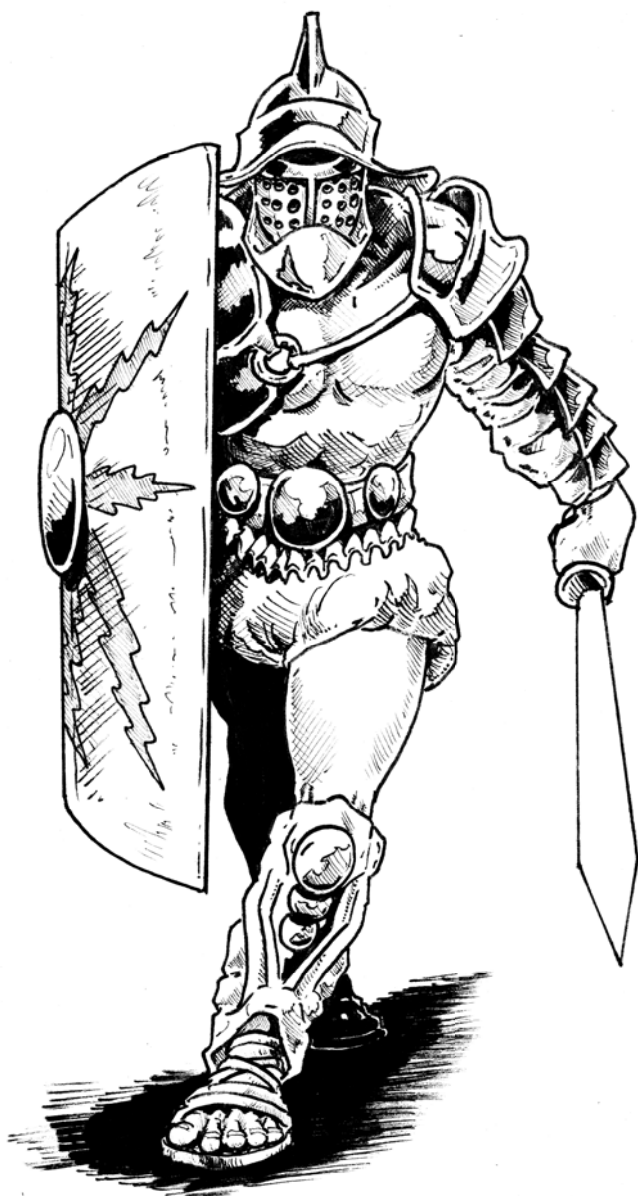
IMPROVEMENTS

Experience O O O O O O >>> Erase experience and choose one:

- ☐ +1 ACUTUS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 FORTIS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 IMPETUS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 LEPOS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 FATUM (max +3)
- ☐ Get a new eques move
- ☐ Get a new eques move
- ☐ Get a move from another playbook
- ☐ Get a move from another playbook
- ☐ Get a new cult move
- ☐ Remove a debility

You may choose from the following after you have taken at least 5 from above:

- o Get +1 to any stat (max +3)
- o Retire your character to safety and create a new character
- o Create a second character to play
- o Change playbook
- o Change cult
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them



CREATING A GLADIATOR

You are a slave, or former slave, who has fought in the Ruman arenas to the delight of its citizens.

Choose a name, description, temperament, cult, stats, moves, and bonds.

DESCRIPTION

Choose one from each line, or make up your own.

- Ambiguous, Concealed, Female, Male
- Happy face, Ragged face, Scarred face, Worn face
- Distrusting eyes, Friendly eyes, Missing eye, Opportunistic eyes
- Athletic body, Massive body, Scarred body, Stringy body

TEMPERAMENT

Choose one:

Choleric, Melancholic, Phlegmatic, Sanguine.

CULT

Choose one cult in which you are initiated:

Diana, Mars, Mercury, Minerva, Neptune, Pluto, The Sisters, Trivia, Venus, Vulcan, Faithless

STARTING STATS

ACUTUS -1, FORTIS +1, IMPETUS +1, LEPOS 0, FATUM 0

Add 1 to a single stat.

MOVES

You know all the basic moves. Choose either the retiarius or secutor move, one other gladiator move, and one cult move from your chosen cult.

GLADIATOR MOVES

- o **Predatory Glare:** when you enter a charged situation, roll +IMPETUS. On a 10+, hold 2. On a 7-9, hold 1. Spend hold 1 to make eye contact with a creature who freezes or flinches and cannot take action until you break it off. On a miss, your enemies identify you as their foremost threat.
- o **Retiarius:** when you use your net to ensnare a target, roll +IMPETUS. On a 10+, you either trip your opponent or disarm/entangle their weapon. On a 7-9, you either trip your opponent or disarm/entangle their weapon, but also suffer harm from them. On a miss, take -1 forward and suffer harm from your opponent.
- o **Roar of the Crowd:** while in battle you may incite onlookers, if present, to fuel your battle frenzy, roll +LEPOS. On a 10+, take +1 ongoing until the end of the battle. On a 7-9, take +1 forward.
- o **Savagery:** when you inflict harm, you may take 1 harm ap to inflict +1 harm.
- o **Secutor:** when you suffer harm in battle, roll +FORTIS. On a 10+, suffer -1 harm and take +1 forward. On a 7-9, suffer -1 harm.

- o **Studied Combatant:** when you take the time to observe an enemy in battle, take +1 ongoing against that enemy until the end of the battle.

STARTING GEAR

You get:

- Camping and mess gear
- 1-barter in Denarii and goods

If you are a Retiarius, you also get:

- A trident (2-harm close near)
- A net (near)
- A dagger (1-harm hand near)

If you are a Secutor, you also get:

- A heavy helm, arm guards, and greaves (1-armor)
- A large shield (1-armor +1armor)
- A gladius (2-harm hand)

BONDS

Everyone introduces their characters. Take your turn. List the other character's names. Go around again for Bonds. On your turn, ask at least 1:

- *Which of you has fought alongside me in the arena?*
For that character, write Bond +2
- *Which of you do I think could take me in a fight if it came to that?*
For that character, write Bond +2

- Which of you reminds me of my master?

For that character, write Bond -2

For everyone else, write Bond +0. You've spent most of your time with fellow gladiators and haven't developed connections with the other members of your cohort.

On the others' turns, answer their questions as you like.

IMPROVEMENTS

Experience O O O O O O >>> Erase experience and choose one:

- o +1 ACUTUS (max +3)
- o +1 FORTIS (max +3)
- o +1 IMPETUS (max +3)
- o +1 LEPOS (max +3)
- o +1 FATUM (max +3)
- o Get a new gladiator move
- o Get a new gladiator move
- o Get a move from another playbook
- o Get a move from another playbook
- o Get a new cult move
- o Remove a debility

You may choose from the following after you have taken at least 5 from above:

- o Get +1 to any stat (max +3)
- o Retire your character to safety and create a new character
- o Create a second character to play
- o Change playbook
- o Change cult
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them



CREATING A HASTATUS

You are a front-line soldier of the Ruman legions, hearty and strong, armed with your trusty gladius and shield.

Choose a name, description, temperament, cult, stats, moves, and bonds.

DESCRIPTION

Choose one from each line, or make up your own.

- Ambiguous, Concealed, Female, Male
- Handsome face, Grim face, Open face, Stern face
- Bright eyes, Cunning eyes, Steadfast eyes, Wary eyes
- Hardy body, Lean body, Stocky body, Strong body

TEMPERAMENT

Choose one:

Choleric, Melancholic, Phlegmatic, Sanguine.

CULT

Choose one cult in which you are initiated:

Diana, Mars, Mercury, Minerva, Neptune, Pluto, The Sisters, Trivia, Venus, Vulcan, Faithless

STARTING STATS

ACUTUS -1, FORTIS +1, IMPETUS +1, LEPOS 0, FATUM 0

Add 1 to a single stat.

MOVES

You know all the basic moves. Choose two hastatus moves plus one cult move from your chosen cult.

HASTATUS MOVES

- o **Hold the Line:** when you stand in defense of a person, place, or thing, roll +FORTIS. On a 10+, pick two. One a 7-9, pick one.
 - No harm comes to the thing you defend for a few moments.
 - No harm comes to you for a few moments.
 - You force the danger back and away.
- o **Only a Flesh Wound:** when you suffer harm between III and VI and no further on the sundial, say how you avoid the harm and erase the harm between III and VI.
- o **Protect Them All:** when you **aid** an ally in battle, roll +FORTIS instead of +Bond.
- o **Swordmaster:** when you **exchange blows** with a gladius, inflict +1 harm.
- o **Sword and Shield:** when you **exchange blows** with a gladius and shield, roll +FORTIS instead of +IMPETUS.

STARTING GEAR

You get:

- A breastplate and greaves (1-armor)
- A large shield (1-armor stacks)
- A gladius (2-harm hand)
- 1 pilum (2-harm near)
- Camping and mess gear
- 2-barter in Denarii and goods

BONDS

Everyone introduces their characters. Take your turn. List the other character's names. Go around again for Bonds. On your turn, ask at least 1:

- *Which of you joined the cohort at the same time as me?*
For that character, write Bond +2
- *Which of you do I look up to as an example of Ruman ideals?*
For that character, write Bond +3
- *Which of you do I not trust to have my back?*
For that character, write Bond -2

For everyone else, write Bond +1. You see everyone as an ally until they prove otherwise.

On the others' turns, answer their questions as you like.

IMPROVEMENTS

Experience O O O O O O >>> Erase experience and choose one:

- ☐ +1 ACUTUS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 FORTIS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 IMPETUS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 LEPOS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 FATUM (max +3)
- ☐ Get a new hastatus move
- ☐ Get a new hastatus move
- ☐ Get a move from another playbook
- ☐ Get a move from another playbook
- ☐ Get a new cult move
- ☐ Remove a debility

You may choose from the following after you have taken at least 5 from above:

- o Get +1 to any stat (max +3)
- o Retire your character to safety and create a new character
- o Create a second character to play
- o Change playbook
- o Change cult
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them



CREATING A MAGUS

You are a practitioner of the secret arts of alchemy and arcanum.

Choose a name, description, temperament, cult, stats, moves, and bonds.

DESCRIPTION

Choose one from each line, or make up your own.

- Ambiguous, Concealed, Female, Male
- Attractive face, Severe face, Wrinkled face, Youthful face
- Clouded eyes, Burning eyes, No eyes, Wise eyes
- Bony body, Bent body, Frail body, Wiry body

TEMPERAMENT

Choose one:

Choleric, Melancholic, Phlegmatic, Sanguine.

CULT

Choose one cult in which you are initiated:

Diana, Mars, Mercury, Minerva, Neptune, Pluto, The Sisters, Trivia, Venus, Vulcan, Faithless

STARTING STATS

ACUTUS +1, FORTIS 0, IMPETUS -1, LEPOS 0, FATUM +1

Add 1 to a single stat.

MOVES

You know all the basic moves. Choose two magus moves plus one cult move from your chosen cult.

MAGUS MOVES

- o **Bind Daemon:** when you have the materials, conduct the proper rituals, and attempt to bind a daemon you can see to your will, roll +FATUM. On a 10+, they do one thing of your bidding within their ability. On a 7-9, they do the thing, but there is a complication. The arbiter will tell you what. On a miss, the daemon attacks you.
- o **Control Animal:** when you attempt to control a nearby animal with your will, roll +FATUM. On a 10+, they do one thing of your bidding within their ability. On a 7-9, they do the thing, but there a complication. The arbiter will tell you what. On a miss, the animal attacks you.
- o **Create Water:** when you create water from nothing, say how much water you create and take 1-harm ap for each congius (3.27 liters or 0.864 gallons) created.
- o **Enhanced Abilities:** when you concentrate for a few minutes to enhance your abilities, take 1-harm ap and choose one stat. Take +1 ongoing to the chosen stat until then end of the battle/scene.
- o **Enhanced Senses:** when you concentrate for a few minutes to enhance your senses, take 1-harm ap. You can see and hear twice as far as normal, and can see in total darkness.

Your enhanced senses last until the end of the battle/scene.

- o **Gaze of Medusa:** when you **exchange blows** using this move (2-harm ap hand near), roll +FATUM instead of +IMPETUS.
- o **Open Portal:** when you have time, and conduct the proper ritual, you may open a portal to either Hel or the Outer Realms. Say which.
- o **Philosopher's Stone:** when you place a material on the stone and have time to conduct the proper ritual, you may transform that material into half as much of another material. Say what the new material is.
- o **Snake Charmer:** when you call to nearby snakes, roll +FATUM. On a 10+, they come to you and do one thing of your bidding. On a 7-9, they come to you.
- o **Universal Panacea:** when you have the necessary materials and 24 hours of uninterrupted preparation time, you may create 1-stock of universal panacea. When someone uses the universal panacea, reduce stock by 1 and they may remove all harm taken and one debility.
- o **Unnatural Charm:** when you **debate a point**, roll +FATUM instead of +LEPOS.

STARTING GEAR

You get:

- A codex of arcanum (if you use such a thing)
- A dagger (1-harm hand near)
- Camping and mess gear
- 3-barter in Denarii and goods

BONDS

Everyone introduces their characters. Take your turn. List the other character's names. Go around again for Bonds. On your turn, ask at least 1:

- *Which of you holds arcane secrets I seek?*
For that character, write Bond +2
- *Which of you once saved my life?*
For that character, write Bond +2
- *Which of you thinks I am an abomination to the gods?*
For that character, write Bond -2

For everyone else, write Bond -1. Your studies don't allow much time to get to know people.

On the others' turns, answer their questions as you like.

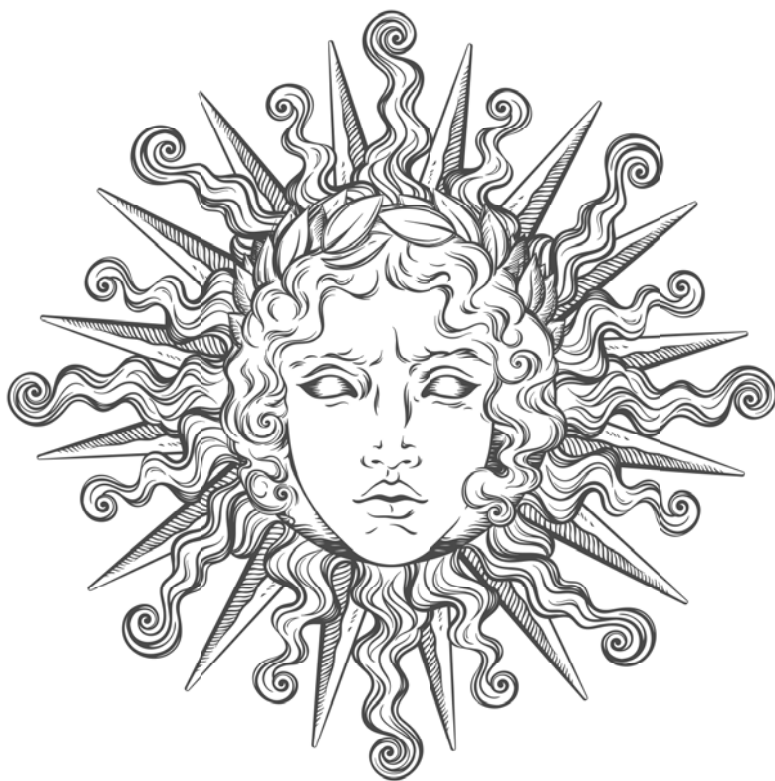
IMPROVEMENTS

Experience O O O O O O O >>> Erase experience and choose one:

- o +1 ACUTUS (max +3)
- o +1 FORTIS (max +3)
- o +1 IMPETUS (max +3)
- o +1 LEPOS (max +3)
- o +1 FATUM (max +3)
- o Learn a new magus move
- o Learn a new magus move
- o Learn a new magus move
- o Get a move from another playbook
- o Get a move from another playbook
- o Get a new cult move
- o Remove a debility

You may choose from the following after you have taken at least 5 from above:

- o Get +1 to any stat (max +3)
- o Learn a new magus move
- o Learn a new magus move
- o Learn a new magus move
- o Retire your character to safety and create a new character
- o Create a second character to play
- o Change playbook
- o Change cult
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them





CREATING A MEDICUS

You are a medic, physician, or surgeon.

Choose a name, description, temperament, cult, stats, moves, and bonds.

DESCRIPTION

Choose one from each line, or make up your own.

- Ambiguous, Concealed, Female, Male
- Haggard face, Kind face, Lively face, Pretty face
- Caring eyes, Hard eyes, Tired eyes, Welcoming eyes
- Big body, Lean body, Rangy body, Stout body

TEMPERAMENT

Choose one:

Choleric, Melancholic, Phlegmatic, Sanguine.

CULT

Choose one cult in which you are initiated:

Diana, Mars, Mercury, Minerva, Neptune, Pluto, The Sisters, Trivia, Venus, Vulcan, Faithless

STARTING STATS

ACUTUS +1, FORTIS 0, IMPETUS -1, LEPOS +1, FATUM 0

Add 1 to a single stat.

MOVES

You know all the basic moves. Choose two medicus moves plus one cult move from your chosen cult.

MEDICUS MOVES

- o **Herbalist:** when you have time and materials to prepare a potion or salve, gain 1-stock and choose a stat. A character can use the potion or salve to gain +1 ongoing to the chosen stat until the end of the battle/scene.
- o **Master of Anatomy:** when you **exchange blows**, roll +ACUTUS instead of +IMPETUS.
- o **Master of Poisons:** when you have time and materials to prepare a poison, gain 1-stock. When the stock is used, say how and roll +ACUTUS. On a 10+, the target takes 3 harm ap and is incapacitated. On a 7-9, the target takes 2 harm ap. On a miss, the poison has no effect.
- o **Patch Them Up:** when you **treat harm**, treat any miss as a partial hit.
- o **Surgeon:** when you have time and the proper tools and attempt to remove another character's debility, spend 2-stock from a medicinal kit and roll +ACUTUS. On a 10+, they erase the debility. On a 7-9, they erase the debility but take 2-harm ap. On a miss, they suffer an additional debility.

STARTING GEAR

You get:

- Medicinal kit (6-stock)
- A dagger (1-harm hand near)
- Camping and mess gear
- 3-barter in Denarii and goods

BONDS

Everyone introduces their characters. Take your turn. List the other character's names. Go around again for Bonds. On your turn, ask at least 1:

- *Which of you did I bring back from the brink of death?*
For that character, write Bond +3
- *Which of you do I think is doomed despite my best efforts?*
For that character, write Bond -2
- *Which of you helped me with my last surgery?*
For that character, write Bond +2

For everyone else, write Bond +1. You pay attention to people's welfare.

On the others' turns, answer their questions as you like.

IMPROVEMENTS

Experience O O O O O O >>> Erase experience and choose one:

- ☐ +1 ACUTUS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 FORTIS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 IMPETUS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 LEPOS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 FATUM (max +3)
- ☐ Get a new medicus move
- ☐ Get a new medicus move
- ☐ Get a move from another playbook
- ☐ Get a move from another playbook
- ☐ Get a new cult move
- ☐ Remove a debility

You may choose from the following after you have taken at least 5 from above:

- o Get +1 to any stat (max +3)
- o Retire your character to safety and create a new character
- o Create a second character to play
- o Change playbook
- o Change cult
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them



CREATING A PRAEDO

You are a bandit, thief, or outlaw.

Choose a name, description, temperament, cult, stats, moves, and bonds.

DESCRIPTION

Choose one from each line, or make up your own.

- Ambiguous, Concealed, Female, Male
- Attractive face, Bony face, Grimy face, Sharp face
- Appraising eyes, Darting eyes, Guilty eyes, Squinty eyes
- Athletic body, Lanky body, Lithe body, Obese body

TEMPERAMENT

Choose one:

Choleric, Melancholic, Phlegmatic, Sanguine.

CULT

Choose one cult in which you are initiated:

Diana, Mars, Mercury, Minerva, Neptune, Pluto, The Sisters, Trivia, Venus, Vulcan, Faithless

STARTING STATS

ACUTUS +1, FORTIS -1, IMPETUS 0, LEPOS 0, FATUM +1

Add 1 to a single stat.

MOVES

You know all the basic moves. Choose two praedo moves plus one cult move from your chosen cult.

PRAEDO MOVES

- o **Kleptomaniac:** when you search your gear for something small you previously stole (the arbiter will say if it is too big), roll +FATUM. On a 10+, you find what you need. On a 7-9, you find what you need or something close, but it belongs to someone nearby.
- o **Into the Shadows:** when you want to disappear, mix with a crowd, or pose as another (in disguise), roll +ACUTUS. On a 10+, pick 2. On a 7-9, pick 1.
 - You remain undetected so long as you do nothing to warrant notice.
 - You gain access to places or resources undetected.
 - You leave no visible traces behind you.
- o **Opportunist:** when you **interfere** with someone, you may roll +ACUTUS instead of +Bond.
- o **Pickpocket:** when you attempt to lift a small item or some coin from another, roll +ACUTUS. On a 10+, you take possession of what you want. On a 7-9, you take possession of what you want, but the former owner notices.
- o **Swift Getaway:** name your escape route, roll +ACUTUS. On a 10+, you're gone. On a 7-9, you can go or stay, but if you

go you either leave something behind or take something with you (the arbiter will say what).

STARTING GEAR

You get:

- A dagger (1-harm hand near)
- A sling (1-harm far)
- Camping and mess gear
- 3-barter in Denarii and goods

BONDS

Everyone introduces their characters. Take your turn. List the other character's names. Go around again for Bonds. On your turn, ask at least 1:

- *Which of you used to be a criminal?*
For that character, write Bond +3
- *Which of you has the nicest gear?*
For that character, write Bond +2
- *Which of you killed someone I used to run with?*
For that character, write Bond -2

For everyone else, write Bond +1. You keep your eyes open for opportunity.

On the others' turns, answer their questions as you like.

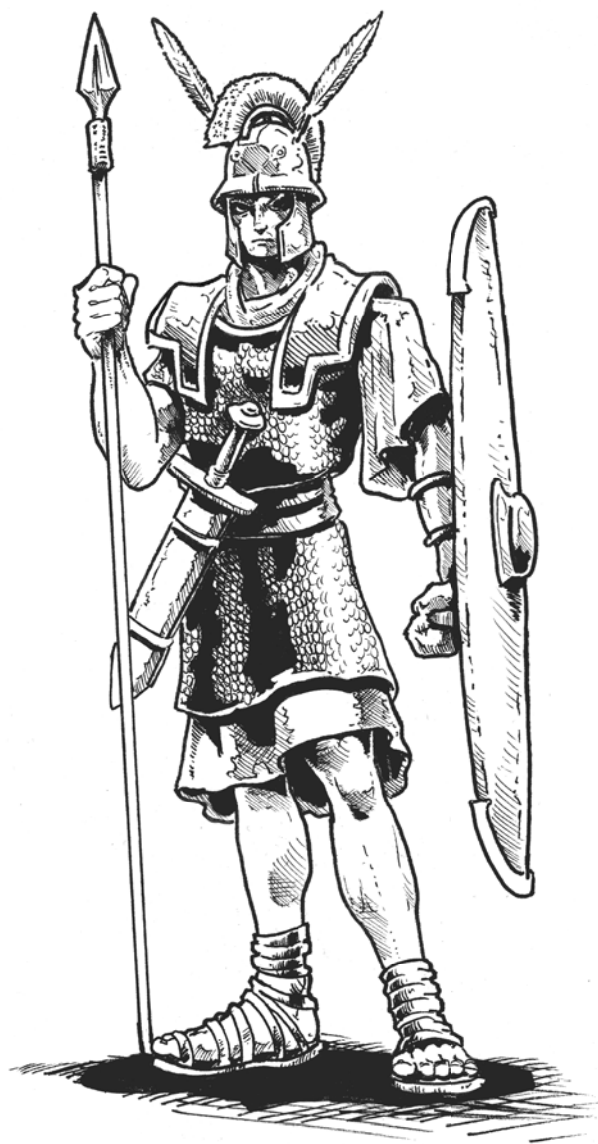
IMPROVEMENTS

Experience O O O O O O >>> Erase experience and choose one:

- ☐ +1 ACUTUS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 FORTIS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 IMPETUS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 LEPOS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 FATUM (max +3)
- ☐ Get a new praedo move
- ☐ Get a new praedo move
- ☐ Get a move from another playbook
- ☐ Get a move from another playbook
- ☐ Get a new cult move
- ☐ Remove a debility

You may choose from the following after you have taken at least 5 from above:

- o Get +1 to any stat (max +3)
- o Retire your character to safety and create a new character
- o Create a second character to play
- o Change playbook
- o Change cult
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them



CREATING A TRIARIUS

You are a veteran soldier of many campaigns, a warrior of the third rank in the Ruman legions.

Choose a name, description, temperament, cult, stats, moves, and bonds.

DESCRIPTION

Choose one from each line, or make up your own.

- Ambiguous, Concealed, Female, Male
- Angry face, Passive face, Stern face, Weathered face
- Jaded eyes, Judging eyes, Merciless eyes, Missing eye
- Angular body, Lean body, Scarred body, Tired body

TEMPERAMENT

Choose one:

Choleric, Melancholic, Phlegmatic, Sanguine.

CULT

Choose one cult in which you are initiated:

Diana, Mars, Mercury, Minerva, Neptune, Pluto, The Sisters, Trivia, Venus, Vulcan, Faithless

STARTING STATS

ACUTUS +1, FORTIS +1, IMPETUS 0, LEPOS -1, FATUM 0

Add 1 to a single stat.

MOVES

You know all the basic moves. Choose two triarius moves plus one cult move from your chosen cult.

TRIARIUS MOVES

- o **Battle Tactics:** when you **aid** an ally in battle, don't roll +Bond. You help them as though you rolled 10+.
- o **Fighting Retreat:** during a battle, name your escape route, roll +FORTIS. On a 10+, you're gone. On a 7-9, you can go or stay, but if you go you either leave something behind or take something with you (the arbiter will say what).
- o **I've Seen It All:** when you **overcome adversity**, take +1 to the roll.
- o **Prepared for the Inevitable:** you have a well-stocked medicinal kit (2-stock) and know how to use it.
- o **Weaponmaster:** when exchanging blows with a gladius or spear, inflict +1 harm.

STARTING GEAR

You get:

- A breastplate (1-armor)
- A large shield (1-armor stacks)
- A gladius (2-harm hand)
- A spear (2-harm close near)
- Camping and mess gear
- 3-barter in Denarii and goods

BONDS

Everyone introduces their characters. Take your turn. List the other character's names. Go around again for Bonds. On your turn, ask at least 1:

- *Which of you have I fought alongside the longest?*
For that character, write Bond +3
- *Which of you ran during our last battle together?*
For that character, write Bond -2
- *Which of you stole from me?*
For that character, write Bond -2

For everyone else, write Bond -1. You don't see the point in developing connections with people who will soon be dead.

On the others' turns, answer their questions as you like.

IMPROVEMENTS

Experience O O O O O O >>> Erase experience and choose one:

- ☐ +1 ACUTUS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 FORTIS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 IMPETUS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 LEPOS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 FATUM (max +3)
- ☐ Get a new triarius move
- ☐ Get a new triarius move
- ☐ Get a move from another playbook
- ☐ Get a move from another playbook
- ☐ Get a new cult move
- ☐ Remove a debility

You may choose from the following after you have taken at least 5 from above:

- o Get +1 to any stat (max +3)
- o Retire your character to safety and create a new character
- o Create a second character to play
- o Change playbook
- o Change cult
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them



CREATING A VELES

You are a glory-seeking skirmisher fighting in front of the Ruman legion's ranks.

Choose a name, description, temperament, cult, stats, moves, and bonds.

DESCRIPTION

Choose one from each line, or make up your own.

- Ambiguous, Concealed, Female, Male
- Crooked face, Grizzled face, Narrow face, Striking face
- Arresting eyes, Hard eyes, Mad eyes, Shifting eyes
- Athletic body, Compact body, Slim body, Sturdy body

TEMPERAMENT

Choose one:

Choleric, Melancholic, Phlegmatic, Sanguine.

CULT

Choose one cult in which you are initiated:

Diana, Mars, Mercury, Minerva, Neptune, Pluto, The Sisters, Trivia, Venus, Vulcan, Faithless

STARTING STATS

ACUTUS 0, FORTIS +1, IMPETUS +1, LEPOS -1, FATUM 0

Add 1 to a single stat.

MOVES

You know all the basic moves. Choose two veles moves plus one cult move from your chosen cult.

VELES MOVES

- o **Brutal Charge:** when you smash your way through scenery to get to or away from something, roll +IMPETUS. On a 10+, the scenery or crowd doesn't impede you and you get what you want. On a 7-9, the scenery or crowd doesn't impede you and you get what you want, but you take 1-harm ap, leave something behind, or are disoriented (you choose). On a miss, you take 1-harm ap, leave something behind, or are disoriented (the arbiter will choose).
- o **For Glory!** in battle when you **exchange blows** before anyone else, take +1 to the roll and +1 forward.
- o **Keep Moving:** the first time you suffer harm during a battle, take -2 harm.
- o **Get Their Attention:** when you **debate a point**, roll +IMPE-TUS instead of +LEPOS.
- o **Merciless:** when you inflict harm, inflict +1 harm.

STARTING GEAR

You get:

- A wolf pelt cloak
- A small shield (1-armor stacks)
- A gladius (2-harm hand)
- One pilum (2-harm near)
- Camping and mess gear
- 1-barter in Denarii and goods

BONDS

Everyone introduces their characters. Take your turn. List the other character's names. Go around again for Bonds. On your turn, ask at least 1:

- *Which of you did I see exude great bravery?*
For that character, write Bond +3
- *Which of you do I think is a coward?*
For that character, write Bond -2

For everyone else, write Bond -1. Most people are not worthy of fighting for the glory of the Empire.

On the others' turns, answer their questions as you like.

IMPROVEMENTS

Experience O O O O O O >>> Erase experience and choose one:

- ☐ +1 ACUTUS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 FORTIS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 IMPETUS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 LEPOS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 FATUM (max +3)
- ☐ Get a new veles move
- ☐ Get a new veles move
- ☐ Get a move from another playbook
- ☐ Get a move from another playbook
- ☐ Get a new cult move
- ☐ Remove a debility

You may choose from the following after you have taken at least 5 from above:

- o Get +1 to any stat (max +3)
- o Retire your character to safety and create a new character
- o Create a second character to play
- o Change playbook
- o Change cult
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them



CREATING A VENATOR

You are a hunter and scout, either Ruman or foreign born, armed with sling or bow, and often employed as an auxiliary to the Ruman legions.

Choose a name, description, temperament, cult, stats, moves, and bonds.

DESCRIPTION

Choose one from each line, or make up your own.

- Ambiguous, Concealed, Female, Male
- Blunt face, Foreign face, Gaunt face, Pretty face
- Calculating eyes, Energetic eyes, Friendly eyes, Narrow eyes
- Hardy body, Rangy body, Slim body, Toned body

TEMPERAMENT

Choose one:

Choleric, Melancholic, Phlegmatic, Sanguine.

CULT

Choose one cult in which you are initiated:

Diana, Mars, Mercury, Minerva, Neptune, Pluto, The Sisters, Trivia, Venus, Vulcan, Faithless

STARTING STATS

ACUTUS +1, FORTIS +1, IMPETUS 0, LEPOS -1, FATUM 0

Add 1 to a single stat.

MOVES

You know all the basic moves. Choose two venator moves plus one cult move from your chosen cult.

VENATOR MOVES

- o **Marksman:** when you **exchange blows** with a ranged weapon, roll +ACUTUS instead of +IMPETUS.
- o **Master Tracker:** when you **observe carefully**, you may ask 1 additional question on a hit or partial hit.
- o **Master Woodsman:** when you are in the wilderness, you can always find food and clean water for you and your cohort.
- o **Son of Hades:** you are the master of a twin-headed Cerrabi hound. When you command your beast to help you exchange blows (2-harm near), take +1 on the roll. When you command your beast to help you observe carefully, take +1 to the roll.
- o **Stalker:** when you hide, sneak, or do something silent in the wilderness, roll +ACUTUS. On a 10+, pick 2. On a 7-9, pick 1.
 - You remain undetected so long as you do nothing to warrant notice.
 - You gain access to places or resources undetected.
 - You leave no visible traces behind you.

STARTING GEAR

You get:

- A dagger (1-harm hand near)
- A sling (2-harm far) or a bow (2-harm far)
- A small shield (1-armor +1armor)
- Camping and mess gear
- 2-barter in Denarii and goods

BONDS

Everyone introduces their characters. Take your turn. List the other character's names. Go around again for Bonds. On your turn, ask at least 1:

- *Which of you is the best hunter next to me?*
For that character, write Bond +2
- *Which of you constantly scares off my prey?*
For that character, write Bond -2

For everyone else, write Bond -1. You keep to yourself.

On the others' turns, answer their questions as you like.

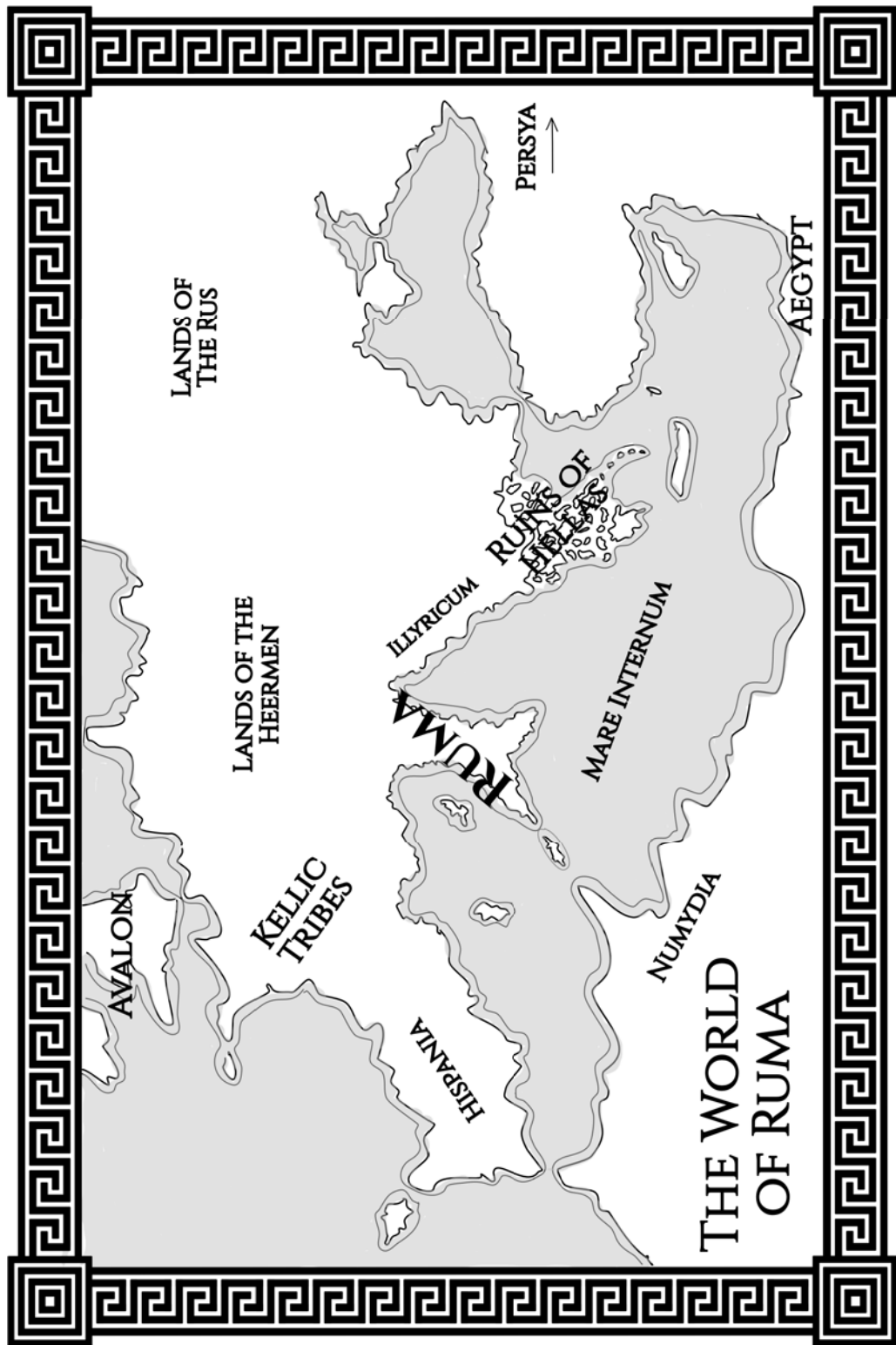
IMPROVEMENTS

Experience O O O O O O >>> Erase experience and choose one:

- ☐ +1 ACUTUS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 FORTIS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 IMPETUS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 LEPOS (max +3)
- ☐ +1 FATUM (max +3)
- ☐ Get a new venator move
- ☐ Get a new venator move
- ☐ Get a move from another playbook
- ☐ Get a move from another playbook
- ☐ Get a new cult move
- ☐ Remove a debility

You may choose from the following after you have taken at least 5 from above:

- o Get +1 to any stat (max +3)
- o Retire your character to safety and create a new character
- o Create a second character to play
- o Change playbook
- o Change cult
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them



III MUNDUS

This chapter provides a starting point for the world in which the characters live, but it is not set in stone. You and your friends will make the world of Ruma your own. Keep what you like, change what you don't.

HISTORY

- 10000 Saturn and the other Titans are defeated by Iuppiter and his offspring.
- 8000 Iuppiter puts down an uprising by the Giants and exiles them to Tartarus.
- 427 The Fall of Troy. Aeneas escapes the city prior to its collapse.
- 398 Aeneas founds the city of Alba Longa on the Ruman peninsula.
- 0 The City of Ruma is founded by Rumulus after he slays his brother Remus in a dispute over the city's location.
- 3 Rumulus ascends to divinity to become the god Quirinus. Numa Pompilius is crowned King of Ruma.
- 245 Founding of the Ruman Republic and end of the Ruman Kingdom.

- 274 Battle of Thermopylae. A small force of Hellenic warriors fend off the Persyan army of Xerxes for three days, until they are betrayed and slaughtered.
- 364 The city of Ruma is sacked by Kellic warbands.
- 431 King Alexandros of Hellas dies in Babylon. His empire is thrown into civil war loosening Hellenic influence on the Ruman Republic.
- 490 The Punic Wars begin. Ruma fights against their greatest rival, Karthage.
- 608 Karthage is destroyed. End of the Punic Wars.
- 657 The Sundering of Hellas. To prevent a Persyan invasion, Hellene Magi open portals to Hel and the Outer Realms.
- 658 The gods move Mount Olympos from the ruins of Hellas to the hills outside the City of Ruma.
- 702 Iulius Caesar returns to Ruma from campaigns in Kell to declare himself Emperor. The Senate conspires to build their own army to maintain power.
- 705 Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus, backed by the Senate, and his army are defeated by Iulius Caesar ending the civil war and solidifying Caesar's title of Emperor.

707 The Battle of Amunia. Aegyptian chronomancers and constructs stem the tide in a deadly battle with the 7th Ruman Legion, resulting in heavy losses on both sides and leading to a stalemate in the Empire's conquest of Aegypt.

708 The present day

THE RUMAN EMPIRE

Since the Sundering of Hellas, Ruma (the name of city, province, and Empire) has grown to become the new cradle of civilization in the known world.

LANDS OF THE EMPIRE

RUMA

Ruma is a hilly and rocky peninsula which divides the waters of the Mare Internum into east and west. The countryside is dotted with rustic farms and villas, rolling pastures, and deep woodlands. But the cities drive the Empire, with the city of Ruma at its center. They are the heart of politics, commerce, and military might. An extensive road network channels resources, knowledge, and troops from the cities throughout the Empire.

The City of Ruma is a wondrous place of towering temples, bustling commerce, and fabulous entertainment, all in the shadow of Mount Olympos, home of the gods. The city is home to the Senate and the Emperor's palace, as well as boasting the Empire's largest arena, best colleges, and finest theaters. But it is also the home of political machinations, secret societies, and illegal trade.

HISPANIA

Home to a hardy and brave, yet recently conquered people, the lands of Hispania lie to the west of the Ruman peninsula. The terrain is similar to that of Ruma proper. To the north, the Kell are an ever-present threat to the citizens of Hispania as their forests spread and encroach upon Hispanian fields and pastures. The land is known for its rich mines and fertile fields, but recent drops in production have the Senate concerned.

ILLYRICUM

The lands between Ruma and Hellas form the province of Illyricum. A deeply tribal land populated by a variety of ethnicities, Illyricum has served as a buffer between the two great powers for centuries. Until the Sundering, Hellene influence on the lands was immense due to its proximity, but since that fateful day the lands have fallen into disarray. The Emperor has claimed them, and their people, as his own. Not everyone is keen to this notion however.

NUMYDIA

Stretching across the southern coast of the Mare Internum lie several small city-states, the largest of which is Numydia. The fertile lands are known for their mercenaries and excellent cavalry. Following the destruction of Karthage in 608, the capital city of Numydia was rebuilt and the area became a Ruman province.

GOVERNMENT

The Emperor is the leader of the Ruman state, both as Princeps (First Citizen) and Imperator (supreme military commander). However, upon seizing power, Iulius Caesar did not abolish the Senate. He realized the institution was necessary to administer the affairs of the Empire. The 600 men and women who are members

of the Senate are drawn from provinces across the Empire, each of whom has risen through the ranks of the bureaucracy and/or military to attain the status of Senator.

WAR

Ruman might begins with its legions of infantry distributed via the well-maintained network of roads throughout the Empire. No fighting force in the known world is as well-trained as the Ruman legions, nor are any as well supplied. Each legion is commanded by a Legatus, who is considered a member of the Senate. Officers of Equestrian rank implement their orders to the troops.

Military tactics are an advancement of the Hellene phalanx, or line of spears, with multiple ranks of troops supporting those in front of them. However, in the Ruman legions the ranks are reflective of the wealth and experience of the troops. The first rank consists of the hastati, the youngest, least experienced, and poorest troops. Often armed only with a helm, breastplate, shield, and gladius, they provide the first line of defense when meeting an enemy. The second rank, the principes, are usually slightly older having been in several battles and earned a decent share of loot from campaigns. They support the hastati with spears. The third rank are the wealthiest and most experienced troops, the triarii. They also support with spears, but are rarely thrown into a fight except in the most dire circumstances.

DAILY LIFE

Citizens of the Empire are those of Senator, Equestrian, and Plebian rank (in order of wealth/power), while non-citizens, who hold far fewer rights, consist of Freedmen, Foreigners, and Slaves. The life of a Ruman citizen varies based on their caste, from the

lofty Senators to the lowly Plebians, but all have several things in common: fashion, family rites, and entertainment.

Rumans revere personal hygiene. Public and private baths, made possible by ingenious aqueducts which bring clean water to the cities, are numerous. It is considered barbaric to not bathe daily or as often as possible, even on the Empire's frontier. Men's hair is often close cropped, while women's hairstyles vary widely from long and free to pinned curls as fashion trends change. Men and women both wear sandals and tunics, although in formal settings Ruman citizens will don a toga or stola (a long dress).

The staples of the Ruman diet are wheat, olives, and vegetables, with wine being the beverage of choice. Meat from small game, livestock, and the ample Mare Internum augment the meals of those wealthy enough to afford such luxuries.

Ruman society is monogamous, with marriages often arranged for financial or political gain rather than love. Extramarital affairs are common and somewhat expected and accepted. Marriage ceremonies tend to have subtle influences of the cults in which the bride and groom are initiated, but all have some reference to Iuno.

Death is inevitable for the people of the Empire and their insistence on cleanliness has led to particular rites when a person dies. Corpses are soon rampant with pestilence so bodies are often cremated after a short mourning period. Ashes of the dead are sometime kept in urns and placed in prominent locations where family members can pray to the deceased for assistance with the gods. Each cult has their own rites specific to the passage of a person from the living to the dead, but all of them pay some service to Pluto.

ENTERTAINMENT

There are four primary forms of entertainment in the Empire: chariot racing, festivals, gladiatorial combat, and theater.

Chariot races are found throughout the Empire, in massive venues like the Circus Maximus in Ruma to tracks laid out in open fields in the countryside. Because of the costs involved with maintaining horses and equipment, racers are either the wealthy seeking more fame and fortune, or are sponsored by the rich for the same end. Crowds flock to the races and gambling is common.

Festivals abound on the calendar with most being tied to a religious cult or ancient tradition in some way. Celebrations of Ruma's founding, the four seasons, and military victories are the most prominent festivals. Each cult also has their own calendar of festivals venerating their chosen god, and families will often hold small celebrations to honor important ancestors in their lineage.

The ludus is a school of gladiatorial combat in which the master trains men and women to fight in the arenas and hires them out to earn fortune and fame. Some gladiators are slaves, some foreigners, or both. Gladiators are often classed into several different types, such as the secutor (a lightly-armored fighter with gladius and shield), the thraex (also lightly-armored with a small shield and dagger), and the retiarius (wields a trident and net). Typically, a gladiator will specialize in one of the styles and duels often match differing types against each other for greater spectacle. Some events will pit untrained slaves against a gladiator, or even beasts. Winning in the arena can also earn a gladiator fortune and fame, and possibly freedom. Losing usually means death.

The Hellene traditions of theater persist in the Empire, from impromptu plays setup on street corners and open fields, to the grand displays put on by ornate playhouses in the cities. Most plays focus on either comedy or tragedy and are often tales of the interaction between heroes and the gods.

RELIGION

Rumans are a spiritual people who worship a pantheon of gods. Some still hold to older religious beliefs, including ancestor worship and honoring the spirits which inhabit nearly everything. Cults devoted to each god are prominent throughout the empire and most citizens are a member of such a cult. Divination, prayer and sacrifice are common rites in the cults, as each person seeks the blessing of their chosen god.



The pantheon of Ruman gods is mostly the same as those worshipped by the Hellenes, although there are a few who remain from the time before Hellenic influence reigned in Ruma. The most prominent gods and goddesses are:

IUPPITER (ZEUS)

Iuppiter is the father of the gods.

NEPTUNE (POSEIDON)

Neptune is the brother of Iuppiter and master of water and the seas.

IUNO (HERA)

Iuno is the wife of Iuppiter and goddess of fertility and motherhood.

MARS (ARES)

God of violence and murder. Son of Iuppiter and Iuno.

VENUS (APHRODITE)

Goddess of love and beauty.

MINERVA (ATHENA)

Goddess of war and tactics. Also associated with wisdom and crafts.

IANUS

God of beginnings, endings, doorways, transitions, and keys. The Gatekeeper.

VESTA (HESTIA)

Goddess of home and hearth.

VULCAN (HEPHAESTUS)

God of fire and forge.

DIANA (ARTEMIS)

Goddess of wilderness and the hunt.

PLUTO (HADES)

God of death and the underworld.

MERCURY (HERMES)

God of travel and messengers. Also venerated by thieves.

CERES (DEMETER)

Goddess of agriculture and motherly relationships.

TRIVIA (HECATE)

Goddess of magic and witchcraft.

THE SISTERS

The twin sisters, Chance and Fate, are said to be the daughters of Iuppiter and a hag who transformed herself into a beautiful maiden and duped Iuppiter into sleeping with her. When he discovered the hag's treachery, he cast her and the two children from Olympos. The pair now haunt the world and control the winds of fate.

THE FAITHLESS

There are some within the empire who do not adhere to the superstitions and worship of the Ruman pantheon. Instead, they idolize the powers of logic and reason.

MEDICINE

Ruman medicine has developed from Hellene and Persyan traditions and focuses on the balance of the four humors in the

body: blood, black bile, yellow bile, and phlegm. Imbalance of the humors leads to illness and disease. Most physicians are self-taught, and of varying quality, but a few institutions exist which attempt to raise the level of medical knowledge within the Empire, albeit mostly for the benefit of those who can afford it.

Wounds are typically treated with wine, vinegar, and poultices before being wrapped for protection. Cauterization and amputation are common on the battlefield. Surgery exists, but mortality rates are high. Some physicians combine their medical knowledge with arcanum to enhance the healing process.

ARCANUM & THE MAGI

Although not ubiquitous, magic and the supernatural are found across the Empire in many forms. Scholars generally refer to unnatural manifestations and spells as arcanum, and to practitioners of such arts as magi (a term derived from Persya). Although there are those who reserve that title only for the learned, and deem those unworthy as witches, warlocks, and charlatans.

Much of Ruman magic is derived from Hellene and Persyan traditions and focuses on three main areas: alchemy, divination, and thaumaturgy. Alchemy consists of the science of transmuting material from one type to another, as well as practices such as brewing potions. Divination is the seeking and interpretation of the will of the gods, especially The Sisters. Thaumaturgy is the ability to manifest changes in the self or nature through channeling divine power.

NOTABLE PEOPLE

ALICIA OF PORTUM

Without fail, visitors to the remote town of Portum in Illyricum are met on the road outside of town by an elderly woman named Alicia. She addresses such travelers by name and seems to know why they have come to the small town. Word has spread about the her visionary abilities and some now venture to the town to seek her wisdom and insight. A few have tried to take advantage of the situation by preying upon travelers, only to find themselves hung from trees as examples to other possible bandits. No one knows who has stopped them, but most believe it to be Alicia herself.

DECURIO ANYSUS RHODANUS

Anysus Rhodanus is a swarthy cavalry officer of Carthaginian lineage serving under the command of Legatus Agorix on the Kellic front. He is often leading patrols to secure the legion's flank or spearheading a cavalry charge into hordes of barbarians. His actions and accomplishments in the field have spawned rumors of arcane sorcery regarding his *turmae* (squad) as their seamless coordination and speed of assault cannot be matched by any other unit under Agorix's command. Others suggest his loyalty to an unsanctioned deity (the Kellic goddess Epona) to be the cause of such centric blessings. Many balk at such stories, but none can deny his propensity to turn stymied advances into victories.

THE ARCE

The current champion of the Ruman Colosseum hails from the Far East. A compact dark-skinned man known only as The Arce (Castle) due to his sturdy battle stance and indomitable fortitude. The Arce revels in spilling the blood of his opponents with his many knives and languishes in the adoration of the crowd. There are some, however, who whisper his accolades may not be earned except by treachery and his reign as champion must end.

LEGATUS LUCIUS SABELLIUS AGORIX

Once a young senator with little influence hailing from a remote province, Lucius was accused of a small crime by a fellow senator and sentenced to life in the legions as punishment. Now a middle-aged man, he has worked his way up through the ranks to earn the title of Legatus of the 3rd Legion. Lucius has proven to be a far more capable general than he was a senator, having won several major battles against the Kellic tribes. Some say he now wields even more power in his current position than he did as a senator, and there are those who await his return to Ruma to enact vengeance on those who may have wronged him.

LEGATUS REGULUS DECIMUS STATIUS

Commander of the 1st Hellene Border Legion on the walls between Illyricum and the wastes of Hellas, Legatus Stadius is a harsh disciplinarian and proponent of continuous training, making his legion into one of Ruma's finest. He has pressed the Senate to push the Empire's boundaries beyond the wall and into the lands beyond Hellas, but so far, they have not agreed. Some say Legatus Stadius is reckless to suggest such action, other say it is the influence of his Aegyptian wife who is rumored to be a priestess of Isis.

LEGATUS VITAS VINCENTAS VARNAS

A tall and proud man, Legatus Varnas leads the 7th Legion on the frontiers of the Empire and the Eternal Kingdom of Aegypt. He is regarded as brilliant by his colleagues, and revered by his men, especially following the recent Battle of Amunia along the Aegyptian coast. Losses on both sides were immense, but Varnas' ability to conduct an orderly withdrawal when Aegyptian constructs took the field saved countless lives in his legion.

PUBLIUS JUSTUS FERRARO

Once part of the patrician class, Justus turned his back on his senatorial brethren and embraced the masses. He is as an eccentric, mercurial and arrogant character. Whether he is a true reformer or just out for power, Justus became a major disruptive force in Ruman politics. He passed numerous laws in the tradition of the *populares* known as the *Leges Justus*. A devotee of Mercury, Justus knows the rumors, truths, half-truths, and lies and can twist any into another with his network of spies and messengers. He is a favorite of the plebs and has been their Tribune for as long as people can remember. Through both the veto and intimidation of the gangs of enforcers at his beck and call, many seek his endorsement for their political goals. In his early 60's, time has quelled this firebrand and softened his rhetoric. Most of his old enemies and allies are now dead and the new generation is starting to not abide old Justus' views.

VIBIA QUINCTIA SURA

Quiet of demeanor and silent in action, Vibia Quinctia Sura is a far-ranging venator with the 3rd Legion. She is a favorite tool of Legatus Agorix for revealing Kellic ambushes and traps, as well as locating legionaries lost in the dark forests. In camp, she is a

rebellious and ornery figure, rarely doffing her hunting leathers and never without her trusty bow. Vibia often gambles with the men and flirts with the officers. Or vice versa. She is always looking for a reason to restock her quiver and satchel, and head to the woods where she can be herself and unconcerned with hiding her veneration of Pluto. She believes the more souls delivered to the God of Death, the better her tally will be in the afterlife. So far, no one has managed to sway her from this thought, and that is just as well. For who knows what sort of mischief an unfettered Vibia could get into.

OTHER LANDS AND PEOPLE

ATLANTIS

Long before Hellas was the cradle of civilization, there was Atlantis, an island nation far to the West of Ruma in the Great Sea. Little is known of Atlantis as the island disappeared several centuries ago and all records were lost in the devastation of Hellas. Rumors of advanced technology and magic are abundant, as are prophecies that the Atlanteans will someday return.

HELLAS

Hellas was once the cradle of civilization and home of the gods at Mount Olympos. In an attempt to halt a Persyan invasion, Hellene magi opened portals to Hel and the Outer Realms releasing hordes of abominations and monstrosities into the world. The Persyans were halted by these horrendous new foes, but not without great cost. Hellas is now a desolate wasteland torn by the remnants of wild magic and roving monsters.

Few people remain in the ruins and even fewer venture into the devastated lands. The 1st Hellene Border Legion now stands watch over the fortifications bordering Hellas and Illyricum holding the monsters at bay. A few brave, or perhaps foolhardy, cohorts enter the devastation of Hellas in search of lost artifacts or knowledge.

CRETE

The island of Crete lies off the southern coast of Hellas. Originally home to many people, it is now overrun with Minotaurs.

NOTABLE PEOPLE

CROTALUS

Crotalus is the offspring of Hades and a mortal Hellene woman whose family prepared bodies for burial. Persephone, Hades' abducted wife, discovered the pregnancy and sent a venomous snake to slay Crotalus before he was born. Despite the attack, Crotalus survived and grew to be a great soldier, rising to the rank of general. Some claim he had venom in his blood, for he could command serpents to his bidding and unnatural inflict fear in his enemies. He was struck down in battle at the young age of 20 in service to the great King Alexandros of Hellas. Upon learning of his son's death, Hades brought the young general to the underworld. Crotalus, now a guardian of the portals between the lands of the living and the dead, has the skeletal upper torso of a man atop a long skeletal snake-like tail. Crotalus patrols the open portals between Hellas and the underworld and few mortals are brave enough to confront him to pass from one world to the other.

KELLIC TRIBES

The Kellic tribes dominate the lands across the mountains North and Northwest of Ruma. Led by druidic priests, the savage Kellic barbarians commune with their dark forests and the horrors within, spreading like a plague across the land.

AEGYPT

The Eternal Kingdom of Aegypt lies to the southeast of the Ruman Empire, across the Mare Internum. It is a land of fertile river valleys surrounded by vast stretches of desert, populated by a pragmatic people, and ruled by a seemingly immortal king and their animal-headed gods. Through the efforts of their king and magi, Aegyptian culture is static and has a long history. Their military is formed of archers, chariots, and unarmored spearmen; and outdated tactics. However, they possess the magic to animate gigantic stone and marble constructs to fight alongside their armies. The Aegyptians have conflicted with all their neighbors at some point in their history, but they do not seem to have a desire to expand their kingdom.

NOTABLE PEOPLE

THE PHARAOH

The King of the Eternal Kingdom is a tall and appropriately regal looking man. Some say he is the son of the goddess Isis and a mortal father. Others say he is a powerful magus with magically enhanced longevity. In either case, the man has ruled over the kingdom for millennia.

THE HEERMEN

Beset by the creeping forests of Kell to the West and Normen raiders to the North, the Heermen are a dying barbaric people. Each fighting season sees their lands and numbers dwindle. Ruman cohorts and legions have begun to annex the Southern lands and tribes of the Heermen, sometimes peacefully, at other times with force.

NOTABLE PEOPLE

BEORHTRIC HAGEN

Beorhtric's childhood was cut short by a war with a neighboring tribe, who slew his father, the tribal chief, and sold Beorhtric and his brothers and sisters into slavery. He grew into a tall, strong man with long strawberry-blond hair, and eventually found his way to the fighting pits after his master set Beorhtric and several other slaves against each other in a fight for food. He killed them all in a rage and, over the next few years, went on to earn great prestige and coin fighting for his master.

Now 25, Beorhtric has escaped his lot by staging a revolt. With a small following of brave warriors who respect his humble and helpful leadership, he has returned to his homeland to claim his rightful place as chief, find his lost siblings, and live the rest of his life in relative peace.

PERSYA

Far to the East of Hellas lies the Persyan Empire, a vast nation of many peoples united under the reign of an immortal emperor some call a god. History tells of great battles between the Persyans and

Hellenes, but the monstrosities inhabiting Hellas serve as a buffer between Persya and Ruma, for now.

THE NORMEN

Far to the North lie cold and heartless lands home to a warlike maritime people. The Normen raid the lands of the Kell and Heermen to the south, sometimes reaching as far as the shores of Hispania.

NOTABLE PEOPLE

TRYGGVI ERIKSSON

A lone wanderer from the far north, who smells of brine and speaks the language of the land, roams the lands of the Heer, Kell, and the young Empire. Creatures, both natural and unnatural, seem to pay him no regard in his travels. Clad in furs and worn leathers bearing patterns of dried sea spray, Tryggvi Eriksson is often seen carving wood into strange idols for strange gods. For those who cross his path, the man is more than capable with his spear, shield, and axe, and foes find themselves disoriented by his booming voice. For those who impress Tryggvi, he shares that he was once a man of the gods until one night he dreamt of a great ash tree, stretching into the heavens with stars as its leaves. The ground rumbled beneath his feet and the tree groaned and began to shake. Stars fell to the earth and burned the land. A mighty serpent rose from the flames to lay waste to the world. Since his dream the gods have fallen silent, though Tryggvi can feel their eyes upon him. He searches for the root of the World Tree that once imprisoned the great serpent, as well as the People of the Oak who may know how to imprison the serpent once again.



IV ARBITER

There are many ways to arbitrate role playing games. This chapter provides guidelines and suggestions on how to run Ruma: Dawn of Empire for a group of players.

AGENDA

- Make the world seem real
- Make the player characters' lives interesting
- Play to find out what happens

Everything you say should be to accomplish these goals. Playing to find out what happens may be difficult as it requires you to set aside any hopes for what happens and let the players and the rules determine the story.

WHAT TO SAY

- What the principles demand
- What the rules demand
- What your preparation demands
- What honesty demands

Let your principles guide what you say in the fiction. Be fair. Offer consequences when they make sense. Don't negate a success or discount a character's moves, rolls, strengths, or resources. Let the

rules do their job. Prepare, but don't let your preparation override your agenda and principles. Be generous with the truth. The more detail you provide on the character's situation and surroundings, the better the players can decide on what they will do.

ARBITER PRINCIPLES

- Fill the world with danger
- Make the world your own
- Address the characters, not the players
- Draw maps, leave blanks
- Ask questions, use the answers
- Be a fan of the characters
- Make your moves look natural
- Never speak your move's name
- Think off-screen too
- Sometimes, share decision-making

FILL THE WORLD WITH DANGER

Outside of civilization, the world is a dark place full of dangers. Fill the world with strange creatures, unexplained magic, horrendous rituals, inviting treacheries, never-ending forests, angry and/or beguiling deities, betrayals, arduous voyages, and unexpected disasters.

MAKE THE WORLD YOUR OWN

Chapter III offers a glimpse at the world of Ruma, but it's only a possibility. Alter it. Cut it. Make it your own. Want different gods? Do it. Want the Heermen to be devil worshipping heathens with horns and tails? Do it. Want to play Ruma as historical fantasy? Do it.

ADDRESS THE CHARACTERS, NOT THE PLAYERS

Always use the character's names when speaking. "Lucius, what do you do?" instead of "What do you do John?" Keep the players in the fiction.

DRAW MAPS, LEAVE BLANKS

As the story unfolds new locations will be revealed. Add them to a map somewhere. You never know when the characters may return. When drawing maps, leave spaces for the unknown.

ASK QUESTIONS, USE THE ANSWERS

The default question is "What do you do?" But that shouldn't be your only question. Everyone is playing to find out what happens, including you. If you don't know something, ask the players. They will answer with what they envision. Use and build upon that. Refer to their answers later in play, maybe even much later.

Ask questions about the past and the future. Ask questions of characters who are ill-suited to answer. Ask questions of characters other than the one you made a move against to shift focus.

BE A FAN OF THE CHARACTERS

The characters are the protagonists of the story. Focus on them with that in mind. They are not your enemy, but you are tasked with making their lives interesting. Challenge them. Cheer for them. Be saddened when they fail. This doesn't mean you go easy on them, nor does it mean you make the hardest move possible when called for. Find the middle ground that matches your agendas.

MAKE YOUR MOVES LOOK NATURAL

When you make a move, ensure it fits with the fiction. Does the move logically flow as a consequence of the character's action? Making a move that doesn't flow will pull the players out of the fiction. Begin and end with the fiction.

NEVER SPEAK YOUR MOVE'S NAME

Don't say, "You're separated" or "I'm separating you." Instead say, "You turn and see the others have fallen behind..." Keep the players in the fiction.

THINK OFF-SCREEN TOO

When you make a move, consider what is happening outside the current situation. Are there NPCs that might become involved at some point? What is happening that the characters cannot see?

SOMETIMES, SHARE DECISION MAKING

Everyone is playing to see how the story unfolds, even you. Share decision making by asking a player to resolve a question. "Does the medicus save the centurion's life?" Giving players agency in the game beyond their characters can enliven their imagination and enhance the overall story.

ARBITER MOVES

As arbiter, you will typically be reactive in making your moves, and only when it makes sense in the fiction. Make an arbiter Move when:

- A player rolls a miss
- When the players look to you for what happens next
- When a character does something that should have immediate consequences in the fiction

The Arbiter Moves:

- Announce future conflict
- Announce off-screen conflict
- Separate them
- Capture someone
- Put someone in a spot
- Trade harm for harm (as established)
- Inflict harm (as established)
- Take away resources
- Tell them the possible consequences and ask
- Offer an opportunity, with or without a cost
- Turn their moves back on them

- Make a threat move

Arbiter moves can be hard or soft. Soft moves give the players a chance to react prior to consequences. Hard moves have immediate consequences.

Your moves should provide the characters with an opportunity to act. They should push the story forward in new ways.

If you don't have another move to make, **announce future conflict** is a good choice. Tell the characters about something that is coming and ask what they intend to do about it.

WHAT DO YOU DO?

This is your default question. After you make a move or when you are not sure what else to say, ask “**What do you do?**”

THE FIRST SESSION

The first session of a game of Ruma involves introducing players to the game, the world, and their characters.

Print out a copy of each playbook and have the players choose one, preferably with no duplicates.

Print out several copies of the player's reference sheets, preferably one for each player.

Print out the arbiter's reference sheets.

You will also need paper, pens/pencils, and at least two six-sided dice, preferably a pair for each player.

The players should work through the Create Your <Playbook Name> section of their chosen playbook. Answer any questions that arise, especially those about the setting if the players are unfamiliar with it.

SET EXPECTATIONS

While the players are creating their characters, discuss expectations for the game. Here are a few things to clarify from the start:

- The characters aren't necessarily friends, but they have been assigned to the cohort by a superior and are expected to work together.
- What level of description is acceptable for subjects such as language, sex, or violence. Some players may be younger and details may be inappropriate or some players may not be comfortable with explicit descriptions.
- It is not the arbiter's goal to win or "get" the players. The arbiter is present for the same reason as the players, to find out what happens to the characters. Express this to the group.

BONDS

Once everyone has finished their characters, have each of them, in turn, introduce their character to the group. Say their name, playbook, temperament, cult, and description.

After introductions, it is time to find out how well their characters know each other. The bond marked on a playbook represents how well that character knows the other character, but not vice-versa.

The other character may have a different value for how well they know the first character.

Each player follows the Bonds section of their playbook to determine their starting bonds with the other characters.

Players may ask about creating their own questions for bonds. Use the existing questions as guidelines when determining what the numerical value of the bond should be.

INTRODUCING THE WORLD

Set the stage on which the characters will begin their adventures. Answer as necessary:

- Who formed the cohort?
- Why was the cohort brought together?
- Where are the characters?

THE PLAYBOOKS

Each playbook has a slightly different focus on how they tackle obstacles faced by the cohort. Provide them with challenges that allow them to show off their strengths.

Below is commentary on each playbook which may provide some guidance on running the game for that playbook.

ARCHITECTUS

The architectus focuses on equipment and a specialized toolkit to overcome obstacles. Make the game interesting by offering situations where their gear will be important and some tasks might require their specialized moves.

AUGUR

The Augur begins the game with some of the highest Bonds, which can accelerate their improvement, and are especially important if they take the **Bonds of Fellowship** move. Ask them what they see in their visions and use their answers, but not necessarily in ways they will expect.

DECANUS

The **Contubernium** move differs from most other moves in the game and effectively gives the decanus player a second character, albeit a limited one. Offer them ample opportunity for the unit to shine. Give them obstacles requiring numbers to overcome, such as rival gangs.

EQUES

The eques is all about using their steed for advantage. Without it, they lose much of their ability and character. Limit occasions in which they cannot use their mount. Should the mount perish, try and replace it quickly as the fiction permits, or perhaps encourage the player to shift their character's playbook to another.

GLADIATOR

Gladiators revel in combat. Give them something to fight, but also offer challenges that require the use of other skills.

HASTATUS

The hastatus' moves mostly focus on defense and protection. Hastatus players are either drawn by the ability to aide their fellow players, or perhaps by a desire to play the character away from its

strengths. In either case, throw their allies into danger and let the hastatus try to save them.

MAGUS

The magus is both the most limited and maybe the most powerful playbook. Magus moves have a wide variety of power, some mundane, and others more significant. The character is limited in their number of choices initially, but over time a character can become quite powerful. Some aspects of ancient magic, such as divination, have been left out of the playbook since they overlap with other playbooks. A magus may choose these options as improvements should the player wish them to be part of their character's repertoire.

Some magus moves last until the end of a battle or scene. Such abilities are not intended to be permanent things, but it is up to you to determine when they should end. Use what makes the most sense in the fiction.

Universal panacea is a powerful move, but the ingredients should be very difficult to acquire. Send the cohort on a quest to find them and limit the amount they find if the move makes things too easy. The same goes for any other magus move which needs materials. No such materials should be in ready supply or magic would be more commonplace.

MEDICUS

The game does not assume the cohort has a medicus, but it can help should the players focus on violence. The medicus can also be a worthy combatant with moves like **Master of Anatomy** and **Master of Poisons**, especially when paired with certain cults.

PRAEDO

Kleptomaniac can be a problematic move if abused. Make sure to ground its limits in the fiction. A character shouldn't be able to swipe a horse from underneath its rider, for example. The praedo will likely work apart from the cohort. Challenge them when they are alone to see how they respond.

TRIARIUS

The triarius is a versatile playbook capable of survivability, dealing harm, and aiding allies despite their level of bond. It may be difficult to allow them to shine. Pay close attention to the moves chosen and the direction the player takes the character. Use those clues to challenge them accordingly.

VELES

Veles moves lend themselves towards quick violence. Tempt the player with potential targets, then be ready to offer consequences when things go awry.

VENATOR

Venators, like the praedo, can be a solitary playbook. Often finding themselves apart from much of the cohort. They are likely the best investigator in the cohort, especially if they have the **Master Tracker** move. Give them things to discover and challenge them with solo threats when they are alone.

HARM

Harm comes from many sources and takes many forms: battle wounds, starvation, mental exhaustion. For the characters, it is all the same. The sundial serves as a gauge, for both you and the player, of the character's state. A character who is further along the sundial might be more hesitant to take bold action.

Should the cohort not have a medicus or a character with the **Prepared for the Inevitable** triarius move, offer the players other means of recovering harm. Perhaps there is an NPC medicus, or a foreign shaman. If no player chooses the medicus playbook or the above move it likely means they aren't interested in that part of the game. Gloss over times of rest. Heal as the fiction warrants.

Harm is dealt as established by weapon or moves, but should it not be established, use the following as guidelines:

- 1-harm: punches and kicks, small weapons, thrown rocks, swarms of small animals and insects.
- 2-harm: most weapons, medium-sized animals
- 3-harm: large animals, a 20' fall
- 4-harm: massive creatures, a 30' fall
- 5-harm: engulfing flames and explosions

WHEN NPCs SUFFER HARM

NPCs suffer harm just as characters, but their sundial reflects different effects.

- 1-harm: minor damage, fear if the NPC is afraid of pain.
- 2-harm: wounds and shock, likely fatal.
- 3-harm: serious injuries, eventually, if not immediately, fatal.
- 4-harm: fatal, although maybe lingering.
- 5-harm or more: fatal and increasingly bodily destructive.

USING A GANG AS A WEAPON

When you lead a gang, you can **exchange blows** using them as a weapon. Their gear will determine limitations on attacking in melee or ranged. When you do, make the move, but use the gang's stats (assumed to be +0 unless otherwise stated) for the roll, and it's the gang that inflicts and suffers harm rather than the leader. A gang inflicts harm equal to its harm rating, minus armor on the target as usual.

GANG SIZE

Gangs of up to 25 members are small, 25-50 medium, and 50 or more are large.

- A large gang inflicts +1 harm and gets +1 armor when fighting a medium gang, +2 harm and +2 armor against a small gang, and +3 harm and +3 armor against an individual.
- A medium gang inflicts +1 harm and gets +1 armor when fighting a small gang, and +2 harm and +2 armor against an individual,
- A small gang inflicts +1 harm and gets +1 armor when fighting an individual.

WHEN A GANG SUFFERS HARM

A gang has a sundial just like a character, but the segments represent levels of injury and fatalities within the gang.

- 1-harm: a few injuries, but no fatalities.
- 2-harm: many injuries and a few fatalities.
- 3-harm: many serious injuries, several fatalities.
- 4-harm: widespread serious injuries and many fatalities.
- 5-harm or more: widespread fatalities, few survivors.

DOES THE GANG HOLD TOGETHER?

A gang will hold together if it suffers up to 4-harm and a strong leader is present. Without a leader, or with a weak one, the gang will hold together if it suffers up to 3-harm. If the leader is both weak and absent, the gang will only hold for 1 or 2 harm before dispersing. Gangs without a leader disperse after suffering 1 harm.

If a PC gang leader has the **Leader of Men** decanus move, they may attempt to hold the gang together regardless of how much harm it suffers. Without that move, use the above rules.

WHAT ABOUT PC GANG MEMBERS?

A PC fighting with a gang suffers the same amount of harm as the gang. If the PC is fighting defensively while with the gang, they suffer -1 harm when the gang suffers harm.

REDUCING HARM WHEN LIFE BECOMES UNTENABLE

Sometimes it makes sense to remove harm from a character after their life becomes untenable. Does the debility they chose and the story they told warrant it? If not, they will need some form of healing. Pay careful attention to the fiction. Both whether removal of harm fits and whether further harm is likely.



EXPERIENCE AND IMPROVEMENT

Here are a few things to consider as arbiter beyond the improvement rules in the Introduction.

Some character may try to game the system and intentionally make moves they are likely to fail with the intention of gathering experience. It is up to you to decide when rolls are made, and whether to chat with the player about ceasing such behavior.

Besides missing move rolls, the End a Session move is the primary method of character improvement. When discussing whether a player followed their character's temperament and/or credo during the session, sometimes it is obvious a player did so, even if only for a brief time. Sometimes it's not so obvious. The ultimate decision of whether a player marks experience is up to the group, but it may help to encourage generosity, especially when a player is trying to get the feel of a new character. Also, don't be afraid to let a player change their character's temperament should their initial choice not match their current vision of the character.

Some players may need help with changing Bonds, especially if the fiction doesn't support a change. At the very least, encourage a change that results in a Bond being reset so they can mark experience. Or perhaps a Bond that will create an interesting new dynamic between the characters in question.

Changing the amount of experience needed to earn an improvement can speed up or slow down progression. This can be useful for shorter or longer-term campaigns.

Increasing the number of times an improvement may be chosen is helpful for long campaigns, or when the amount of experience needed for an improvement is lowered. Take care when allowing additional bonuses to stats since a +4 stat will only miss on double ones.

Players should be responsible for marking their experience as warranted, and choosing improvements when earned. Heed the fiction when they choose improvements. In some cases, it may make sense for the improvement to go into effect later.

HACKING THE SYSTEM

At its core, the Apocalypse Engine is straightforward and easily customizable. Moves form the foundation and can be created for just about anything. New playbooks offer additional character options and tropes to players looking for something different.

CREATING NEW MOVES

You may come to a point where none of the existing moves work well for a situation and a new move might be warranted. Creating too many custom moves may result in too many choices for both you and the players, which can slow the pace of play.

Moves consist of a trigger [When...] and a result [then...].

As with the pre-defined moves in Ruma, new moves should be triggered by something in the fiction. An action. A situation.

Moves can have several different types of result:

- Direct results, such as when x happens, then y happens.

- Variable result, typically involving a roll +Stat, followed by what happens on a hit, partial hit, and optionally a miss (arbiter moves work most of the time on a miss).
- Resource results provide a currency, often hold, which can be spent on an effect indicated in the move.
- Option results provide a list of choices for the player.

Resource and option results are usually combined with variable results.

EXAMPLE NEW MOVES

When you consult the Oracle, take +1 forward. (direct result)

When you pass through the dark forest, roll +FORTIS. On a 10+, you pass through unhindered. On a 7-9, it takes you twice as long as expected. (variable result)

When you drink from the well of Eternity, roll +FATUM. On a 10+, take 3 hold. On a 7-9, take 1 hold. Spend hold to take +1 forward. (variable resource result)

When you exchange blows using the Bow of Artemis, roll +ACUTUS. On a 10+ choose two. On a 7-9, choose one.

- *Inflict 3-harm*
- *Root target in spot*
- *Exchange blows with target out of sight*

(variable option result)

CREATING NEW PLAYBOOKS

Before creating a new playbook, ask yourself “Is this different from the existing playbooks?” Each playbook should have a unique feel, and unique abilities. Playbooks in Ruma also represent specific roles in the Ruman military or society. New playbooks should follow suit.

New playbooks should contain:

- **Description** – four suggestions each for gender, face, eyes, and body.
- **Starting Stats** – +1 in the playbook’s most important stat, +1 in another stat, and -1 in the least important stat. The other stats should start at zero. The player still has the choice to increase one of their stats by +1 when creating a character with the new playbook.
- **Moves** – 5 moves unique to the playbook. 2-3 should be variable and/or have resources/options. 1-2 should augment basic moves (either replace Stat rolled or some other effect). 0-2 should provide the character with a reliable direct result.
- **Gear** – a list of gear appropriate to the playbook’s role, to include at least one weapon, camping gear, and an appropriate amount of barter.
- **Bonds** – two to three questions appropriate to the playbook’s history with other characters. At least one should be a negative value and at least one positive. Also, a default value for any characters not answering a question.

- **Improvements** – a list of improvement choices. Should follow example of other playbooks with two choices being new moves from the new playbook. The new playbook may require a different list (as seen in the decanus and magus playbooks) as necessary.

ARBITER MASTERY

Want to take your arbiter skills to a higher level? Here are a few other things to consider when running the game.

Ensure each player has adequate time in the spotlight each session. When things are tense and happening simultaneously, shift back and forth between the participants.

Occasionally offer details not pertinent to the situation at hand. Players may pick up on them and take the fiction in an unexpected direction.

Zoom in and out of the story occasionally. Let the moves expand and contract in time and space. Start a session immediately after the last left off, or let days or weeks pass in the fiction between sessions. Conduct combats or negotiations in precise detail, then cut in and summarize. Or the other way around. Or just one way through to the end.

Turn questions back on the group. Ask them for details or what they think.

Take breaks when needed. Breaks in the session. Breaks between sessions.





V PERICULUM

This chapter shows how to represent the dangers characters will face in the world of Ruma: Dawn of Empire within the rules.

Anything that stands in the way of the characters is a **threat**, whether it be something like an overgrown forest or a warband of Kellic barbarians.

A group of threats with a common theme is called a **front**. Fronts tend to be portions of the setting in which the characters' story unfolds.

THREATS

Threats possess several characteristics: a type, one or more keywords, a description, an **impulse**, and suggested moves (which the arbiter can use when a player misses a move or when appropriate in the fiction). These characteristics will help the arbiter run the threat within the game.

Some types of threats include:

- **Adversaries** (individuals of great ability and/or power)
- **Afflictions** (curse, disease, exposure, starvation)
- **Creatures** (mundane fauna)
- **Gangs** (groups of people)

- **Landscapes** (structures or terrain)
- **Monsters** (magical and mythical creatures and horrors)

A threat's type will be included in its keywords, which can also contain things like how much harm they deal, what armor they possess, or the size of a gang. Other keywords help provide details on using the threat within the game.

A threat's impulse is its motivation, native behavior, or purpose. What does it do? Why is it here?

SAMPLE THREATS

BLOOD FEVER

affliction

Impulse: Drain body of fluids and spread to others.

One of the most severe maladies contracted in the wilds is known as blood fever. Symptoms include dehydration, profuse vomiting, and sweating blood.

- Inhibit activity
- Cause fear in others
- Spread to others

CHIMERA

monster, 2-harm hand, 3-harm ap near fire, 1-armor

Impulse: Slay anything living nearby.

Chimeras are fire-breathing lion-like beasts with a goat's head protruding from its back and a tail ending in a snake's head. They are often found roaming the wastes of Hellas having been loosed upon the world during the Sundering.

- Cripple with poisonous snake bite
- Engulf enemies in flame
- Trample and knock down enemies

DARK FORESTS

landscape, dark, overgrown

Impulse: Impede progress.

Many of the forests in Kellic lands are thickly overgrown permitting little sunlight or moonlight and difficult to traverse.

- Disorient travelers
- Entangle intruders amidst bramble and scrub
- Separate travelers in pockets of darkness

DARU

monster, huge, 4-harm hand close, 1-armor

Impulse: Protect the forest.

Daru are magical tree-like creatures formed in a crude humanoid shape. They lumber on all four limbs and serve as guardians of the Kellic forests.

- Separate enemies with a sweeping blow
- Trip enemies with animated roots

DRUID

adversary, 1-harm hand

Impulse: Protect the forest.

Druids are the spiritual leaders of the Kellic tribes and serve as a conduit between them and the natural world.

- Control the elements
- Summon natural creatures for protection
- Use terrain to attack enemies

HELSTORM

landscape, 4-harm ap fire, 2-harm ap smoke/heat

Impulse: Rain destruction and fear.

The skies above Hellas swirl with malevolent clouds drenching the landscape with heavy rains of water and blood, and sometimes fire.

- Ignite flammable terrain
- Momentarily illuminate nearby dangers
- Unnerve with rains of blood

KELLIC WARBAND

(small, medium, large) gang, 2-harm hand near

Impulse: Hit hard and fast.

Most Kellic barbarians fight with axes, swords, and spears. Some have javelins or slings. Few possess armor and some fight completely naked in the hopes of unnerving the enemy and gaining greater glory.

- Overwhelm with superior numbers
- Split up and flank the enemy
- Use terrain to their advantage

WOLF PACK

creature, small gang, 2-harm hand

Impulse: Hunt together.

Packs of wolves are found throughout Ruma and surrounding lands, although more prominently away from civilization.

- Circle around to attack again
- Howl in the distance from multiple directions
- Single out a target

FRONTS

Fronts possess several characteristics: an overview, a face (the being central to the front), a list of threats/dangers, and an impending doom should the characters be unable/unwilling to stop the front from reaching its conclusion.

SAMPLE FRONTS

IN SEARCH OF ANCIENT LORE

Overview: Deep within the wastes of Hellas lie the ruins of an ancient library. The cohort has been tasked with locating and retrieving a lost tome of magic which can aid the empire in overcoming drought conditions.

Face: Quintus Geminius Cato, a Ruman magus and senator of middling years and bald pate, has researched and located the possible ruins of an Hellene library dedicated to water magic.

Threats:

- A chimera hunts the cohort, forcing them to fight or hide.
- Decaying walls and floors make investigation of the ruins treacherous.
- Helstorms scour the cohort's path causing discord, harm, and disorienting them.

Impending Doom: Drought conditions in Ruma worsen resulting in many lost crops, livestock, and lives of citizens.

THE WOODS MARCH FORTH

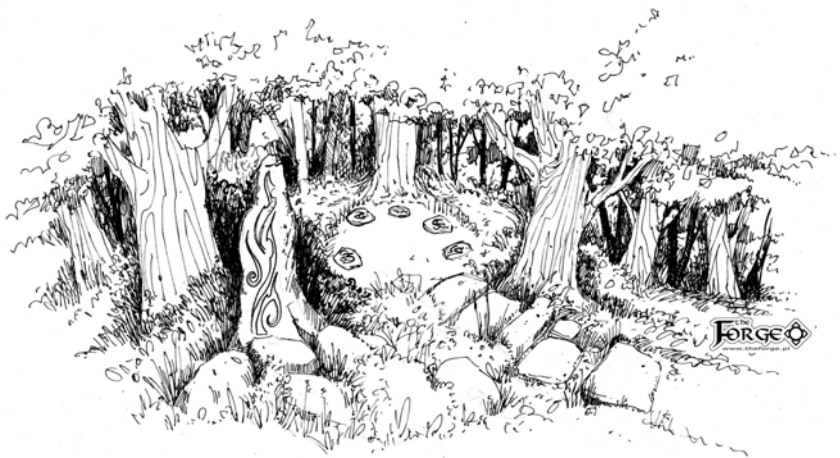
Overview: The 7th legion campaigns in southern Kellic lands to the Northwest of Ruma are under assault by renewed efforts of the local Kellic tribes.

Face: Brinc'lan, an ill-tempered elderly Kellic druid, has gathered several tribes in the area to push Ruman forces back to the sea.

Threats:

- Daru and other forest creatures ambush Ruman patrols.
- Kellic Warbands raid nearby Ruman camps and settlements.
- Mysterious forests, in which travelers are frequently lost and separated, seem to move each night closer and closer to Ruman encampments.

Impending Doom: The forests expand and overtake Ruman encampments, weakening Ruman influence and resources in the area.





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LEGATUS

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VII APPENDICE

The appendice contains a few new cults and playbooks for characters to choose from, as well as a new front. Each of these was designed and/or inspired by one of the generous architectus backers of the Kickstarter campaign.

CULT OF EPONA

A cult by Anonymous.

Epona is a Kellic fertility goddess and protector of horses and other equines. Some cults worshipping Epona have found homes on the outskirts of the empire, especially in the lands of Hispania.

Credo: Work tirelessly and together and all shall be overcome.

CULT OF EPONA MOVES

- o **Epona's Voice:** you can speak with horses and take a +1 to any move which involves communication with them.
- o **Equine Sense:** when you take the time to meditate on your surroundings, roll +FATUM. On a 10+, you detect the presence of nearby equines and may look through their eyes and see what they see. On a 7-9, you detect the presence of nearby equines.
- o **Ride Like the Wind:** when you embark on a journey on horseback, barring complications the journey takes half the time.

CULT OF ISIS

A cult by Anonymous.

Isis is an Aegyptian goddess of health, marriage, and wisdom. She is the wife of her brother Osiris and mother of the both Horus and the Pharaoh. Small pockets of Isis worshippers can be found in the empire, although often in secret as worship of an Aegyptian goddess is not widely accepted.

Credo: From the Mother come all good things.

CULT OF ISIS MOVES

- o **Aura of Peace:** when your cohort opts to deliberate rather than exchange blows in a heated situation, each member of the cohort gains +1 forward.
- o **Lay to Rest:** when you attempt to sooth angered spirits or lay them to rest, roll +FATUM. On a 10+, choose two. On a 7-9, choose one.
 - The spirit's attitude towards you changes for the better.
 - You take +1 forward towards that spirit.
 - The spirit takes 2-harm ap.
- o **Touch of Isis:** when you touch a creature and channel Isis' healing, you may roll +FATUM instead of +stock when you treat harm.

CULT OF JUSTITIA

A cult by Anonymous.

Justitia, also known as Themis, is one of the Titans, daughter of Uranus and Gaia. She is the embodiment of divine order, fairness, and natural law. Worship of the Titans was not prominent in Hellas prior to the Sundering, and is even less so in the empire.

Credo: *The end does not justify the means.*

CULT OF JUSTITIA MOVES

- o **Balance the Scales:** when you make a move, you may take +1 on that move, but must take -1 forward. Or you may choose the reverse.
- o **Sword of Justice:** when you exchange blows in defense or pursuit of justice, take +1 to the roll.
- o **Truth Conquers All:** when you debate a point to uncover the truth of a matter, roll +FATUM instead of +LEPOS.

THE VATIS

A playbook by Anonymous.

You are a bard, orator, and poet. Your songs or musical performances encourage allies and sway your audience to do your will.

The vatis relies upon Lepos to perform for and influence their audience.

CREATING A VATIS

Choose a name, description, temperament, cult, stats, moves, and bonds.

DESCRIPTION

Circle one from each line, or make up your own.

- Ambiguous, Concealed, Female, Male
- Aged face, Beaming face, Placid face, Young face
- Clouded eyes, Laughing eyes, No eyes, Piercing eyes
- Bent body, Frail body, Tall body, Wiry body

TEMPERAMENT

Choose one:

Choleric, Melancholic, Phlegmatic, Sanguine.

CULT

Choose one cult in which you are initiated:

Diana, Mars, Mercury, Minerva, Neptune, Pluto, The Sisters, Trivia, Venus, Vulcan, Faithless

STARTING STATS

ACUTUS +1, FORTIS 0, IMPETUS -1, LEPOS +1, FATUM 0

Add 1 to a single stat

MOVES

You know all the basic moves. Choose two Vatis moves plus one cult move from your chosen cult.

VATIS MOVES

- o **Dirge:** when you perform to instill fear in nearby enemies, roll +LEPOS. On a 10+, your audience shrinks in size by one step (large gang becomes medium, small gang becomes individual creature, etc.) as some or all flee or surrender. On a 7-9, your allies take +1 forward against your audience as your enemies are disoriented.
- o **Discordant Note:** when you exchange blows with your performance (2-harm ap hand near), roll +LEPOS instead of +IMPETUS.
- o **Encouraging Performance:** when you perform to bolster your allies, they take +1 ongoing until the end of your performance.
- o **Enthralling Performance:** when you perform to debate a point, you do not need to provide a reason.

- o **Grand Performance:** when you perform for a crowd, roll +LEPOS. On a 10+, choose two. On a 7-9, choose one. On a miss, the crowd turns against you.
 - The crowd will defend you as a small gang for a short period of time.
 - The crowd will attack a target of your choice as a small gang for a short period of time.
 - The crowd believes something as you wish.

STARTING GEAR

You get:

- A dagger (1-harm hand near)
- A musical instrument of your choice
- Camping and mess gear
- 3-barter in Denarii and goods

BONDS

Everyone introduces their characters. Take your turn. List the other character's names. Go around again for Bonds. On your turn, ask at least 1:

- *Which of you has a lovely singing voice?*
For that character, write Bond +2
- *Which of you am I inspired to sing about?*
For that character, write Bond +3

- Which of you shows a distaste for the arts?

For that character, write Bond -2

For everyone else, write Bond +1. Your charisma and empathy emboldens connections to everyone.

On the others' turns, answer their questions as you like.

IMPROVEMENTS

Experience O O O O O O O >>> Erase experience and choose one:

- o +1 ACUTUS (max +3)
- o +1 FORTIS (max +3)
- o +1 IMPETUS (max +3)
- o +1 LEPOS (max +3)
- o +1 FATUM (max +3)
- o Get a new vatis move
- o Get a new vatis move
- o Get a move from another playbook
- o Get a move from another playbook
- o Get a new cult move
- o Remove a debility

You may choose from the following after you have taken at least 5 from above:

- o Get +1 to any stat (max +3)

- o Retire your character to safety and create a new character
- o Create a second character to play
- o Change playbook
- o Change cult
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them
- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them



THE DOCTORES

A playbook by R. Jon Rock.

You are a trainer of gladiators and command a small group of Novicius (new recruits).

The doctores relies upon Impetus to lead his men in battle.

CREATING A DOCTORES

Choose a name, description, temperament, cult, stats, moves, and bonds.

DESCRIPTION

Choose one from each line, or make up your own.

- Ambiguous, Concealed, Female, Male
- Scarred face, Stern face, Unimpressed face, Weathered face
- Harsh eyes, Reassuring eyes, Empathetic eyes, Tired eyes
- Portly body, Muscular body, Spindly body, Squat body

TEMPERAMENT

Choose one: Choleric, Melancholic, Phlegmatic, Sanguine.

CULT

Choose one:

Diana, Mars, Mercury, Minerva, Neptune, Pluto, The Sisters, Trivia, Venus, Vulcan, Faithless

STARTING STATS

ACUTUS 0, FORTIS +1, IMPETUS +1, LEPOS 0, FATUM -1

Add 1 to a single stat

MOVES

You know all the basic moves and both doctores moves. Choose one cult move from your chosen cult.

DOCTORES MOVES

- **Novicius:** you lead a small unit of gladiators (small gang, 2-harm hand, 1-armor) armed with gladius and shield. Choose two:
 - Back-to-Back: In battle, you and your gang gain +1 armor when everyone is in hand range.
 - Bloodthirsty (+1 IMPETUS to gang)
 - Careful (+1 ACUTUS to gang)
 - Coordinated Advance (gang gets 2-harm close near)
 - For Glory! (+1 FATUM to gang)
 - I'll do it Myself: when you **exchange blows** without your gang, you inflict +1 harm and take -1 armor.
 - Just a Scratch (gang suffers -1 harm twice per battle)
 - Stout (+1 FORTIS to gang)
 - Wavering Loyalties: when you suffer harm in the presence of your gang, your gang may suffer the harm instead, but you get -1 forward.

- o Well Armored (gang gets 2-armor)
- **Crack the Whip:** when you command your gang, roll +IMPETUS. On a 10+, pick 1 and get +1 forward. On a 7-9, pick 1. On a miss, pick 1, and take -1 forward.
 - They begrudgingly do what you command, even if risky.
 - The gang does not disperse in combat, despite the odds.
 - They'll do their best to bring or give you what you seek.

STARTING GEAR

- A hardened leather breastplate and greaves (1-armor)
- A small shield (1-armor stacks)
- A gladius (2-harm hand)
- A doctores leather whip (1-harm hand, 1-armor stacks)
- Camping and mess gear
- 2-barter in Denarii and goods

BONDS

Everyone introduces their characters. Take your turn. List the other character's names. Go around again for Bonds. On your turn, ask at least 1:

- Which of you shows promise as a gladiator?
For that character, write Bond +3

- *Which of you do I think would make a decent replacement should I fall?*

For that character, write Bond +2

- *Which of you is a coward?*

For that character, write Bond -2

For everyone else, write Bond 0. You see little use for most of the cohort beyond being fodder for your foes.

On the others' turns, answer their questions as you like.

IMPROVEMENTS

Experience O O O O O O >>> Erase experience and choose one:

- o +1 ACUTUS (max +3)
- o +1 FORTIS (max +3)
- o +1 IMPETUS (max +3)
- o +1 LEPOS (max +3)
- o +1 FATUM (max +3)
- o Get 2 new options for the novicius move
- o Get 2 new options for the novicius move
- o Get a move from another playbook
- o Get a move from another playbook
- o Get a new cult move

- o Remove a debility

You may choose from the following after you have taken at least 5 from above:

- o Get +1 to any stat (max +3)
- o Retire your character to safety and create a new character
- o Create a second character to play
- o Change playbook
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- o Choose 3 basic moves and advance them

THE IVORY TOWER

A front by Gabriel Valenzuela

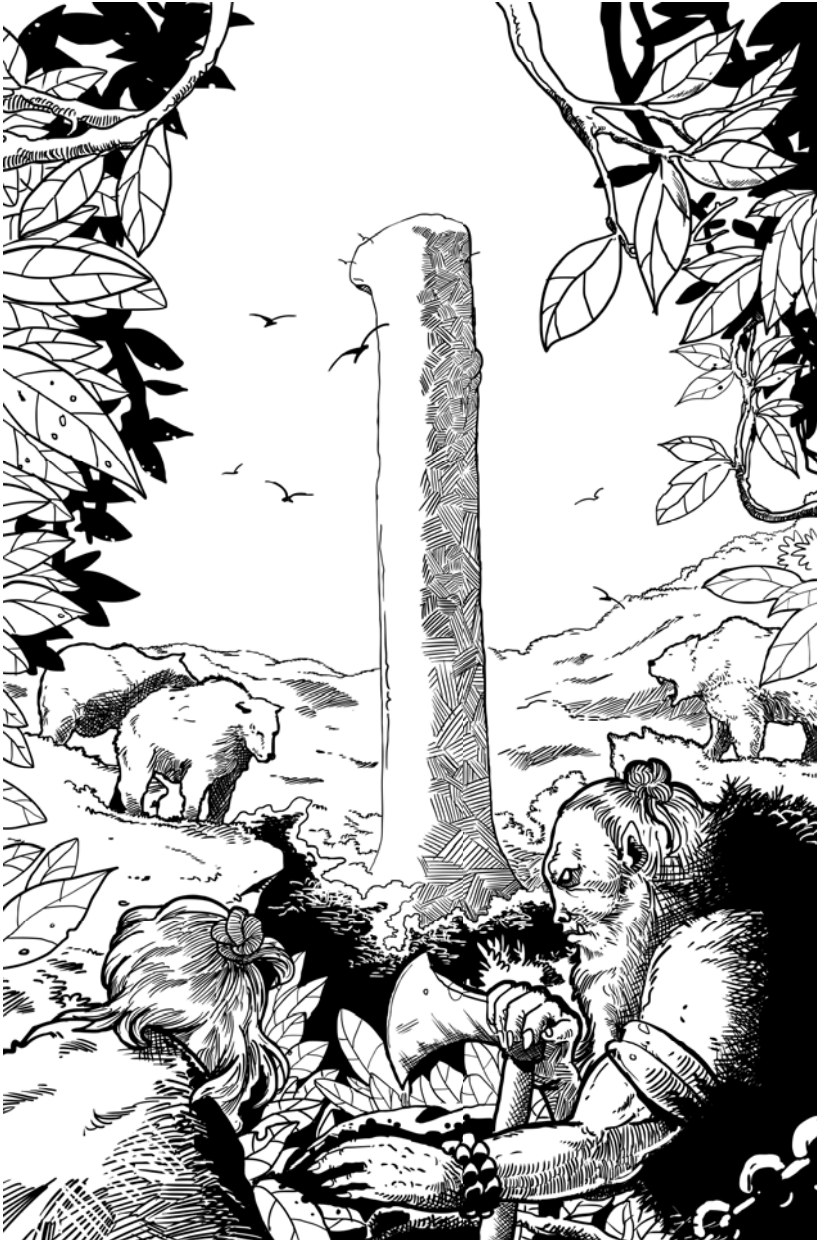
Overview: Deep within the woods in the southern Heerman lands lies a circular clearing with an immense narrow white tower at its center. The tower has no visible doors or windows and is clearly not of human origin. Most Heermen avoid the tower, although a local tribe of shaggy warriors stand guard before the spire. Legend says the tribe are werebears and the tower holds an ancient evil imprisoned long ago. A neighboring tribe known as the Black Paws lurks in the shadows and seeks to release whatever is held within the tower.

Face: Adalbern is the grizzled, white-haired chief of the Guardians of the Tower. He is a man of few words, but quick to anger when provoked. Some say the great white bear often seen in the woods near the tower is Adalbern.

Threats:

- Hulking warriors and brown bears patrolling the woods and clearing surrounding the tower.
- Ambush by Black Paw warriors.
- Disturbing mental images of chaotic landscapes projected into the minds of those who see the tower up close. Powerful urges to open the tower.

Impending Doom: Should the Black Paws succeed at opening the tower, releasing the vile power within will unleash insidious plague and horrid evil upon the land, resulting in the loss of valuable lives and threatening the heart of the empire.





VIII INDEX

Advance	4	Augur	55
Bonds	5, 17, 149	Decanus	61
Credo	5, 17	Eques	67
Cults	34-36	Gladiator	73
Experience	18, 158	Hastatus	79
Forward	4	Magus	85
Fronts	170-171	Medicus	93
Gangs	155-156	New Playbooks	161
Harm	13, 154	Praedo	99
Hold	4	Triarius	105
Improvement	18, 158	Veles	111
Moves		Venator	117
Arbiter	147-148	Principles	
Basic	6-11	Arbiter	144-146
Cult	37-47	Player	27-28
Harm	14-16	Stats	5
New Moves	159-160	Tags	12
Session	17	Temperament	5, 17, 33
Ongoing	4	Threats	165-169
Playbooks	30-32		
Architectus	49		