

Ultima V Forsan



OFFICIAL
SAVAGE
WORLDS
LICENSED PRODUCT

Ultima Forsan

ULTIMA FORSAN

by Mauro Longo & Giuseppe Rotondo

CREDITS

A GG Studio production

Producer: Gionata Dal Farra

Layout and Graphic Design: Matteo Ceresa, Luca Basile

Editing: Mauro Longo, Giuseppe Rotondo

Translation from Italian: Annarita Guarnieri

Cover Art: Sebastien Ecosse

Interior Art: Mariusz Gandzel, Francesca Baerald, James Denton, Carly Sorge, e Chris Bivins; historical art by Hans Holbein (mainly)

Cartography: Francesca Baerald

All historical images included herein are in the public domain.

THE AUTHORS WISH TO THANK:

Laura Burrascano, Marina Manganaro, Umberto Pignatelli, Nicola Santagostino, Maner Samuel, Matteo Ceresa, Gionata Dal Farra, Daniele Prisco, Annarita Guarnieri, Giovanni and Francesco Boccaccio, George Romero, Max Brooks, Dago and Corto Maltese; all the playtesters, players and supporters; All the Italian fans and the Malandanti Necromancers

PLAYTESTERS AND SUPPORTERS:

David Arnao, Laura Burrascano, Ilaria Coppola, Nicola Santagostino, Marco Beltramino, Umberto Pignatelli, Morgan Fazio, Matteo Gabellieri, Simone Giovannozzi, Laura Longo, Marina Manganaro, Francesco Zaccagnini, Federico Chiodi, Alba Velazco, Federico Mallarino, Giuseppe Molaro, Matteo Rivabella, Giorgio Collino, Alberto Tagliavia, Marzia Bianchini, Luca Di Gennaro, Carlo Spinelli, Adriano Longo, "Antro dell'Orco - Games Academy" in Messina

The sections "Ghastly England", "The Green Glens of Scotland", and "When Erin first rot" are developed by Fabio Fiorelli and Mauro Longo.

WWW.SAUGEWORLDS.IT




This game references the Savage Worlds game system, available from Pinnacle Entertainment Group at www.penguin.com. Savage Worlds and all associated logos and trademarks are copyrights of Pinnacle Entertainment Group. Used with permission. Pinnacle makes no representation or warranty as to the quality, viability, or suitability for purpose of this product.

©2015 GGStudio, Ultima Forsan and all related marks and logos are trademarks of GGStudio. All Rights Reserved.
Produced under license by Studio 2 Publishing, Inc. The Studio 2 logo is a trademark of Studio 2 Publishing, Inc.







The Dead have breached our defenses.
The Alchemist and the Knight have
already died fighting, while that cursed
Inventor has flown away on his winged
machine. The gypsy has been bitten, and
now she cannot hide her sardonic grin.
You have seen this happen to the Morituri
many times before. You have managed to
barricade yourselves in the armory, where
you sit close to each other. Her wound is
superficial, so it may take her many days
to turn into one of them, but the door will
fall down much sooner than that.

It is your last hour of life.

Perhaps.

Contents



INTRODUCTION 8

THE WRATH OF GOD	9
THE DARKEST AGE.....	10
THE RECONQUEST	12
ATRAMENT.....	13
WHAT HAPPENS TO ANY INFECTED MAN	14
UNTAINTED, MORITURI AND DEAD.....	15
THE TAINTED	17
FIEFS, WILDERNESS	
AND CITIES OF SORROW	18
MACHIAVELLI	
AND LEONARDO'S FLORENCE.....	21
PISA, CITY OF SCOUNDRELS,	
BRIGANDS AND SAILORS.....	22
ITALIAN SIGNORIE	22
THE DUCHY OF MILAN	24
NEW VENICE AND THE ADRIATIC LEAGUE.....	24

NEW KINGDOMS MAP 26

THE FRENCH HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE.....	28
THE TEUTONIC FEDERATE PRINCIPALITIES	29
GHASTLY ENGLAND	29
THE GREEN GLENS OF SCOTLAND	30
WHEN ERIN FIRST ROT.....	31
THE FOUR QUEENS OF THE WEST	32

THE STRIGONII KINGDOM OF HUNGARY	35
THE KALMAR UNION	35
THE HANSEATIC LEAGUE.....	36
RUTHENIA	38
SULTANATE OF GRANADA	39
THE CALIPHATE OF SICILY	39
THE SULTANATE OF SEVASTOPOL.....	40
THE MYSTERIOUS EGYPT	42
THE BLACK EMPIRES	42
PORTUGAL AND THE OVERSEAS KNIGHTS	46
THE CONQUISTADORES ISLANDS.....	46
THE FORTUNATE ISLES.....	46
THE OVERSEAS	47
BOREALIA	47
THE DEAD	48
STRAYS, PACKS, AND HORDES.....	49
NECROMANCERS AND VIVISECTORS.....	49
INFECTORS AND FELONS	50
FELL BEASTS.....	50
ABOMINATIONS AND CHIMERAS	52
TYRANTS.....	52
THE CITIES OF SORROW	53
THE LION'S DEN	53
THE GOD OF DEATH'S ADVANCE	54
THE BLACK SULTAN OF JERUSALEM.....	55
THE GOLDEN HORDE	55

CHARACTER CREATION 56

ARCHETYPES.....	57
1. RACE	65
Untainted.....	65
Tainted	65
Knowledge.....	66
2. ATTRIBUTES	66
3. SKILLS.....	66
4. LANGUAGES.....	67
5. EDGES AND HINDRANCES.....	67
6. GEAR.....	67
7. DERIVED STATISTICS	67
8. FINISHING TOUCHES.....	67
EDGES AND HINDRANCES IN	
ULTIMA FORSAN.....	68
Not available Edges:	68
NEW HINDRANCES	68
NEW EDGES.....	68
Background Edges.....	68
Combat Edges	70
Professional Edges	71
Weird Edges	76
Legendary Edges.....	78

GEAR 80

ARMOR.....	81
------------	----

Augmented Armor.....	81
WEAPONS.....	83
MUNDANE ITEMS.....	88
Clothing.....	88
Animals & Tack.....	91
Assorted Items.....	91
Travel.....	93

SETTING RULES..... 94

SAVAGE WORLDS DELUXE SETTING RULES.....	95
THE MACABRE WAR.....	95
Fear and Horror.....	95
Medical.....	Science and
Natural Healing.....	95
Fighting against the Dead: Weapons with Reach.....	95
Exposure to the Plague.....	98
Last Hope e Cautery.....	98
Misericorde and Mercy Killing.....	99
Fighting against the Plague Hordes.....	99
Afflicted and Extras.....	101
Amputations and Prosthesis.....	101
Morituri and Sardonic Grin.....	103
Plague in Action.....	103
Getting up again.....	104
The Miasma.....	104
ALCHEMISTS, INVENTORS AND WITCHES.....	104
Setting Rule: No Power Points.....	104
Macabre World Alchemists.....	105
Alchemists' Powers.....	107
Alchemic Accident.....	107
Macabre World Inventors.....	108
Inventors Powers.....	110
Macabre World Witch.....	111
Witches' Powers.....	111
USING TAROTS AS ACTION CARDS (OPTIONAL).....	112
Assembling the Action Deck.....	112
Starting.....	113
The Suits.....	113

GAME MASTERING..... 114

ADDITIONAL RULES.....	115
Mass Battles against the Dead.....	115
Orders and Renegade Heroes.....	115
JOURNEYS AND ENCOUNTERS.....	116
RELICS AND MARVELS.....	120
Relics.....	120
Marvels.....	122
THE SECRETS OF ULTIMA FORSAN.....	124
The origin of the Plague.....	124
A cure for the Plague.....	126
The secrets of Atrament.....	127
Untainted and Tainted.....	127
Tainted and Fiends.....	129

Striges.....	129
Ambrosia and Progenitors.....	131
The Saints and Manna.....	131
Mandragora.....	132
Beyond the Progenitors: Nephilim and Immortals.....	133

THE SECRET OF MARCO POLO 134

AN OVERALL INTRODUCTION	
TO THE CAMPAIGN.....	135
OVERALL BACKGROUND	
FOR THE GAME MASTER.....	135
EPISODE 1 OF LEAD AND GOLD.....	136
EPISODE 2 MARCO POLO'S JOURNAL.....	143
EPISODE 3 THE CASTLE OF OTRANTO.....	149
EPISODE 4 THE BOOK OF THE SUN.....	157

ADVENTURE GENERATOR.... 168

MAIN TABLES.....	169
Mission (d6).....	169
Enemies (d6).....	169
General Destination (d20).....	170
Specific Destination (d20).....	170
Resources (d6).....	172
Difficulties (d20).....	172
SECONDARY TABLES.....	173
Search (d6).....	173
Destruction (d6).....	174
Capture (d6).....	174
Reconnaissance (d6).....	174
Escort (d20).....	175

BESTIARY..... 176

Animals.....	177
Fell Beasts.....	178
The Dead.....	181
Abominations.....	186
Chimeras.....	192
Men And Women Of The Macabre World.....	193
Wild card non playing characters.....	200

LUCCA MAP..... 206

CHARACTER SHEET..... 208





In Ultima Forsan, resolute, resourceful heroes face the dead brought back to life and the nameless abominations infesting our macabre world in a period set between the end of the Dark Ages and the dawning of the Renaissance. The Plague has already been spreading for two centuries, but now men are ready to face it and hope in a better future. Death, however, is always lurking out there for those who fight and risk their lives every day, and it counts each second of their lives on a dusty hourglass. Ultima Forsan is these Heroes' motto: each hour, each feat, each adventure could be their last, but they won't stop because of that. Whether they succeed or fail, they will fall fighting!

Introduction

Chapter One

From the Dies Irae to the Universal Council



t the end of the Middle Ages, the Plague of the Dead has spread through the Old World, destroying the kingdoms of men. All the cities

in Europe, Africa, and Asia have fallen prey to the Gray Horde of the corpses brought back to life, which has reached all the known lands, while horrible abominations are rampant everywhere, thus giving rise to the darkest time in the history of the human race.

After almost two centuries spent fighting for survival, facing macabre battles and unthinkable horrors, the survivors among the human race have managed to reconquer part of the lost territories and establish small, fortified and guarded fiefs. All sciences, techniques, and arts have been redirected from their original course and steered toward those fields of research most useful against the Plague. Resources never dreamed of before, and obtained from the treasures and properties of millions of families now extinct, have been devolved to the development of machines, alchemic materials, weapons, equipment and training to fight this Macabre War. Now, since the year 1514, delegates from all the Mediterranean area Fiefs are going to meet each others in councils and conclaves to decide the future of the New Kingdoms and bring forth an era of hope: the Renaissance.

Ultima Forsan Heroes are indomitable warriors wearing augmented armors, alchemists skilled in distilling devastatingly efficient preparations, stealthy hit men who

can track down and kill necromancers and infectors, skilled mercenary soldiers, hunters of the Dead who carry silenced muskets, gifted inventors who can design tanks and flying machines, witches and monks, rascals and charlatans so sly and skilled they can deceive even the Plague Spawn.

The Dead are their main enemy, be them isolated Strays or devastating Hordes, but in the Wilderness and in the depths of the Cities of Sorrow have their lair horribly mutated Fell Beasts, Chimeras born of mad experiments, or even more frightening Abominations.

And in the East, in Jerusalem, the Black Sultan is gathering his awful legions, getting ready to hurl them at the New Kingdoms...

THE WRATH OF GOD

Scholars and wise men are still debating where and how all this began. As far as we now, and on the basis of the reconstruction of the events worked out by Hospitallers and kabbalists scattered all over the Levant, the dead spread from the Kingdom of Prester John, somewhere beyond Ruthenia and Persia, at the eastern boundaries of the world.

From there, this unspeakable horror commonly known as the Plague spread like a wave of pestilence and corruption through the nearby countries, relentlessly overflowing the furthest reaches of Asia. Unstoppable, crossing over mountains and deserts, the Dead reached the opulent cities along the Silk Route, which fell one after the other. That was the first time reliable chronicles recorded the Dead's presence.

It was the year 1345 since the Son of God's Incarnation.

Chapter One

From the Dies Irae to the Universal Council

As it reached more accessible roads and thickly populated lands, the Plague spread more swiftly and tore down the kingdoms of men like a house of tarots. Within that same year it reached the Black Sea and the Genoese colony called Caffa, the “Queen of the Great Sea”. From there, it spread all over the Mediterranean on the very swift ships that were trying to escape the evil they were carrying onboard.

In 1347, the Plague destroyed Constantinople and whatever was left of its falling apart empire, then reached all the Mediterranean ports. On the following year, this Grey Horde of death and corruption invaded all the Italian peninsula, the Sultanate of Granada, the kingdoms of Aragon and Hungary, all the major islands on the Roman Mare Nostrum and the coasts of Africa. Year after year, the Dead advanced all over Europe, Asia and Africa, all the way to the most isolated villages, the furthest regions, the smallest islands.

By 1365 there wasn't any land of the known world still untouched by the Plague.

No defense implemented by men managed to contain this evil. Quarantines, mass graves filled with quicklime, preemptive massacres of whole villages, indiscriminately burning at the stake Dead, Morituri and still healthy people... all this availed to nothing. Troops of foot soldiers, armies of knights, companies of crossbowmen, riflemen and pike men were mobilized. All men, women, oldsters and children took up arms to fight and save themselves from this obscure evil. Those cities further away from the first centers of infection had time to raise higher walls, lock their gates, melt all available metal objects to make bombards, blades and

war hammers, but little by little they were sieged and taken by the Dead, one after the other.

In those times, the overwhelming majority of men died horribly, only to raise again and come back to torment the land they loved so much.

In twenty years from the first recorded appearance of the Plague, the human race was all but wiped out, cut down to a fraction of what it had been two decades earlier.

The chroniclers remember those days of horror, devastation and death as the Dies Irae, the Days of God's Wrath against His sons.

THE DARKEST AGE

Many men of faith, preachers, destitute, bigots and lunatics believed then that the Judgement Day was upon humanity and that God was going to summon the righteous to Heaven and condemn the sinners to the eternal fire. There never was any Judgement, though. The most pious and righteous men died just like the others did, to raise again after their First Death to haunt cities, farmland and villages. The angels never blew the apocalypse trumpets, nor any purifying fire fell on Earth. Those who survived the Dies Irae simply remained where they were, in a world besieged by the Plague Spawn, trying to stay alive day after day, month after month, generation after generation.

After those first years of horror, surprise, anguish and despair, men began to react. The survivors mustered up their courage, went in search of safer places, formed new communities and united in a coalition against the Dead.

Chapter One
From the Dies Irae to the Universal Council



Chapter One

From the Dies Irae to the Universal Council

Little by little, the largest packs and Hordes were destroyed or scattered, and the first generations of Dead slowly withered until they became almost harmless, turning into emaciated carrions and skeletons that could barely drag themselves along the roads.

Little is remembered of the following decades, between 1365 and 1420. Scholars and wise men were fewer and fewer, and even less numerous were those who could afford to learn reading and writing, let alone compiling annals and chronicles for the generations to come. Most of the previous centuries knowledge and culture went lost and the history of many communities and past civilizations is now forgotten.

For more than half a century life was just an attempt at preservation, at reconquering farmable land, protected villages, adequate weapons, medical cures useful for everyday life.

And slowly, day by day, the number of the living kept dwindling down.

Those terrible years of despair and fight for survival are remembered as the Darkest Age, the most frightening page in Man's history.

THE RECONQUEST

Around the first half on the Fifteenth century, for the first time more or less everywhere births outnumbered deaths again. The newly founded city-states and fortified villages began to expand and unify more or less peacefully, forming new potentates and kingdoms 'on the weedy ruins of the old reigns.

Men had finally learned from what had happened and were ready to fight back.

Since they could use the treasures and properties left behind by all those who were gone, their reconquest of Earth was relentless, even if slow and all uphill. In the following decades, cities were equipped with every useful defense and remedy against the Plague, armies learned how to face the Dead, medicine and science knew a sudden development that could guarantee, if not the mythical "Theriac", the so much wished for antidote to the Plague, at least all the civilized, hygienic and sanitary knowledge necessary to guarantee both good health and a good quality of life to the people of that time.

In the second half of the Fifteenth century, potentates and minor domains became small reigns and fiefs that could offer a certain degree of safety, even if still isolated and unstable.

New communication routes were reopened, ships put out to sea again, the foundations were laid for political relationships among besieged countries, and all sciences knew further progress.

Nowadays, in the year 1515, the New Kingdoms are ready to meet and bring the Renaissance to life... the Renaissance of Man on Earth.

Many are the places where the new powers on Earth are meeting to forge their alliances and, at times, plot their schemes out of personal interest. One of them is New Venice – on the Isle of Candia, in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea – where the survivors from the Fall of Venice found shelter. Another is Lucca – in the heart of Tuscany – where every year merchants, onlookers, noblemen and inventors from all the New Kingdoms are attracted by the Fair of the Dead.

Chapter One

The Plague and the Plague Spawn



he vile scourge known as the Plague is undoubtedly the greatest and most terrible evil in the history of humanity. Under

some respect, it is like a pestilence, which is why some also call it the “Grey Pestilence”, or the “Grey Death”. Physicians from every reign have been trying for decades to establish its origins, its nature and how to fight or even cure it. Even if a real cure hasn’t been found yet, nowadays we finally know many things about this devastating scourge.

The Plague spreads like a pestilence. If one looks beyond the horrific way the contagion is spread (the awful scourge of the Dead) and the end result of the contagion (the affected person becoming a crazy Dead hungering for human flesh), the Plague is transmitted like any common illness, through contact with infected subjects, their body fluids, or the sickening effluvia emanating from them, if inhaled in excessive quantities.

ATRAMENT

By now, the black ichor oozing from the Dead’s bodies and drenching them had been recognized as the main way the Plague was transmitted. This black, foul and sticky substance can be almost liquid or, at times, as thick as glue. It is called Atrament and is generated inside the infected bodies by the decomposition and fermentation of their fluids and tissues. Almost as if it were a devilish yeast, or a mother dough

generated in Hades, Atrament must be continuously fed with human flesh and blood, which is why the Plague Spawn always crave human limbs to devour and gorge themselves on human blood. Little by little, Atrament consumes the host body and turns it into a withered carrion or a bony puppet. Until the host body is totally destroyed, however, Atrament will keep coercing every dead body brought back to life to gorge itself on more flesh and blood, so that it can keep proliferating and be active.

Likewise, Atrament seeps out of the Dead and the other Plague Spawn’s sores, their broken claws and their fangs, so that it can come in contact with its host’s victims, take root in their bodies and consume those new hosts as well, thus continuing to spread and prosper. For reasons learned men haven’t been able to ascertain yet, Atrament seems to be able to prosper and react almost exclusively inside human bodies, which is why the Dead usually ignore animals, and also why many beasts luckily appear to be immune from the worst effects of the Plague.

Atrament sort of looks like congealed blood, and it cannot be washed away by water, spreading in dangerous clots in rivers and lakes; those clots can remain active for many years. The only means to totally destroy Atrament are fire, the strongest acids and quicklime. Luckily, Atrament cannot penetrate through the skin; therefore, if a healthy person gets sprayed with Atrament, it cannot transmit the Plague, even if it is better to remove such traces of Atrament from one’s body as soon as possible.

According to some, Atrament may even be

Chapter One

The Plague and the Plague Spawn

able to perceive by itself external stimuli and react accordingly. For example, in his *De Cadaverum Sectione*, Gregorio of Cordoba reports that if you reach with a lit torch toward a tub containing Atrament, it will try to move away from the flame and slide out of the container.

WHAT HAPPENS TO ANY INFECTED MAN

When a man gets bitten or scratched by a Dead, an infected fiend, or one of the many, horrible Abominations wandering all over the world, or when he otherwise comes in contact with Atrament, he is exposed to the same terrible illness consuming his foes: the Plague.

However small the wound or the quantity of Atrament involved, unless the infected part gets amputated (in the cases in which amputation is possible), and the stump cauterized immediately after the wound is inflicted, the victim is hopelessly doomed to a terrible death.

Depending on the seriousness of the wound and of the blood loss, the contagion may take a few minutes, hours or days to

run its course. Swellings, sores and other awful infection symptoms appear around the wound and all over the torso, then the veins start spreading Atrament through the body as they become as dark and murky as the blood inside them. Blotches and sores appear everywhere and a dark, infecting liquid may leak out of any part of the body. Any contact with this ichor is as lethal as being infected with Atrament that has been fermenting for decades within the body of a Carrion.

As time goes by, the victim grows weaker, and all the liquids and tissues in his body tend to ferment and decay, turning into Atrament. Unless a merciful hand puts an end to his suffering, in the span of at most a few days the victim meets his first Death with convulsions, retching and spasms.

But death is just the beginning...

A few minutes after his first Death the corpse starts moving and convulsing, its eyes roll back in their sockets, and it contorts itself and grind its teeth. A few more instants and it gets back up on its feet, entering a condition called Second Death (or living death, walking death, reviviscence, and an infinite list of other

Miasma and the Plague Doctor's Mask

Miasma, which is the toxic effluvium emanating from the Dead, heaps of carrions and infected corpses, or even from the smoke rising from the pyres consuming them, is one of the most terrible ways of contracting the Plague.

In fact, some physicians deny this possibility, or at most maintain that it may be feasible only in some exceptional case, such as hundreds of Dead packed in closed or confined spaces. In any case, Plague Doctors, Gravediggers and Dead Hunters often wear special masks fitted with filters and filled with herbs, to avoid inhaling the foul Miasma. Those masks are useful also to prevent the more common nausea caused by the sickly smell of decay.

Chapter Two

The Plague and the Plague Spawn

terms). In a primitive and inhuman way, the Plague present in the corpse tries then to feed and spread, using that body as a mindless slave and infection carrier.

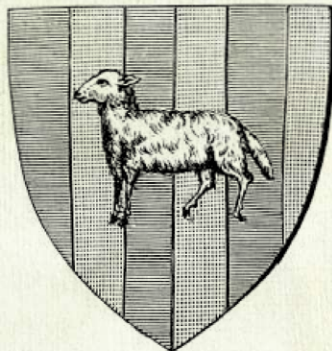
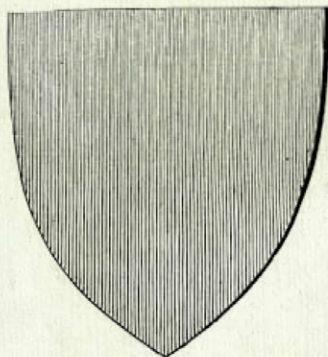
UNTAINTED, MORITURI AND DEAD

Most cities and New Kingdoms show compassion and mercy, but also firmness and strictness, to the *Morituri* – that is, people infected with the Plague (*Morituri*: Latin for “those who will die”). If a *Morituro* willingly gives himself up to the authorities, or admits his condition (which most of them are quite willing to do), he is taken into custody by the Plague Doctors or by a Friar of Death, who assist him in his last hours on earth, helping him say goodbye to is loved ones, put on record his last will, and keep sores and pain at bay. Eventually, the victim is given a dose of a lethal poison which kills him without further suffering. Then the Gravediggers take over, handling the body with proper caution as they swiftly throw it into a grave coated with quicklime,, thus destroying

any trace of the corpse and of the Atrament consuming it.

When an Untainted (that is, an ordinary man not infected with the Plague) dies a natural death, his body is not doomed to the Second Death and lies normally inside its grave, there normally turning to dust. If the passing away takes place inside a Fief however, the body is usually burned all the same to prevent any danger, and the ashes returned to the family. Old people and those seriously ill often are given a similar form of precautionary “mercy killing”, and then their body is burned as well.

As for the Dead who wander through the Wilderness or manage to crawl across the border of the most secure Fiefs, their only possible fate is getting destroyed. They get dispatched and dismembered by skilled men-at-arms or by any commoner who finds himself confronting them, then their parts get handled with the utmost caution. Whenever it's possible, their remains are dragged to one of the mass graves and coated with quicklime, otherwise they get burned where they lie, taking care not to inhale any Miasma.



Chapter One
The Plague and the Plague Spadon



Chapter One

The Plague and the Plague Spawn

THE TAINTED

Forced as they are to live in a world full of Dead and decay, with corpses decomposing in the fields or in the rivers, breathing in for years the smoke from the mass graves pyres and finding themselves constantly exposed to the Plague and Atrament, men have long since begun to change...

In the course of the last century, more and more babies have been born with a quite evidently altered body, while other subjects who have been wounded by the Dead, or have indirectly come in contact with Atrament, manage to survive after weeks of agony, only to find themselves totally changed. Such cases, which are becoming increasingly frequent year after year, all have some similar traits in common and in time have become an actual human "sub-race", unmistakable and easy to identify, and different from that of the "Untainted".

These subjects are called "Tainted".

At birth (or after their dreadful convalescence following their being infected with the Plague), the Tainted are heavily debilitated in the body. Their skin is pale and in many places it lets the underlying dark veins show through. The Tainted are less resistant than ordinary men to fatigue, wounds and hardships, sunlight and heat, while they seem to be almost immune to other illnesses.

Most of all, the Tainted won't die if scratched or bitten by the Dead. They do not contract the Plague nor are they damaged by Atrament, do not develop any sores or swellings nor their wounds can become infected because they already carry the contagion inside their

body. However, even if while alive they never suffered any wound inflicted by the Plague Spawn, when they die the Tainted turn into terrible, raging Dead, which are called Possessed.

At best, the Untainted react to such people with diffidence, fear and discomfort. Everybody knows that when a Tainted dies (even accidentally), a horrible Possessed will suddenly go rampant in a city or a village otherwise quite secure. Moreover, any contact with the blood of a Tainted means to get infected with Atrament, which is why even most physicians shun them and they are regarded in the same way as the Plague Spawn.

Because of the objective and unavoidable danger they represent, the Tainted themselves often accept to get confined inside closed ghettos at nightfall, choose a solitary life in lost, abandoned lands, settle in villages peopled only by Tainted, far away from everybody else, or choose a useful or socially acceptable craft, such as Gravedigger, Friar of Death, Plague Doctor.

In other cases, fear and intolerance prevail and Tainted children are abandoned at birth, or adults get chased away, captured or killed. According to many scholars, the Tainted are just another cursed form of Plague Spawn. Many consider them infectors, sorcerers and servants of the Evil, and there are some Tainted who react to a life of hate and persecution by committing real crimes and studying the abominable arts of Necromancy and Vivisection. Of course, this only has the effect of further fuelling the spiral of hate...

Chapter One

The Plague and the Plague Spawn

FIEFS, WILDERNESS AND CITIES OF SORROW

In the dawn of this macabre Renaissance, after almost two centuries in which the Plague has been constantly spreading, the world is divided in civilized territories, wild lands and areas of death and destruction, haunted by all sorts of horrors.

These three different kinds of places are respectively called Fiefs, Wilderness and Cities of Sorrow.

Fiefs are havens and sanctuaries, places of light and relative safety in a frightful, crazy world. Usually, they are cities surrounded by high, thick walls, castles, fortified villages or well defended harbors, where the citizens or a local lord's army constantly watch out for any approaching danger or any Pandemonium – that is, a Plague infection – outbreak. Such places are relatively safe and their dimensions range from a small, guarded village to a militarized kingdom, where roads and farmlands are patrolled as well. The largest Fiefs also have companies of warden who constantly patrol their borders and the surrounding Wilderness, warlords, engineers and alchemists who offer their support to the community, and even special champions and vigilantes shown as an example to the people.

From time to time, even in such places there is an outbreak, but the official reaction always manages to cut the problem in the bud and guarantees peace and tranquility to all the inhabitants.

Outside the city walls or the patrolled borders of the Fiefs, stretches the Wilderness. In almost two centuries of neglect and decline of the old kingdoms

of men, many farmlands have turned to desert, wild lands, a mixture of woods, barren stretches of brushwood, tangled forests and marshy swamps. The old roads have been reclaimed by vegetation and covered with mud and roots, many rivers changed their course and caused floods, formed new swamps and generally altered the lay of the land. Owls and crows now inhabit abandoned houses and towers, while whole villages have been taken over by trees, grass and brush. Places where men would once put their herds to pasture have now reverted to a hunting ground for all sorts of wild beasts.

The Dead still wander through this Wilderness that has once more reclaimed most of the world, and they represent a real danger, albeit not the only one. The Wilderness is haunted by wild beasts and vile creatures infected with the Plague, and it is also the home of bandits, exiles, refugees, hermits, deserters, heretics, necromancers, Tainted and many other kinds of barbarized and dangerous outcasts.

As all those who venture into the Wilderness – whether to travel from one Fief to another, or to look for something or someone, or simply on patrol – know only too well, to set foot on these lands means to face dangers, unexpected events, foes and ambiguous characters, Fell Beasts, Dead and Abominations.

The darkest places on the maps are the Cities of Sorrow, the hideous, opposite mirror image of the Fiefs.

These were once prosperous villages, booming cities, or flourishing towns, peopled places full of life, provisions and riches. Now hundreds – or even thousands

Chapter One

The Plague and the Plague Spawn

– of Dead lay there, rotting, heaped up in the squares, locked behind still standing walls, abandoned within crypts, laboratories and palaces, only waiting for somebody to come and disturb them, or for the rotting wood door keeping them prisoner to fall under their blows.

The Cities of Sorrow teem with nameless horrors, vile Fiends, Abominations and legions of the Dead, and they are surrounded by the Wilderness, constantly haunted by the Plague Spawn. They owe their name to the moans that unceasingly come from the decaying throats of the Dead, day and night, as a warning to the unwary passing nearby.

It is often necessary, however, to adventure in the depths of these places of horror in order to seek riches or past knowledge, to recover precious science books or holy relics, to reach armories full of still usable swords and armors, or treasures accumulated by kings of the past.

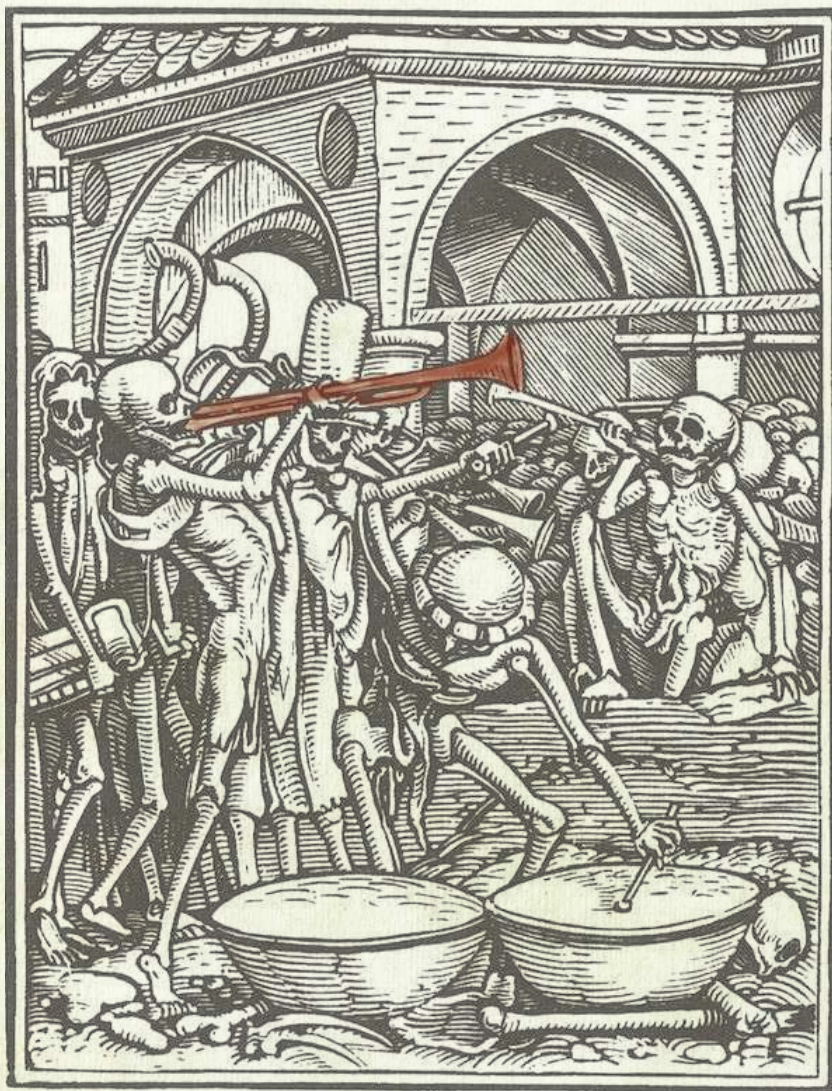
There are many who try their luck and go to disturb the Dead inside their domain in order to get rich. Just one successful mission of this kind would be enough to be well off for the rest of one's life.

Just one.

Maybe the last.



Chapter One
The New Kingdoms



Chapter One

The New Kingdoms



any things have changed since the Dies Irae. Whole empires, dynasties and kingdoms of the past have fallen never to raise again, while other families, fiefs and Signorie have arisen from the devastations of the Darkest Age, and now look at the future and at new alliances with the nearby nations.

Italy

MACHIAVELLI AND LEONARDO'S FLORENCE

The Machiavellis became the actual lords of Florence within the first few years since the oncoming of the Plague. The undeniable strategic skills of the members of this family, coupled with the pre-existing riches and organization of the town, the strong city walls recently built and the wide stretches of farmable land within their perimeter, helped the city itself and its surrounding lands to become a secure Fief within few decades.

Since then, under the firm hand of the Machiavellis, real geniuses when it comes to politics and planning, this city has become one of the largest and most prosperous Fiefs in Italy. In particular, the *Bande Grigie* (Grey Bands), currently led by Giovanni Machiavelli, Niccolo's illegitimate half-brother, is a company of trained mercenary soldiers stationed in Florence, and has

become one of the more sought after mercenary companies all over Europe. These veteran mercenaries sell their honed, unmatched skills in fighting the Dead at a very high price, putting themselves in the service of any lord in need of expanding his Fief on some still unconquered area of Wilderness.

Besides these mercenaries' military excellence, Niccolò Machiavelli's strategies, its banks funds and its lands prosperity, Florence is renowned for the Da Vinci Manufacturing, established by the genius of Leonardo, one of the greatest inventors of this Macabre Renaissance. Supported and financed by the Machiavelli brothers, who are well aware of how important the most experimental technical applications are in the Macabre War, Leonardo is now a sprightly sixty year old man running a series of laboratories and plants employing hundreds of craftsmen and using raw materials and components pouring in from all over the world.

In his laboratories, surrounded by selected coworkers and brilliant assistants, Leonardo designs and builds all sorts of prototypes: flying machines and tanks, amphibious vehicles, automatons and steam engines.

There isn't any practical application that doesn't have a chance to be implemented here, and all the best items are then mass-produced. They are used in Florence, or become part of the Grey Bands gear, or are sold to other Fiefs, thus adding to the city's riches.

Chapter One

The New Kingdoms

PISA, CITY OF SCOUNDRELS, BRIGANDS AND SAILORS

Set a few miles from Florence, Pisa has a far different reputation from the Machiavellis' shining gem. This river harbor rising a short distance from the mouth of the River Arno has long been known as a "city of scoundrels, brigands and sailors". During the wars against the Dead, this city was destroyed and became an abandoned land, haunted by the horrors born of the Plague and peopled by small groups of lawless wretches and misfits. In 1455, however, the nearby Signorie decided it was time to regain control of that annoying grey blot on the maps that had once been a city. Thanks to the Grey Bands and the men-at-arms of the Della Gherardesca family, which meant to take that Fief for its own, the reconquest of Pisa took only a few weeks, followed by several months of "Remediation" from the remains of the Dead and groups of its most "stubborn" inhabitants. Nowadays, Pisa is a harbor visited by ships coming from all over the Mediterranean Sea, well defended, with several piers along the coast, part of the river accessible to ships and channels surrounding the city like moats. Reconstruction and recolonization have been a slow business, but Pisa is an expanding Fief, thanks to its strategic position. Its surrounding lands aren't very large, however, and its population hasn't changed much after its Reconquest. It is well known that in Pisa live all sorts of rascals, misfits and rogues, and that his guards are finding it more and more difficult to control his city. Wanted men, deserters and scoundrels come to this river harbor to board the first ship that will take them. While the government of Pisa is

constantly troubled by plots and uprisings, one half of the city's current inhabitants has come here from some far away land, and the other half is looking for a way to leave the area. In Pisa there are many inns and taverns, houses of ill repute and gambling dens that every night fill with all sorts of sluggards, prostitutes, robbers, crooks and swindlers.

ITALIAN SIGNORIE

North of Rome, and up to the River Po, Italy is divided into numerous Fiefs surrounded by vast areas of Wilderness. Many walled cities have hold out against the Plague since the Dies Irae, or have been reconquered later on, cleared of the Dead and resettled. The most common form of government is the *Signoria*, "Lordship", that is a small independent state run by an outstanding family that has the support of the people, other aristocrats, the army and the craft guilds. Other forms of government are de facto republics, aristocrats' oligarchies, military dictatorships or vassalages controlled by foreign *podestàs*. Usually, however, these Fiefs all look the same: they are well organized city-states, surrounded by a small area of farmland and walled villages, and the whole is constantly patrolled by foot soldiers, men-at-arms, knights and mercenary companies.

Competition is strong among Italian *Signorie*, but on the other hand each of them has land enough to expand on that it doesn't have to encroach on the nearby ones: all it has to do is to select one on the numerous areas of Wilderness surrounding it and try to reconquest it.

In Italy there are scores of small Fiefs, from Ferrara, that takes pride in its air ships



Chapter One

The New Kingdoms

which can fly attached too great alchemic vapors filled balloons, to the pacific Abrahamitic Republic of Salerno, a place of science, peace and neutrality where Jews, Christians and Saracen formally live in harmony together; from Pavia, renowned for its Cardan Laboratories, where war automatons, mechanical devices and analytical engines using punched cards are built, to Brescia, which is famous for its foundries, factories and firearms laboratories belonging to the Beretta family; from the Bandits' Republics of Central Italy to Spoleto, main center for all charlatans, ruled by "His Magnificence" Cesare Carlomagno Von Wittengstein, the "Archduke of all Charlatans"; and there are many more...

THE DUCHY OF MILAN

The Duchy of Milan is a rich, vast Fief, openly competing for predominance with the Kingdom of Sardinia and Florence. Its center is Milan itself, the "Cathedral City", also called the "Gothic Babylon", a metropolis built on five levels which is the most populous city in all Europe. Even if the Duchy of Milan is rich, powerful and well organized, its further expansion is impeded by the continuous internal strife among the nobles controlling this or that part of the Fief, most of all the Dal Vermes, the Viscontis and the Della Torres. Just like Florence relies on the Da Vinci Manufacturing, in Milan the mechanical sciences industry is mainly managed by the Severian Factories, a chain of laboratories that for years has been playing a central role in the economic and strategic growth of the Fief. Larger, more advanced and better equipped than Pavia's Cardan Laboratories, the Severian Factories employ more than

one thousand artisans and clockworkers, and produce firearms, mechanical inventions and architectonic marvels for the Macabre War, items employed by all the cities and fortresses of the Duchy. Even more famous, exalted and widespread are the Factories wonderful clockwork inventions, among which the most renowned are augmented armors and mechanical prosthesis.

NEW VENICE AND THE ADRIATIC LEAGUE

After the Fall of Old Venice and the consequential loss of all its Mainland Domains, the survivors from this commercial empire barely managed to escape the Plague seeking refuge on the Isle of Candia (once called Crete) and on some other sea domains belonging to the Republic. In particular, the city of Candia was expanded and renewed with the name of New Venice.

In spite of the many, highly unsuccessful attempts to reconquer the old capital, New Venice only managed to maintain its control on some islands and ports on the Adriatic and Aegean Seas. While New Venice possesses an exotic beauty of its own, however, Venice past splendor is forever lost and it is not a world power anymore. Instead, it is part of the Adriatic League, and while being it's most important member, it still is a *primus inter pares*... at the same level with allies as ambitious and cunning as it is.

The Adriatic League members are New Venice and the maritime republics of Ancona, Rimini, Trani and Ragusa, each with its own domains. All these cities have different potential and inclinations, and a small mainland territory (with the

Chapter One

The New Kingdoms

exception of New Venice, in Crete), but they all share a naval alliance that makes them the most important maritime imperial domain on the Mediterranean Sea. All the ports of the League cities are full of sailing ships, carracks and all sorts of other vessels, and their ships daily travel from Sevastopol to the Atlantic Ocean, thus creating a safe (at least as far as the Dead are concerned) commercial network which has greatly contributed to the Reconquest, the spread of people and goods, and the contacts among Fiefs. Corsairs and storms notwithstanding, in fact, travelling by sea is far safer and swifter than travelling on the roads, whether old or new it doesn't matter, that cross the Wilderness.

On the other hand, however, the Mediterranean Sea is still full of dangers. The Barbary pirates and the corsairs from Marseilles are the most dangerous foes,

but many other fiefs, both large and small, can harbor all sorts of rascals, marauders, pirates and enemies, not to mention the ongoing rivalry with Pisa, the Kingdom of Sardinia, the Principality of Benevento and the Sultanate of Granada. At times, the League ships themselves get involved in barely legal... or downright illegal... missions so that the League supremacy remains unchallenged.

There are rivalries among the League members as well, because New Venice is doing its utmost, by any means, to control the League and become an actual maritime empire. All League ports are rich in goods, yards and foundries, since many ships are armed with bombards and other big firearms. Certainly, the Mediterranean *fondaci* aren't short on gunpowder.







Western and Southern Europe

THE FRENCH HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE

At the breakout of the Plague, Pope Clement VI resided in Avignon, as all his predecessors had done since 1309 A.D. During the *Dies Irae* and the Darkest Age, Rome was devastated and destroyed, and all over the world priests, monks and the faithful were left to fend for themselves, as the Kingdom of France itself fell prey to the Grey Horde.

The Church, however, held out against the Horde. From the fortified city of Avignon, the Pope-Kings of the Darkest Age went forth to reconquer the surrounding regions, and took the field at the head of the Count-Bishops, the Chaplains, the Paladins of the Order of Saint Galgano and the Knights of Saint Lazarus.

Through devotion, obedience, training and spirit of sacrifice, the Pope-Kings strengthened their Fief in a couple of decades, and nowadays the Pope's standard with the sword and the key coat-of-arms waves over most of what once was the Kingdom of France.

In the dawn of the Macabre Renaissance, the French Holy Roman Empire is a most catholic monarchy with Avignon as its capital city. The political, military and religious powers blend together and while no office is hereditary the Imperial Church controls, protects and rules each province of its Fief with an iron fist. The Pope himself is seen as the Pope-King, as well as the Emperor of his whole army.

The only faith allowed within this Fief is Christian Catholic Obedience, and many maintain that the Holy Roman Empire is the most narrow-minded and conservative among the New Kingdoms. It must be said, on the other hand, that the living standard is very high within the Fief, and that its most faithful inhabitants are among the few who have not lost their faith in God or their hope in the afterlife. Any Tainted crossing the border into the Empire are seen as Plague Spawn and immediately sentenced to death, while relationships with the Kingdom of Hungary are so exacerbated that the present Pope-King, Constantin II, has been crying out for years for a Crusade against Southern Italy and Eastern Europe voivodes.

The imperials see as "devil's work" firearms, alchemy and witchcraft, as well as all inventions based on electricity, gunpowder and steam, but they hold in high regard the studies of mystics and healers who are investigating the power of the Relics and the use of clockwork armors and prosthesis. The Pope-King personal guards, the Archangels, use such gear, made to order for them by the Severian Factories, in the Duchy of Milan.

The Paladins of the Order of Saint Galgano wear full armor and augmented arms as well, ride the best horses and face the Dead armed with their swords and their unshakable faith. The Knights of Saint Lazarus are a light cavalry corps instead, quite versatile and capable of breathtaking charges and manoeuvres.

Chapter One

The New Kingdoms

THE TEUTONIC FEDERATE PRINCIPALITIES

The Teutonic Federate Principalities are what is left of the old German Empire after its fall and destruction during the *Dies Irae*, and are a series of small Fiefs, surrounded by the Wilderness and connected by patrolled and fortified roads. *Sic transit gloria mundi*.

While the single Fiefs are governed by various noble families, the only true power in the Principalities is the Order of the Teutonic Knights, and their Grand Master, Sigfrid of Sweden, is the most powerful man in the region. Another powerful Order present in the Principalities is that of the Inquisitors, who administer justice in the country, act as federal police for the most serious crimes and as intelligence in the other Fiefs, find and destroy necromancers, witches and Dead. Knights and Inquisitors are backed up in their missions by maniples or companies of Landsknechts, veterans from the best mercenary companies in the country.

The Principalities are a cold, stern and militarized kingdom, but their laws aren't particularly harsh and many heresies, thought movements, novelties and "oddities" are tolerated there. Saracens, pagans, Turks, Jews and Tainted are accepted and fit in this society without problems, but crimes of any kind are punished very severely, most of all those that can expose the population to the danger of the Plague, and no insubordination is tolerated. Laboratories, furnaces, foundries and factories are plentiful and sciences are well developed, including elemental alchemy, medicine, mechanics, pyrotechnics and

clockmaking. Complex devices, punched cards machines, medical findings and precision machineries are among the main products exported by their clockworkers.

GHASTLY ENGLAND

Savagely stricken by the Plague coming from Normandy and by continuous droughts, in the span of a few years England reverted to a barbaric and savage land, while the Wilderness spread to cover whatever was left of farms and cultivated lands. Almost immediately London became a City of Sorrow, and most of the old nobility was wiped out, while the Dead spread through every shire. Soon the whole region looked again as it had 500 years earlier, with small keeps and fortified villages surrounded by a sea of Wilderness filled with brigands, barbarians, peoples grown wild and fiends.

The New Kingdom of England was founded anew by the *condottiero* John Hawkwood, and the Hawkwoods still hold the throne. A mercenary captain, Hawkwood fought for years in Italy and continental Europe, and came back to England just in time to save what small fragments were left of his country from total destruction and downfall. Using strategies he had learned during his European campaigns, his personal charisma and his political skills, Hawkwood swiftly conquered Salisbury, then Bath, Exeter, and Gloucester, and finally all the South-West as far as the Cornwall border. After taking as his second wife Isabella of England, daughter of the old king Edward III, John Hawkwood gave birth to a new dynasty that in the span of a few decades extended

Chapter One

The New Kingdoms

its government over all old England, up to the borders of Cornwall, Wales, the Danelaw and the Kingdom of Jorvik, the last two being potentates under the control of the Kalmar Union.

John and his successors created the Order of the Garter. The king always is the head of the Order, which is now the most important military force in England and gets a contribution of men-at-arms, servants and supplies from all English Fiefs. Besides this company of knights, however, dukes, barons and princes of the kingdom are formally independent and have their own corps of guards, infantry and cavalry (often counting a few dozens of riders), as well as companies of lethally skilled bowmen, trained to bring down the Dead from an incredible distance.

In these lands great inventions, alchemy and gunpowder are not much common, and the Tainted are still quite few, seen more as an evil phenomenon than a real danger or a new reality everybody has to live with.

The Baconian Friars are the only exception to this partial backwardness. They are an order of artisan monks who study alchemy and occult sciences, and produce inventions and firearms useful against the Dead and the Fell Beasts, which are the most widespread source of danger in the Wilderness. Many Baconians are also skilled gunmen and often hide under their scapulars or in the folds of their sleeves repeating pistols they use with lethal accuracy...

Apart from the Baconians, life in Ghastly England is the same once led in a far, rural past, with isolated castles surrounded by woods and peopled with shepherds, second rate artisans, a handful of men-at-arms and

a small noble family running the Fief on behalf of the royal family, which resides in the faraway Salisbury. Of course, there are also knights errant, highwaymen, itinerant monks and witches, while the Puritan church spreads mostly in the shadow of the cathedrals or in the largest villages.

The Domesday Secundus lists among the most populous cities places such as the capital city, Salisbury and the prosperous Exeter. York (or Jorvik) is a rich and prosperous city as well, certainly the most prosperous in the lands of the Union. Oxford and Cambridge remain two centers of knowledge, the first fully oriented toward Wycliffe's Puritanism, the past, the law and the preservation of knowledge, while Cambridge (founded only a short time before the Plague breakout) is open to the future and to all innovations, especially the Baconian ones. Well-known Cities of Sorrow are London, Canterbury (where precious relics still lie within the cathedral) and Leicester.

THE GREEN GLENS OF SCOTLAND

Beyond the Kingdom of Jorvik there is Scotland, a Fief where the advent of the Dead has been more a cause of development than of crisis and decline. Throughout the Dies Irae, King Robert Bruce led the highlands and islands clans in a brave resistance against the Dead swarming from the South, helped in his fight by the rough terrain and hard climate of Scotland.

Even if many Dead had already reached the Highlands, in the Battle of Hadrian's Wall the Scots stopped the so-called Great Norman Horde's advance, finally defeating it in the Battle of Bannockburn

Chapter One

The New Kingdoms

and destroying the King of Sores (a Tyrant who, according to rumors, was Richard II, oozing Atrament). That great victory, while obtained at the high price of the life of more than half the able men of Scotland, allowed the clans to strengthen their positions and build the necessary defenses, turning many valleys (the Scottish glens, a term which in Scotland is now virtually a synonym of Fief) and mountain peaks into safe refuges, even if the land there is rough and difficult to farm.

Nowadays, the Scottish clans are still united under the rule of Aileen de Bruce, or “Bonnie Aileen” (Aileen the Beautiful), and remain strongly independent, meeting at the royal court mostly to address in Parliament (Pàrlamaid na h-Alba) problems affecting everybody, such as the frequent outbreaks in the Lowlands, expeditions to Borealia and the clans’ territorial rights.

Under many respects Scotland (just like the small potentates of Wales and Cornwall) is an austere kingdom, little used to those technological innovations spreading through the rest of Europe and mostly concerned only with its castles, pastures and survivors. The real capital is Dunfermline, and other important cities are Iona, Perth, and Berwick, which is Scotland’s main port. There aren’t any Cities of Sorrow, even if many settlements in the Lowlands are now lost.

The only goods traded with the rest of the world are high quality wool and liquors, and various kinds of dried fish, which are exchanged for luxury goods such as wine and spices. Queen Aileen is intentioned to change this state of affairs and to open the Kingdom of Scotland to the Renaissance.

To this effect, she’s financing expeditions toward the West and a land beyond the sea, which has already been christened Nova Scotia (New Scotland).

WHEN ERIN FIRST ROT

Used for centuries to all sorts of raids, Ireland has suffered relatively little damage from the Plague. Its fortified monasteries have been the most important line of defense against the Dead, commonly called “Sluagh” in the local language, and from those same monasteries has started the Irish Reconquest, centered around old royal families and the reestablishment of the Irish High Kingship.



Chapter One

The New Kingdoms

The regional kings, the High King, the war leaders and the *fianna* are nowadays the real political and military power on the island, which appears however as a barbaric, depopulated and wild kingdom. Along the coasts there are more civilized centers frequented by Scotsmen, as well as *fondaci* belonging to the Hanseatic League, colonies of the Kalmar Union and small potentates run by War Abbots, who govern them like small theocracies, quite independent from Avignon but still formally loyal to the Pope.

Ireland's wild and forlorn nature notwithstanding, common Dead and Fell Beasts are almost inexistent there thanks to the indomitable Irish warriors, while the greatest dangers derive from abandoned and marshy places where dreadful and cunning beings, such as Abominations, Striges and Tyrants, have their lair.

THE FOUR QUEENS OF THE WEST

In this macabre era, women are as important as men and there aren't any subordinate roles within the family or society. During the decades long fight against the Dead many past prejudices have disappeared and each individual is crucial to the safety of a Fief, so much so that nowadays only very few military corps, sects and guilds do not accept women among their members.

All this notwithstanding, it is odd – to say the least – that a lot of European kingdoms are right now in the hands of women, strong and skilled queens who have repeatedly demonstrated they can manage their Fiefs much better than many a man.

Young Isabel of Aquitaine rules a small potentate bordering on the Empire. She's renowned for her tolerance and open-mindedness, and many French refugees and heretics have found in Aquitaine a safe harbor from the papacy and its excesses. At her court there are troubadours and poets, scholars and scientists, artists and intellectuals, physicians and astrologers. There are Tainted and Saracens, gypsies and Normans, Jews and Catholics, Copts and sun worshippers, and even travelers from the Far East, the northern lands and even the "Black Empires" (Subsaharan Africa). Hers is a poor kingdom, with vast stretches of Wilderness still to be reclaimed, but Isabell has great trust in the values of humanism and Renaissance. Aquitaine is renowned for its artists and scholars, and Isabell herself is a physician and a wise judge of what lies in the human soul.

Blanche of Navarre is the old and cautious ruler of a small fief on the Atlantic coast. Her high castles are awe-inspiring, her walls solid, and the Plague seems to be very far away from Navarra. However, the kingdom is the object of invasions from the sea by northmen: fierce Viking raiders and Kalmarian conquerors who have already subjugated part of England and many lands along the North Sea coast. The "White Queen" Blanche is trying to stem these raids employing her noble, faithful knights, the Campeadores, and the Matamuertos, the renowned warden of Navarre, but she has long been seeking a more long lasting solution to this problem.

Chapter One
The New Kingdoms



Chapter One

The New Kingdoms

Seductive Lucrezia of Aragon is not as peaceful as the two above mentioned queens. Her ships, foot soldiers and artificers fight daily against the Dead still infesting the wild areas of her kingdom, the bandits of Castile, and the Barbary pirates that raid the coast areas. Lucrezia often takes to the field at the head of her army, which her vassals respect her for, but she's far more renowned, both within her kingdom and in the neighboring Fiefs, for her interest in herbs, poisons and witchcraft. The blood in her veins is half gypsy, half the blood of the noble Borgia family of Valencia. Rumor has it that she is at the head of the Fair Dames, the occult covenant of witches and healers, who are so plentiful in Aragon that this kingdom even "exports" them to the nearby Fiefs. Her most trusted men are the so-called Green Knights, skilled scouts, warden and spies, used to work both alone and in small groups, or to join other brotherhoods and travel for months or even years through wild foreign lands before they get back to report to their queen.

Eleanor III of Arborea rules over Sardinia, Corsica, the Balearic Islands and Liguria. The "Queen Mother" of Arborea is an ambitious, ruthless woman, who managed to accomplish the reconquest of all Sardinia and to expand her domain to the nearby islands and the Ligurian coast. Unmarried, and yet mother of eighteen sons and daughters she had through illegitimate unions with different men, Eleanor is a highly skilled strategist and planner who has set her numerous bastard sons at the head of as many principalities, fleets and military contingents, never having to regret her decisions. Her expanded family is very large and all its members are as healthy, loyal, stubborn and prideful as she is. Even if her fleets are often attacked by the corsairs from Marseille, Barbaros' raiders and rascals from Pisa, her castles, lighthouses and towers form an impregnable network of coastal strongholds.



Chapter One

The New Kingdoms

East and Northern Europe

THE STRIGONII KINGDOM OF HUNGARY

The Kingdom of Hungary, ruled by Ladislao Kan, nominally is the largest Fief in Europe.

The Strigonii dynasty, named after the city of Strigonium where the family was originated, controls with an iron fist all Southern Italy, from Naples downward, as well as Transylvania, Dalmatia, Slavonia, Servia, Styria, Moldavia, Walachia, Bulgaria and other regions situated between the Teutonic Principalities, Old Poland and Sultanate of Sevastopol.

Ladislao, all the royal family and most of the noblemen, clergy, knights and the voivodes (the princes ruling each province) are all Tainted. Besides making all the nearby peoples uncomfortable and suspicious, this exceptional situation strongly undermines any possibility of reaching an agreement with the French Holy Roman Empire and the Caliphate of Sicily.

On the other hand, this state of affairs, elsewhere seen as paradoxical, is seen as a sort of promised land by all the Tainted spread all over the world, who often try to migrate toward those lands and are welcomed there. To many, the Kingdom of Hungary is a land of sorcerers, heretics, necromancers and felons, and their noblemen do not even attempt to erase this misconception.

The official ambassador of Ladislao Kan in the West is the young and ephelic voivode Mircea Draculesti, who surrounds himself

with a retinue of pale, dour and lascivious courtesans and travels on gloomy sailing ships and curtained carriages. The king's emissary in Southern Italy, Janosh Corvino, voivode of Benevento, instead is a brutal and ruthless cavalry captain, who disciplines the living in his Fief with the same harshness with which he destroys the Dead.

THE KALMAR UNION

In the aftermath of the spreading of the Plague through the Scandinavian countries, Queen Margaret I managed to bring under her control all the declining small kingdoms of the north, unifying them into a still enduring uniform and stable political unit. The impact of the Hordes of the Dead was as hard here as anywhere else, but it was easier to repel them here than it was in other areas thanks to the rigid climate, the vastness of the territory and environmental conditions that slowed down the Dead's advance and the spreading of the Plague from the very beginning.

Various historical changes notwithstanding, nowadays the Union consists of the domains of Norway, Finland, Denmark, Iceland, the Baltic regions and several colonies spread on the northern seas, between Ruthenia, Greenland, England and the northern coast of France and Spain.

More cohesive than they had ever been before, after almost two centuries the Norse are nowadays a strong but fragmented kingdom, stable but depopulated, dynamic but based on very small enclaves.

Chapter One

The New Kingdoms

The old rivalries between noblemen and local chiefs, reigning houses and warlords still exist, as strong as ever, but the Union's structure acts as a sort of dome embracing them all, which allowed the Union to remain a powerful and reliable fief through the decades. In fact, according to some historians, thanks to the Union the Northern Fiefs never formally "fell", which is why they are among the very few lands of the Old World which developed without breaking continuity with their past.

The countries of the Union are powerful and well-armed kingdoms, rich in basic resources such as food, clothing, wood and metal. Their borders are stable, but inside them these extremely vast lands are to all practical purposes just Wilderness, desolate, wild and forlorn. All the villages, towns and cities are fortified, and outside their walls the land has reverted to a wild natural state, as if the state of those countries had regressed to the situation existing one thousand years earlier.

At present, these kingdoms main enemy is their depopulation, coupled with their territory reverting to a wild and dangerous state. The frigid climate kills and traps in its vise the common Dead, and only those Plague Spawn known as the Draugar can actively move through the snow and the thick woods. Far more common are Fell Beasts of all kinds, which include dreadful aquatic beings, while Trolls – a particular kind of Abominations – often attack any travelers crossing these wild lands.

These descendants of the Vikings of old do not have the strength to reclaim the Wilderness, and they often turn to maritime raids as they used to do in the past, ravaging the coasts of the British Islands, France and Navarre, and

founding small colonies here and there. Other indomitable sailors choose instead to head for the far West, and it seems that new settlements are already prospering in far lands, called respectively Vinland, Markland, and Helluland, which have never been reached by the Plague.

These overseas colonies are attracting more and more people toward what appears as a promised land, which they have recently taken to call Borealia.

THE HANSEATIC LEAGUE

Surrounded by the Teutonic Federate Principalities, the Kalmar Union and the Kingdom of Hungary there are the cities of the Hanseatic League, an alliance of free communes strewn throughout Central, Northern and Eastern Europe, with its center in the Old Poland regions and a formal capital city in Danzig. The only political authorities they recognize are their own Burgomasters and the powerful Governors of the League. The most important cities of the League (Danzig, Lübeck, Antwerp, Riga, Bremen, Kraków and Utrecht) are independent city-states surrounded by the Wilderness or by larger Fiefs, but there are many more League cities or harbours scattered throughout Europe, from Gibraltar to Sevastopol, from Amalfi to Pleskov.

The League's power is mostly commercial, based on high quality craftsmanship products (salt, furs, fish preserves, fabrics, crystals, gunpowder, goldsmithing) and excellent exchanges, which happen in favorable conditions in all the confederate centers, from the Mediterranean Sea to Ruthenia. Unlike the large "kingdoms" surrounding them, the cities of the

Chapter One

The New Kingdoms

League do not aim to expand and rule wide territories, not even the Poland regions themselves, but only to guarantee prosperity and independence to those who live within their walls, often surrounded by Wilderness or other state powers.

Typically, the cities of the League are peopled by rich and busy merchants, open to any religious or philosophical ideals as well as to any race or culture, provided that they do not cause any trouble to their city or clash with their civilized way of life. The cities are defended by efficient and well trained corps of arquebusiers, artillerymen and men-at-arms, and since the population mostly lives within its fortified walls, they almost always are secure Fiefs.

Recently, however, many cities of Pomerania, Red Ruthenia, Masovia and Prussia have suffered from a dreadful variation of the Plague coming from the East. The so-called Morbus Horribilis (in corsivo) is a terrible form of contagion that turns whoever contracts it into Spawn, as ferocious and strong as Fell Beasts, who often walk four-legged like dogs or wolves. Very little is known as yet about this form of the Plague, but it seems that by now there are some powerful Tyrants hidden in League cities: they have the ability to manage their pack and pose as normal human beings, at least when they are not driven by hunger or consumed by the most devastating forms of the Plague.



Chapter One

The New Kingdoms

RUTHENIA

The territory stretching from Poland eastern border to the eastern cities of Kazan and Archangelopolis is generically known as Ruthenia and comprises several different political entities: cities belonging to the Hanseatic League and to the Union of Kalmar, the Grand Principality of Moscow, the Land of Novgorod, the Lithuanian Duchies and a few more. These are cold and widely depopulated territories, with small Fiefs scattered within an untamable, boundless Wilderness that stretches to the east and south toward the Tartary and its Golden Horde Khanates, ruled by nine Tyrants who are the Spawn of Erlik Khan. The Tainted are few here and their social status varies from Fief to Fief, even if they are usually feared but respected.

In spite of the ruthless Hordes pressing at their borders and of the hardship of living in such wild lands, Ruthenians are renowned for their steel character, forged through centuries of hardship and privation. Their princes and dukes are fierce, indomitable and ambitious men, citizens and peasants are industrious and practical people who can face any endeavor, and the women are beautiful, brave and proud.

Ivan III the Great rules in Muscovy, and he is changing this previously desolate and minor Principality into a sort of commercial and religious capital of Ruthenia. Moscow is also called the "Third Rome" because the patriarchy of the Orthodox Church has its seat there and because of the many treasures recovered among the ruins of Constantinople.

While Novgorod and Archangelopolis still are major commercial and naval centers, Kiev and the Lithuanian Duchies are richer and more important from the cultural point of view, and more open toward the West. Ruthenian armies usually are made of chivalric orders and regular soldiers, but there are also the Bogatyrs, Knights Errant who offer their services to both noblemen and commoners in trouble. The Oprichniki, "Black Mastiffs" of Muscovy are the most feared military corps in the region. These men, whom the common people have dubbed *Satan's Troop* (because they strike terror into everybody's heart) dress all in black, carry steel swords and have with them mastiffs as black and fierce as the horses they ride.

The boundless vastness of Ruthenia and Tartary does not lack legends about terrifying and cunning monsters haunting the steppes and the desolate regions around the Fiefs: the old and evil Koshej seems to be an Immortal whose nature and powers are unknown; the Yagas are a coven of striges hiding in the thick of the woods and obeying to the Crone, who is the head of their order; Erlik Khan, lord of the Golden Horde, is a powerful Progenitor who has spawned nine Tyrants ruling as many packs and hunting territories; the snake-women infesting Lithuania are a variant of the Furies, and may have been generated by the *Morbus Horribilis*.

Chapter One

The New Kingdoms

Africa, Emirates and Caliphates

The Mediterranean Moorish, Saracen and Turkish Fiefs are the Christian ones' counterpart. The cultural differences often are so few that a Frenchman can live for years in Granada, or a Turk in Florence without ever having any problem to fit in. Even languages aren't an issues since Florentine is spoken and understood in the harbours and squares of all the Mediterranean cities, just as Greek and Latin are in the academies and libraries.

SULTANATE OF GRANADA

The Sultanate of Granada stretches from Cádiz almost up to the border of the Kingdom of Aragon, and its Red Sultana, Soraya, is the friend and lover of Lucrezia, Queen of Aragon. According to many people, Granada is the richest, most splendid and pleasant Fief among the New Kingdoms, and as a matter of fact its land is peaceful and its fields flourishing, and beautiful parks, villas, gardens, fountains and palaces grace its magnificent cities. Most people here lead an opulent and cheerful life, and the population is a mixture of Moors, Jews, Christians, gypsies and all sorts of foreigners, all obeying the laws and paying the rightful taxes to the Sultan's treasury. The Sultanate of Granada maintains a friendly relationship with the Abrahamic Republic of Salerno, with whom it shares the corps of the Iscariots. There are others, however – both among the commoners and the powerful – who deplore and

scoff at Soraya's court promiscuous habits, accuse her (rightfully so) of witchcraft, and disapprove the monstrous Menagerie she has in her palace, a collection of all sorts of Plague spawned Abominations, shipped to Granada from all over the world for the Sultana and her guests' entertainment.

A special elite group of concubines, dancers and warriors, the Red Odaliskues (who often double as spies, lovers and informants), is Soraya's personal guard.

On her part, the Red Sultana is not free from worries. Barbaros Hayreddin Pasha keeps raiding and pillaging her coasts, exacting heavy tributes and ransoms. Moreover, over the last few years strange, savage red-skinned warriors, coming from who knows where and painting their body with mysterious tribal symbols, have been appearing at the borders of her kingdom. According to her spies, they travel across the Atlantic Ocean on board Portuguese ships, and have their base on the Conquistadores Islands off the coast of Western Africa. Some even insinuate that they might come from lands the Plague never reached, and that the conquistadors are amassing them on their islands as they get ready to invade Europe

THE CALIPHATE OF SICILY

The Hamsa flutters in the wind on the standards of the Caliphate of Sicily, one of the few Saracen Fiefs still independent from the great power of Barbaros and the Sultan of Sevastopol. Here the Moorish culture is rich and elegant, but less tolerant and open minded than the one in Granada, and it is also strongly focused on faith and mysticism. In any case, a short distance outside the city

Chapter One

The New Kingdoms

walls, the whole island is just Wilderness, stretching everywhere, barely dotted with a few other small Fiefs, and widely known as a savage and dangerous place in the very heart of the Mediterranean. In fact, the most important ports are connected and can be reached only by sea; they are fortresses defended by high walls and surrounded by wild, abandoned lands infested with wandering pagans, witches, predators, brigands and – so it is said – even cannibals. Many are the Abominations mentioned by the Sicilian chronicles, dreadful beings that resemble creatures belonging to the oldest myths, such as gigantic birds, cyclops, satyrs, sirens and sea monsters. Another unique characteristic of this Caliphate is the substantial presence of people from the far North: Scanian people who came here by ship in the Darkest Age and have settled all along its coasts. These tall, impressive blond men have long since abandoned their worship to submit themselves to the only God of the Saracens and wield their scimitars in defense of His faith. The present ruler, the White Caliph Omar ibn Rugiar, who holds all civil, military and religious authority in the caliphate, is the son of a converted Scanian chief. Extremely pious and generous, but at the same time quite strong and steady, the Caliph has a dream: to find enough men to free his island from the Plague and turn it into an inviolable Fief like its more powerful neighbors.

The Caliph has an elite guard of al-Barsarkun, faithful bear-warriors armed with dreadful two-handed scimitars.

THE SULTANATE OF SEVASTOPOL

The Sultanate of Sevastopol is a Fief peopled by Turks and ruled by Suleiman “the Magnificent” and by his skilled and cunning Grand Vizier Ibrahim Pasha. While declaring himself to be a peaceful, science and art loving man, Suleiman has a fist of steel when it comes to politics and the Macabre War. Working together, Suleiman and Ibrahim have been expanding the small Fief inherited by their predecessors, a kingdom whose capital city is Sevastopol, on the Black Sea, annexing many neighboring principalities, emirates and Fiefs. Suleiman’s pashas, captains and emirs are a formidable war and expansion machine, which is why Suleiman has soon found himself facing the Free Emirates, the Black Sultan of Jerusalem and the Kingdom of Hungary, not to mention the other big and small Fiefs his sultanate borders on to the south and east, and the fearful Tartarian Golden Horde.

Many are the technological and scientific secrets dating back to the Byzantines and the prosperous kingdoms of old that Suleiman has recovered from the ruins of the cities now part of his Fief and put in the hands of his learned mathematicians and philosophers. Thanks to these discoveries, the engineers and learned men of his small kingdom can create architectonic wonders, eolian machines, automaton and amazing devices.

Suleiman is surrounded by a court of Mamluk knights, eunuch counsellors and janissaries armed with scimitars and pistols.

Chapter One
The New Kingdoms



Chapter One

The New Kingdoms

THE MYSTERIOUS EGYPT

The Copt Kingdom of Egypt is a place of blending and contrasts, where all sorts of people can be found: slaves from Black Empires, European renegade fortune seekers, wise kabbalists investigating the secrets of the past, scholars, necromancers and grave robbers who plunder the ancient tombs of the pharaohs. They are all ruled by the Great Eunuchs, a parliament of elective princes controlling the country's network of ports, cities and oasis. Even if the eunuchs often are cunning and powerful men, real power in the country is in the hands of the Necropolitans of the Reformed Copt Church. After the Plague almost completely destroyed the country's population, the local clergy turned to a new and upsetting form of worship, intimately bound to the worship of the dead and to present and past necropolis. Death, decay and macabre are this cult's main themes, as well as Man's transience and the triumph of death over the kingdoms of men. This death cult affects every aspect of life in the kingdom, with a succession of macabre processions and shows, the Dead used for cathartic performances, extremely impressive sacrifices and corporal punishments, public and apocalyptic purifying rituals. Here the Tainted are seen as "holy people", necromancers and vivisectors are respected and praised, so much so that their best experiments are seen as extraordinary offers to God. The Necropolitans themselves often are Tainted, necromancers and vivisectors, and practice this kind of rituals and experiments.

In spite of such macabre themes and of its Death cult, Egypt entertains excellent relationships with Sicily, the Ottoman Empire and the Kingdom of Hungary, and it is not considered a place of wanton cruelty and evil.

THE BLACK EMPIRES

South of the great African desert and of the Copt Kingdom of Egypt stretches a land of wandering nomad tribes and wild beasts. The Plague reached these lands too, and invaded them from one end to the other, but here there were few cities to devastate, and very few kingdoms to tear down. The Dead spread here much more slowly than they did in Europe and still wander through savannahs, jungles and plains, swamps and mountain ranges, but they never gather in groups larger than small Packs that can easily be faced by the brave and valiant warriors of the tribes and of the Fiefs. All this notwithstanding, many different and horrible variations of the Plague have spread through these lands, such as the Grey Leprosy, which came from the Levant and spread through the eastern regions, and the Red Death, that originated in the heart of this continent.

Nowadays in Africa there are only half a dozen Black Empires, which differ in culture, ethnicity and traditions, but were all born – just like the European New Kingdoms – from the destruction wrought by the *Dies Irae*, while there are countless nomad peoples and nations, tribal and free, which encompass the Pigmies, the Arcantrops and the Giants. Abyssinia and the Lion Empire are the largest and best organized African

Chapter One

The New Kingdoms

Fiefs, but there are others, more or less small, which occupy some corners of the continent.

Even if Africa remains, of course, a wild and isolated place, contacts with the neighboring peoples exist. The Lion Empire trades – mostly in warriors and slaves – with the Mexica from the Conquistadores Islands, while Abyssinia has trade relationships with Egypt, Venice and the Mediterranean sailors, and the Sultanate of Zanzibar and its neighboring Fiefs have contacts with the Hospitallers, just to mention the most important connections.

African nations and empires are often at war with each other, attacking one another to obtain slaves to sell to the Mediterranean Tormentors or to the Mexica.

Common Dead aren't the worst threat existing in Africa, which is infested with dreadful Fell Beasts and awful Necropiths, Dead Monkeys that are as agile, strong and fierce as they were in life. European explorers and merchants who visit emporia and outposts tell of legends about indescribable monsters, worse than any Abomination ever spawned by the Plague, that lie blasphemous and degenerated in the heart of the jungle.







Chapter One

The New Kingdoms

Beyond the Pillars of Hercules

To the inhabitants of the Mediterranean New Kingdoms, the lands beyond the Atlantic Ocean are unknown, mysterious and almost legendary places, but some skilled sailor might know something more about them.

PORTUGAL AND THE OVERSEAS KNIGHTS

In the *Dies Irae* and the following Darkest Age, Portugal was totally destroyed and torn by the Plague. It was only in the Fifteenth century that Henry the Navigator managed to come back from exile and to start the reconquest of this once splendid country, becoming the first king in the new course of its history.

The only military force at his side, together with the cadet noblemen belonging to the surviving aristocratic families, was that of the present Royal Order of the Knights of the Temple of Outremer, more simply known as Overseas Knights. They descended directly from the Knights of the Order of Christ and were therefore Templars who, in Portugal, had managed to escape the destruction of their order by changing their name.

After reorganizing themselves at the orders of King Henry, the Overseas Knights regained control of some ports and fortresses of the country, destroying the by now run down and rotting Hordes of the Dead.

From his seat in the new capital, Sagres, King Henry – who had by then become

Grand Master of the Order – rebuilt a new, small but stable Fief, of a naval and chivalric sort, before starting off a new, more ambitious project at which he is still working.

THE CONQUISTADORES ISLANDS

For years the European base for the Portuguese routes toward the West, the islands off the Atlantic African coast are now an independent potentate, the Conquistadores Islands, or *Islands de la Conquista*. They are now inhabited by explorers and advanced forces of Montezuma II's Mexica, led on land and sea by Doña Marina “la Malinche”, the Queen of the Conquistadors, and by ruthless sea captains sold out to the Mexica. Pyramids and temples have been built everywhere, from the islands the Romans used to call the Canaries to Cape Verde, and on them all flutters the standard of Mictlantecuhltli, the God of Death. Hidden in those ports and on those islands, at the farthest borders of Europe, the Mexica only wait to amass forces and slaves enough to start conquering the lands to the east of the great sea.

THE FORTUNATE ISLES

While the Islands de la Conquista are in the hands of the Conquistadors and of the Mexica, and therefore lost, the Fortunate Isles – once called Azores – are still firmly under the Portuguese crown control and they are the Overseas Knights' most important seat. The Fortunate Islands main characteristic is that they never

Chapter One

The New Kingdoms

had any contact with the Plague and still are a pure land, surrounded by an even purer sea. The Order's ships constantly patrol those waters, controlling whoever tries to land, which is to say the ships of the Order themselves and very few vessels from Northern Europe. The quarantine one must undergo to access the Islands is quite strict, and de facto nobody can access the Islands without a special permission given by the Crown of Portugal and the Overseas Knights. The knights have built many castles and palaces on those islands, and give refuge here to those magnates, land owners and noblemen who want to escape once for all the ills of this world together with their families. These "chosen" have to hand over all their riches and properties to the Order to be allowed to live in this blessed islands, where they do not have anything to worry about anymore, far from the horrors of death and the Plague, forever protected by the Knights' swords.

THE OVERSEAS

The Islands of the Shallow Sea, the Windward and Leeward Islands, Portuguesa, San Salvador, Vespuccia, Tortuga and all the other lands and Islands discovered by the Overseas Knights on the opposite side of the Atlantic Ocean are wild places inhabited by all sorts of savage tribes, with unknown plants and animals, but they are also lands where the Plague is unknown. Here the Knights have established some trading colonies and emporia, have built bases and castles, but their intent is not to conquer these places, which the diminished finances both of the Order and of Portugal would

make impossible. Their real mission is to retrace, centuries later, the steps of the Templars, who reached the Cannibals' Sea decades before the *Dies Irae*, and search for their predecessors' secrets, such as the Fountain of Manna and the legendary treasures of the lost kingdoms of Overseas.

BOREALIA

While the Overseas Knights, the Mexica, the Conquistadores and the Portuguese follow sea routes that cross the central part of the Atlantic Ocean, from Gibraltar to the Cannibals' Sea, other peoples have been settling along the North Atlantic coasts of the New World, and in particular in an area generally known as "Borealia", which comprises several territories and islands south and west of Greenland: the "New Land" *Terra Nova* (Vinland, Helluland and Markland) that belongs to the Kalmar Union; Nova Scotia, which is under the Bruce rule; and New Flanders, belonging to the Hanseatic League, which encompass the region around the mouth of the Muhheakantuck River, inhabited by the Lenape Indian tribe. These coastal trade settlements comprise only a few thousand people all told: hunters, colonists, explorers, trappers, whalers, gold miners and all sorts of adventurers, but as years go by the number of people attracted by Borealia is growing. After all, that is a land totally free from the Plague, with no Dead, Fell Beasts or Abominations: a new promised land...

Chapter One

Mankind's enemies



The world has always been a dangerous place for those who dared venture too far away from the strong walls of their city. Marauders, pirates, brigands, assassins and all sorts of rascals, as well as despotic noblemen, enemy soldiers, religious zealots belonging to this or that creed, narrow-minded sects and ruthless conquerors, are dangers as real as the Dead.

Even common wild beasts are a danger those who venture into the Wilderness have to beware of, together with all sorts of natural dangers, such as putrid swamps, thick woods, floods, landslides, fires, frost, parasites and all kinds of illnesses.

It goes without saying, however, that in this macabre age the Dead and the Plague Spawn are the most dreadful enemy, relentless as it is lethal.

The Plague has changed the world forever, and it is the real enemy that must be defeated.

THE DEAD

The animated corpses created by the Plague, usually known as the "Dead", are walking human remains hungering for flesh and blood. In time, it's become customary to classify and group them into different categories, according to their characteristics and looks, two elements mainly depending on how they were infected and on how well-preserved their body is.

The most common variations are tottering Husks, swift Furies, scrawny Carrions, skeletal Carcasses and the dreadful, semi-intelligent Possessed.

Their differences notwithstanding, all these types of Dead have in common a total absence of thought, emotions, memories or feelings, a blind hunger and the ability to infect all the Untainted they manage to bite or scratch. Their constant and only aim is to attack any living human being crossing their path, tear him apart and feed on him to satisfy the black Atrament sustaining them. The Dead more or less maintain whatever physical and ambulatory abilities they had in life; the Possessed can also work out rudimentary strategies, as well as make use of some tools and weapons. Their eyes and ears still work more or less as well as they did in life, but they don't seem to still have use of the other senses, or to have developed new ones.

The Dead do not possess any survival instincts, cannot feel pain and have no qualms at going through the fire or throwing themselves into a trap or down a cliff, and (but for the Possessed, at times) they will always look for the shortest and most direct way to reach the nearest victim and tear it apart.

Fortunately, if they lack fresh food, or are exposed to weakening environmental conditions (such as extreme heat or cold, or a pouring rain), their bodies slowly deteriorate until they turn into disgusting bags of decayed flesh, or into skeletal, desiccated scarecrows that can barely move. Even in such a state, however, the Dead are still contagious and can transmit the Plague.

Chapter One

Mankind's enemies

STRAYS, PACKS, AND HORDES

The Dead lack any social instinct, and they usually wander randomly until they meet a victim they can attack. The term "Strays" is generally applied to those Dead (whatever their kind) that are seen wandering alone in the Wilderness.

Many Dead, however, end up accidentally gathering into small Packs and then wandering together. Packs can count just a handful of individuals (usually from three to twelve), and continuously lose and acquire members, their numbers growing and decreasing each day. They do not use any communal strategy, not even with a target in sight, but all the dead in a Pack will throw themselves at the nearest victim without any control or coordination, fighting over it against their own "companions".

The Hordes are mobs of tens and hundreds of Dead walking together, usually to moving from a City of Sorrow or to attack a village, a company of knights or a caravan.

During the *Dies Irae*, one single, endless Grey Horde trod the world, moving through all the kingdoms of men. Fortunately, only worn out remains of those huge masses of animated corpses are left nowadays, legions without any brains or tactics that wander randomly roaring their inhuman howls.

According to some, however, powerful and degenerate Tyrants can put together and control real armies of the Dead, and it seems that some of them are getting ready to launch a new attack against all surviving mankind.

NECROMANCERS AND VIVISECTORS

Even though the Plague is a dreadful, absolute and unnatural evil, some despicable subjects have discovered that it can give them advantages and powers. What the people calls Necromancers are shady characters, often Tainted, who meddle with Atrament and the bodies of the Dead in order to obtain new effects, make forbidden experiments, and acquire knowledge and resources. The line between Plague Doctors and Necromancers is very thin, and the experiments carried on by less than scrupulous physicians who try to discover the secrets of the Grey Death may become an abominable obsession for crazy and outcast individuals. In other instances, Necromancers work on behalf of some customer, be it an inhuman foe or a ruthless general, offering actual armies of darkness or monsters they have assembled with parts of different corpses sown together. A vivisector is an even more repugnant king of "scholar", who makes use of knowledge and technics similar to those of the necromancers to create dreadful hybrids, puts together disgusting Chimeras, and experiments with awful Abominations. In many Fiefs, Necromancers and Vivisectors are seen as enemies similar to the Dead themselves, and are therefore captured, exiled or killed on sight. Elsewhere, and depending on their aims and intentions, they can even be respected members of society. It is the case of the Keepers of the Granada Menagerie, an order of Vivisectors which creates new "marvels"

Chapter One

Mankind's enemies

for the entertainment of Sultana Soraya, or of the Mourners of Egypt, Copt priests who are a cross between dark necromancers and pious priests).

INFECTORS AND FELONS

While there are some Fiefs where even Necromancers and Vivisectors can be officially acknowledged and get a laboratory where to carry on their experiments, all civilized peoples hold in the utmost contempt and harshly condemn Infectors, that is those living beings who deliberately spread the Plague among healthy people to forward their personal, nefarious agenda. Dead Hunters who want to earn a bag of florins in a territory where there aren't any more Strays to bring down, unscrupulous marauders and soldiers who coat their blades and arrows with Atrament in order to gain an easier victory in a siege or a battle, enemy agents who infect a city from within to weaken and take it, aberrational heretics and religious zealots hoping for the *Dies Irae* days to return and bring humankind's ultimate end, desperate outcasts seeking to wreak the worst possible revenge on their persecutors. Whatever may be the Infectors' drive or intent, any person accused of having knowingly spread the Plague among the Untainted is condemned to torture, public loathing and the most painful kind of death.

Like Infectors, Felons are numbered among the most loathsome people. Felons are all those Untainted or Tainted who put themselves in the service of vile Tyrants or other intelligent Plague Spawn, in exchange for money, protection or favor.

Felons are mankind's renegades, and they do for their dark masters all those practical jobs other Dead cannot accomplish, such as provide well-maintained "food", do some handmade work or act as spies.

FELL BEASTS

As a norm, the Plague never extends to animals, nor the Dead try to feed off horses, dogs or other creatures different from men. In some cases, however, single animals or small packs, swarms or flocks may contract the Plague and become a serious source of danger.

If they go for too long without finding any human flesh, for example, it may happen that Dead and Abomination try to catch and devour any animal they find, or else hunger may drive some beasts to feed off infected bodies, or again the pools animals drink from may get infected by the decaying remains of some Carrion lying on its bottom. For these and many other possible reasons, some animals may contract the Plague and turn into Fell Beasts.

Fell Beasts aren't exactly dead, but they turn into aggressive, savage and often horrifying fiends: they randomly attack any human being or other animal in their vicinities and the wounds they inflict transmit the Plague, just like the Dead's bites. Sores and oozing swellings cover their bodies, they fall prey to mad, killing instincts and part of their body starts decaying, corrupting or changing. Those specimens that survive the first stages of contagion and manage to devour enough flesh and blood may also grow larger, gain new abilities and become Abominations in their own right. Their mad fierceness



Chapter One

Mankind's enemies

and the presence of Atrament in their bodies aside, however, they maintain all normal abilities and characteristics belonging to their species.

ABOMINATIONS AND CHIMERAS

The Plague troubles mankind mostly through the scourge of the Dead, but Atrament has such a dreadful strength that at times unique and unspeakable beings appear in the depths of the Wilderness or in the Cities of Sorrow, beings so horrific that their sight brings a quiver even in the heart of the bravest of veterans.

Abominations are always “side effects” or dreadful variations generated by Atrament infecting some living creature. They can be Fell Beasts who, after feeding for decades on the bodies of men and animals, have grown to huge proportions and acquired unheard of abilities, Tyrants so decayed and corrupt that they have acquired unsettling features, Dead exposed to a particularly powerful form of Atrament or to the Plague Spawn’s earlier generations, or else mounds of heaped corpses that end up blending together and growing new organs and limbs.

Each Abomination is a unique and terrifying monster, often lacking any real name, and each with its own characteristics and abilities. Some of them may even have a glimmer of intelligence, comparable to the one Possessed and Tyrants have, but in any case their only goal always is to catch, attack and devour any man within their reach.

Chimeras are often an “artificial” variation of Abomination, the fruit of the most horrific laboratory experiments carried

out by Necromancers and Vivisectors, and usually created joining together parts of men and beasts. Unlike Abominations, Chimeras are “designed” and created by intelligent minds who aim at a very specific goal. There are more than a dozen Chimeras in the Menagerie of Granada, and many more are created inside the dark lairs of Necromancers scattered all over the world.

TYRANTS

Many consider them just a dark legend, but others unfortunately know only too well what the terrifying truth is. As far as anybody knows, Tyrants are the most cunning and powerful Plague Spawn, beings caught between life and death, who got infected by the Plague and somehow became “immune carriers” for it. It would seem that some Tyrants look every inch a normal, still living man, while others look like the Tainted or have some hidden, horrible characteristics that they keep more or less hidden, such as sharp teeth, darkened skin, claws or a hump. Fortunately, they are few in numbers, and it is still unclear how they come into being, and if they may be a further mutation undergone by some Tainted. Moreover, those few Tyrants mentioned in the chronicles have often differed from one another in character, aims and appearance. According to the legends, they hide among the living or try to carry on a way of life similar to that of a mortal man, even if they must constantly feed off flesh and blood, while others live inside the Fiefs, where they secretly commit heinous crimes, or have their lair inside ruined fortresses, caves or shacks in the heart of the Wilderness,

Chapter One

Mankind's enemies

where they ambush the unwary who enter their territory. Some more are said to rule some of the Cities of Sorrow as if they were real Kings of the Dead, plotting against their peers or planning invasions and wars against the nearest Fiefs.

The most fearful characteristic Tyrants share, however, is their ability to control and organize the other Dead, Fell Beasts and even Abominations, bending the other Plague Spawn to their will and using them as slaves and tools to forward their plans.

THE CITIES OF SORROW

Rome, Venice, London, Constantinople an many other capitals and important cities of the Old World are now Cities of Sorrow, places of death and horror surrounded by regions laid waste.

It is said that in Rome, once the capital of the Caesars' empire, now rules a monstrous being simply known as the Emperor who, as rumors have it, might even be Nero come back to life, or perhaps Caligula, or some other emperor of old times. Surrounded by a mad court of necromancers and dead servants, this being seems to be bringing the Second Death to the countless thousands of skeletons resting in the catacombs and ossuaries of the city, creating legions of Carcasses with some dreadful goal in mind.

Old Venice is a place of death and horror too. The "Drowned Ones", that is those Dead who fell or were thrown in the water keep resurfacing at every corner, between the foundations of the palaces, on the small islands, on the sandy or stony banks of the channels. It is said that now Venice only inhabitants are a community of

Tainted outcasts, who live on large barges and scows that keep well away from the shore. These desperate people brave the channels only to loot the old palaces or to find on the mainland some food that has not been infected by the waters of the Black Lagoon, as the stretch of sea in front of the old city is now called.

Just like Venice and Rome, all the other Cities of Sorrow hide within their depths unending horrors and nameless terrors, and certainly are the most dreadful places of the Macabre Renaissance.

THE LION'S DEN

Along Africa northern coast, between Gibraltar and Egypt, there are the Free Emirates, a collection of small city-states, desert Fiefs, Berber principalities and local potentates scattered along Africa Mediterranean shores. Most of them are at war with their neighbors and experience a troubled domestic political situation, made of betrayals, assassinations, slaughters and poisonings. Almost all the Free Emirates cheerfully indulge in piracy, plundering and expansion attempts at the expenses of their neighbors, resorting at times to strategies forbidden anywhere else, such as Infectors' despicable practices.

Algiers, the "Lion's Den", lair of Barbaros Hayreddin Pasha, the fiercest and most feared pirate of the Mediterranean, and of all his fleet, stands out among all these fortresses of outcasts and marauders. One way or another, Hayreddin exerts his control on most of the nearby cities, and every time he sets sail to raid, all the Fiefs quiver with terror.

THE GOD OF DEATH'S ADVANCE

When they heard about what was happening in the Old World, beyond the ocean, the high priests of the Mexica had trouble believing the tales told by the Conquistadores. A few months later, when the princes and priests they had sent finally reached the European and African shores and saw with their own eyes the dead walking around and the consequences of the Plague, they hailed it as a miracle. The priests then turned to their darkest knowledge and prophecies in an attempt to understand what was happening, thus starting a momentous religious renewal that changed the Mexica society from

within and soon enlisted rulers and noblemen, included the present emperor, Montezuma II. The new priests abolished or set aside all old rituals and put the dark lord of hell, Mictlantecuhтли, at the apex of their pantheon, stating openly that the Age of the God of Death had come. Since then, a series of purges, conquests and civil wars has seen Mictlantecuhтли's standards flutter on the top of pyramids and palaces of the Mexica. Tens of thousands of slaves are captured and sacrificed each year in the course of the increasingly atrocious rituals typical of this cult, while little by little the slavers and warriors' armies cross the ocean on the renegade Conquistadores' ships to invade and conquer the Old World.



Chapter One

Mankind's enemies

At present, the Mexica have taken possession of the Islands de la Conquista, from which they are forcing their way through Africa, capturing thousands of slaves and converting the strongest, more warlike tribes to the God of Death's cult. The real target of this holy war, however, is Europe, and it is almost time for the Mexica to embark on their conquest of these already devastated and weakened lands.

THE BLACK SULTAN OF JERUSALEM

In the East, in the country once known as the Holy Land, the mysterious Black Sultan – who in the past entertained diplomatic relationships with the King of Hungary, the Sultan of Sevastopol and Egypt's Great Eunuchs – rules on the small kingdom of Jerusalem.

Little is known about the Black Sultan. Some think he might be a powerful Tyrant, an Abomination or even a demon posing as a human being. The only sure fact is that this being has been ruling for too many years on a kingdom where the living are treated like slaves and cattle, served by Tyrants and Tormentors, and protected by the Nightmare Riders, a host of Possessed wearing black armor and riding Fell Horses. The Black Sultan is the symbol of the new order of the world, where Dead and living mingle and the most dreadful Plague Spawn breed human beings like cattle and feed off them, surrounded by Felons, deceased servants and other awful creatures. He is one of the mankind's most disgusting foe, because of his dreadful armies and even more because of the degenerate horror he embodies.

THE GOLDEN HORDE

Beyond Sevastopol, Moscow and the Volga Cities lie the boundless lands of Tartary, an immense land very few have at least some knowledge about in the West. The Silk Route, that runs from Sevastopol to Serica, going most of the time through very small Fiefs called Oasis, is just a ribbon of hard-packed earth thousands of kilometers long, stretching among endless destruction and wild lands still infested with all sorts of horrors.

Somewhere, in the heart of Tartary, there is the Kingdom of Prester John, which is said to be the place from which the Plague originated, but nobody knows exactly where it is situated. According to the few legends mentioning it, that unfortunate kingdom is now a nightmarish place, inhabited by the most awful Chimeras and the most ancient among the Abominations, and no man in his sane mind should wish to go there.

Outside the borders of that mysterious kingdom, the vastness of Tartary is a hunting ground for the Golden Horde, a series of Packs of Furies, Possessed and Tyrants controlled by the terrible Erlik, Khan of the Khans. Erlik seems to be a dreadful Progenitor, and his nine "sons" – each at the head of different Hordes – are all powerful Tyrants who firmly control their armies, unleashing them at need.

What aims the Golden Horde plans to achieve – besides attacking any caravan and exacting tributes in flesh and blood from any city it finds on its path – is not known, but it certainly is the most powerful and devastating army of the Dead in the world.

Chararter Creation

Chapter Two

Character Creation



*reating your own
Ultima Forsan
character is quite
easy. All you have
to do is to follow
the usual Savage
World Deluxe
rules.*

ARCHETYPES

Delegations from many European, African and Levantine countries convene and meet in many of the Fiefs of the New Kingdoms to form alliances and treaties. Other exotic and interesting people, such as merchants, charlatans, beggars and rascals have flock to the towns to keep an eye on what is happening there. There are also spies and observers from those Fiefs – enemy kingdoms or faraway lands – that wander in search of information. Here are some examples of characters you might want to play.

AL-BARSARK

When they left their native Scandia and followed Magnus the Fair to Sicily with their families, those strong Northern men readied the path for their descendants' conversion to the faith of Mohammed. Nowadays, these Sicilian Normans – ruled by the White Caliph of Palermo – are the most devout and faithful Muslims, and count among them the sacred al-Barsarkun warriors, whom Allah has blessed with the fury of the Bear. These jihad berserkers' sacred zeal lends them a holy frenzy and an almost superhuman strength, which they use in the Macabre War to destroy the Dead and honor God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

These muscular, tattooed believers pervaded with the frenzied spirit of the bear are among the greatest and most famous fighters against the Plague, and many of them are members of the Caliph's elite guard.

Theta Nigrum

The Theta Nigrum is the symbol identifying Ultima Forsan Wild Cards. It is a black letter with which Greeks and Romans designated those heroes who had died fighting. This glyph is the first letter of the Greek word Thanatos ("Death") and of the Latin one Obit ("He is dead"). Ultima Forsan Heroes, as well as their most fearsome foes, always walk in the shadow of Death, and Theta Nigrum is their distinguishing brand.



Chapter Two

Character Creation

ALCHEMIST

Saracen pharmacists, Jewish kabbalists, gypsy spagyrist, pagan elementalists and Christian artificers: learned men who can create acids, explosives, pyric powder and mineral extracts abound in this macabre age. Most alchemists enjoy a respected position and are very highly thought of in the Fiefs, where they are usually in the employment of the local Lord, or belong to a city guild. Others – apprentice, mercenary or itinerant alchemists – choose to travel from Fief to Fief to sell their knowledge and their potions to the highest bidder. They are scholars who can read and speak many languages and carry their travel equipment with them. Some others are more secretive in practicing their arts, and at times they face hostility from the local powers.

BONZE

These exotic, “Bonzes” – diplomats, monks and scholars from the mysterious Far East, well beyond even Prester John’s Kingdom – have come to explore Europe through the intercession of the Sultan of Sevastopol. They are quite interested in discovering the Land of the Setting Sun, as they call Europe, and they have already acquired a basic understanding of the local languages and customs. They are kind, friendly and clearly open to an exchange of technologies and knowledge with the Westerners. Some of them, so it seems, are talented warriors, trained in many martial arts, while others are mystics, diplomats and wise masters, very respected in their own country.

CHARLATAN

The scoundrels’ community is a vast rabble of vagrants, gypsies, beggars, hucksters, street acrobats, actors, artists and entertainers who travel from Fief to Fief practicing all sorts of arts, ingenuities and swindles in order to “earn” a few florins, some wine and an accommodation for the night. This colorful and ragged underworld is made up of the rascals, swindlers and rogues who people the seediest parts of the cities and travel through the Wilderness in large groups, in order to protect each other in case of need.

MERCENARY CAPTAIN

Warlords, mercenary captains, hardened veterans, officers leading small regiments, Barbary pirates, land and seafaring commanders, quartermasters expert in strategies, armaments and provisioning: most of the world still has to be reconquered, a limitless battlefield for the Macabre War... and also for more mundane battles. A good leader, an expert strategist, or anybody good at leading people is never out of work.

COURTESAN

Noblemen, princes, lords and all sorts of aristocrats: these refined and learned individuals often have some extremely useful qualities, usually lacking in scoundrels, warriors and scholars. Many courtesans are cunning and talented planners, used to the intrigues of the courts and to the greater interplay among European powers. Then there are others who are more exotic, such as the unsettling retinue of the Voivode of Hungary or the Eunuchs sent by the Sultans and Egypt.

Chapter Two

Character Creation

DEAD HUNTER

Many Fiefs have established special corps of men-at-arms, foot soldiers and rangers, such as Navarra's Matamuertos, specifically to patrol their borders or to enter the wild lands to destroy any Stray coming too close to the Fief. These wardens travel alone or in small groups, resort to ambushes, traps and surprise attacks, and are usually armed with short blades. There are also unaffiliated adventurers and itinerant hunters who ply this trade, since some Fiefs pay 50 florins, or a similar amount, for each Dead's head. Some Dead Hunters make use of a kind of special pistols, called Petronels, whose longer barrels muffle the report of the shot, so that the noise does not attract any other Dead in the vicinity.

GRAVEDIGGER

Gravediggers are often hired among the most destitute and the outcasts, both in the cities and in the countryside, and at times even among inmates, Tainted and slaves. Their task is to dispose of the bodies of the departed in a safe way, and to get rid of the Dead after any outbreak of the Plague within a Fief. As unskilled laborers, They work in close contact with the Plague Doctors and the Friars of Death. They are always equipped with their characteristic Mask, a Misericorde and a well-honed Last Hope, as well as plenty of Cautery doses.

HOSPITALLER

Also called God's Bankers, the members of this order are widespread through many Mediterranean islands and ports, and in the Levant. The

Hospitallers run small military enclaves and guarantee safety on the sea to their passengers, as well as to merchants and ship owners who can pay for their services. More than for their prowess in a fight, they are renowned for their faith in the Church of Damascus, their seafaring and healing abilities, and their loan and credit banks which form the widest banking network from Gibraltar to the mysterious Levant.

INVENTOR

Real geniuses, incomparable artists, Moorish mathematicians heirs to the wisdom of the past, scholars researching algebra, geometry and physics, Jewish grammarians and numerologists, European engineers willing to experiment the most daring mechanical and architectural solutions, clockmakers and clockworkers, artists and smelters, sappers and architects, real Renaissance men with an expertise in all arts, sciences and technologies: these individuals are among the most important symbols of Man's rebirth from the mists of the Darkest Age.

Their mechanical, magnetic, optic and architectural marvels are activated by levers and gears, hinges and tie-rods, are fueled by steam and spring mechanisms, gunpowder and inflammable oil, the power of lightning and of the wind.

Inventors almost always are on the payroll of the lord of a Fief or work in a workshop or factory equipped with any raw material and tool they may need to create prototypes and machines that someday will finally defeat the Plague Spawn.

Chapter Two

Character Creation

ISCARIOT

The sect known as the Iscariots is a religious and warrior order born among those Jews scattered throughout the Levant, and it has now spread through European and African Fiefs as well. It is possible, for example, to find official headquarters of this sect in the Abrahamic Republic of Salerno, the Sultanate of Granada and the kingdoms of Aragon and Aquitaine. Iscariots profess a fighting faith in the only God and actively take part in the defense of any Fief harboring them; their devotion is such, however, that they also help any man who is in serious trouble. They are among the best Dead Hunters in the world, trained to attack and destroy the Plague Spawn both in the Wilderness and within the Fiefs, and even in the Cities of Sorrow. Moreover, they also act as spies, saboteurs and assassins against whoever poses a real threat of using the Plague against the Fiefs: necromancers, vivisectors, infectors, felons, mad kings who have at their disposal small “hordes” of the Dead and powerful Tyrants. And yet, rumor has it that Iscariots have a secret agenda and that they are dangerous and untrustworthy hired assassins.

MAN-AT-ARMS

Foot soldiers, crossbowmen, pikemen, halberdiers and arquebusiers: the Macabre War is still going on and constantly needs strong arms, firm hands and steel hearts. Mercenary companies can be found everywhere and they put themselves in the service of the highest bidder, helping the lords of the weakest Fiefs to reconquer some of the Wilderness, old fortresses and lost territories. German Landsknechts and the *Bande Grigie* Florentine company

are among the best mercenary groups of this kind, trained to use any weapon and strategy to reach their goal. Each Fief and king also has his own soldiers, fighters and armed men who serve in the cities and in the reconquered lands on a regular basis. Lucca Guards and Suleiman's Janissaries are two examples of excellence renowned all over the Mediterranean countries.

MAN OR WOMAN OF THE CLOTH

Military chaplains of the Church of Avignon, Friars of the Confraternities of Death who look after the Morituri and take care of the deceased, Mourner priests belonging to the Copt Church, schismatic, charismatic, ecumenical, apostolic, separatists, orthodox or Catholic monks and priests, country friars and city prelates, amanuenses and clerics, members of the mendicant orders, deacons, presbyters and conversi, even members of movements which have been declared heretical: some men and women have hung on to their faith through the horrors of this macabre age and use it as their North star, guiding their path. Others have chosen this path out of personal convenience, and exploit their position for other purposes.

MONK OF MERCY/ NUN OF THE ROSARY

The Christian order of the Monks of Mercy, together with its female equivalent, the Nuns of the Rosary, is independent from the Church of Avignon and follows the rule of the so-called “Theban Obedience”, which has its core in Saint Maurice Abbey, in the New Swiss Confederation.

These monks and nuns' motto is “Ora et Ultiora” (Pray and Destroy) and they fulfil their holy obligation by protecting

Chapter Two
Character Creation



Chapter Two

Character Creation

the helpless and destroying the Plague Spawn wherever they are. The Monks are expert in bare-handed combat, but they also train in the use of some special weapons, such as the animated Crucifix, the war Rosary and the hobnailed Crosier.

They show their devotion by granting the Dead what is called the Eight Sacrament: the Last Death. At times, they can resort to their fighting arts also against brigands, marauders or other kinds of living people who “strayed away from God’s grace”, but in that case they use their training only to stun such lost sheep and render them harmless. After the schism from the Church of Avignon, the position of Abbot of Saint Maurice is also the highest religious office in the Confederation.

ORDAINED KNIGHT

Besides the most renowned ones – the Paladins of France, the Hospitallers and the Teutonic Knights – in the New Kingdoms there are many chivalric orders. The Mamluks of the Sultan of Sevastopol, the French Knights of Saint Lazarus, Navarra Campeadores, and the Green Knights of Aragon are the most famous examples of light cavalry, but each mercenary company, Fief or kingdom has such an army of light cavalry or harbors some noble, religious or martial chivalric order, each with its own distinctive features. The Mamluks, for example, are real experts in acrobatics and special maneuvers, while the Campeadores are true masters in the use of the lance, the Green Knights are also explorers and rangers, and the Knights of Saint Lazarus are supported by their unshakable faith.

PALADIN OF THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE

The Knights of the Order of Saint Galgano, or Paladins of France, are devote to the Pope-King and to the Holy Roman Empire. They take an oath to serve and honor the Order and the Empire, and their faith in the Church of Avignon and the Christian God is unshakable. Even when they do not have some special mission to carry out on behalf of the General Cardinals or the Count-Bishops, they follow the commandments of the Pope-King, fight against the Dead, defend the needy and the travelers, hunt down and face infectors, sorcerers, heretics, necromancers and Tainted. All Paladins usually get an augmented arms,, or some similar weaponry, as part of their special gear.

PLAGUE DOCTOR

The Plague Doctors are physicians who are specialized in treating both the Dead and the Morituri, and in studying the Plague and Atrament. They have been the source of most of the acquired knowledge about the Plague, and are constantly looking for better therapies or even the legendary “Theriac”, a cure that could permanently overcome this scourge.

Even if they have not succeeded yet, Plague Doctors constantly swap theories and discoveries from one end of the world to the other and have contributed far more than many others to the rise of the New Kingdoms.

Chapter Two
Character Creation



Chapter Two

Character Creation

RED ODALISQUE

The Red Odalisques form the elite guard of the Sultana Soraya of Granada. They can belong to any race or religion, but in the Harem of Granada they all get trained in the arts of seduction, disguise and spying techniques, and in a special martial discipline known as the “Blade Dance”, which requires the use of two sabers. Each Odalisque takes an oath to serve Soraya and Granada, and is ready to accept any compromise in order to fulfil her lady’s wishes. Some suspect that there may be some men – more or less effeminate – among their ranks.

SCOUNDREL

Even in this macabre age, the world is still full of scoundrels who live one day to the next, rogues engaged in robberies, scams and ambushes, sea marauders and highwaymen, wanted men and deserters seeking shelter in the Wilderness, lowlifes, troublemakers and crooks hiding within the Fiefs, and even Felons who turned their back to the Human race. These men are not always bad, sadistic or ruthless, but they can simply act out of sheer self-interest, vengeance, pettiness or some devious intent.

TEUTONIC INQUISITOR

The Inquisitors are the members of a secular corps of investigators and witch hunters widespread in the Teutonic Principalities. It also has spies and observers in the nearby Fiefs. The main task these dour and disquieting individuals are appointed to is to find and eradicate Infectors, necromancers, felons and witches within the Principalities, even if at times they also take care of

common criminals. “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live”, this has always been their motto, but unfortunately the definition of “witch” varies from one Inquisitor to another. They often cannot understand how there can be Fiefs where people can live side by side with these “enemies of the human kind”, and they infiltrate within those countries in order to spy on their foes or to secretly destroy them. The most extremist views of their Order aside, Inquisitors are universally recognized as the best investigators in the New Kingdoms.

TEUTONIC KNIGHT

The Order of the Teutonic Knights is the real political and military power ruling the Teutonic Federate Principalities, an efficient, ruthless body of troops perfectly organized to carry on the Macabre War and feared by all rival Fiefs.

These so-called “Black Knights” do not disdain the use of the most modern weapons, most of all those utilizing gunpowder, and many are the new inventions and contraptions they choose to adopt year by year. They are equipped with both firearms and melee weapons, and trained to defend the reconquered territories, patrol the Wilderness and the borders, and secure roads and rivers.

WITCH

Wise peasant women, soothsayers with a knowledge of the occult, Jewish mystics and Saracen hermeticists, fortune tellers and astrologers, pagan keepers of forgotten knowledge, grim warlocks and benandanti, curanderos and hexenmeisters, snake charmers and wild beasts trainers: unlike acknowledged physicians, alchemists and inventors,

Chapter Two

Character Creation

witches are relegated to the fringes of society, often driven away or despised by the rulers of the Fiefs, and nearer to rascals, charlatans and swindlers than to scholars and academics. They often live traveling from Fief to Fief and plying their itinerant trade whenever asked to or offering their services in exchange for a few alms. Sometimes, they are persecuted as heretics, sorcerers or infectors. A renowned exception are the Fair Dames of Aragon, a powerful, branched out order to which Queen Lucrezia herself is rumored to belong.



1. RACE

Your character can be a normal human being, also called “Untainted”, or can be a “Tainted”. These are not two different races in the literal meaning of the word, but since they are different from each other it is better to consider them separately.

No matter whether your character is Untainted or Tainted, he can originate from any European, North African or Levantine country.

UNTAINED

These are normal human beings who therefore follow Savage Worlds usual rules and start the game with a free Edge.

TAINTED

The Tainted are men and women infected with the Plague. Atrament has drenched their body fluids and tissues, causing their body to mutate, but they are still fully alive and human, as far as emotions, instincts and feelings are concerned.

In strict game terms, however, the tainted are dangerous Plague immune carriers! Their plight marks their bodies: their skin is diaphanous and their swollen, dark veins can clearly be seen all over their bodies. The Tainted are immune from the plague because their body is already filled with Atrament, which means two things: the contagion cannot kill them, and at their death – however they may die – they rise up again as awful Possessed.

Because of their emaciated looks and of their ability to transmit the Plague both while still alive and after they die, the Tainted are shunned by most Untainted, which is why they usually form isolated communities or get driven away and persecuted.

Chapter Two

Character Creation

Doomed to the Affliction: The Plague cannot kill you, but you can die in many other ways. When this happens, you are doomed to rise again as dreadful Plague Spawn.

Contagious: Your blood is infected with Atrament and therefore extremely dangerous for any Untainted. Whoever ingests – or otherwise gets in contact with – your blood gets automatically infected with it. A critical failure on a Healing roll to treat your wounds means that the person treating you (if Untainted) has been careless and got infected. The same goes if it is you who are treating an Untainted.

Outsider: Because of their grotesque appearance and their dangerousness, the Tainted suffer the Outsider Hindrance towards the Untainted and in most Fiefs.

Plague immune: Your body has already been infected through a wound, an accidental contamination or even in your mother's womb, so you do not have to worry about contracting the Plague anymore. Moreover, your body has developed a peculiar resistance to any

other illness, and you get +2 to all Vigor rolls to avoid contracting any.

Emaciated: Increasing a Tainted's Vigor costs 2 points at the moment of creating the character. A character who becomes Tainted during the game has his Vigor die reduced by one type (d4 minimum).

Free Edge: Even if they are different from non-infected human beings, the Tainted are still human and start the game with a free Edge.

2. ATTRIBUTES

In order to determine your character's five Attributes follow the usual Savage Worlds deluxe rules. Each Attribute starts with a d4, and you have 5 points with which to raise the type of die up to d12.

3. SKILLS

In order to determine your character's skills, distribute 15 points among them, following Savage Worlds Deluxe usual rules.

Knowledge

Knowledge (Battle): In Ultima Forsan, this Skill also includes strategies to fight the Dead and the hordes generated by the Plague; it can therefore be used in mass battles against both the Dead and regular armies.

Knowledge (Plague): It applies to the various Plague Spawn's physiology and allows you to know some of those monsters' special abilities, their strengths and weaknesses, their behavior. Characters endowed with this Skill know Dead, Fell Beasts and Abominations far better and more deeply than any normal person, because they read reports or collected statements of all kinds, even about the most uncommon creatures. As a free action, a character with at least a d4 in this Skill can make a roll whenever he meets any Plague Spawn. With each success and raise, he gets from the Game Master a useful information about one of the Plague Spawn special abilities. The character can make only one roll for each kind of Plague Spawn.

Chapter Two

Character Creation

Note: Driving and Piloting skills are not available. In order to drive wagons and carriages, simply use Riding.

Note: Characters with the Arcane Background (Alchemy) use as their arcane skill the new arcane skill Alchemy, while those with the Arcane Background (Witchcraft) use the new arcane skill Witchcraft.

4. LANGUAGES

Your character speaks his native language, plus a number of languages equal to half the value of his Smarts die (Ultima Forsan uses the Multiple Languages Setting rule). The most widespread language in the Mediterranean area is Florentine. According to the character's origin and background, he can speak, for example, Spanish, French, Arabic, German, Greek or Hungarian. More learned characters probably also know Latin and Ancient Greek.

Note: While in this world most people are illiterate, Ultima Forsan heroes can always read and write, unless they chose the Illiterate Hindrance.

5. EDGES AND HINDRANCES

Your character can take up to one Major and two Minor Hindrances, and use the points according to Savage Worlds Deluxe usual rules in order to improve Attributes or Skills, or to get new Edges, or more starting money. If you want, you can choose more Hindrances, but you do not get more points.

A Major Hindrance is worth 2 points; a Minor Hindrance is worth one point.

- For 2 points you can raise an Attribute by 1 point or choose an Edge.

- For 1 point you can gain another Skill point or gain 500 additional florins.

See also the Edges and Hindrances section below.

6. GEAR

Your character has at his disposal 500 florins to buy his starting gear. See Gear section.

7. DERIVED STATISTICS

Calculate your character's derived statistics:

- **Charisma** is 0, unless modified by Edges or Hindrances;

- **Pace** is 6", unless modified by Edges or Hindrances;

- **Parry** is 2 plus half the Fighting die value;

- **Toughness** is 2 plus half the Vigor die value.

8. FINISHING TOUCHES

Finish your character by giving him an appropriate name and background. Ask yourself about his past, where does he come from, what are his ambitions, what does he think about the Plague and the Dead, what does he put his trust in and what does he fear. If Tarots are used as Action Cards (See page 112), choose his Wild Arcane.

Chapter Two

Character Creation

EDGES AND HINDRANCES IN ULTIMA FORSAN

NOT AVAILABLE EDGES:

The following Savage Worlds Deluxe Edges – and therefore also other Edges which require them – are not available in Ultima Forsan:

- * **Adept**
- * **Giant killer**
- * **Arcane Background (Psionics Arts, Magic, Miracles, Superpowers)**
- * **Champion**
- * **Holy/unholy warrior**
- * **Gadgeteer**
- * **Wizard**
- * **Mentalist**
- * **Powersurge**
- * **Soul drain**
- * **Power Points**
- * **Arcane Resistance**
- * **Rapid Recharge**
- * **Rock and Roll**
- * **No Mercy**

NEW HINDRANCES

WEAK STOMACH (MAJOR)

This character never saw, or never got used to, the horrors of the Plague and must take a Fear test every time he meets one. You can spend an Advance to remove this Hindrance.

NEW EDGES

BACKGROUND EDGES

AL-BARSARK

Requirements: Novice, Strength d8+, Spirits d6+, usually only Sicily Normans.

al-Barsarkun warriors are descended from the legendary Norse berserks. Fueled by their Islamic faith, they turn into raging zealots ready to tear the hordes of the Plague apart. At times, some of them have trouble holding themselves in check even when facing some Tainted, because they see them as another kind of Plague Spawn.

Upon meeting any Plague Spawn, an al-Barsark must immediately make a Spirits roll. If it is successful, the character is imbued with a mystic rage and throws himself at any foe.

While in the presence of any Plague Spawn, an al-Barsark gets the same positive and negative effects of the Savage Worlds Edge Berserk, as if he failed a Smarts roll, and he also gets +2 to the rolls to recover from Shaken.

Moreover, al-Barsarkun carry all over their body elaborate tattoos depicting verses from the Koran. They are very proud of showing these tattoos, proof of their bravery and faith, which is why they never wear armor; if they wear one, they lose all the benefits connected to this Edge. They can still use a shield with no penalty, though.

ARCANE BACKGROUND (ALCHEMY)

Requirements: Novice, Alchemy d4+

Alchemists study the properties of matter and substances, and use their knowledge to create potions and ointments.

Their arcane Skill is Alchemy. See Setting Rules section for further details.

Chapter Two
Character Creation



Chapter Two

Character Creation

ARCANE BACKGROUND (WITCHCRAFT)

Requirements: Novice, Witchcraft d4+

Mystics, occult experts, fortune tellers, snake charmers and charlatans... they all are Witches.

Their arcane Skill is Witchcraft. See Setting Rules for further details.

COMBAT EDGES

BIG-GAME HUNT

Requirements: Veteran, fighting d8+, Knowledge (Plague) d4+, Brave, Levelheaded

Some fighters, real veterans of the Macabre War, have faced enough Abominations and Chimeras to know how to take advantage of their weaknesses and lower instincts.

When facing any Plague Spawn labeled as Large or Huge, they add to their damage rolls the bonus allowed to attack rolls against these creatures.

HEAD STRIKE

Requirements: Novice, Strength d6+, Fighting d8+, Levelheaded

The character is particularly used to smash, pierce or cut off the Dead's head, anticipating their moves and attacks. This Edge halves the penalty to head strikes in a melee against the Dead.

HEAD SHOT

Requirements: Novice, Shooting d8+, Steady Hands

The character is particularly used to hit the Dead's head and he can anticipate their moves and their shuffling gait. This Edge halves the penalty to head shots when using a ranged weapon against the Dead.

PATH OF HELL

Requirements: Seasoned, Monk of Mercy/Nun of the Rosary, Fighting d8+

When adopting this style, a Monk can perform unarmed attacks and use the Rapid Attack at Parry -1 (instead of -2) and Attack -3 (instead of -4).

The Monk/Nun must chose if and which path to use at the beginning of his round and cannot change it till the next round.

PATH OF PARADISE

Requirements: Seasoned, Monk of Mercy/Nun of the Rosary, Fighting d8+

When adopting this style, a Monk can perform unarmed attacks and add +2 to Fighting rolls to inflict nonlethal damage. The Monk/Nun must chose if and which path to use at the beginning of his round and cannot change it till the next round.

PATH OF PURGATORY

Requirements: Seasoned, Monk of Mercy/Nun of the Rosary, Fighting d8+

When adopting this fighting style, a Monk adds +2 to all types of Push attempt rolls.

The Monk/Nun must chose if and which path to use at the beginning of his round and cannot change it till the next round.

PATH OF LIMBO

Requisiti: Heroic, Path of Paradise, Path of Purgatory, Path of Hell, Agility d8+, Spirits d10+

As he/she reaches the end of his mystic and martial path, a Monk/Nun can become almost "invisible" to the weakest Dead, that is, those with Smarts (A) or (D) (the Game Master knows which is which). The Monk can activate this Path only if there aren't any Dead nearby, and with a successful

Chapter Two

Character Creation

Agility roll he becomes fully invisible to the Dead, provided that he does not run and makes only free actions. However, he must repeat his roll at each round.

The Monk must chose if and which path to use at the beginning of his round and cannot change it till the next round.

PROFESSIONAL EDGES

DEADCATCHER

Requirements: Novice, Agility d6+, Knowledge (Plague) d4+

Deadcatchers can easily be found in many recently recovered cities, just as in others too near to a poorly dredged river or as sprawling as Milan. This trade falls within the Gravediggers' Guild and it is a sort of middle ground between Gravediggers and Dead Hunters, so much so that often Deadcatchers are just Guild apprentices who, while aiming for a better status, get their training carrying out the most disgusting and vile tasks required by the Guild's trade. Deadcatchers have to deal with Fell Rats and other similar, nasty beasts wandering between watercourses and sewers, the Opprobriums and Carrions scattered in the alleys, in old cellars and among the ruins of cities not fully reclaimed yet... in short, they deal with all the secondary forms of Plague Spawn and of the Plague itself that find their way into a city. They usually earn 1 florin per each Fell Rat or Opprobrium they manage to catch and destroy.

A character choosing this Edge at the start of the game gets for free a Deadcatcher Vest, a Plague Doctor's Mask, a lantern, a Last Hope hatchet, one vial of Cautery and a Misericorde, and a War spade. Moreover, the character does not suffer the penalty usually applied to attacks

against Small creatures (of any kind) and adds +2 to attack rolls against any kind of Swarm.

GRAVEDIGGER

Requirements: Novice, Strength d6+, Knowledge (Plague) d4+

In many cities and Fiefs, Gravediggers are the Macabre War – or better still, the Macabre “peace” – handymen.

A character choosing this Edge at the start of the game gets for free a Plague Doctor's Mask, a War spade, one Last Hope hatchet, three vials of Cautery and a Misericorde.

Moreover, the character adds +2 to all Knowledge (Plague) rolls, and to Notice rolls pertaining Atrament (of which he knows well the look and smell, at least), and contagion (for example, to discover if a person is infected or Tainted and tries to hide it).

Finally, the character also adds +2 to Fear rolls induced by the Plague Spawn.

HORSEMAN

Requirements: Novice, Agility d6+, Riding d8+

Horsemen are extremely adept at carrying out any kind of manoeuver with their mount. They get a +2 to Riding rolls and to Agility Tricks while on horse, provided that they suffer no penalty due to Encumbrance.

ISCARIOT

Requirements: Novice, Agility d8+, Spirit d6+, Fighting d8+, Stealth d8+

Iscairiot are among the best Dead Hunters, trained to attack and bring down the Plague Spawn with lethal precision and speed.

In particular, they are trained in the use of fist weapons and daggers, which they can

Chapter Two

Character Creation

use as if having both the Ambidextrous and the Two Hands Edges, provided that they suffer no penalty due to Encumbrance.

While free from this penalty, they can also use Agility instead of Strength to calculate melee damage when using fist weapons and daggers (they still have to obey to the Minimum Strength rule, though).

They get for free a full leather armor (corselet, arms, leggings), a cowed cloak and two fist weapons or daggers of their choice.

KNIGHT

Requirements: Novice, Strength d8+, Spirits d6+, Vigor d6+, Riding d8+, Fighting d8+

Knights are men and women who took an oath and serve an authority, be it a nobleman, the Pope-King or the head of a military, martial or religious Order. Theirs is a sacred oath which requires obedience and an immediate answer to any call to arms, even when this means to ride toward certain death.

All Knights get a war horse, a full chain hauberk (corselet, arms, leggings), an enclosed steel helmet, a long sword and a medium shield carrying their chivalry order coat of arms.

A Knight can always expect to find shelter at any seat of his order, or with the Lord he owes fealty to.

Moreover, according to the Order a Knight belongs to, the following effects are applied:

Knight of the Collar: These Knights have their main seat in Geneva and they share the same objectives as the city's bailiff and notables, with whom they can get shelter. They get a gold collar of the value of

2,000 florins. Misplacing it (in any way) is a grave dishonor, which usually entails expulsion from the order.

Navarra Campeador: Navarra Campeadores are loyal to their kingdom and Queen Blanche. They have the same characteristics as Ordained Knights (see below), but instead of the Command Edge they get the Trademark Weapon Edge (knight's lance) and of course a knight's lance.

Knight of Saint Lazarus: The Knights of Saint Lazarus are a religious order in the direct service of Pope Constantin II. They get the Levelheaded Edge for free, even when they do not have the necessary requirements. Instead of the above mentioned gear, they get a horse, a pot helm, a coat of mail (covers the torso), a medium shield and a long sword, and they can find shelter in any ecclesiastical building belonging to the Church of Avignon, as well as in any monastery, convent and abbey belonging to any Christian religious order.

Military Knight: These knights belong to a militia, a regular army or a mercenary company such as the Bande Grigie. They have the same characteristics as Ordained Knights, but have no right to any kind of shelter. On the other hand, if expelled from their order they are not considered as enemies and do not suffer a -2 to Charisma (unless guilty of a really serious infraction, to the Game Master's discretion).

Ordained Knight: Knights ordained by a nobleman are very common. They get the Command Edge for free, even if they do not have the necessary requirements, and can find shelter with any nobleman in

Chapter Two

Character Creation

their own Fief, as well as in the Fiefs allied with their patron.

Teutonic Knight: The Teutonic Knights owe obedience to the masters of their order. Besides the above mentioned gear, they also get one arquebus with 10 shots, a bastard sword and a plate barding. They can find shelter with any nobleman and in all the military buildings of the Teutonic Principalities.

Green Knight of Aragon: Also called knights errant, the knights in the service of Queen Lucrezia owe loyalty and obedience to her. Specialized in fighting the Dead in the Wilderness, instead of the above mentioned gear they get a horse, a full leather armor (corselet, arms and leggings), a pot helm, a long sword, a battle axe, a small shield carrying the coat of arms of their order, a longbow, a quiver and 20 arrows. They also get the Steady Hands Edge, even if they do not have the necessary requirements.

Dragon: The Dragons are the elite corps of Dead Hunters of the Kingdom of Hungary. Instead of the above mentioned gear they get a horse, a pot helm, a leather jacket (covers torso and arms), a scimitar and an arquebus. They can find shelter in any Fief of the kingdom. Moreover, they get the Steady Hands Edge even if they do not have the necessary requirements.

Black Dragon: Only the Tainted can enlist in this elite corps of the Black Army. They all get the same benefits as the Dragons, but they get a coat of mail (covers torso and arms) instead of the leather jacket and, a silver pin in the shape of a skull pierced by a Misericorde. Owning that pin by itself gives a +2 to Persuasion and Intimidation rolls against the subjects of the kingdom of Hungary.

Mamluk: Instead of the above mentioned gear, these Saracen knights get a horse, a pot helm, a coat of mail (covers torso), a medium shield and a scimitar. They find shelter in all the Moorish and Saracen Fiefs. Moreover, they get the Horseman Edge even if they do not have the necessary requirements.

Hospitaller (Additional Requirements: Boating d4+, Healing d4+):

The Hospitallers are a Christian chivalric order, loyal to the Church of Damasco. They find shelter in any building belonging to their order or to the Patriarchy of Damasco, as well as in any monastery, convent and abbey belonging to any Christian religious order. They are always accepted as officers on any ship of the order. They also get the Healer Edge.

Paladin of the Holy Roman Empire: The Paladins of the Holy Roman Empire form a very selected elite corps directly in the service of Pope Constantin II. Besides the above mentioned gear, they also get an augmented arm (See Gear) and can find shelter in all the ecclesiastical buildings belonging to the Church of Avignon, as well as in any monastery, convent and abbey belonging to any Christian religious order.

Hussar: The Hussars form the light cavalry corps of the Kingdom of Hungary and their members are chosen among all the Untainted of the kingdom. They mostly patrol the borders and coordinate all the other military corps, carrying messages, pennons and embassies. Instead of the above mentioned gear, they get a horse, a pot helm, a coat of mail (covers the torso), a medium shield, a scimitar and a spear. They find shelter in any Fief of the

Chapter Two

Character Creation



Chapter Two

Character Creation

kingdom. They also get the Horseman Edge even if they do not have the necessary requirements.

Black Hussar: Only the Tainted can enlist in this elite corps of the Black Army. They get the same benefits as the Hussars but their gear consists of a war horse, a coat of mail (covers torso and arms), a bastard sword and a Misericorde, and a silver pin shaped as a skull pierced by a Misericorde. Owning that pin by itself gives a +2 to Persuasion and Intimidation rolls against the subjects of the kingdom.

MONK OF MERCY/NUN OF THE ROSARY

Requirements: Novice, Spirits d6+, Fighting d6+

A character belonging to this order gets the Martial Artist Edge; he also gets a dark, legs unhampering habit, a pair of sacred leather gloves also called Chirothecae, which cover both the hand and the whole arm and give 1 Armor point, and some special weapons. Wielded by anybody else, these are considered just improvised weapons, but in the hands of a Monk or a Nun they are true weapons, with the following characteristics:

Nuns of the Rosary:

- War Rosary (damage: Str+d4; Reach 1; Weight 2; no -2 draw penalty if worn around the neck);
- Iron thurible (damage: Str+d8; 2 hands, Parry -1; Reach 1; Weight 12).

Monks of Mercy:

- Animated Crucifix (damage: Str+d4; Weight 2; the blade is hidden inside the long arm of the cross);
- Hobnailed Crosier (damage: Str+d6; 2 hands; Parry +1; Reach 1; Weight 10).

A Monk finds shelter at all religious buildings belonging to his order, as well as at any monastery, convent and abbey belonging to any Christian religious order, but he must follow the rule of a frugal life of service to the community and must obey to the authority of the Abbot of Saint Maurice. Finally, Monks acquire the Pacifist Hindrance (Major) described in *Savage Worlds Deluxe*. It must not be counted as one of the Hindrances chosen by the character (and therefore doesn't give extra points, also leaving the character free to choose another Major Hindrance).

PLAGUE DOCTOR

Requirements: Novice, Knowledge (Plague) d6+, Healing d6+

These physicians devote themselves to studying all the aspects of the Plague in the hope of someday discovering a cure against the contagion.

A character choosing this Edge at the start of the game gets a free Plague Doctor's Mask and a bag of medical instruments.

A deep study of the Plague allows a character with this Edge to add +2 to all Knowledge (Plague) rolls.

Moreover, he can also try to prevent Atrament from spreading through the tissues of a newly infected person. If a character has been wounded by a Dead, within 5 rounds from the contagion a Plague Doctor can try to surgically remove the infected tissues through a Healing roll at -4 (or -6 if he doesn't have his instruments bag handy). If the roll is successful, the infected parts get successfully removed and the character avoids contracting the Plague without having to amputate the wounded body part. This kind of surgery may even save a character with a torso wound.

Chapter Two

Character Creation

Note: All the other effects of the suffered wounds, as illustrated in the Bites and Scratches Table, are still effective, so the character can still suffer the effects of the Injuries, be them temporary or permanent.

RED ODALISQUE

Requirements: Novice, Agility d8+, Spirits d6+, Fighting d6+, Persuasion d6+, Attractive

The Red Odaliskues are the elite guards and spies of the Red Sultana Soraya. Just like Knights do, they take an oath of obeying their Sultana's will.

Thanks to their training in the "Blade Dance", Red Odaliskues can fight with two scimitars or sabers, as if having the Ambidexterous and Two Fisted Edges, provided that they have no Encumbrance penalties.

While free from any Encumbrance penalty, Red Odaliskues can also use Agility instead of Strength to cause melee damage when using sabers or scimitars (they still have to follow the Minimum Strength rule).

They get two free sabers, or scimitars, and elegant, custom-made gowns of red veils, which add +1 to Charisma in those circumstances where status is important.

TEUTONIC INQUISITOR

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d6+, Streetwise d6+, Knowledge (Plague) d6+, Investigation d6+, Notice d6+

The Teutonic Principalities Inquisition is a powerful and feared civil organization, whose task is to track down and eradicate infectors, sorcerers, felons and necromancers.

As an Inquisitor, your character gets the Investigator Edge (even if he doesn't have the necessary requirements) and a flintlock pistol with 10 shots; he finds shelter with all the authorities in the Principalities, but he must obey to his superiors within the Inquisition Order and to the Teutonic Knights.

WEIRD EDGES

AUGMENTED ARMOR

Requirements: Novice

Somehow, the character manages to get hold of a part of Augmented Armor of his choice (see Gear).

BAFFLE THE DEAD

Requirements: Novice, Tainted, Smarts d6+, Spirits d8+

Mysteriously, some tainted can influence the Dead. While undoubtedly useful, this innate ability unfortunately often has also the effect of fueling the hate against the Tainted, seen as infectors or necromancers.

Baffle the Dead allows you to use one action to concentrate and try to confound a Dead. You must be able to see the creature and defeat it in an opposed Spirits roll. If you are successful, the creature is Shaken. If you get a raise, you can immediately control it and make it move the way you want, which leaves the creature Shaken.

This effect doesn't cause any wounds, even if used on an already Shaken creature.

This edge is effective only on the Dead with type (A) or (D) Smarts. The Game Master knows which they are!

Chapter Two

Character Creation

FOOL THE DEAD

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d8+, Spirit d6+, Persuasion d6+

This character's empathic gestures can influence even whatever residue of consciousness the Dead have left; he can resort to Smarts Tricks against any type of Dead.

Moreover, the character adds +2 to Smarts Tricks against the living.

FULL STOCK

Requirements: Novice, Riding or Boating d6+

There are people who have trouble parting from their things, even those apparently less useful, because they are persuaded that anything can come handy, sooner or later.

This Edge has two effects. In the first place, the character starts the game owning a mount, vehicle or vessel of his choice costing less than 10,000 florins.

In the second place, when he can access his mount, vehicle or craft, the character can retrieve an item as if having the Scavenger Edge, and the dimensions of the tool or instrument thus found, while still depending on the Game Master's discretion, are not bound to those of a pocket or a bag, but to those of the vehicle. Moreover, besides any instrument or tool, the character may also retrieve alchemic components or other kinds of supplies (rations, ammunitions, clothing, and so on). In such cases, it will be up to the GM to determine their quality and quantity.

Note: The character can use this effect with any vehicle, vessel or mount belonging to him, if he owns more than one.

If the character also has the Scavenger Edge, then he can use it twice per session

and decide each time if to retrieve the item from the vehicle or from his own pockets.

MECHANICAL PROSTHESIS

Requirements: Novice, Wild Card, Missing body part

One way or another, the character manages to get hold of a mechanical prosthesis. Thanks to the incredible progress of science, a lost hand, arm, ear or even an eye can be replaced with an artificial part built by some brilliant craftsman, which can approximately do the same things the original part did. In order to acquire this Edge, the character must be able to obtain the services of a barber-surgeon and an inventor. The prosthesis cancels any Hindrance corresponding to the Injury or mutilation. It can be designed and decorated according to the character's wishes.

For further details, see Gear.

SARDONIC GRIN

Requirements: Novice, Wild Card, Untainted, infected by the Plague only.

Realizing to be doomed to die, with just a few days of life left, is the kind of experience that changes most people.

If your character has been so unlucky that he has contracted the Plague during the game, he immediately gets this Edge which, on the other hand, cannot be obtained in any other way: you cannot get it through an Advance.

To begin with, your character gets an extra free Benny per session. All his attack and damage rolls against the Plague Spawn get a +1, and the character ignores the penalties from any Wound inflicted by these creatures, as well as any Fear effect.

Chapter Two

Character Creation

Moreover, should his Wounds make him Incapacitated, the character still has one last round in which to act normally. Of course, the Tainted can never get this Edge.

TAINTING

Requirements: Heroic, Human, Vigor d8+

This character has seen and faced unspeakable horrors, has fought against uncountable hordes of the Dead. Something went wrong, however, and in spite of his skills and experience he got the Plague!

Luckily, the infection is mild, perhaps due to a minimal exposure to the Plague over the time.

The effect is that after a few days of feverish – and at times extremely painful – recovery, the character turns into a Tainted: besides seeing his own body drastically change, he also gets all the traits belonging to the Tainted.

LEGENDARY EDGES

BEYOND THE THRESHOLD

Requirements: Legendary, Wild Card, Tainted, Spirits d12+

Some Tainted are subject to an extremely rare phenomenon. With no apparent cause, their body begins to deteriorate and in the span of a few days they realize they are dead and going through even more mutations! In other cases, this awful realization comes more swiftly and clearly because of sudden death.

Regardless, the final effect is that the Tainted becomes an extremely rare creature called a Strix, a being suspended halfway between life and death, but still in full control of his conscience and actions (see also page 129).

Fiend: The character gets the Baffle the Dead Edge and all the Dead Special Abilities, but for Blind Hunger and Brain Death. He also loses the Doomed to the Affliction Ability and his being an Outsider extends to the Tainted as well.

DIES IRAE

Requirements: Legendary, Fighting d10+ or Throwing d10+ or Shooting d10+, Trademark Weapon

The hero's righteous rage against the hordes of the Plague is by now legendary, and so is his weapon, that meted out infinite slaughter. The weapon he uses more often, which is linked to the Trademark Weapon Edge, becomes a real relic, and therefore causes one extra die of damage to the Dead. Should the character lose his weapon, he also loses this Edge and its benefits because they are bound to the weapon in itself. The required skill depends on the type of weapon.

PERFECTED DEVICE

Requirements: Legendary, Arcane Background (Weird Science), Weird Science d10+

One of the powers chosen by the character becomes a somewhat more dependable than usual device.

Using the device doesn't cumulate with the penalty for maintaining one's powers; when using the perfected device, the character adds +1 to the roll to use it.

Moreover, if the character is Shaken or wounded, the device power is interrupted only if he gets 1 on a Smarts roll.

Finally, the perfected device power causes a Backlash only if the character gets a critical failure on his Arcane Skill roll.

Chapter Two
Character Creation



Bear



ere is a list of the Gear most commonly used by Ultima Forsan heroes. Some of the following items are specific to this setting and are explained

in detail in the notes. The florin is the standard monetary unit, accepted and commonly used on all markets, from Gibraltar to the Holy Land and Ruthenia. Other types of coins exist, of course, but for simplicity's sake all the prices and values in the game are represented in florins, considering that a coin's value is given by the metal it is made of.

ARMOR

AUGMENTED ARMOR

Augmented Arm: this augmented armor part protects the arm and adds +1 to Strength rolls for actions that involve the use of that arm, as well as to melee damage in attacks carried out with that arm. A character wearing two Augmented Arms and using a two-handed weapon adds +2 to Strength rolls and melee damage. The wearer is never considered unarmed, and can use the Arms as a weapon that inflicts Str+d4.

3.1 ARMOUR

TYPE	ARMOR	WEIGHT*	COST	NOTES
LEATHER				
Arms	+1	4	10	Cover arms
Corselet	+1	6	20	Covers torso
Leggings	+1	6	20	Cover legs
Deadcatcher's Vest	+1	16	60	Covers torso, legs, arms, 50% vs head shot; see notes
CHAIN HAUBERK				
Arms	+2	6	80	Cover arms
Corselet	+2	8	100	Covers torso
Leggings	+2	10	120	Cover legs
PLATE ARMOR				
Arms	+3	10	200	Cover arms
Corselet	+3	25	400	Covers torso
Leggings (greaves)	+3	15	300	Cover legs
HELMS				
Pot Helm	+3	4	75	50% vs head shot

Chapter Three Gear

Steel Helm (enclosed)	+3	8	150	Covers head
BARDING				
Light Barding	+1	10	250	For horses
Plate Barding	+3	30	1250	For horses
SHIELDS**				
Small shield (buckler)	-	8	25	+1 Parry
Medium Shield	-	12	50	+1 Parry, +2 Armor to ranged shots that hit
Large shield (pavise)	-	20	200	+2 Parry, +2 Armor to ranged shots that hit
* Effective weight when worn. Most armor weighs quite a bit more when carried rather than worn.				
** Shields protect only from attacks from the front and left (assuming a right-handed character).				

3.1.1 AUGMENTED ARMOR

TYPE	ARMOR	WEIGHT*	COST	NOTES
Augmented Arms	+3	6	5000	Covers one arm, see notes
Augmented Corselet	+3	30	5000	Covers torso, see notes
Augmented Helm	+3	10	5000	Covers head, see notes
Augmente Leggings	+3	0	5000	Cover legs, see notes

It is moreover possible to attach one of the following weapons to an Augmented Arm: crossbow, light crossbow, pistol, harquebus, bombard. To adapt and attach the weapon of choice to the Arm costs three times the cost of the weapon itself (which is included). Once installed, the weapon can be used at any moment, as if it were already in the hand, without having to draw it, and the character's hands stay free.

Of course, the weight of the weapon must be added to that of the augmented Arms.

Augmented Corselet: This augmented armor part protects the torso and allows to attach and optimize other augmented armor parts. Thanks to a system of hinges, springs and tie-rods, Augmented Arms add another +1 to Strength rolls and damage (for a total of +2 damage with one hand weapons and +3 with two-handed weapons), while augmented Leggings halve the weight of other attached parts (corselet, arms, helm).

Augmented Helm: This augmented armor part protects the head. A system of

prismatic lenses and cardanic sight adds +1 to ranged attacks.

Augmented Leggings: This augmented armor part protects both legs and causes no encumbrance thanks to a complex system of tie-rods and gears.

A character wearing full body Augmented Armor (Arms, Leggings, Corselet and Helm) has no exposed body parts that attacker might exploit with Called Shots.

Deadcatcher's Vest: A Deadcatcher's vest consists of leggings, tunic, boots, gloves and a hood. It protects the whole body, and thanks to tight fitting lacings and strings, it prevents small animals like rats from entering inside: in game terms, a character wearing the vest and a

Plague Doctor's Mask doesn't have "least armored spots", and the armor value must be applied to damage inflicted by Swarms.

WEAPONS

Arquebus: An arquebus inflicts 1d6 damage at Long Range, 2d6 damage at Medium Range and 3d6 damage at Short Range, and adds +2 to Shooting rolls because it shoots a spread of metal balls. It must be loaded with 2 "shots" in order to fire. It inflicts both piercing and bludgeoning damage, depending on which type of damage is more useful against the target.

3.2 RANGED WEAPONS

TYPE	RANGE	DMG	ROF	COST	WEIGHT	STR.	NOTES
BOWS AND CROSSBOWS							
Bow	12/24/48	2d6	1	200	3	d6	
Longbow	14/28/56	2d6	1	250	5	d8	
Crossbow	15/30/60	2d6	1	500	10	d6	AP 2, 2 actions to reload
Light Crossbow	6/12/24	2d4	1	200	3	-	AP 1
FIREARMS (BLACK POWDER) *							
Arquebus	4/8/16	Note	1	300	12	d6	2 actions to reload
Bombard	14/28/56	Note	1	700	30	d6	2 actions to reload
Double Pistol	5/10/20	2d6+1	1	450	4	-	2 actions to reload; holds 2 shots ready; allows Double Tap
Flintlock Pistol	5/10/20	2d6+1	1	150	3	-	2 actions to reload
Musket	10/20/40	2d8	1	300	16	d6	2 actions to reload



Chapter Three Gear

Petronel**	8/16/32	2d6+1	1	300	4	-	2 actions to reload
Shot Pistol	5/10/20	Special	1	250	3	-	2 actions to reload; Damage and notes as per Arquebus
OTHER WEAPONS							
Axe, Throwing	3/6/12	Str+d6	1	50	2	-	
Knife, Throwing	3/6/12	Str+d4	1	25	1	-	
Sling	4/8/16	Str+d4	1	10	1	-	
Spear	3/6/12	Str+d6	1	25	5	d6	

* All firearms allow only one Shot. A successful Agility roll allows to reload in one round.

** The petronel is a pistol whose long, brass barrel muffles the report of the shot.

3.3 MELEE WEAPONS

TYPE	DMG	WEIGHT	COST	NOTES
FIST WEAPONS				
Katar	Str+d6	3	250	See notes
Flick Katar	Str +d4	2	100	See notes
Gauntlet Sword	Str +d8	8	350	See notes
POLE ARMS				
Halberd	Str +d8	15	250	2 hands, Reach 1
Lance, for knights	Str +d8	10	300	2 hands, AP 2 when charging, only in mounted combat, Reach 2
Pike	Str +d8	25	400	2 hands, Reach 2
Pole Spade	Str +d6	16	100	2 hands, Reach 2
Scythe	Str +d6	13	50	2 hands, Parry -1, Reach 1
Spear	Str +d6	5	200	2 hands, Parry +1, Reach 1
Staff	Str +d4	8	10	2 hands, Parry +1, Reach 1
War Spade	Str +d6	10	50	2 hands, Reach 1
AXES				
Axe	Str +d6	2	200	
Battle Axe	Str +d8	10	300	
Lochaber Axe	Str +d8	14	350	Parry -1; +1 damage if used with 2 hands

Chapter Three Gear

Great Axe	Str +d10	15	500	2 hands, AP 1, Parry -1
BLADES				
Bastard Sword	Str +d8	10	350	Parry -1; +1 damage if used with 2 hands
Dagger	Str +d4	1	25	
Great sword	Str +d10	12	400	2 hands, Parry -1
Long Sword	Str +d8	8	300	
Rapier	Str +d4	3	150	Parry +1
Saber	Str +d6	3	250	
Scimitar	Str +d8	6	350	
Short Sword	Str +d6	4	200	
Two-handed Scimitar	Str +d10	10	450	2 hands, Parry -1
MAULS				
Club	Str +d4	8	10	
Flail*	Str +d6	8	200	
Great Flail *	Str +d8	11	350	2 hands, Parry -1
Light Flail *	Str +d4	7	150	
Mace	Str +d6	8	150	
Maul	Str +d8	20	400	2 hands, AP 2 vs rigid armor, Parry -1
Warhammer	Str +d6	8	250	AP 1 vs rigid armor

* Ignores bonuses to Parry due to shields and weapons or Cover.

3.4 SPECIAL WEAPONS *

TYPE	RANGE	DMG	ROF	COST	NOTES
Ballista	20/30/60	3d6	1	Military	AP 4, Heavy Weapon
Cannon, Shot**	40/80/160	3d6+1	1	Military	AP 4, Heavy Weapon
Cannon, Canister**	20	2d6	1	Military	MBT
Catapult	24/48/96	3d6	1/2	Military	AP 4, MBT, Heavy Weapon

* It requires 4 artillerymen to operate these weapons. If they are less than 4, RoF is halved.
 ** See Cannons, Savage Worlds Deluxe.

3.5 AMMUNITION

TYPE	COST	WEIGHT	NOTES
Arrows (10)	5	2	Can be recovered on a d6 roll of 4-6
Bullets, large, and black powder (10)	30	2	For bombard
Crossbow quarrels (10)	10	2	Can be recovered on a d6 roll of 4-6
Light crossbow quarrels (10)	10	1	Can be recovered on a 6 roll of 4-6
Shots and black powder (10)	20	1	For blunderbuss, musket, petronel and pistol
Sling Stones (20)	1	2	They can also be found with a Notice roll and 1d10 minutes searching, depending on terrain

Bombard: A bombard is a small cannon, measuring between 20" and 28", usually installed on a wood support. It can be loaded with a large bullet inflicting 2d10 damage, has an AP value of 2 and is considered a Heavy Weapon. As an alternative, it can also be loaded with shots and black powder, using 4 shots per action: in this case the range is the Cone template, and all the targets within the template must beat the shooter's Shooting roll with an Agility roll or suffer 2d8 damage. In both cases, the inflicted damage is considered both piercing and bludgeoning, depending on which damage is more useful against the target.

Because of the cumbersome wooden support, a character carrying a Bombard cannot move while using or reloading it. A character with a d10 Strength can use it without its support and can therefore move, but he suffers a -1 penalty to each Shooting roll. A character with a d12 Strength can move and shoot without penalties. Without support, a Bombard weighs 24 pounds.

Two characters can reload a Bombard together in one round spending one action each.

Flick Katar: A flick katar is equipped with a mechanism that, once attached to the forearm, allows the wearer to hide the weapon inside the sleeve and draw it with a flick of his wrist as a free action.

Gauntlet Sword: A gauntlet sword is a long blade extending from a rigid, jointless war gauntlet. The fingers of the hand carrying this weapon cannot be used until removing the weapon. This also means that the wearer is immune to disarm attempts.

Katar: A katar is a fist weapon. Its blade is longer and heavier than that of a dagger, but less so than a sword's.

Light crossbow: A light crossbow penalizes range and damage in favor of higher manageability.

War Spade and Pole Spade: Combat spades are heavy but cheap weapons of humble origin, purposely engineered to fight the Dead, combining the safety of their Reach with a wide blade that can cut and behead in one strike.

MUNDANE ITEMS

CLOTHING

Normal clothing: Wearing cheap clothing can inflict -1 to Charism whenever social status matters. All characters start wearing normal clothing, unless noted otherwise.

Winter Gear: Characters not wearing winter gear suffer -2 to Fatigue rolls against the cold.

Custom-made clothing: Elegant, custom-made clothing adds +1 to Charisma whenever social status matters.

Plague Doctor's Mask: Dead Hunters , Gravediggers, Deadcatchers and Plague

3.6 CLOTHING

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT	NOTES
Normal Clothing	15	-	See notes
Formal Clothing	50	-	
Winter Gear	40	-	See notes
Custom-made Clothing	150+	-	See notes
Plague Doctor's Mask	10	-	See notes

3.7 ANIMALS AND TACK

ANIMAL	COST	WEIGHT	NOTES
Hunting hawk	200	-	See Bestiary.
Horse	200	-	See Savage Worlds Deluxe.
War Horse	750	-	See Savage Worlds Deluxe.
Hunting dog	100	-	See Bestiary.
War dog	150	-	See Savage Worlds Deluxe.
Mule	100	-	See Savage Worlds Deluxe.
Saddle and tack	10	10	Riding bareback inflicts -1 to Riding.

3.8 FOOD

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT	NOTES
Cheap meal	1	-	-
Good Meal	3	-	-
Sumptuous meal	5	-	-
Trail Rations	25	10	Enough for 1 week
Cheap wine, 1L	1	2	-
Good wine, 1L	3+	2	-

Chapter Three

Gear

3.9 ADVENTURING GEAR

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT	NOTES
Alchemic Ingredients	20	2	See notes
Alchemist Bag	300	6	See notes
Backpack or Bag	20	2	
Bedroll	20	4	
Bellows	15	2	
Blanket	10	4	
Candle	1	0,2	Provides light in a 2" radius, burns for 2 hours
Canteen	5	1	Holds 1 pint
Cautery Vial	5	1	See notes
Crowbar	10	2	
Emerald Herb	20	1	See notes
Flint and Steel	3	1	
Grappling Hook	100	2	
Hammer	10	1	
Handcuffs	15	6	
Iron Chain (4")	20	20	See notes
Lantern	25	3	Provides light in a 4" radius
Large Tent	100	20	Circular tent, shelters 8
Last Hope Hatchet	5	2	See notes
Lockpicks	200	1	
Mechanical Prosthesis	2000	-	See notes
Mercy Killing Elixir	20	1	See notes
Oil (for lantern, 1 pint)	2	1	Burns for 3 hours
Parchment paper, 10 sheets	5	1	
Quiver	25	2	Holds 20 arrows/bolts
Rope (10")	10	15	
Salamander Wool Bag	25	1	See notes
Shovel or Pick	5	5	
Soap	1	0,2	
Tent	25	10	Shelters 2



Torch	1	1	Provides light in a 4" radius, burns for 1 hour.
Trap	50	20	See notes
Waterskin	5	1	Holds 1 pint
Whetstone	5	1	
Witch bag	150	4	See notes

Doctors often wear the same kind of mask, both because of the similarity between their trades and because it can protect them against the Plague Miasma. Also, in many Fiefs Dead Hunters and/or Plague Doctors, as well as Gravediggers, are forced to wear it. Wearing a Plague Doctor's mask adds +1 to a Vigor roll against the effects of Miasma (See Setting Rules) but inflicts -1 to Charisma.

ANIMALS & TACK

Animals: Hawks, war and hunting dogs obey simple orders: "come!", "catch!", "sit!" and "attack!". More complex orders may require the animal to make a Smarts roll, or may not be possible, at the Game Master's discretion.

Hunting dogs are obviously trained to follow a – mostly olfactory – trail through Tracking and to bring back what they find (a prey, usually). Hawks are similarly trained, but they mostly use their keen eyesight.

Trained animals make excellent allies because as a general rule animals cannot be infected with the Plague.

ASSORTED ITEMS

Alchemic Ingredients: This set of powders, extracts, concentrates, humors and essential oils is necessary to prepare alchemic products. Each potion consumes 1 florin worth of raw materials per each

Power Point. Each alchemist has to buy and take along the ingredients necessary to the powers available to him.

Alchemist's Bag: It is the bag containing burners, alembics, boilers, lenses, mortars and all the other necessary instruments to create potions and alchemic preparations. Ingredients are not included.

Cautery Vial: This officinal balm immediately stops the bleeding caused by an amputation or any other wound and cauterizes the gash.

Chain: It can safely hold up to 1000 pounds. A d6 must be rolled every minute for each 200 pound addition or when the chain is suddenly tugged. With a d6 roll of 6 the chain snaps.

Emerald Herb: This invigorating medicine consists of a handful of leaves than must be held in one's mouth, chewing slowly. One dose lasts 1 hour, during which the user gets -1 to Charisma but at the same time reduces by 1 point any penalty due to Fatigue.

Lantern Oil: Glass or ceramic oil flasks can be fit with a long fuse made of rags and thrown. Their range is 3/6/12; if they hit the target they inflict 1d10 damage and the target is at risk of bursting into flames.

Last Hope Hatchet: Commonly called just Last "Hope", it is specifically made to the purpose of amputating on the spot any limb torn by the Plague Spawn to prevent

the infection from spreading through the body and killing the victim. If used in a fight, it counts as a small improvised weapon.

Mechanical Prosthesis: These technological wonders allow to efficiently replace a damaged or amputated arm, leg, eye or ear. The weight is deemed non-existent because the prosthesis becomes an integral part of the character's body.

Any wound and injury to a part of the body replaced by a Mechanical Prosthesis immediately make it useless, and the character suffers once more all the effects of the Hindrance corresponding to the missing body part. On the bright side, he doesn't have to mark any wound because his real body escaped being damaged.

Mechanical Prosthesis have Toughness 7. They are made with strong metal but they consist of quite delicate gears. It is still possible to wear normal and augmented armor over a prosthesis for an arm or leg, and the armor works as usual.

In order to repair a damaged prosthesis it is necessary to have the appropriate tools available, spend 2d6 hours, and make a successful Repair roll (-2). With a raise, the required time gets halved.

Mercy Killing Elixir: It is a preparation commonly employed by Plague Doctors, Friars of Death and all those who risk their life every day fighting the Dead. It is a sweet tasting Lethal Poison (See *Savage Worlds Deluxe*) which takes effect in just a few rounds (2d6) and spares a Morituro the agony contagion brings. Unfortunately, Mercy Killing cannot prevent the victim from rising again to his Second Death a short time later, which makes it necessary to resort to the Misericorde or to destroy the body.

Rope: It can safely hold up to 300 pounds. A d6 must be rolled every minute for each 50 pound addition, or when the chain is suddenly tugged. With a d6 roll of 6 the rope snaps.

Salamander Wool Bag: These bags are made of asbestos, or "salamander wool", a waterproof, fire resistant material impervious to the Plague. Such bags are used to safely contain and transport heads, carcasses or body parts of the Dead, with no risk of infection. They are absolutely fireproof and are always "washed" in the flames after use. A typical bag may contain up to 5 heads.

Trap: A robust iron foot trap. A hidden

3.10 SERVICES

SERVICE	COST	NOTES
Bathroom	2	
Common room	1	
Double room	4	
Single room	8	
Traveling with a wagon train	4 per day	See notes
Traveling by ship	5 per day	See notes

trap can be discovered only through a Notice roll, but most Dead never make this roll because they are not clever enough to recognize the danger. Those who do not see it suffer 2d8 damage to a leg. An opposed roll to the Strength of the trap, which is d8, is required to free the leg, but most Dead are not smart enough to attempt it.

Witch Bag: It is the bag in which Witches keep all the components and objects they use to carry out their tricks.

TRAVEL

Travel: The specified costs are calculated assuming that the character does nothing but traveling. Fighting men are often welcomed, instead, and usually get their meals for free during the voyage as a sort of “payment” for their presence.

3.11 VEHICLES

TYPE	ACC/MAX SPEED	TOUGHNESS	CREW	COST	NOTES
Wagons					
Cart	See horse	8 (2)	1+2	200*	2 wheels, drawn by 1 horse
Wagon	See horse	10 (2)	1+7	400*	4 wheels, drawn by 2+ horses
Carriage	See horse	11 (2)	1+5	3000*	4 wheels, drawn by 2+ horses

* Horses are not included in the cost.

3.12 WATERCRAFTS

Rowboat	1 / 2	8 (2)	1+3	300	
Galleon*	2/6	20 (4)	20+80	200K+	Heavy Armor
Galley*	2/8	19 (4)	20+100	100K+	Heavy Armor, Acc/Max Speed reduced by 1/3 if sailing
Sailing Boat	2/10	12 (2)	2+10	10000	Heavy Armor
Tartane	2/6	15 (2)	3+15	15000	Heavy Armor

* Galleons and Galleys can carry up to 6 cannons, or 2 catapults, or 4 ballistae.

Setting Rules



The Ultima Forsan setting is a dark and grim world, which is reflected in its setting rules

SAVAGE WORLDS DELUXE SETTING RULES

Ultima Forsan makes use of the following Savage Worlds Deluxe Setting Rules, which you can find recapped here for your convenience.

Gritty Damage: Every time a Wild Card suffers one or more Wounds, he must make a roll on the Injury table and immediately apply the result (one roll only for each incident or strike, regardless of the number of Wounds). Injuries sustained in this way are temporary, and they will disappear as soon as the Wound heals, while Injuries suffered via Incapacitation follow Savage Worlds usual rules, and can therefore be either temporary or permanent. A Shaken character who gets Shaken a second time through an attack usually suffers a Wound, but he doesn't suffer any Injury.

Multiple Languages: As shown in the Character Creation chapter, Heroes always speak their mother tongue, plus a number of other languages equal to half the value of their Smarts die.

Blood & Guts: Characters can spend Bennies on damage rolls. This rule is valid for Non-Player Characters as well.

THE MACABRE WAR

FEAR AND HORROR

Unfortunately, all Ultima Forsan Heroes are quite used to the living dead, massacre and agony scenes, and tales about all the Abominations hiding in the wastelands. This means that quite seldom they face creatures and situations that can upset them. As far as monsters are concerned, the Bestiary shows which creatures cause Fear; situations that may cause Fear are described in detail within the campaigns and the adventures. It is up to the Game Master to use such cases as examples or models, in order to define analogue situations.

Note: *In Ultima Forsan, the characters make Fear checks with a Spirit roll, not the Guts skill.*

MEDICAL SCIENCE AND NATURAL HEALING

In this Macabre Age, conditions, instrumentations and medical and sanitary knowledge possessed by nurses, hospitals and sanatoriums are well above those you might have found described on history books.

This is why receiving medical care in the city sanatorium or by a skilled healer gives a +2 modifier; all other modifiers found in *Savage Worlds Deluxe* are still valid.

FIGHTING AGAINST THE DEAD: WEAPONS WITH REACH

Most Dead will attack the living in blind fury, heedless of any danger. Therefore, everybody knows that it is possible to use against them a long weapon and take advantage of their own savagery to destroy them.

Chapter Four

Setting Rules

Variable Lethality

It cannot be denied that the Plague is dangerous, and in game terms it is really lethal. As a group, however, you can opt for a lethality level of your choice, to adapt Ultima Forsan to your preferences.

Triumph of Death (High Lethality): *Miserere Domine!* May God forgive the Heroes' sins, because fate will probably lead them straightaway to the Valley of the Shadow of Death. If you really want to taste the horror of the Plague and be true to the Decameron of the Dead, then play Ultima Forsan using all the setting rules as they are presented, which means to play at the highest possible lethality level. You have been warned! This level is the ideal choice for one session games, for games where horror and death are at the core of the story, or to taste the real sense of transience and macabre of Ultima Forsan. In any case, Heroes brave enough to face this level of lethality deserve 2 more Experience points per session! Furthermore, at this lethality level, the Emaciated trait includes the extra effect that a Tainted's Vigor can never advance beyond d6.

Containing the Contagion (Medium Lethality): *Memento Mori!* Remember that your character must die... just not right away, perhaps! In fact, some believe that through being exposed to the Plague for centuries, all men (or just some special individuals) have grown stronger and can now better withstand exposition to Atrament. Do you think it is true? If you want to make the game a little less dangerous, you can apply to the Plague the Savage Worlds standard rules for diseases: when a character gets exposed to the contagion, he can try a Vigor roll. If it is successful, in spite of the wound the infection could not reach the blood circulation and there aren't any negative effects. If it fails, the character is infected and the wound starts getting black and suppurates immediately, showing the contagion.

This is the perfect level for not too dangerous campaigns, or for players who get easily attached to their character. In any case, Heroes facing this Lethality Level deserve 1 additional Experience Point per session.

At this lethality level, the Emaciated trait includes the extra effect that a Tainted's Vigor can never advance beyond d8.

Heroes against the Plague (Low Lethality): *Requiescant in pace!* May the Dead Rest in peace... even if they don't want to! If you'd rather have contagion and its consequences to be an infrequent danger for your Heroes, it is enough for you to apply what we said above (that potentially infected characters can make a Vigor roll to avoid contagion); in addition, consider as potentially contagious only the Wounds that Incapacitate a character. Your game world will thus be more savage than macabre, and the Dead will flock around you only to be wiped out by the Heroes!

This level is for players who prefer not to continuously to deal with the effects of the Plague, who want to limit as much as possible grim, somber atmospheres, and who like their Heroes to be over the top.

Chapter Four
Setting Rules



Chapter Four Setting Rules

A character wielding a weapon with Reach can set it. To do so, the character must be on Hold. When attacked by a Spawn with (D) type Smarts (D stands for Dead, of course) who was not already in contact when the action started, the character makes the usual opposed Agility roll, adding +2 for every 1" of his weapon Reach. If the opposed roll succeeds, the character attacks first and adds +2 to the damage. If the opposed roll is unsuccessful, the character attacks after the Afflicted and does not get any bonus.

EXPOSURE TO THE PLAGUE

Exposure to the Plague is perhaps the greatest danger Ultima Forsan Heroes have to face.

If a character gets hit by a Dead or any other Plague Spawn and the damage causes a Wound, he is in real danger of contracting the Plague. And this is something nobody wants to happen, right?

As usual, such a consequence may be avoided spending a Benny to make a Soak roll. If the Soak roll is successful, and there aren't any Wounds, the character has been lucky enough to dodge the attack, getting bitten on a body part protected by cloth layers or in some other similar way.

There is no risk of contracting the Plague if an attack by a Dead only causes the character to be Shaken. If the character was already Shaken, however, being Shaken a second time will cause a Wound, as usual, and the character will contract the Plague.

Please Note: *Unlike usual diseases, the Plague is such a powerful and dark disease that it doesn't allow any Vigor rolls to avoid infection, unless you're playing at a lower than standard lethality level (see Variable Lethality Box). Therefore, whoever suffers*

one or more Wounds inflicted by a Dead or by any other contagious creature, and cannot avoid them through a Soak Roll, can be certain of having been infected!

LAST HOPE E CAUTERY

If it hasn't been possible to avoid a Wound, there is still some hope of getting out of it alive.

Having been bitten, or scratched, by a Plague Spawn might not be the end of the Hero. Centuries of battles against the Dead, Fell Beasts and all sorts of Abominations have taught fighters and healers how to act efficiently if one of their companions gets wounded.

There is one good piece of news. Given the kind of attacks delivered by these enemies, hands, arms, and legs are the parts of the body that get wounded more frequently (See Bites and Scratches Table), and it is therefore still possible to intervene.

First thing, time is running out! The players have only 5 rounds to amputate the infected part. This is why fellowships, groups of scouts or of warriors, and in general whoever can afford it, always carry with them a special surgeon hatchet called the Last Hope, specifically to the purpose of amputating on the spot the infected limb. The Last Hope must be constantly honed, cleansed with fire, and never used for anything else, particularly not for fighting, because it would risk getting infected and lose its purpose.

To efficiently amputate a limb it is enough to make a successful Healing roll, but it is necessary to apply a -2 modifier if the victim tries to perform the amputation by himself, and another -2 if weapons or instruments that aren't the Last Hope are used (to say nothing of the fact that other

Chapter Four

Setting Rules

instruments, weapons in particular, could already be infected with Atrament, which would make the amputation totally useless!)

Once the limb has been amputated, the character is at risk of bleeding out.

Bleeding out works here exactly as it does in *Savage Worlds Deluxe*: the injured character must make a Vigor roll at the start of each round, before Action Cards are dealt, and then every minute after the fight; getting a Success, the victim must roll again at the next round, and every minute after the fight; getting a Raise, the victim stabilizes, and no further rolls are required; getting a Failure, the character - from blood loss.

To avoid blood loss effects, it is possible to apply Cautery – another object wise adventurers should always carry with them – after cutting out the infected part. Cautery is an alchemic, officinal substance that corrodes like vitriol and burns like fire, but in the long run has soothing and balsamic effects. If immediately applied on the stump, Cautery will thoroughly cauterize and disinfect the wound, and the victim won't die from infection or blood loss. This operation doesn't require any roll, but it is necessary to have one dose of Cautery available.

If no Cautery is available, it is possible to use fire, vitriol or other acids. In this case, however, it is necessary to make a Healing roll, at -2 if the victim has to do it all by himself.

It is possible to repeat this roll until successful, but at each try the victim also has to make a Vigor roll or suffer one Fatigue level due to the extreme pain (recoverable after 24 hours).

MISERICORDE AND MERCY KILLING

If it is not possible to amputate (for chest, neck or head wounds), or if the amputation is badly executed, the victim contracts the Plague and will die in a short time, waking up again in the Second Death (see *The Plague in Action*, page 103). Those characters facing such a fate aren't dead yet, however, and they still have a few cards to play. See *Morituri* and *Sardonic Grim*, page 103.

To avoid a fate worse than Death itself, most *Morituri* who can do it prefer to drink the *Mercy Killing Elixir*, a sweetish drug which in a short time generates a general feeling of laxity and serenity, followed by a deep slumber and, finally, by death. Technically, it is a *Lethal Poison*, which unfortunately does not prevent the Second Death, which is why the poor victim is usually put out of his misery with a *Misericorde*, a thin and very sharp blade, made to kill at the first stroke a helpless or consenting man. The *Misericorde* may be thrust through the throat or the back of the neck, and the body of the unfortunate adventurer has then to be cleansed with fire or quicklime. And may God have mercy on him...

FIGHTING AGAINST THE PLAGUE HORDES

There are some specific rules to follow when fighting against the Dead, Fell Beasts and other Plague Spawn. After all, they are anything but average opponents! When a Plague Spawn attacks using claws or fangs, together with the attack roll the Game Master rolls a d20 on the Bites and Claws Table to see what part of the body was attacked. This allows the wounded character to use the Armor

Chapter Four Setting Rules

4.1 BITES AND SCRATCHES TABLE: ATTACKS BY THE SPAWN AGAINST THE CHARACTERS

Roll a d20 together with the Spawn attack roll to determine the specific Injury:

D20	LOCATION	INJURY	CURE
1-2 3-4	Right leg Left leg	Calf bite! Gain the Lame Hindrance (or One Leg Hindrance, if already Lame)	Amputation prevents infection, but the Injury becomes permanent.
5 6	Right leg Left leg	Thigh torn apart! Pain and wound prevent use of the leg; gain the One Leg Hindrance.	Amputation prevents infection, but the Injury becomes permanent.
7	Guts	Family Jewels! Intolerable pain, and reproduction is out of the question from now on.	Amputation prevents infection, but the Injury becomes permanent.
8	Guts	Agility reduced by one die type (min. d4).	Infection is unavoidable!
9	Guts	Vigor reduced by one die type (min. d4).	Infection is unavoidable!
10	Guts	Strength reduced by one die type (min. d4).	Infection is unavoidable!
11-14 15-18	Right arm Left arm	Arm bitten and torn! Pain and wound prevent use of the arm, as in One Arm Hindrance, but if the primary arm is affected, off-hand penalties apply to the other.	Amputation prevents infection, but the Injury becomes permanent.
19-20	Head	<p>The monster grabs your head! Roll d20:</p> <p>1-2: Right eye ripped off! Gain the One Eye Hindrance (or the Blind Hindrance if you had only one good eye). This Injury is always permanent!</p> <p>3-4: Left eye ripped off! As above.</p> <p>5-7: Right ear ripped off! The damage causes the Hard of Hearing Hindrance (minor). This Injury is always permanent!</p> <p>8-10: Left ear ripped off! As above.</p> <p>11-13: Nose ripped off! Gain the Ugly Hindrance.</p> <p>14-16: Blinded! Right eye: One eye is wounded. Gain the One Eye Hindrance (or the Blind Hindrance if you had only one good eye).</p> <p>17-18: Blinded! Left Eye: See above.</p> <p>19: Face torn apart! Gain Ugly Hindrance.</p> <p>20: Neck torn apart! You start losing blood!</p>	<p>Ripped off eye or ear: The piece of good news is that the infected part has been severed off and it is not necessary to intervene to avoid infection.</p> <p>Nose: Amputating the remaining part prevents infection, but the Injury becomes permanent.</p> <p>Blinded: The eye is seriously wounded and the only remaining hope is to remove it! The Injury becomes permanent.</p> <p>Face: Infection is unavoidable!</p> <p>Neck: Infection is unavoidable, but cauterizing the wound may stop the blood loss.</p>

points that protect the affected area. If the attack causes one or more Wounds, it is then necessary to apply (in addition to Wounds) the effects described for that part of the body in the Bites and Claws Table.

This table substitutes the *Savage Worlds* Injury Table as far as the Spawn are concerned, because they use natural weapons and are fundamentally irrational. If able to use a regular weapon, Plague Spawn (such as Possessed, Tyrants and Striges) follow the usual *Savage Worlds Deluxe* rules and use its regular Injury Table. As for the Gritty Damage Setting Rules, Injuries generated by the Bites and Claws Table are temporary, and heal together with the Wounds that caused them, provided that the character isn't made Incapacitated. Beware: unfortunately, this doesn't prevent contagion! See the section Exposure to the Plague.

USING ATRAMENT ON WEAPONS

Some abject men, such as infectors, felons and war criminals, can at times coat their weapons with Atrament to use them against the Heroes or other adversaries. Such barbaric practice is universally condemned by all civilized Fiefs, as is the practice of making an unaware victim drink Atrament as if it were a poison.

Use the standard *Savage Worlds Deluxe* Injury Table for these attacks, and check the Bites and Claws Table for the possible "cure" to the contagion of the corresponding body part.

A few drops of Atrament are enough to make a dose; unfortunately, this substance is extremely easy to find: it is enough to plunge one's sword into any Spawn's body to have 1d4 doses clinging to the blade. One dose is enough to coat 1 melee weapon or 4 projectiles/bolts/arrow points

and infect them. When a melee weapon delivers a blow (even if no damage results from it), 1 dose must be counted as lost, or "used". In the case of ranged weapons, the amount of Atrament coating each arrow or projectile is "lost" when used (even if it doesn't strike the target).

AFFLICTED AND EXTRAS

The Bites and Scratches Table detailed instructions are for Wild Cards only. All Extras follow *Savage Worlds* normal rules: if they suffer a Wound, they are immediately out for the count.

As usual, this doesn't necessarily mean they are dead. The players or GM make a Vigor roll for each Extra: if the roll fails, the Extra is dead, if it is successful, the Extra is alive but Incapacitated. In this case, one or more raises mean that the wounds were superficial and therefore the Extra is alive and can act normally.

Be careful, though: all the Extras needing such a roll after a fight against infected creatures have been infected with the Plague, unless you are playing at a lower than standard level of lethality (see page 96)!

In the case of those Extras killed during a fight, the only possible intervention is unfortunately to prevent them from reaching their Second Death. See the Rising section.

AMPUTATIONS AND PROSTHESIS

Veterans from the Macabre War can be found in any city and reign, and many among them owe their life to improvised amputations and cauterizations. Their status as heroic individuals is universally recognized and as such they are fully integrated in their society, where they are put in the condition of being still useful, and are compensated for their losses.

Chapter Four
Setting Rules



Chapter Four Setting Rules

Their disability may be due to an extemporary amputation made to prevent infection, or it may be the consequence of a normal fight against brigands or an enemy army, or it may even have been generated together with the Character.

Wild Cards who suffer such mutilations in a battle fought after the Character was generated gain the corresponding Hindrance, and they can receive proper care in any settlement until their conditions stabilize and they get used to the loss of that limb. In order to compensate the Hindrance, the character gains an Edge, due to the new charisma he is endowed with in the eyes of both commoners and comrades at arms, to the fact that his temperament and will have been strengthened by his ordeal, or to the wisdom thus acquired. After all, the Hero was infected with the Plague, or risked his life in battle, but has escaped death and is still here to tell about it... which is something very few among the living can say.

The free Edge can be one of the following:

- * **Alertness**
- * **Charismatic**
- * **Command**
- * **Hard to Kill**
- * **Elan**
- * **Levelheaded**
- * **Combat Reflexes**
- * **Mechanical Prosthesis**
- * **Danger Sense**

As you can see from this list, the disabled Hero can even chose the Mechanical Prosthesis Edge, which directly cancels out the Hindrance. The Mechanical Prosthesis Edge may be chosen immediately after

the mutilation, when the Character is generated, or even later on, for example when the Character is entitled to gain a new Edge. In order to gain this Edge and make it effective, however, the Hero must have the time and the means to get back to his lord or warlord, or in any case to reach a well-equipped settlement, where he can be treated by the local barber-surgeon and inventor.

MORITURI AND SARDONIC GRIN

If there is no way to save the character, who is therefore doomed, before settling his business, say good-bye to his loved ones and entrust himself to the Misericorde... well... he's not dead yet, after all.

Some Morituri have admitted to feeling a sense of freedom and relief in being doomed to death, a sense of resignation and serenity called Sardonic Grin. The Dead have lost their best weapon – the fear of the Plague – against that victim, who can now attack them without hesitation, knowing there is nothing left to lose.

A Wild Card thus infected gains the “Sardonic Grin” Wild Card Edge. See page 77.

PLAGUE IN ACTION

The first effect of the Plague is to kill the infected subject: the infected character must make a Vigor roll every day. It is a special roll, because Wild Cards cannot use either the Wild Die or their Bennies: the Plague doesn't make any exceptions. After the first day, a cumulative -1 penalty is applied to the roll for each day.

If the roll is successful, the character carries on for another day. If the roll fails, the character suffers one Fatigue level, or 2 if he gets 1 on his Vigor roll.

If Fatigue makes him Incapacitated, the character still has one last chance. He can draw one Action Card for each Rank (that is, one for Novice, two for Seasoned, and so on). If he draws a Joker, his body has managed to stand up to the Plague and has overcome the danger: the character thus becomes Tainted, gaining all the pertinent Traits, but he loses the Sardonic Grin Edge. If the character draws any other card, it is time for the First Death.

Even the Tainted, already infected and therefore – theoretically – destined to rise again, have a last chance: at the moment of death, a Tainted character draws one Action Card per Rank (that is, one for Novice, two for Seasoned, and so on). Drawing a Joker, the character gains the Beyond the Threshold Edge, and in fact cheats Death. See page 78.

GETTING UP AGAIN

Characters infected by the Plague (Tainted included), get up again 1d6-1 hours after their demise. This means that if the die gives 1 as a result, the Dead gets up right away.

The infected Untainted who died a violent death (for example, characters killed while fighting), get up as pitiful Husks, or even as Carrions, if their body is awfully mangled. Characters killed by the Plague after the long agony due to the infection (as described in the section Plague in Action), get up instead as dangerous Furies or even as Possessed, if they succeed in a Vigor roll (-2).

The Tainted always get up as Possessed.

THE MIASMA

The infamous Miasma is a concentration of infected exhalations, full of Atrament, which take the form of thick, foul-smelling vapors. Fortunately, it is a quite rare phenomenon, and can usually be found only where there are huge quantities of infected remains, such as in mass graves or in some areas of the Cities of Sorrow.

Unfortunately, the downside is that such a Miasma is often not clearly apparent as such, and even when very thick can be easily taken for fog or smoke.

When unexpectedly surrounded by Miasma, a character can make a Smarts roll to hold his breath, and can hold it for 2 rounds plus half his Vigor die value.

If a character breathes the Miasma, he must make a Vigor roll at each round. Wearing a Plague Doctor's Mask adds +1 to his roll. If it is successful, the character suffers a Fatigue level (that he can recover in one minute, as soon as he can breathe clean air again). With a raise, the character does not suffer any effect. If the roll fails, the horrid vapors infect the unlucky character, who immediately starts throwing up and turning pale.

ALCHEMISTS, INVENTORS AND WITCHES

SETTING RULE: NO POWER POINTS

Ultima Forsan uses the *Savage Worlds* Setting Rule No Power Points.

The Characters having an Arcane Background who want to use a power simply have to make an Arcane Skill roll, to which must be applied a penalty equal to half the cost in Power Points (rounded down).

Chapter Four Setting Rules

The roll result can be:

Success: The power activates normally.

Raise: The power activates with all the possible added effects featured in its description.

Failure: The power does not activate, the character is Shaken and loses all active powers.

Backlash: If the character gets 1 on his arcane ability die (regardless of the Wild Die), he fails automatically. For further details, see each Arcane background description.

Maintaining Powers: Powers can be maintained indefinitely, but each maintained power entails a -1 cumulative penalty to all other rolls for the activation of other powers.

Interrupting Powers: If a character is Shaken, or suffers either a Wound or a Fatigue level while having active powers, he must make a Smarts roll in order to maintain all his powers. If the roll fails, all powers are immediately interrupted.

Powers are interrupted also if a character falls asleep or loses consciousness.

MACABRE WORLD ALCHEMISTS

They are Jewish philosophers, Saracen chemists, Eastern and Western physicians and scientists, scholars of nature and of the substances it produces, spagyrists, apothecaries and casters, wise and learned men who have devoted their life to the art of melting and solidifying, mixing and experimenting. In this Macabre World the work and research carried on by these learned men have been very useful in fighting the Plague, which made them get partially over their secrecy and rivalry

of the past, exchanging information about their secrets and thus creating a common ground of knowledge nowadays widespread throughout all the New Kingdoms.

ARCANE BACKGROUND (ALCHEMY)

Archane Skill: Alchemy (Smarts)

Initial Powers: 3

Alchemists make ointments and other substances, through which they use their Powers.

In order to make a potion, an Alchemist must have handy his alchemist's bag (a sort of portable laboratory containing alembics, meters, mysterious powders and other tools) and devote one hour per rank to the Power he wants to prepare.

Once the potion is ready, in order for the power to manifest itself each preparation must be activated through ingestion, contact with the air or contact with the target, depending on the kind of preparation. It is not necessary that it is the alchemist himself to use the potion.

Preparation: In order to prepare a potion, an alchemist must be able to access a laboratory or to use an alchemist's bag, he must have water and fire at his disposal and has to work for one hour per rank on each preparation.

Moreover, each potion consumes 1 florin per Power Point in raw materials (value halved in respect to the original, as it is for the No Power Points rule, with a minimum of 1). It is during this stage that the Alchemist must decide if he wants to spend more ingredients in order to give his preparation possible added effects, determined by the expenditure of more Power Points, as per power description.

Chapter Four Setting Rules

Alchemic Accident: While preparing a potion, an Alchemist must make an Alchemy roll. If the roll is a critical failure, then something has gone awfully wrong! Both the time and the raw materials are wasted, and the character must roll a d20 on the Alchemic Accident Table.

Note: This roll is needed only to verify if an accident has occurred: failure, success or raise have no effect on this roll. The quality of the potion will be ascertained only through Activation, that is when the potion is actually used.

Activation: When the alchemic preparation is used, the Alchemist must make an Alchemy roll (even if it is another character who uses the potion). The penalty based on the cost in Power Points does not apply to this roll, nor does the penalty due to maintaining many powers active at the same time. This roll only determines if the power is or is not activated, and its possible effects based on a raise.

Note: There are no consequences to the Alchemist if the roll is a failure, and there can be no Backlash. The Alchemist is not Shaken, and the preparation simply does not work. Also note that the potion can be used by other characters, even if the Alchemist is Shaken, Incapacitated or even dead!

Range: Alchemists' powers are "contained" inside potions and ointments. This is why Savage Worlds powers ranges have to be converted: all powers with Touch, Self or Sight range require that the potion is either ingested by or applied on the intended target (with a Touch attack if the target is not willing); potions with powers whose range is divided into

range brackets (for example 12/24/48) or depends on an Attribute (for example, Smarts x 2) must be thrown instead. To throw a potion you must make a Throwing roll, and a potion's range is always 3/6/12.

Duration: A power's duration is always and only the one given in its description and cannot be further extended, unless such effect figures in the description of the power as the result of a raise in an Arcane Skill roll. On the bright side, powers having a duration cannot be disrupted, not even if the Alchemist is Shaken or suffers any Wounds.

Perishability: Alchemic potions are highly unstable. Each preparation maintains its properties intact for a number of days equal to half the Alchemy die value of the Alchemist who prepared it.

Backlash and Alchemy: Alchemic preparations that have been made without any Accidents (see above) are stable enough. Getting 1 on the Alchemy roll to activate a potion does not cause any Backlash: the potion simply does not work, and the power is not activated.

Rapid Preparation: As an alternative to the slow and safe preparation of a potion, an alchemist may run the risk of preparing a concoction in just one round! While working on a rapid preparation, an alchemist cannot run or take any other action (with the exception of the free ones). He must still have with him his alchemist's bag and the necessary ingredients, but he does not need any water or fire. In the round in which he devotes himself to his rapid preparation, the character must make a Preparation roll, as seen above, but the probabilities of an Alchemic Accident are much higher: if the roll fails, the character

Chapter Four Setting Rules

must immediately make an Accident roll! If the roll succeeds, then the preparation is ready and can be used starting at the next round.

ALCHEMISTS' POWERS

The Powers Alchemists can use are only those shown below, together with their possible Trappings.

NOVICE

Armor: An ointment, or potion, to harden the skin.

Blind: A mixture of phosphor and other powders which generates a blinding flash of light when it gets in contact with the air.

Boost/Lower Trait: Alchemists know countless concoctions, drugs, poisons, medicines and preparations that alter the

mind or the vigor in a subject. Which Trait they will affect, and if they will boost or lower it, has to be decided at the moment of making the preparation, as well as if the preparation will act through contact (which means it can be thrown) or by ingestion.

Burst: Small bellows charged with inflammable mixtures, thus blowing out flames.

Confusion: A preparation made of ether and subtle vapors that may cause hallucinations when breathed. It can only be made for a single target.

Darksight: Nictalopa is a preparation which augments eyesight, thus allowing to see in the dark. It can only be prepared for a single target.

Alchemic Accident

4.2 ALCHEMIC ACCIDENT

D20	EFFECT
1-5	You must have made some mistake: the preparation evaporates and you have wasted time and materials.
6-10	Foul-smelling vapors intoxicate the character. His Smarts die and all the connected skills are decreased by one type for a length of time equal to one hour per rank of the power.
11-15	The power activates immediately on the character, be this a good or bad thing.
16-18	Explosion! The preparation explodes and causes 2d6 damage within a Medium Burst Template. If you were using an Alchemist's bag, it is now destroyed.
19	Explosion! The preparation explodes and causes 3d6 damage within a Large Burst Template. If you were using an Alchemist's bag, or a real laboratory, it is now destroyed.
20	Discovery! By a stroke of sheer luck you discover a new formula (at the Game Master's discretion), which you prepare instead of the desired one, thus permanently acquiring a new power.

Fear: A preparation that releases a vapor causing hallucinations and terror.

Healing: The mysterious Panacea, a miraculous essence that invigorates the body and helps fighting any illness. Unfortunately, it cannot cure the Plague.

Light/Obscure: Luminescent preparations and smoke generating substances. The light or obscure effect must be chosen at the moment of making the preparation. The potion itself will be the light source (or will generate black vapors).

Speed: This preparation speeds up the heartbeat for a while and stimulates to the full body vigor and reflexes.

Succor: A miraculous tonic, developed with the help of physicians and apothecaries, which acts as a cure and a cordial.

SEASONED

Blast: A highly unstable and destructive mixture, which can explode and wound many opponents.

Invisibility: This refracting powder is a byproduct of the Magnum Opus which allows you to become as transparent as glass if spread on clothing or skin. It can only be made for a single target.

Quickness: A concentrated version of the preparation used for Speed.

Sleep: These crystal balls are filled with soporific vapors. Unfortunately, they have no effect whatsoever on the Dead.

Slow: A special, sticky paste you can throw at your enemies to slow them down. It can only be made for a single target.

Stun: This exploding preparation deafens and hits all the nearby subjects.

VETERAN

Puppet: This etheric vapor is so powerful that it can influence and dominate the target's brain.

MACABRE WORLD INVENTORS

The geniuses of this grim era are people who express one of the highest achievements of the human race: the overpowering strength of the intellect, that exalts life, art and science, and can defeat Death.

With their devices, they have made cities secure, have endowed armies with new weapons, and given to brave and skilled experimenters powers never seen before.

ARCANE BACKGROUND (WEIRD SCIENCE)

Arcane Skill: Weird Science (Smarts)

Starting Powers: 1

Inventors follow Weird Science standard rules.

Each power represents a device the inventor has built. In order to activate the device power, it is usually necessary to make a Weird Science roll. If the device makes use of a different skill, such as Fighting or Shooting, the inventor uses that skill instead.

Ultima Forsan makes use of the No Power Points Setting Rule. Therefore, just as it is not necessary to keep count of the characters Power Points, the same is true for any device.

Backlash and Weird Science: The inventions of the Renaissance geniuses are quite unstable. When the user gets 1 on the Arcane Skill die (or in the proper skill needed to make use of the device), the power does not activate

Chapter Four Setting Rules



Chapter Four Setting Rules

and the character suffers 2d6 damage. Moreover, the device he wanted to use is now seriously damaged, and it will need repairs before it can be used again. This procedure requires 1d3+1 hours and a successful Repair roll. A raise will reduce the required time by one hour.

New Powers: Whenever an inventor acquires the New Power Edge, he invents and builds a new device. If he wants to, he may choose one of the powers he already possesses, in order to build a duplicate of a device he already has.

Maintain Powers: Using a power while other powers are still active comports the standard penalty, as shown in the No Power Points rule.

Sharing: An inventor may allow other characters to use his devices.

Lost Devices: If a device gets lost or destroyed, the inventor owning it may build a new one in 2d6 hours, provided that he has the necessary instruments and components available. He must also make a successful Repair roll. If he gets a Raise, it halves the required time.

Should it be recovered, the original device will be broken and useless (the character cannot get a “free duplicate” of the device).

INVENTORS POWERS

The Powers Inventors can use are only those shown below, together with their possible Trappings.

NOVICE

Armor: A cuirass made of very thin foils, that can be folded on itself so that it takes very little room; it expands at will to cover the wearer.

Bolt: Automatic precision multiple

crossbow, equipped with a complex mechanical and optical sighting system. This device makes use of the Shooting Skill.

Blind: A device made of prismatic lenses or pyrotechnics.

Darksight: These special lenses intensify any light source.

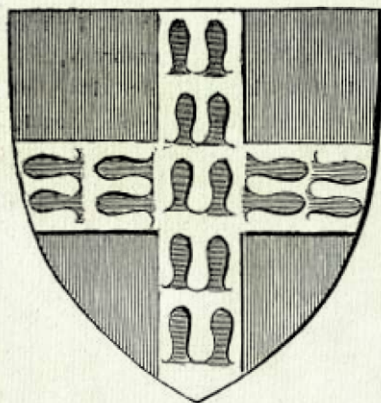
Deflection: A jacket made of prismatic lenses, arranged so that they will reflect what is before them.

Entangle: These snap-fit chains, linked by special joints and tie-rods, can trap opponents.

Environmental Protection: An incredible protective suit, conceived for use in any possible environment.

Light/Obscure: Special lanterns and smoke generating devices.

Smite: Rack swords, mechanized weapons, rotating maces and flails, drilling or overheating bolts, and other such brilliant inventions make use of the appropriate attack Skill.



Chapter Four

Setting Rules

Speed: Pneumatic boots and spring activated leggings.

Wall Walker: Metal hooks, pulley crossbows, suction cups and special glues which allow the user to move along walls and ceilings.

SEASONED

Pummel: It is a special compressed-air cannon which traps and then releases a very powerful thunder.

Stun: Fireworks and firecrackers, which generate explosions and annoying sparks.

VETERAN

Fly: This is the legendary “flying-man machine”, one of the most renowned and complex devices ever conceived.

MACABRE WORLD WITCH

Witches, both men and women, are expert hypnotists and swindlers, who have an almost unlimited stock of tricks and gimmicks at their disposal. They represent the poor, disregarded and mysterious side of this grim era arcane world. Their ancient wisdom and lore has been handed over for generations by wise or unsettling teachers, through hermetic grimoires or secret covenants of practitioners. At times, to avoid being considered just like heretics and infectors, Witches hide in the Fiefs, among common people, citizens or even noblemen.

ARCANE BACKGROUND (WITCHCRAFT)

Arcane Skill: Witchcraft (Spirits)

Starting Powers: 2

Witches make use of a mix of suggestion, tricks, sleight of hand and cheap components to use their powers.

Backlash and Witchcraft: When a Witch gets 1 on a Witchcraft roll (regardless of the Wild Die), his trick fails miserably and he becomes Shaken. The character also has his Witchcraft die decreased (to a minimum of d4). The Witchcraft die will recover its original value as soon as the Witch manages to use one of his powers.

Components: In order to carry out some of their tricks and gimmicks, Witches use more or less common objects and materials. In game terms, it is presumed that a Witch always has those materials ready in his bag, since they are common objects and substances that the character can easily collect or prepare; moreover, unlike an Alchemist, a Witch doesn't have to keep track of the components he uses. As far as the game is concerned, all materials and objects are inside a Witch's bag, and he cannot use Powers needing material components if he has parted from his bag.

WITCHES' POWERS

The Powers Witches can use are only those shown below, together with their possible Trappings.

NOVICE

Beast Friend: Complex training tricks that require use of goads, drugged morsels and stimulants. This power has no effect on Fell Beasts. Its range is reduced to 4”.

Blind: Blinding lights and stinging powders thrown in the face of the targets. The power has a range of 3/6/12.

Bolt: Bundles used in shows, made of wax, cloth and inflammable or otherwise damaging material. This power has a range of 3/6/12.

Boost/Lower Trait: Suggestions, spurring or threats.

Chapter Four Setting Rules

Burst: Using a trick learned from street acrobats, Witches ingest powders and preparations and then spit them out in a long tongue of flame.

Confusion: Drugs filled and poisonous powders, spread with small bellows hidden under the clothing. This power has a range of 3/6/12.

Deflection: A special conjurer's cloak, equipped with buckles, hooks and trinkets that may disguise the target's real location.

Detect/Conceal Arcana: A prodigious sixth sense, together with years of occult experience. This power allows Witches to recognize Relics and Marvels, and to understand their properties.

Fear: Ventriloquism and gestures that, if properly used, can distract and terrify many an opponent.

Healing: Cures, infusions and all the lore coming from folk and herbal medicine. Using this power requires 10 minutes.

Light/Obscure: Powders and fumes used by theatre actors, special effects used in street shows.

Mind Reading: A mix of sixth sense, an almost supernatural shrewdness, cheap tricks and hypnotic talent.

Stun: Huge firecrackers, made of paper and gunpowder, commonly used in pyrotechnics. This power has a range of 3/6/12.

Succor: Herbal tonics, tisanes and cordials.

SEASONED

Disguise: Tricks, make-up, iridescent clothing and a consummate actor's talent.

Dispel: Occult knowledge, propitiatory gestures, sleight of hand and a proper use of acids, salt, sulfur and iron filings.

Sleep: Vapors, and rags soaked in soporific substances, which act as soon as inhaled.

VETERAN

Puppet: Hypnosis, suggestion and cursed dolls.

HEROIC

Divination: Astrology, fortune-telling, palm-reading, omens interpretation... and some talent as a medium.

USING TAROTS AS ACTION CARDS (OPTIONAL)

Tarots are very common in Ultima Forsan macabre Renaissance, and they are the fundamentals on which all future decks of cards will be created.

As an optional variation, instead of common action cards it is possible to use a Tarots deck. To do so it is enough to follow the rules below.

ASSEMBLING THE ACTION DECK

The first thing to do is to prepare the action deck. Separate Major from Minor Arcana (also called "trionfi" or Trumps), and remove from Minor Arcana the Knights, which will not be used. At this point, each player has to choose one of the Major Arcana as his Wild Arcane. Each character must have a corresponding, different Wild Arcane. Write down the chosen Arcane on the character sheet. Nobody can choose the Fool (the only trump without number) or Death, which is reserved to the Game Master.

To assemble the action deck, now shuffle the Minor Arcana (less the Knights) with the players' Wild Arcane, adding Death and the Fool. Set aside all the others Major Arcana, which will not be used, and your action deck is ready.

Chapter Four Setting Rules

STARTING

During the game, the countdown starts with the Major Arcana, which are called out before the Ace. It is not necessary to call them out one by one: the Game Master will simply call out the Trumps. Whoever has one as an Action Card has to show it. The characters who have a Trump, play one after the other, starting from the higher Trump to the lower. After the Trumps, the Game Master proceeds as usual, calling out the other cards (Ace, King, and so on).

Special Trumps:

- * **Wild Arcane:** If a player gets his own Wild Arcane, it works as a normal Savage Worlds Joker, and the player also gets a Benny.
- * **Death Arcane:** It is always the Game Master's Wild Arcane. It works as a Joker for him only, and he also gets a Benny.
- * **The Fool:** The Fool works as a normal Savage Worlds Joker for any player or the Game Master.

THE SUITS

The tarots suits are different from those in the usual poker decks, but they are those used in Italian or Spanish cards: wands, cups, pentacles and swords. If one or more characters get cards with the same value, the order in which they start playing is as follows:

Swords	corresponding to	Spades
Cups	corresponding to	Hearts
Pentacles	corresponding to	Diamonds
Wands	corresponding to	Club

Trumps and Suits: The Fool and a player's own Wild Arcane work as a Joker and do not need a "suit" in any Savage Worlds rule. If a player receives a Trump which is neither the Fool nor his own Wild Arcane in a situation in which the suit is of importance (for example in a Chase or in a Dramatic Task), then the Arcane is always considered as a Wands/Club card.



Game Mastering

Chapter Five

Game Mastering



he following pages are for the Ultima Forsan Game Master's use. They contain some additional rules and many of the secrets of the setting.

ADDITIONAL RULES

Ultima Forsan is a game of terrible fights against the Dead and of other horrors faced by fearless Heroes. The following additional rules and variations from Savage Worlds Deluxe allow for a game experience that enhances the setting peculiarities.

MASS BATTLES AGAINST THE DEAD

In Mass Battles, hordes and armies of the Dead follow some special rules.

Knowledge Roll (Battle): The Hordes of the Dead usually are legions of walking corpses with nobody to control them, which means that a skilled commander can exterminate them without suffering serious losses. Their Battle roll is a meager d4-2. Armies led by one or more Tyrants are much more dangerous: they use one of the warlords' Knowledge (Battle) die.

Morale: If a Horde, or an army of the Dead fails in the Morale roll, this doesn't mean that the Dead decide to run away, but that because of the suffered losses and of their opponents' superior strategy, the mass of the Dead is now in such a disarray that can be dispersed or swept away with relative ease.

Morale Modifiers: The Dead cannot feel any kind of fear, and they always add +2 to their Morale roll.

Contagion: After each Battle round, 50% of the fallen among the living must be added to the Dead army, whose tokens must therefore be recalculated. Those among the fallen who haven't been devoured by the Dead rise again and are ready to fight!

Characters in a Battle against the Dead:

Heroes taking part to a battle against the Dead run a great risk. If the Character's Result in the Battle table shows that a character has suffered some damage, and that damage causes one or more Wounds, the character has to make a roll on the Bites and Claws table. The damage must be considered as inflicted by a single blow, so the character makes only one roll, regardless of the number of Wounds.

ORDERS AND RENEGADE HEROES

Many Professional Edges, such as Knight, Inquisitor, Iscariot, Monk of Mercy and Red Odalisque, refer to an Order or specific organization, and to the corresponding obedience commitments. Whoever becomes part of an Order, takes a lifelong binding oath of obedience. This is why no character can belong to more than one Order at the same time, nor have more than one of these Edges.

If a character breaks his vow either by breaking the rules, or through disobeying or rebelling against his superiors, he becomes a Renegade (also called rogue, turncoat, or other less pleasant names).

A Renegade character can still ask to be allowed back into his own Order, but he must make amends somehow. If he is guilty of a minor infraction, he

can simply persuade his superiors of his innocence through a successful Persuasion roll. In the case of a major infraction, a successful Persuasion roll will give him more chances of being taken back inside the Order if he successfully undertakes some mission. In any case, he can be admitted again in the Order only if he immediately disavows the forbidden behavior and stops behaving that way.

A character adds +2 to his Persuasion roll if his behavior was dictated by need, -2 if the infraction was due to trivial reasons, and -4 if he acted out of despicable reasons.

If a character is not readmitted and remains a Renegade:

- * He is not considered part of the Order anymore, losing his right to any kind of hospitality.
- * He does not have any obedience commitment anymore.
- * He must hand back whatever gear he received, but if he manages to avoid giving it back, he can keep it; remember, however, that this is an out-and-out theft, which further dishonors the character.
- * If the Order he belonged to had a corresponding Edge, he keeps that special skills.
- * He suffers -2 in Charisma when dealing with anyone who knows of his behavior (except for eventual enemies of the Order that expelled him).
- * According to his behavior, he may be considered an out-and-out enemy of the Order that expelled him.

JOURNEYS AND ENCOUNTERS

In the world of Ultima Forsan, a journey is always a dangerous thing. When the Heroes undertake a journey, they must follow the usual *Savage Worlds Deluxe* Encounter rules: as Game Master, you must draw an Action Card for each day of travel. If it is a face card or higher, the Heroes will have an encounter or an accident of some kind.

- * **Hearts - NPC:** Roll on the NPC table.
- * **Club - Obstacle:** Roll on the Obstacle table.
- * **Spades - Enemies:** Roll on the Enemies table.
- * **Diamonds - Fortune:** Roll on the Fortune table.
- * **Joker - Special:** A special encounter, which may be directly related to the ongoing adventure, or may be a double encounter. In this case, draw two more cards and combine their suits (considering them as if they were two face cards).

HEARTS - NPC (D6)

IN A FIEF:

The people encountered may be a traveling group or they can be in a small structure, such as a farm, a manor farm or an encampment: They can provide information about the surrounding area or do business with the Heroes.

- 1 - Merchants (2d6):** They probably carry with them a stock of goods to sale.
- 2 - Armed Men (2d6):** Men at arms, patrols, Dead hunters, mercenaries.
- 3 - Workers (2d6):** Farmers, breeders, woodcutters, fishermen, hunters.

Chapter Five Game Mastering

4 – Men of the cloth (2d6): Monks, nuns, pilgrims, high ranking clergy with their escort.

5 – Artists (2d6): Acrobats, actors, jugglers, minstrels, comedians.

6 – Special (2d6): A nobleman, or an alchemist, an inventor, or a witch, with their small retinue or escort.

IN THE WILDERNESS:

It is highly improbable to meet travelers or small settlements in the Wilderness. If you draw a Hearts card, you must immediately draw another one. If the second one is Hearts again, then the Heroes really meet some NPCs, and you will use the “In a Fief” table. If it belongs to another suit, then the Heroes have encountered some Enemies, and you must roll on the “Enemies” table instead.

ON THE SEA:

1-3 – Merchant Galleon: The ship carries goods from one harbor to another. There may be some interesting passengers onboard: **make a roll on the NPC “In a Fief” table.**

4-5 – War Galleon or Galley: The ship is hunting pirates or simply carrying troops. It may come from a recent fight.

6 – Hospitallers: A galleon belonging to the Knights Hospitaller, or to the Overseas Knights if in the Pacific Ocean. Such ships almost always carry important passengers: **make a roll on the NPC “In a Fief” table.**

CLUB - OBSTACLES (D6)

IN A FIEF OR IN THE WILDERNESS:

1 – Delay: A river burst its banks, a bridge collapsed, the vegetation is too thick and tangled to proceed: a Survival roll may

allow the Heroes to bypass the obstacle without any delay, otherwise the journey's duration will be lengthened by one day.

2 – Landslide: Luck is against the Heroes, who risk being swept away. They must make an Agility roll or suffer 2d6 damage! Ignore this outcome if the group is traveling on a plain, and roll on the NPC table instead.

3-6 – Adverse Weather: According to the region and the season, the Heroes must face Heat or Cold, as described in the *Savage Worlds Deluxe* Dangers section.

ON THE SEA:

1 – Dead Calm: You can only row, if the ship has oars.

2 – Adverse Winds: For this day, the Boating roll suffers a -2 penalty.

3 – Storm: For this day, the Boating roll suffers a -4 penalty.

4-6 – Adverse Weather: According to the region and the season, the Heroes must face Heat or cold, as described in the *Savage Worlds Deluxe* Dangers section.

SPADES - ENEMIES (D6)

IN A FIEF:

1-2 – Brigands (2d6): If they are 8 or more, one of them is a Wild Card.

3 – Enemies (2d6): Men at arms belonging to a faction clearly hostile toward the Heroes.

4 – Beasts: A boar, a bear or 1d6+2 wolves (see *Savage Worlds Deluxe*).

5 – Pack (3d4): Husks or Carrions.

6 – Strays (1d6): Possessed or Furies.

IN THE WILDERNESS:

1 – Veteran Brigands (2d6): If they are 8 or more, one of them is a Wild Card.

Chapter Five
Game Mastering



Chapter Five Game Mastering

2 - Pack (3d4): Husks or carrions. The die result may be an Ace!

3 - Strays (1d6): Possessed or Furies. The d6 die result may be an Ace!

4 - Beasts: A boar, a bear or 1d6+2 wolves (see *Savage Worlds Deluxe*).

5 - Fell Beast: Roll again a d6:

* **1:** Flock of Fell Crows

* **2:** Swarm of Fell Rats

* **3:** Fell Boar

* **4:** Wolfish Cat (1d4)

* **5:** Cerberus (1d6)

* **6:** Fell Bear

6 - Abominations: Roll again a d6:

* **1:** Hecatonchires

* **2:** Wormridden (1d6)

* **3-4:** Chimera: A Husk with 2 more Special Abilities

* **5:** Chimera: A Fury with 3 more Special Abilities

* **6:** Chimera: A Possessed with 4 more Special Abilities

ON THE SEA:

1-4 - Corsairs or Pirates: A galleon ran by sea marauders. 50% chance that the ship contains significant loot!

5 - Enemies: A warship belonging to a faction clearly hostile toward the Heroes.

6 - Adrift Ship: Make a roll on the NPC "On the Sea" table; the crew, however, has turned into a pack of the Dead!

DIAMONDS - FORTUNE (D6)

1-3 - Luck: The Heroes find a building or a wreck containing something that might be useful to them.

4-5 - Food: Game, schools of fish, or other similar things. Making a Survival roll, the Heroes can find food for one day without slowing down their journey.

6 - City of Sorrow: The Heroes get in sight of an abandoned settlement. On the open sea, ignore this result.

5.1 RELICS TABLE (1D100)

D100	TYPE OF RELIC
01-60	Common Relics: Such Relics do not have any particular effect besides their intrinsic value and the Benny the faithful belonging to the corresponding creed can get from having them.
61-80	Manna containing Relics: Besides their intrinsic value and the additional Benny, these Relics also somehow have 1d4 doses of Manna either spread on the object itself or inside a specific vial made of crystal, glass or some precious metal. If the Manna is extracted, consumed or used, the Relic keeps the properties of a Common Relic.
91-95	Holy Weapons: These Relics are weapons or armors that once belonged to some saint, prophet or champion of the faith, and they can inflict permanent additional damage to the Spawn (see examples).
96-100	Unique Relics: They are exceptional Relics that can provide lost knowledge, special effects or extraordinary substances.

RELICS AND MARVELS

Relics and Marvels are special treasures that can be found in the Cities of Sorrow or in abandoned buildings deep in the Wilderness.

They may be the object of a specific mission, of an adventure created with the help of the Adventure Generator (Chapter 7), or be found in another way.

RELICS

The first thing to do if the group finds a Relic is to identify it. Such objects are usually kept inside a special shrine, which might carry some inscription by which it is possible to identify its content. Or else, one of the characters may try a Common Knowledge (-2) or Knowledge (Religion) roll to identify it.

All Relics can be handed over to an institution pertinent to them, which usually rewards the giver with 1d6x500 florins, besides pledging its gratitude and appreciation to its benefactor.

As an alternative, most Relics (Common Relics) can be fit by a craftsman on a weapon or armor, or can simply be carried in a small case: the effect is that if the character owning the relic belongs to the corresponding faith, he obtains one more Benny per session (but each character can get no more than one, no matter how many Relics he carries with him) thanks to the encouragement he draws from it. Other special Relics may contain Manna or have further additional abilities, if used by a faithful of the creed they belong to.

For the above mentioned effects to take place it is not necessary that the Relic is really "genuine", and in fact most of them are not. It is enough, however, that they have been declared genuine and

worshipped through the centuries under a specific name for them to be somehow effective and sought after by the faithful and the clergy. This also means that if a character decides or discovers that a Relic is a fake, he will not get any benefit from it because he knows it is forged!

Listed below are some examples of Relics, divided by creed.

CHRISTIAN RELICS

Common Relics: Saint Joseph's Ring, Splinter from the Holy Cross, Saint Francis' Cordon, Saint Apollonia's Tooth, Saint Theodore's Jawbone, Saint Procopius' Hand, Stone from the Bethlehem Grotto, Saint Clare's Braid.

Relics containing Manna: Vial of Saint Januarius' Blood, Vial of Saint Pantaleon's Blood, Saint Nicholas' Heart, Nail from the Holy Cross or Thorn from Jesus' Thorns Crown, Shrouds, veils, fragment from the Uncction Stone.

Holy Weapons - Saint Peter's Staff: A staff that inflicts +d6 damage to the Spawn. In the hands of a Monk of Mercy it acquires the same characteristics as a shepherd's iron reinforced staff, but it weighs only 4 pounds.

Holy Weapons - Saint Galgano's Sword: The saint's legendary longsword is a powerful relic which inflicts +d6 damage to the Spawn.

Holy Weapons - Saint George's Spear: The saint knight's legendary spear is a powerful Relic, which inflicts +d6 damage to the Spawn.

Holy Weapons - Saint Flavian's Cuirass: This plate Corselet (Armor +3) adds +1 to Soak rolls against Wounds which could carry the infection of the Plague.

Chapter Five

Game Mastering

Unique Relics – Judas’ Coin (one of the thirty silver coins Judas received as a reward for betraying Jesus): As long as a Christian hero has it, he will lose 1 of the Bennies at his disposal.

Unique Relic – Saint Maurice’s Episcopal Gloves: These gloves, embroidered in gold and silver, give 1 Armor point to the arms; a Monk of Mercy will also get +2 in any Soak rolls against Wounds that could carry the infection of the Plague.

Unique Relics – Saint Grail: Its economic value is of 4d6x500 florins, and it holds 4d4 doses of Manna inside.

ISLAMIC RELICS

Common relics: Fragment from the Black Stone, very ancient copy of the Koran, a silver Khamsa, a lock of Mohammed’s hair, holy Seals, Scrolls with the Prophets’ faces described on them.

Holy Weapons – Mohammed’s Sword: This scimitar is a powerful Relic, which inflicts +d6 damage to the Spawn.

Holy Weapons – Buraidah’s Spear: This point once belonged to the spear that bore Muhammad’s banner. It can be inserted on a knight’s lance or on a common spear, or even on a pike, and inflicts +d6 damage to the Spawn.

Holy Weapons – Kab ibn Zuhayr’s Cloak: It is a cloak that can be used by an al-Barsarkun or by another warrior of the Faith; it adds +1 to Soak rolls against Wounds that can carry the infection of the Plague.

Unique Relics – Mohammed’s Seal: It adds +2 to Soak rolls against Wounds that could carry the infection of the Plague.

JEWISH RELICS

Common Relics: Piece of rock from the Temple of Jerusalem, Holy Scroll, a Menorah.

Relics containing Manna: Lamps from the First Temple, Sinai Resin.

Holy Weapons – Judith’s Blade: This dagger grants the Head Strike Edge.

Holy Weapons – David’s Sling: This sling grants the owner the Head Shot Edge.

Holy Weapons – Aronne’s Staff: It’s a common wooden staff and weighs only 4 pounds.

Holy Weapons – Samuel’s Spade: This powerful spade of Jew origin inflicts +d6 damage to the Spawn.

Unique Relics – Silver Star of David: It adds +2 to Soak rolls against Wounds that could carry the infection of the Plague.

PAGAN, UNIVERSAL AND GYPSY RELICS

Common relics: Holy masks, divination scrolls, necklaces of teeth or bones, amulets and talismans of any kind.

Relics containing Manna: Sarah the Black’s remains, parts of Osiris dismembered body, Orpheus’ Head, Bones of Ancient Heroes, mummies, salt from Gomorra, angelic remains.

Holy Weapons – Achilles’ Spear: It inflicts +d6 damage to the Spawn.

Holy Weapons: Caesar’s Cuirass: This plate Corselet (Armor +3) adds +1 to Soak rolls against Wounds that could carry the infection of the Plague.

Holy Weapons – Ancile: This holy shield has the same characteristics as a large Shield, but it weighs only as much as a medium Shield.

Chapter Five Game Mastering

Holy Weapons – Famous Swords (Excalibur, Durenal, Joyeuse, Curtana): They all inflict +d6 damage to the Spawn.

Holy Weapons – Moses Staff: It is a staff that inflicts +d6 damage to the Spawn. In the hands of a Monk of Mercy it acquires the same characteristics as an iron reinforced staff, but it will still weigh only 4 pounds.

Unique relics – Zoroastrian Seal/Solomon's Seal: It adds +2 to Soak rolls against Wounds that could carry the infection of the Plague.

Unique Relics – Prometheus' Clay: Contains 1d4 doses of Ambrosia (see page 95)

Unique Relics – Bones of the Giants: Contain 1d4 doses of Ambrosia (see page 95)

Unique Relics – Ark of the Covenant: Contains 1d6 small urns, each filled with 1d12 doses of Manna.

MARVELS

Marvels are incredible scientific artifacts or mysterious and occult objects which promise knowledge and power to whoever studies and learns to use them. Even more than with Relics, you can use the examples in the table below to create such objects and introduce them into your adventures as the goal in specific adventures, random treasures or rewards.

Many Marvels must be recognized and understood before it is possible to use them. In such cases, a character has to make a Common Knowledge (-2) or appropriate Knowledge roll to recognize them.

Many Marvels can be sold to alchemists, scholars or noblemen with an interest for such things. Unless the object already has a specific price, the reward will be of 1d6x500 florins.

5.2 MARVELS TABLE (1D100)

D100	TYPE OF MARVEL
1-15	Enhanced Armor: A piece of enhanced armor. Make a d6 roll: 1-2: arms; 3-4: helm; 5: corselet; 6: leggings.
16-17	Fate Astrolabe: This complex astrological instrument requires a Smarts roll (-2) to understand how it works. If an Alchemist can use it, he can find out if on that day the stars influence is favorable or hostile to the creation of potions. The alchemist can read the stars every day by making a d6 roll: if the roll gives a 6, all the potions made that day get +1 at the Activation roll.
18	Iron Mask: This totally closed helm is fit with special bars which exert different levels of pressure on the skull. If fitted on a Dead's head, it will totally inhibit its aggressiveness without killing it and will turn it into a tottering puppet. Once the Mask is removed, the Dead will behave normally once again. In order to apply the Mask, it is necessary to defeat the creature through Grappling, at -2.

Chapter Five Game Mastering

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 19 | <p>Cloak of the Dead: It is a mantle realized by sewing together a few Dead's skins; its hood has the shape of an embalmed head. At the inside, the cloak is lined with Salamander Wool, which protects the wearer from any possible contamination. Whoever wears it can become almost "invisible" to the eyes of the weakest Dead, which is those endowed with type (A) or (D) Smarts. The wearer of the cloak can "vanish" only if there aren't any Dead in contact: if successful in an Agility roll, he becomes fully invisible to the Dead, provided that he does not run and makes only free actions. However, he has to make another roll at the beginning of each of his rounds.</p> |
| 20 | <p>Enochian Table: This object is covered with inscriptions written in a language very few scholars know: the Enochian language. A character who possesses this special text can study it once at every rank. If he is successful in a -4 Smarts roll, he can learn Enochian. Each Table of this type (the first excluded) allows its owner to add a cumulative +1 to this test.</p> |
| 21-45 | <p>Engineering Project: Schematics and formulas which explain how to build a device. An inventor who is successful in a Smarts roll understands their secrets and gains a new power (chosen by the Game Master) for free.</p> |
| 46-65 | <p>Alchemy Tome: An ancient text describing the properties and transmutations of matter. If an Alchemist is successful in a Smarts roll, this Tome allows him to learn a new power (chosen by the Game master) for free.</p> |
| 66-70 | <p>Emerald Table: An Alchemist who possesses this special Alchemy text can study it once at each new rank. If he is successful in an Alchemy roll he can learn for free a new power of his choice, or he can choose one of the powers he already has and halve the cost of the necessary ingredients (1 at least).</p> |
| 71-95 | <p>Grimoire: a mystic or hermetic Kabbalistic text which allows a Witch successful in a Witchcraft roll to learn a new power (chosen by the Game Master) for free.</p> |
| 96-100 | <p>Xerion: This small flask contains a fluid whose extraordinary alchemic properties no Alchemist has ever been able to recreate since it was first discovered. If used to prepare a potion, it makes it immune to any deterioration due to aging. The flask contains enough fluid to be used 3d6 times.</p> |

THE SECRETS OF ULTIMA FORSAN

Here you will find some of Ultima Forsan most important secrets, that you will be able to use directly in the Campaign described in **Chapter 6**, or in other scenarios created with the adventure generator you can find in **Chapter 7**.

Use these information discreetly and have the Players sweat a little to get it.

THE ORIGIN OF THE PLAGUE

All the wisest scholars know about the origin of the Plague is that it is the end result of an alchemic process carried out in a faraway kingdom by a learned man called Abramelech, better known

simply as the Alchemist. Nobody knows if the Plague that originated from his alembics was due to an error he made, or if it was the intended result; all we know is that for some time he managed to keep under control his Magnum Opus Nigrum, Great Black Work, until it got out of hand, infecting both him and an unknown number of people, who later became the so-called "Progenitors". It is not sure where all this took place, but it is supposed to have happened in a far region of Central Asia, known as the "Kingdom of Prester John". According to some, the Alchemist is still wandering around the world, looking for a cure for the Plague he caused, or perhaps just enjoying the results of his work.

Tomes, Projects and other Documents

When the characters find a written text, they may not always be able to read it. If you want, you can randomly determine the language of that text by a 3d6 roll:

Western Europe and Mediterranean Area

- 3 - Roll on the other table
- 4 - Greek
- 5 - Jewish
- 6 - Arab or Turkish
- 7 - French
- 8 - German
- 9 - 10: Florentine
- 11 - 12: Latin
- 13: Hungarian
- 14: Spanish or Portuguese
- 15: Danish
- 16: English or Gaelic
- 17 - Coptic
- 18 - Enochian

Eastern Europe and Northern Area

- 3 - Roll on the other table
- 4 - Greek
- 5 - Jewish
- 6 - Turkish or Arab
- 7 - Latin
- 8 - German
- 9 - 10: Danish
- 11 - 12: Polish
- 13: Hungarian
- 14: Florentine
- 15: Ruthenian
- 16: English or Gaelic
- 17 - Tartarian
- 18 - Enochian

Chapter Five
Game Mastering



A CURE FOR THE PLAGUE

There is no cure for the Plague. At least, not yet. Many scholars throughout the New Kingdoms, Plague Doctors, Alchemists and Witches frantically chase this utopia, trying and retrying all sorts of prescriptions and remedies, almost always without success. All this research, however, have had some positive side effects, such as the development of general medical science, surgery and sanitary measures, much more advanced than they were at the beginning of the fourteenth century, as well as the spreading of Last Hope, Cautery, Mercy Killing and Misericorde as general aid to limit both pain and contagion, and the creation of many formulas for invigorating, antitussive and healing potions and ointments.

But... what about the Plague?

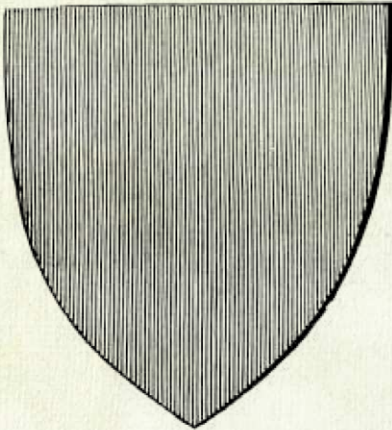
At present, very few know about the effects of Manna, Ambrosia and Mandragora, and nobody has tried as yet to combine those substances or to use them to obtain

a more reliable cure. This could be a path to follow in pursuing the creation of the mythical "Theriac".

Manna is effective if used on Morituri in the first stages of contagion and may save them from a single infection, but it is extremely rare and it is impossible to recreate it artificially. Mandragora, on the other hand, is poisonous for the Dead, but it is toxic for Untainted, Morituri and Tainted as well.

As for Ambrosia, it is a terrible and unstable substance, which generates fearful monsters by sheer contact, but it is also true that its mysterious properties might play a fundamental role in the final formula for a cure.

The scholars' aim is to obtain a substance that may be easily reproduced artificially in a laboratory and that, if administered to the Untainted before they get exposed to the Plague, may immunize them once for all. Other researchers venture further still, and hypothesize that this mythical



Theriac may have a beneficial effect on Tainted, Fell Beasts, Tyrants and Striges, bringing them back to normal.

Nobody in his right mind, however, can believe that any cure may be effective on Dead, Chimeras or Abominations, far too compromised by the Plague, whose effects are by now irreversible.

THE SECRETS OF ATRAMENT

Atrament is the awful substance the bodies of Dead, Fell Beasts and Abominations are impregnated with, and it spreads the Plague. Under some respects, the Plague is nothing else but Atrament, spread by numberless bodies it has altered and corrupted, which act as carriers, feeding and spreading it. The nature of this awful substance is still unknown even to the most skilled Plague Doctors. It acts as a sentient infection, an insidious, creeping disease, a symbiotic organism that is slowly adapting to its human hosts and to the environment through which it is spreading. Its mysterious nature is the same that gives Tyrants their ability to manipulate other Spawns, acting as a sounding board between the bodies of these intelligent beings and those of similar, but inferior, creatures. In spite of some scholars' beliefs, in fact, it is not the Tyrants' mind, or their will, to exert control over the Dead and the Fell Beasts, but the power and the higher quality of the Atrament in their bodies, which is able to exert its influence on the one present in other bodies. Men see each Spawn as an independent monster or being, but the Plague actually is one single being, divided into many bodies but at the same time somehow still inherently connected.

UNTAINTED AND TAINTED

The Tainted are a new kind of human beings, born or altered to the point of being able to adapt to a world invaded by the Plague. From a certain point of view, they are an evolution both of the human race and of the Plague itself; from another viewpoint, they can be seen as a sort of "compromise" between the human race and its most fearful enemy.

In any case, the Tainted are "immune" carriers of the Plague, and they can infect the Untainted through their blood, besides becoming an objective and tangible problem at the moment of their death, when they turn into Possessed, hungering for human flesh.

If their blood is hopelessly tainted, however, their saliva and other body fluids aren't, which allows this new race to reproduce normally.

The relationship between Tainted and Untainted is quite complex, as it is the matter of procreation and half breeds. Normal parents may have Tainted offspring – something that is apparently happening at a rate of a birth out of ten – while the opposite seems to happen much less often. Inter marriages are rare as well, and in such cases it is impossible to predict the nature of the offspring, which doesn't seem to follow any kind of pattern. There aren't, however, any intermediate variations between Tainted and Untainted: the offspring of such unions will belong to either one or the other "race".

A high percentage of pregnancies involving one or more Tainted ancestors or parents ends "unpleasantly". However, this doesn't prevent both Tainted and Untainted from trying to live a normal

Chapter Five
Game Mastering



life, and tales of tormented love stories born of the meeting of these two races have recently become quite common at the courts and on the squares throughout the New Kingdoms.

TAINTED AND FIENDS

The Tainted are as exposed as the Untainted to the attacks of Dead, Fell Beasts, Chimeras and Abominations, who like to feed off their flesh. However, wounds inflicted to the Tainted do not cause any infection, or the victim's First Death; instead, the victim will regain his strength as per normal Healing rules. Just like an Untainted, a Tainted can use a Benny to make a Soak roll, but he has no need to amputate and cauterize his wounded body parts because he cannot be infected by the Plague in this way. For these same reasons, a Tainted will never receive the Benny Morituri are entitled to, nor the Sardonic Grin Edge.

Tainted are in all respects living beings and members of the human race, even if some scholars number them among the Fiends, together with Tyrants and Striges, Plague Spawn who are suspended between life and death, have retained their intelligence and have methods and goals similar to those of human beings.

When a Tainted dies, however this happens, he comes back in a very short time as a Dead, specifically as a dangerous Possessed.

Just like an Untainted can become Tainted at the moment of his First Death (see Setting Rules), however, the Tainted can hope to "pass away" in a more pleasant way, becoming one of those creatures known as Striges.

STRIGES

Striges are a rare and almost unknown type of Plague Spawn. They are Tainted who, at the moment of death, instead of turning into Possessed, slowly drift into a twilight life condition, a sort of death that can simulate life, retaining their mental faculties intact. As they pass away into their Second Death, Striges do not age any longer, but they begin to wither, dry out and shrivel up, turning into pale mummies. Their heart stops beating, blood doesn't circulate any longer and their lungs do not work anymore. Their anatomy becomes very similar to that of Tyrants, even if less powerful and enduring. They can go on existing for centuries in this condition, and since their nature is a relative novelty, nobody knows what the final outcome of such inhuman longevity will be.

Striges aren't as cruel as Tyrants, nor do they feel the need to feed off human flesh and blood, but their life is often centered around self-preservation and their fight to slow down the effects of their progressive "mummification". Together with their appearance, this makes them outcasts in the eyes both of Untainted and Tainted, turning them into isolated hermits, more hated and feared than the Tainted themselves.

Year by year, together with their normal appearance, they also lose their humanity, becoming sepulchral creatures used to live inside isolated, dusty crypts where they seek to give a meaning to their life, or to find a way to preserve themselves forever, through necromancy or contemplation.

As far as rules are concerned, details about Striges can be found at page 78.

Chapter Five Game Mastering



Chapter Five Game Mastering

AMBROSIA AND PROGENITORS

Few are those who suspect the existence of the Progenitors, beings more powerful than Tyrants and more monstrous than Abominations. They are those individuals who first contracted the Plague, somewhere in the heart of Asia, in the “Kingdom of Prester John”. Those Progenitors who survived during the last two centuries are extremely powerful beings, whose cunning, vigor and strength are far greater than those of any other Spawn. Two of them are the Black Sultan of Jerusalem and Erlik Khan of Tartary; unfortunately, they are not the last of their breed, since many others of this peers are still scattered all over the world. The bodies of Progenitors are not impregnated with Atrament but with Ambrosia, a substance they use to create faithful and powerful servants.

Red and thick, Ambrosia represents the “original”, or primitive, version of Atrament, or its extreme sublimation. Ambrosia is very dangerous and the smallest quantity can change whoever gets in contact with it into a terrible and deadly Chimera.

One dose of Ambrosia usually is the quantity held by one vial: a couple of drops which have the power of instantaneously changing whoever drinks them into a terrible monster, augmenting both his size and vital energy, and causing from one to a maximum of four alterations (see the Bestiary, Chimera). Ambrosia has this effect both on other Plague Spawn and on Untainted, Morituri and Tainted.

Each existing Spawn comes from a contagion chain that traces back to one of the Progenitors, and its Atrament is a decayed version of that Progenitor's

Ambrosia. This is why any cure or other alchemic substance based on a Progenitor's Ambrosia will act only on the Plague strain originating directly from him.

Most of the Dead, Fell Beasts, Chimeras and Abominations that can be found in the Mediterranean area are Spawn of the Black Sultan.

THE SAINTS AND MANNA

Rumors about the existence of the Saints, mortals that seem to be totally immune from the Plague, have multiplied during the last few decades. Saints can be distinguished from the Untainted only by a faint scent of flowers and balms that emanates from them, be them alive or dead. In some unclear way, this “smell” can be perceived by the Spawn, generating in them a sort of physical repulsion that, in some cases, even prevents them from getting near to its source. It is the opinion of many that in the Saints bodies is hidden the secret of how to defeat the Plague; this is why they are seen as a sort of messiahs, but under many respects Saints are absolutely normal people. No Plague Doctor has ever been able to “examine” a Saint, but some of them theorize that such individuals may be a sort of natural “antibody” developed by the human race against the Plague. In fact, not only their body is immune to any infection, but it also produces a substance that puts the Spawn to flight and acts as an out-and-out poison against Atrament.

This miraculous essence is called “Manna”.

Manna appears as a white, milky liquid, with a strong balsamic scent that has an

incredible effect on the Plague. At times, it is possible to extract it from the untainted bodies of saints of the past, but some alchemists maintain that they can also distill it from the bodies of still alive Saints. Usually, one dose of Manna corresponds to the quantity held in one vial: just a few drops of this substance, which have the following effects:

- * Used against a Spawn (in a Touch or Throwing attack), it inflicts 1d6 damage, and the eventual wound cannot regenerate, just like it happens with the effects of fire or acids. Coating 1 melee weapon or 4 projectiles/bolts/arrow points with 1 dose of Manna, the damage it causes has to be added to the one of the weapon (+d6). 1 dose is enough to coat 1 melee weapon or 4 projectiles/bolts/arrow points. With melee weapons, as soon as the blow hits the target (even if it doesn't inflict any damage), the dose must be considered lost, or "used up". In the case of ranged weapons, the quantity of Manna on each arrow or projectile is "lost" as soon as they are used (even if they do not hit the target).

- * If a Morituro who's just been infected with Atrament spreads 1 dose of Manna on the wound within 1 hour from contagion (the Hour of Mercy), he can then try to make a Vigor roll. If he is successful, the effects of the infection vanish noticeably, and he is out-and-out healed! In the case of a character who suffered more than one attack, it is necessary to use one dose on each infected wound.

- * If an Untainted gets infected by Miasma, Manna may prevent the contagion from taking roots inside the

victim's body, if he inhales for a long time the effluvia of 1 dose of Manna within the Hour of Mercy. The dose will lose its effectiveness after being used once.

- * If an Untainted ingests some Atrament, Manna may prevent the infection from taking roots inside the victim's body if he swallows one dose of Manna within the Hour of Mercy.

- * If Manna is allowed to evaporate in the open air, it creates an area of balsamic effluvia which impregnates a Medium Burst Template for 12 hours before losing its effectiveness. Any (D) Smarts Spawn will avoid that area unless forced to step into it.

As far as all these effects are concerned, the Tainted are considered as Spawn.

MANDRAGORA

Mandragora is an officinal herb mostly known because of the poison that can be obtained from it, which acts only if swallowed. If ingested by an Untainted, Mandragora is just a Toxic Poison, but if a Plague Spawn is forced (one way or another) to ingest it, Mandragora attacks Atrament most violently, and it is considered a Lethal Poison [-2]. If the victim cannot resist it, the effects are those described below:

Tainted: First Death in 2d6 round, coming back as Possessed in 1d6 rounds.

Fell Beasts and Dead: Last Death in 2d6 round.

Striges, Abominations and Chimeras: Last Death in 2d6 minutes.

Tyrants: Knocked out for 2d6 Minutes, then they turn into Possessed.

Chapter Five Game Mastering

With a success, the Spawn get 1 Wound (note: this way, Extras die anyways) and become Exhausted. With a raise, the Spawn is just Exhausted, and with further raises avoids any negative effect.

The effects Mandragora has on the Plague, however, may be an important element in the search for Theriac: at the moment, Mandragora is the only known poison which is effective against the Spawn and ignores the Undead immunity to poisons.

BEYOND THE PROGENITORS: NEPHILIM AND IMMORTALS

The most fearful legends of this macabre era tell about creatures even more powerful and mysterious than the Progenitors. This mysterious primordial race, known as Nephilim on some lost tomes, is somehow

connected to the Plague, but how and why is so far still unknown.

Moreover, there are still many who tell about mysterious individuals who wander all over the world or stay holed up into their unimaginable hideouts and seem to be endowed with long life, unfathomable faculties and obscure intents. Each of them is independent and distinct from the others even if the causes of their supernatural nature always seem to be somehow linked to the Plague, but they are usually known under the collective name of "Immortals".

The Heretic, the Alchemist, Koshej and the Wandering Jew mentioned in this manual are Immortals.

Discovering the Immortals' secrets might be a task fit for Heroes of Legendary Rank.



The Secret of Marco Polo

Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo



ere is *Ultima Forsan* introductory campaign in four episodes for 3-6 Novice rank heroes. Our heroes get hired by wise Melqisedeq of New

Venice to recover Marco Polo's treasure. From New Venice they must travel to Old Venice, then to Otranto and finally to Salerno, where the treasure is hidden.

AN OVERALL INTRODUCTION TO THE CAMPAIGN

In this short campaign, divided into 4 episodes, wise Melqisedeq of New Venice asks the heroes to engage in a treasure hunt through Macabre Italy, searching for Marco Polo's treasure and a priceless alchemic grimoire hidden with it.

The heroes assemble and leave for New Venice, whose cosmopolitan nature allows the players to play any type of character. The old kabbalist Melqisedeq has summoned the heroes to give them the task of finding the treasure, and to explain why he is willing to let them keep all the booty, as well as to provide the necessary funds for the expedition in exchange for the alchemic book – called the *Book of the Sun* – that the Polos seem to have brought back to Italy from the Cathay.

Leaving New Venice, the heroes set sail for Old Venice, there to recover Marco Polo's journal, but they are pursued by Sabellicus, the Gray Alchemist, a cunning and knowledgeable foe. The journal contains the information that both the clues to the actual location of

the treasure and the key to recover it are hidden inside the Castle of Otranto, a keep set in Southern Italy and belonging to the Kingdom of Hungary. The group must therefore sneak into the keep to track down these clues. Finally, the heroes and their foes will converge in the city of Salerno, where the treasure has been hidden, and explore the dangerous "Mechanical Vault" where the treasure lies, still well protected.

OVERALL BACKGROUND FOR THE GAME MASTER

Melqisedeq is honest in his intentions and pledge. Everything he says and agrees upon with the heroes will turn out to be true: the old kabbalist is interested only in a grimoire called Shams al-Ma'arif – "the Sun of Wisdom", or more commonly the *Book of the Sun* – and when the heroes find the Polos treasure he will gladly let them keep it.

However, Melqisedeq did not learn about the treasure and the grimoire by himself, but only heard about them after other people set forth to search for it and went to New Venice.

In particular, the first clues about it were discovered by the alchemist Sabellicus, a scholar at the court of the French nobleman Thomas Linche of Bastion of France, near Algiers. Linche used to be a Count-Bishop of the French Empire as well as a commander of the Knights of Saint Galgano, but he was expelled from the order and exiled on charges of moral turpitude, corruption and as a suspected Infector. He then retired to his Outremer estates with a retinue – agreed upon with Barbaros – of his most trusted knights,

Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

who used to be also accomplices in his evildoing, and of his “court scholar”, the Gray Alchemist Sabellicus. While studying some documents about a local Saracen scholar, *Ibn Ali al-Buni*, Sabellicus learned about his *Book of the Sun*, a tome in which he had condensed all the magic, alchemic and occult knowledge of the Arab tradition, a book that also seems to offer to whoever owns it the key to eternal youth and philosopher’s gold. Funded by his protector, Linche, Sabellicus then set sail on a ship full of trusted armed men to search for the grimoire.

His first discovery was that well before the Plague a family of Venetian merchants, the Polos, had brought the book back with them to Italy from the East, so he decided to go to New Venice and collect there more information about the Polos. Upon reaching New Venice, the Gray Alchemist contacted the wise men of the *Corte de’ Sortileghi* (Sorcerers’ Court), but instead of helping him, they told Melqisedeq about it all. The wise kabbalist is now set to snatching away from Sabellicus both the treasure and most of all the grimoire, to prevent it from falling in the hands of the alchemist and also to be able to study it himself, looking for a Cure against the Plague.

To this end, Melqisedeq charges the heroes with a mission through Italy, finding them a passage on Captain Largo Sevillano’s small sailing ship so that they can reach the object of their search before Sabellicus and his henchmen. Their journey promises to be full of unexpected events and dangers!

EPISODE 1

OF LEAD AND GOLD

INTRODUCTION FOR THE PLAYERS

There are two Venices. One of them, Old Venice, is a City of Sorrow, a grim place of death and horror haunted by the Drowned Ones, countless animated corpses who adapted to crawling in the channels and swimming in the Black Lagoon, surfacing everywhere, on the shores of the islands, in the narrow streets and canals, between buildings, in the flooded cellars of the palaces.

The other one, New Venice, was founded anew by those merchants, citizens and noblemen who fled Old Venice, and it is now the golden capital of the Island of Candia (Crete) and of the remaining Venetian maritime domains.

New Venice is one of the richest and most cosmopolitan cities in the New Kingdoms of the West. Those noble families who escaped the Fall of Old Venice moved their lodgings and riches to this place, building palaces and towers by the harbor and the forest of masts filling it all year round. At the same time, Levantine, French, Hungarian, Greek and Saracen merchants and ship owners have peacefully invaded the *sestieri* (Venetian for “districts”) of the city, determined to carve their space within those highly strategic *fondachi* where everything and everybody is tolerated, even the Tainted, provided that they bring profit and power. New Venice’s architecture is a mixture of eastern and western styles, with European, African and Asian traits. Mosques, synagogues and cathedrals rise around the same squares, and the Copt Pyramid

Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

of the Necropolitan of Venice, which stands in the heart of the Tainted's Ghetto, adds the final touch to the atmosphere of this place.

Therefore, on the streets it is possible to see noblemen, clergymen, merchants, adventurers and spies from all over the Old World, while the city markets offer any kind of goods that can be shipped by sea.

While wandering about the city streets and minding his own business, each hero gets a mysterious message...

BACKGROUND FOR THE GAME MASTER

Jorius Sabellicus – also known as the “Gray Alchemist” because of the Salamander Wool cloak and gloves he often wears – is a scholar, a cross between an alchemist, necromancer and inventor. Upon leaving the court of his lord, Thomas Linche of Bastion of France, Sabellicus reached New Venice with his escort of renegade Paladins and spent a lot of time at the Sorcerers' Court and in the Tainted's Ghetto, searching for information about the *Book of the Sun*. As he studied the old records of the noblemen who escaped the Fall of Old Venice, he discovered that a copy of Ibn Ali al-Buni's grimoire had reached the court of Kubla Khan, in the East, where it had been given as a gift to the Polos, who had brought it with them to Venice. The grimoire had then become part of Marco Polo's treasure, whose location could be found only by accessing his journal, still hidden somewhere in Old Venice.

Sabellicus researches, however, sparked wise Melqisedeq's interest, and he is now

set on “snatching” the *Book of the Sun* away from Sabellicus and sending his own emissaries to Old Venice ahead of the Gray Alchemist, there to find and secure the journal.

Melqisedeq summons the heroes to the Gold Rooster Inn, to entrust them with this mission. On the way there, the heroes must face the guards and find the mysterious Sorcerers' Court, hidden in the deepest recesses of New Venice Ghetto. Upon agreeing to undertake the mission, the heroes will have to come up against Sabellicus' secret weapon: the Leaden Knight, a Philosopher's Android sent to destroy them.

SCENE 1

A MESSAGE SEALED IN GOLD

Each hero receives a mysterious message written in golden ink on an hexagonal sheet of parchment folded and sealed with a seal impressed in pure gold. The message may have been left on an windowsill of an inn room – inaccessible from the outside – or slipped surreptitiously inside the hero's pocket, or delivered by an urchin who immediately disappeared through the crowd. In any case, each message is written in the language each character knows best, but the content is always the same:

“Beyond the black iron gate, where the cats rule and men serve, when the moon rises over the mansions and the doors lock, there the Sorcerers' Court appears, and the light-footed Gold Rooster round and round wanders about.

Your services are fervently required, great is the reward.”

Chapter Six
The Secret of Marco Polo



Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

SCENE 2

CURFEW

The message, which has been sent by Melqisedeq, hints at the mysterious Sorcerers' Court, a legendary place hidden within the Tainted's Ghetto, and to the way to find it.

If the heroes make some inquiries, they will be told that the Court should be somewhere within the Tainted's Ghetto, but that in the general opinion it is just hogwash: a courtyard around which gather the houses and laboratories of witches, alchemists and necromancers, hidden among the wretched alleys and cramped yards of the Ghetto.

The Untainted can access New Venice Ghetto only in the daytime, while at night a strictly maintained curfew and a heavy gate block the only official entrance. If there are any Tainted among the heroes, they already know they have to be inside the Ghetto by nightfall, when the gate is locked, and that they won't be allowed to leave till dawn. Together or individually, the heroes have to find a way to be still inside the Ghetto after curfew. They can:

- * Hide somewhere during the day through a successful Stealth roll, or disguise themselves as Tainted, making a successful Persuasion roll (a failure means that the character gets rudely escorted outside the Ghetto by the city guards);
- * Being Tainted, they are therefore forced to spend the night in one of the smoky inns of the Ghetto;
- * Make a Notice roll (-2) to look for a secret passage in the cellars and tunnels under New Venice;

* Make a successful Notice (-2) or Alchemy roll to follow a series of alchemic symbols drawn with charcoal on the walls of alleys and storage rooms;

* Jump from the nearby roofs to those of the Ghetto with two successful Agility rolls (a failure causes 2d6+2 fall damage, which can be halved with an Agility roll);

* Pay a girl of maybe twelve, barefoot and dressed like a gypsy, to lead them through almost invisible and inaccessible alleys to the Ghetto;

* Once inside the Ghetto after sundown, however, the heroes realize that their presence has not gone unnoticed. A patrol of city guards has followed the clumsier among the heroes and now barges into the courtyard where they have gathered, ready to arrest and manhandle them for breaking the curfew.

City Guards (Number of Heroes):

These braggart and annoying guards are somehow doing their duty in trying to take the heroes prisoners. They deliver their blows with knotty wood maces which inflict nonlethal damage. If necessary, they can use a whistle to summon more guards, but they will run away if at least half of them is put out of commission. In this case, however, the Ghetto will soon be surrounded and combed.

CITY GUARD

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Streetwise d4

Pace 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 6 (1)

Gear: Leather armor, wood mace (Str+d6).

Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

SCENE 3

THE SORCERERS' COURT

After defeating the city guards (and maybe leaving them to sleep for a couple of hours in some warehouse), the heroes find themselves hopelessly lost among the narrow alleys and courtyards of the Ghetto. Some shops are still open, and in a courtyard several cats have gathered around a well, drawn by the scraps of fish a somewhat tipsy fishmonger throws them from time to time. Nobody, let alone the fish seller, will answer to any question about the Sorcerers' Court. If the heroes wait in this courtyard, however, as soon as the moon rises above the surrounding buildings roofs, the cats meowing gets louder and as he looks up, the fish seller realizes it is time to close his shop, after throwing whatever fish he has left to the cats. As he closes the doors, he thus reveals a narrow and low passage in the wall, up to then hidden by the open door. The passage leads to the Sorcerers' Court, a darker, even more tumble-down yard surrounded by leaning buildings, smoky laboratories, haunted houses and attics that hide kabbalistic secrets under their crumbling roofs. In the night breeze, a sign slowly revolves on its chain above the door of an inn: the Gold Rooster.

SCENE 4

AT THE GOLD ROOSTER

At the Gold Rooster, the only patron is an old man who looks like a competent, odd wise man, maybe an alchemist or some kind of sorcerer.. The old man introduces himself as Melqisedeq, scholar and kabbalist, and says he summoned the group because he has a business proposal for them. Each hero has been selected by means of oracles,

bone dice and old bronze coins that the old man still carries with him and seems to consult every time before opening his mouth, as if to decide what he can or cannot say.

Melqisedeq, who seems to know much of the characters, introduces the group members, then he gets to the point.

"In four hours, a merchant tartan with a load of spices will set sail for Trieste. The captain, Largo Sevillano, is a trusted friend of mine; he will take you on board and take you to Old Venice.

Somewhere in that city is hidden the Journal of Marco Polo... you might have heard of him, a merchant and traveler who lived well before the Plague. The Polos traveled the Silk Road for a long time, getting as far as the Court of the Kubla Khan, who at that time was the Lord of Cathay. After years of travels and adventures in unknown lands, Marco came back to Italy, where he assembled and organized his treasures, travel journals and secrets.

It seems that, among the chests full of precious goods he is said to have hoarded, there was also a grimoire, written in Arabic by an ancient master and containing the secrets of a knowledge now lost, which had been sent as a gift to the lord of Cathay. I will supply you with the means to search and find Marco Polo's treasure. All I ask in exchange is that grimoire, called the Book of the Sun. I'm not interested in the rest of the treasure.

So, what do you think of my proposal?"

Chapter Six
The Secret of Marco Polo



Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

SCENE 5

THE LEADEN KNIGHT

Melqisedeq and the heroes are still discussing the details of their agreement when a loud sound of heavy steps coming from the outside shakes the ground and the glasses and jar on their table.

The old man peers outside through a grime covered window and after staring into the night mist he exclaims: "He has found us! Sabellicus has found us... and he's sent his Leaden Knight to destroy us!"

A moment later a huge Teutonic Philosopher's Android breaks down the door and in a whirlwind of spinning weapons it attacks the heroes and everybody else, smashing chairs, tables and furniture, shattering kegs full of spirits and throwing lanterns and candleholders to the floor. In a few seconds the fight becomes a nightmare of flames and relentless blows, while the fire draws the attention of the city guards.

THE LEADEN KNIGHT

It is said that the Dominican Friar Albertus Magnus built a prototype of "mechanical man" in the monastery of Cologne, some seventy years before the outbreak of the Plague. Centuries later, the alchemist monk Basil Valentine rediscovered that first model and the studies of that wise philosopher, and used them as the starting point for the creation of the renowned "Teutonic Philosopher's Androids", built nowadays in the German Spagyric Monasteries. Nobody knows how this heavy prototype came into Sabellicus' possession.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d4

Pace 4; Parry: 6; Toughness: 10 (3)

Special Abilities:

* **Armor +3:** Thick layers of metal armor plate. Called shots in between the plates (with -2) do not inflict extra damage but allow to ignore the armor.

* **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; it does not suffer extra damage from called shots; immune to poison and disease; does not suffer Wound modifiers.

* **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.

* **Improved Frenzy:** the Leaden Knight can perform two Fighting attacks with no penalty when he suffers at least one Wound.

* **Mallet:** The Leaden Knight's huge fists inflict Str+d6.

* **Size +1:** The Leaden Knight is almost 8 feet tall!

SPECIAL RULES FOR THE ENCOUNTER

Fire: Starting with the second round, each player must roll a d6: if he gets 6, then the flames reach a random part of his body (use the Injury table) and he catches fire: the character suffers d10 damage!

A burning character must spend one round and make a successful Agility roll to extinguish the flames. If he fails, he keeps suffering d10 damage and must throw a d6 die again: if he gets 6 the damage increases of d10.

Chocking: Starting from the fourth round, if the characters are still inside the inn they must make a successful Vigor roll at each round, or suffer one Fatigue level.

Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

Guards: If nobody intervenes to put out the flames, by the sixth round the fire attracts a small crowd and d6+1 city guards. The guards may not have a clear picture of the situation, and a Persuasion roll may induce them to face the Leaden Knight.

EPILOGUE

Once the automaton is defeated, the kabbalist Melqisedeq reveals further details – withheld up to now – concerning the endeavor.

“You are not the only ones looking for Marco Polo’s Treasure. A man known as Sabellicus, the Gray Alchemist, is already searching for the journal and he will try to get to Old Venice ahead of you. He is a ruthless, unscrupulous scholar, a skilled alchemist, necromancer and inventor, the very one who sent that automaton against us. Sabellicus came to New Venice on a well-equipped ship, and has with him an escort of renegade knights who would stoop to doing literally anything. You will have to face these ruthless foes and get to New Venice before they do. Will you be up to it?”

Melqisedeq then rushes the heroes out of the Ghetto through a series of alleys and tunnels, and directs them to the docks, where the Pandora, Captain Largo’s small tartan, is waiting for them. Largo arrives immediately after the heroes and gets ready to immediately set sail.

While the Pandora finally weighs anchor, you stare at each other and wonder if you did the right thing embarking upon this adventure...

EPISODE 2

MARCO POLO’S JOURNAL

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF THE PREVIOUS EPISODE

A few days ago the old kabbalist Melqisedeq gathered the heroes at the Sorcerers’ Court, in New Venice, to entrust them with an adventurous and mysterious mission. They must recover Marco Polo’s treasure, wherever it may be hidden, and deliver to the old kabbalist a grimoire written in Arabic and called the *Book of the Sun*, the only piece of Polo’s collection the wise scholar is interested into. As for the rest of the treasure, the heroes can keep it. The heroes have willingly accepted to undertake this mission and have set sail on a tartan belonging to Captain Largo Sevillano, a trusted friend of Melqisedeq’s. Largo will take them wherever they need to go, up and down the Mediterranean coasts, but this will be pretty much the full extent of his helping them.

Their first stop is Old Venice, where the heroes must look for a certain Hilaire Aschenbach and deliver some letters by Melqisedeq to her, in order to persuade her to help the group to find Marco Polo’s journal.

BACKGROUND FOR THE GAME MASTER

The heroes’ foes – the Gray Alchemist Sabellicus and his men – are hot on their heels and will get to the Black Lagoon of Old Venice right after them. While the heroes are busy exploring the Polo’s palace, Sabellicus attacks Aschenbach and her Tainted pirates, killing some of them and turning them into Possessed. When

Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

the situation on Aschenbach's ship gets out of hand, Sabellus calls his men back and goes into hiding with his sail ship behind an island, waiting for the heroes to return.

SCENE 1

DYING VENICE, LYING ON THE SEA

The journey is going on smoothly on board the tartan Pandora (a sail ship a little more than fifty feet long, with closet-sized cabins and barely room enough for the heroes and the captain). Captain Largo is a likable and romantic rover, who can tell the heroes about his adventures or teach them something about the New Kingdoms. On board, the heroes are called upon to steer the ship and do all the necessary work, but Largo will never allow them to inspect the hold.

"There are some surprises that should better remain a secret..." he just says.

In New Venice, Melqisedeq directed the heroes to the Lazzarettos and to their leader, Hilaire Aschenbach, to whom they must deliver a sealed parcel containing a confidential message and a small fortune in diamonds.

During the night, while the cries of the Shrieking Eels echo all around them, Largo negotiates the still waters of the Black Lagoon and takes the group to a large ship anchored off shore, a small floating "palace" that is the residence of Hilaire and her small court of guards, henchmen and sailors, among which stands out Othello, Hilaire's huge second in command. They are all Tainted, because the Tainted are the only ones who can survive for long to the miasma and dangers of the Black Lagoon.

Othello throws down a rope ladder to

the heroes and allows them to come onboard while the Pandora sets sail for Trieste. Thanks to Melqisedeq's letter, the Lazzarettos put the heroes up in lavish rooms, decorated with gold lacquered wood, ancient paintings and tapestries.

Hilaire hears the heroes out, then explains:

"Marco Polo brought back home from the Far East three extremely valuable objects. One of them is the Shams al-Ma'arif, the Book of the Sun, a grimoire literally overflowing with magic symbols, algebraic squares, talisman patterns and ancient secrets, which is said to contain the core of the Moors' occult lore. Centuries ago, a copy of that book was sent beyond Zoroaster's lands, among Asian barbarians and Tatars, to the Great Khan of Cathay. It's not sure if the Polos stole the book from that king or if he gave it to them as a gift, so that they could take it back to the West. Be as it may, the Book of the Sun – the last existing copy of this tome – finally came back to Italy together with the Polos huge treasure, and it must still be stored away with it.

The only way to find it is to search for clues in the Polos old palace. Years ago, I sent my men to comb that building and bring back anything useful they might find, but it seems that besides being haunted by the Drowned Ones, the palace is also crumbling and full of traps.

I will have somebody escorting you there, but you'd better not underestimate the dangers of that place..."

Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

SCENE 2 THE EVIL DEAD

Aschenbach gives the heroes a guide and a boatman, a certain Cecchin, who seems to carry out often this sort of tasks. He wears a thick tabard and wide brimmed hat. The group gets on his boat, a narrow vessel some thirty feet long and quite low on the water, with two lamps to light the way.

The Polos' palace is surrounded by channels on two sides and on the other sides rests against other buildings, now partially collapsed. On two floors, the main body of the building has two small towers on the sides. Reaching it on Cecchin's gondola, the heroes get to a flooded arcade that opens directly on the channel and that probably was used to load and unload goods. The plain back side of the palace overlooks a small courtyard, with an outer staircase leading to the second floor, and a wide vaulted door leading to the first floor. The general atmosphere is gloomy and unwholesome, with a humid mist drifting up from the channels and almost choking whoever wanders in the area.

Independently from the side they decide to arrive from, as soon as the heroes get a few dozen steps from the building a sudden movement in the water around them and telltale noises may warn them that the Drowned Ones are going to attack them.

Drowned Ones (Number of Heroes): They are slow and clumsy foes, bloated and livid from being always underwater in the Black Lagoon as they wander among the ruins and weeds of the dry part of the city, but they pose a greater danger if they attack Cecchin's boat. In any case, the

clamor of the fight attracts more Drowned Ones from all around, and soon the only way out for the heroes is to get into the Polo's palace and lock themselves inside.

DROWNED ONES

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4 (D), Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d4, Swimming d4

Pace: 2 (10 swimming); **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities:

* **Bite:** Str+d6.

* **Claws:** Str+d4.

* **Dead:** The creature has all the Special Abilities of the Dead.

* **Shuffling Gait:** They cannot run.

SPECIAL RULES FOR THE ENCOUNTER:

They are coming! After the first round, the characters may notice that in the distance more Drowned Ones are crawling toward them. Starting from the second round, d6-3 new Drowned Ones get into the fray surfacing from the water or crawling over dry ground at 6+d10 inches from the group (some 50 to 65 feet).

SCENE 3 INSIDE THE POLOS' PALACE

Once inside the palace, the only thing to do is to start searching for the book in its crumbling rooms, covered with mold and cobwebs, with their ruined and rotten furniture.

The heroes can make a Notice roll to explore each section of the palace: first floor, cellars, second floor and third floor. Draw a card for each player who fails in the Notice roll:

Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

Clubs: Some rubble falls on the character's head, who must make a successful Vigor roll to avoid suffering one Fatigue level (he can recover in 24 hours).

Diamonds: In a narrow corridor the wood floor caves in, and there is the danger of falling. The character must make a successful Agility roll or suffer 2d6+2 damage.

Hearts: A pile of old bottles and crock collapses on the character, who must make a successful Agility roll or suffer one Fatigue level (he can recover in 24 hours).

Spades: The opening of a door makes an old and rusty spear suddenly spring up from the floor! The character must make a successful Agility roll (-2) or suffer 2d6 damage.

INSIDE THE PALACE

At the first floor: Among rubble and rotting furniture, the heroes can find a trap door leading to the cellar, and the stairs to the upper floors. The stairs between the first and the second floor are

unsafe. Draw a card for each character: the first of them who gets a clubs card slips and must make a successful Agility roll or suffer 2d6+2 damage.

In the cellar: It is composed of two small rooms full of rotting wood. A few inches of cold, foul water cover the floor. In a corner there is what looks like a pile of rubble covered with mussels but actually is a Musseler (see Bestiary), almost turned to stone.

At the second floor: A swarm of bats has nested in the second floor rooms, and it flies away through the broken windows as soon as the heroes climb the stairs. If successful in a Notice roll, they can find a small gold ring (100 florins value) amidst the rotten furniture.

At the third floor: The door to one of the second floor rooms seems to be locked. It is a strong oak wood door, with Toughness 10, which can be broken down through a Strength (-2) roll or destroyed inflicting at least a 10 damage with an appropriate weapon, or else forced open

The Journal

The craved Marco Polo's Journal seems to have been written by a certain Rustichello, Marco Polo's cellmate in a Genoese prison after some battle, in the times before the Plague. According to this account, full of amazing descriptions of the eastern lands, the treasure was destined to Marco's three daughters, Fantina, Bellella and Moretta, and he hid it on the way back home from his travels, to keep it away from the Doge's taxmen avid hands and from the even more avid ones of his relatives.

To further ensure the safety of the treasure, Marco seems to have hidden the directions to its location and a "key" in Otranto, entrusting them to a relative of his who should have handed them to his daughters, while the treasure itself lies within a "Mechanical Vault", in a place that apparently Marco was careful not to disclose to anybody, Rustichello included.

Besides its value as a clue, the journal seems quite interesting and full of curiosities: maybe one of the heroes might decide to circulate it as entertainment reading...

Chapter Six
The Secret of Marco Polo



Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

through a Lockpicking (-2) roll. Its opening immediately springs a trap: see **Spades**, above.

Beyond that door there are the Polo family archives: a room filled to capacity with shelves, drawers and furniture, literally overflowing with papers, documents, ledgers, and more. Once the heroes get into this room, they can find the Journal with a Notice roll.



SCENE 4

THE MOOR OF VENICE

Once they recover the journal, the heroes can get back to Cecchin's gondola: after drawing the Drowned Ones away from the palace, in fact, he has come back to pick them up.

Cecchin takes them back to the Bucintoro, where Othello throws down the rope ladder to let them aboard.

However, a terrible surprise is in store for them on the ship: Sabellicus has been there and he has killed some of the Lazzarettos who, being Tainted, have turned into awful Possessed, while the survivors have barricaded themselves in the hold. The ship is now infested, but the worst enemy of them all is certainly huge Othello. As for Sabellicus and his men, they have got back to their own ship, there to wait in safety for the Possessed to do the dirty work for them.

POSSESSED

(ONE EVERY TWO HEROES)

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Notice d6, Swimming d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

Special Abilities:

- * **Claws/Bite:** Str+d6.
- * **Dead:** These creatures have all the Special Abilities of the Dead.
- * **Go for the Throat:** When fighting unarmed, Possessed instinctively go for an opponent's soft spots. With a raise on their Attack roll, they hit the target's most weakly armored location.

Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

* **Hardy:** Possessed do not suffer a wound from being Shaken twice.

* **Improved Frenzy:** Possessed may make two Fighting attacks per round without penalty,

* **Weapons:** The Possessed can use weapons, and they can often be seen brandishing melee weapons to kill the living before devouring them, most of all if in life they were soldiers or fighters.

❏ OTHELLO

Othello is a Possessed, like the others, but he is a Wild Card.

After defeating the Possessed, the heroes free Aschenbach and her surviving crewmembers, who tell them what happened and give them a description of the Gray Alchemist and his henchmen. Right then Sabellicus' ship appears from behind an island and heads for them, but some bombard shots hit it and put it to flight: *the Pandora* is back!

EPILOGUE

While Sabellicus and his men disappear, Captain Largo welcomes the heroes back on his ship and urges them to move on. The Pandora has more surprises on board, but even so it is not wise to linger on the Black Lagoon or chase after Sabellicus ship, not even with the Lazzarettos' help. It is better to set sail toward the south and Otranto.

EPISODE 3

THE CASTLE OF OTRANTO

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF THE PREVIOUS EPISODES

Many days ago the old kabbalist Melqisedeq gathered the heroes at the Sorcerers' Court, in New Venice, to entrust them with an adventurous and dangerous mission. They must recover Marco Polo's treasure, wherever it may be hidden, and deliver to the old kabbalist a grimoire written in Arabic and called the *Book of the Sun*, the only piece of Polo's collection the wise scholar is interested into. As for the rest of the treasure, the heroes can keep it.

The heroes willingly accepted to undertake this mission and set sail on a tartan belonging to Captain Largo Sevillano, a trusted friend of Melqisedeq's. Largo will take them wherever they need to go, up and down the Mediterranean coasts, searching for the treasure.

After recovering Marco Polo's Journal in Old Venice, the heroes discovered that Marco Polo had entrusted a relative of his – who was the lady-in-waiting of the city's lady – some documents and a key to be delivered to his daughters. Therefore, the heroes are now heading for Otranto, there to search for these documents.

BACKGROUND FOR THE GAME MASTER

In Old Venice the alchemist Sabellicus, Melqisedeq's rival, almost managed to take the journal away from the heroes, but Largo Sevillano's sail ship is quite fast and easily left their foes behind. Sabellicus doesn't know (or should not

Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

know) the contents of the journal, or where the heroes are heading, but he will follow them to Otranto and will go ashore and into the city after them, trying to understand what they are planning. Upon discovering that the heroes are trying to get invited to Duke Conrad's Castle, he beats them to the draw, so that when they get to the banquet they find him already there, intent upon telling the Duke that they are plotting against him. Being far more straightforward than the devious, scheming Sabellicus, the Duke of Otranto doesn't plot anything complex. He simply has the heroes poisoned and locked up, to torture and question them at his leisure. Therefore, the heroes will have to find a way to escape from the dungeons of the Castle, find what they are looking for, and finally get out of the city itself.

SCENE 1

OTRANTO

Otranto is a strong, well defended city overlooking the sea with its fortified harbor. The walls, the towers and the castle are ancient and partially run-down, but they are still powerful and gloomy, old but impregnable. Otranto belongs to the Principality of Benevento which, in turn, is just a province of the Kingdom of Hungary, the largest among the New Kingdoms of the West. This city is a crucial link for all relationships between Hungary and Southern Italy, and its docks are crowded with merchant and war ships, these last quite useful in the frequent skirmishes against the Adriatic League and the Mediterranean pirates. Duke Conrad rules the city from his castle, and he is a Tainted, like most of the local nobility. He is a relative of the Voivode

of Benevento and, like him, he rules on his domains with an iron fist, resorting to ancient and questionable political and police methods, such as torture, public corporal punishment, branding, maiming and executing those deemed guilty on the public square.

The dungeons of Otranto are the most feared throughout the Realm, and they occupy the lower levels of the castle.

According to Marco Polo's Journal, his cousin Maddalena then lived in the Castle as lady-in-waiting to the lady of the castle of that time. On his return trip from the place where he had hidden the treasure, the Venetian merchant entrusted his cousin with a missive and a key, both objects necessary to tell his daughters – once they came of age – how to recover their father's legacy. It is not clear where within the castle the lady's room could have been located, but it seems the inside of the Castle has not changed through the centuries; therefore, the lady's room must still be in the noble wing of the Castle.

First and foremost, the heroes will have to find a way to get invited as guests at the Castle. It will not be easy, because both the Duke and his Chamberlain are stern, distrustful and arrogant people. Here are a few suggestions:

- * A Paladin of Saint Galgano or a Red Odalisque that look "convincing" in their roles will be welcomed at the castle, since they are special guests and have been sent by their respective sires.
- * The Duke's interest in alchemy and mechanical sciences is well known: an Alchemist, an Inventor or even a Witch who know how to best present themselves might

Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

be invited to the castle to talk about science with the Duke. A successful Streetwise roll allows the characters to discover this interesting detail about the Duke.

* Mattheus Tafuri, a young astrologer who lives in the city, is a friend of Melqisedeq and can help the heroes to infiltrate the Castle obtaining an invitation for himself from the Duke and introducing the heroes as his helpers. A Persuasion roll may induce Mattheus to help the heroes.

* In any case, the heroes can pose as noblemen, ambassadors, prelates or any other thing they can think of: a successful Persuasion (-2) roll will abate the Chamberlain and Duke Conrad's suspicions.

SCENE 2 THE MURDER IS SERVED

However obtained, the official invitation is to a banquet to be held a few days later, and to spend the night at the Castle. The heroes have all the time to find the necessary clothing and to put together a convincing cover story.

The dinner is served in a wide, formal banquet hall, furnished with frugal austerity. Besides the heroes, the other table companions are some city notables, the bishop Onuphrio, a chosen few among the Duke's knights and some of the ladies of the Castle. A bitter surprise is in store for the heroes, however, because sitting at the banquet table with them are also five Outremer French knights and a man dressed in gray.

"We barely glimpsed each other in Venice," sneers the man in gray. "My name is Sabellicus..."

It is up to the Game Master to decide how long to carry on the interaction between the heroes and the alchemist, whose men are all ex-knights, expelled with dishonor from the ranks of the Paladins of Saint Galgano, and now just lawless henchmen. Any character with the Knight or Noble Edge may try a Smarts roll to recognize some of them and immediately understand they are renegades of the worst kind.

Sabellicus may tell the heroes that Melqisedeq is trying to steal from him a treasure he was the first to start looking for (which is true), *so... who really is the bad guy here?* He will also try to induce them to tell him what they know in exchange for help or more information... theoretically, after all he has no idea why the heroes are there, and might think the treasure actually is in Otranto.

The Duke arrives soon after the beginning of the dinner and he sits at the head of the table, looking daggers at Sabellicus and the heroes.

During the supper the heroes get poisoned. Each of them must pass a Vigor (-4) test or fall asleep before he realizes what is happening. Those who pass the test or do not drink the wine (the inside of their cups is coated with poison) get surrounded by the Duke's guards and knights who knock them unconscious.

SCENE 3 THE DUNGEONS OF OTRANTO

The heroes wake up half naked and chained to the walls of a cell, in the Castle dungeons. Narrow and long, the cell holds only an iron brazier full of burning coals in which are thrust some sharp iron tools. Shortly afterwards, a reinforced wood door opens and the Duke himself steps

Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

into the cell. He has the guard lock him in with the heroes and starts hitting them with an iron bar.

"That Sabellicus says that you want something that is hidden inside my Castle, a treasure or something like that. According to him, with the treasure there is also a magic book containing some special formulas to turn the Dead into something else... like turning lead into gold. I don't know if I should believe to all this nonsense, but I swear on my father Manfred's grave that if you do not tell me everything you know I'll have you spit out your soul bit by bit..."

That is a promise Conrad is perfectly able to keep. The heroes will have to free themselves, get out of the cell, escape the worst dungeon in the Kingdom, get back into the Castle and find the room once belonging to Marco Polo's relative. And they will have to do all this within the night, before the sun rises, the guards catch them and the Duke sends all the city garrison after them.

SCENE 4

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE

Escaping the Dungeon of Otranto looks like an impossible mission, but we are dealing with heroes here, aren't we?

A plausible sequence of actions might be:

- * The heroes manage to pry the iron bar from the Duke's hand and to knock him unconscious or to take him prisoner;
- * Using the iron bar and the red-hot irons they free themselves from the chains;
- * Holding the Duke hostage or threatening him, they have the guards open the cell door, and then lock them inside;

- * They can disguise themselves as guards, look for their equipment and then leave the dungeon, getting back to the Castle courtyard;

- * They can then sneak into the ladies' rooms and lock themselves inside.

There are many other possible solutions, even if this is a desperate endeavor. For starts, the Duke is a Tainted, which means that if he were to suddenly die, for example inside the heroes' cell, he would turn into a terrible Possessed, a devastating weapon to turn against the prison guards. Moreover, the Duke has some Dead chained in the dungeons, which he uses to study their anatomy: they could be the source of another diversion, not to mention the other prisoners in the dungeon, ready to escape if freed and properly motivated.

Moreover, with a successful Persuasion (-4) roll it might be possible to persuade the Duke to free one of the characters, if the hero tries to persuade him that they could become allies, as scholars interested in the arcane or (for example) as lovers.

Finally, and ironically, Sabellicus himself might turn into an ally. In the hands of the Duke as they are, the heroes are of no use to him, so he could try to create a diversion and free them. After all, necessity makes for odd bedfellows. If the players do not find any way to free themselves or make other mistakes, Sabellicus will intervene, either getting hold of the cell keys or distracting the Duke's guards.

In any case, all the gear belonging to the heroes (but for any money) is in the room leading to the dungeons and can be recovered.

Chapter Six
The Secret of Marco Polo



Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

NPCs IN THE CASTLE

LADIES, SERVANTS, COURTESANS

Race: Tainted (25%) or Untainted (75%)

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Knowledge (Trade) d6, Notice d4

Pace 6; Parry: 4; Toughness: 5

Gear: Dagger (Str+d4) or other weapons or improvised weapons.

OTRANTO GUARDS

Race: Tainted (25%) or Untainted (75%)

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d4, Notice d4

Pace 6; Parry: 6 (1); Toughness: 7 (2)

Gear: Spear (Parry +1, Reach 1, Str+d6), chainmail armor (Armor +2 to torso), pot helm (50% vs head shot, Armor +3).

CONRAD, DUKE OF OTRANTO

Race: Tainted

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Science, Alchemy, Plague) d6, Notice d6, Riding d6, Taunt d8

Charisma -2; Pace 6; Parry: 7; Toughness: 8 (2)

Hindrances: Greedy, Mean

Edges: Noble

Gear: Rapier (Str+d4, Parry +1), dagger (Str+d4).

SABELLICUS' RENEGADES

Race: Untainted

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Riding d8

Charisma -2; Pace 6; Parry: 7; Toughness: 8 (2)

Edges: Knight (renegade).

Gear: Full chain hauberk (corselet, arms and leggings), steel helmet (enclosed), Long sword (Str+d8), medium shield without any coat of arms. Inside the castle they only wear the mail corselet and the sword by their side.

SABELLICUS

Tall and haggard, he has gray hair and worn out, grim and ruthless looks. Those of Jorius Sabellicus and Gray Alchemist are just two fictitious names this saturnine character has adopted over the years. Warlock, charlatan, swindler, he will stop at nothing to reach his goals, has learned little by little some basic alchemic and necromantic knowledge through stealing secrets and goods from other scholars, with no mercy or dignity whatsoever. His heavy cloak is made of Salamander Wool and protects him from fire, acids and Atrament. He has recently contracted a terrible illness for which there is no known cure. One of the reasons he is looking for the grimoire is that the alchemic secrets it contains represent his last hope at survival.

Race: Untainted

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

Abilities: Alchemy d10, Investigation d8, Knowledge (Plague) d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Streetwise d4, Throwing d6

Charisma -; **Pace 6;** **Parry: 2;** **Toughness: 2 (1)**

Hindrances: Anemic (-2 to Fatigue tests)

Edges: Arcane Background (Alchemy), New Power, New Power

Gear: Alchemist's Bag, an already made potion for each of his powers, components (20 florins), dagger (Str+d4)

Cloak of Salamander Wool: Armor +1; Armor +3 against fire and acid damage; if a hero wears it for longer than a month, he acquires the Anemic Hindrance.

Powers: *Confusion, Fear, Healing, Sleep*

SCENE 5

THE LADIES' ROOMS

For centuries, the Duchess' ladies-in-waiting have been occupying the same set of rooms, in one of the castle towers, below the Duchess and her youngest sons' rooms. If our heroes are running away from the Duke's guards and have barricaded themselves there, holding the dames and noblemen hostages might give them a few hours respite before the Duke decides to break down the door and put an end to it all. Depending on how discreet

the heroes were in their escape, outside the door there may be just a conscientious page or a full contingent of soldiers. In any case, it will be necessary to find the Polos' documents as soon as possible.

The quickest way to do this is to look into the most ancient features of the building (walls, floors), ignoring both the furniture and wood beams: whoever makes a successful Smarts (-2) roll may easily reach this conclusion.

Maddalena Polo used as a hiding place an old fireplace in her room. Through a Notice (-2) test, the heroes can find the small box they are looking for, containing some papers, jewels and an odd cylindrical object full of gears, carvings and holes: a big, old fashioned key.

EPILOGUE

If the alarm has spread to the city, all the docks and gates are guarded, so that nobody gets in or out of Otranto. If the heroes are trapped inside the castle tower, their only escape is through the ladies' rooms high windows, climbing on the roof and... being picked up on the fly by the Pandora!

Captain Largo has resorted to another of the "surprises" his tartan has in store. He has removed the mast, lightened the cargo and unfolded the large aerostatic balloon he had in the hold, inflating it with some

Maddalena Polo's box

When Marco Polo came to see his cousin and to entrust her with the secret of his treasure, he also left her a good amount of gems and jewels as a sign of his gratitude, a map of the city of Salerno, a parchment containing coded instructions and a special key from the Greek or Byzantine times. The box contains all these things, together with some of the by now long dead Maddalena's personal belongings.

The next leg of the hunt for the Polos' treasure will therefore certainly take the heroes to Salerno.

Chapter Six
The Secret of Marco Polo



Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

alchemic vapors he expressly purchased in Ferrara, which were kept in huge airtight iron barrels. The Pandora has now become a small flying ship, which takes the heroes onboard in fight and heads west, toward Salerno, while some bombard shots harmlessly cut through the sky...

If the heroes manage to leave the Castle unnoticed, instead, and to reach the harbor and the Pandora without any problem, they fully deserve an extra Experience Point.

EPISODE 4 THE BOOK OF THE SUN

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF THE PREVIOUS EPISODES

Many days ago the old kabbalist Melqisedeq gathered the heroes at the Sorcerers' Court, in New Venice, to entrust them with an adventurous and dangerous mission. They must recover Marco Polo's treasure, wherever it may be hidden, and deliver to the old kabbalist a grimoire written in Arabic and called the *Book of the Sun*, the only piece of Polo's collection the wise scholar is interested into. As for the rest of the treasure, the heroes can keep it.

The heroes willingly accepted to undertake this mission and set sail on a tartan belonging to Captain Largo Sevillano, a trusted friend of Melqisedeq's. Largo will take them wherever they need to go, up and down the Mediterranean coasts, searching for the treasure.

After recovering in Otranto the last clue to the treasure location, the heroes have set sail for Salerno, where the "Mechanical

Vault" – the place where Marco Polo has hidden the treasure he brought back from the East – is located.

The heroes have a map of the city, a parchment containing some instructions, and an odd cylindrical object which is the "key" needed to access the Vault. Virtually, the treasure is almost in their hands... if it weren't for the alchemist Sabellicus, who has been pursuing them since they left New Venice!

BACKGROUND FOR THE GAME MASTER

A long time ago, many centuries before the Plague, Salerno belonged to the Empire of Byzantium and is therefore well fortified. Part of General Belisarius mechanical siege weapons, together with a stock of Greek fire, were hidden under an old fortress, on the hill behind the city. Centuries later, the wily Robert Guiscard, a brave conqueror skilled in the arcane arts who lived before the Plague, found that storage. He led there some of his orderlies and soldiers with the intent of secretly restoring those vaults and recovering the weapons and war secrets of the emperors of old. That was when the "Mechanical Vault" was built, a series of interconnected underground chambers where several valuable artifacts, war weapons prototypes and siege weapons of the past were kept, protected by traps and secret passages.

When Marco Polo came back to Italy in search for a place where to hide his treasure, any memory of the "Mechanical Vault" had long vanished. Only an old notable of the Kingdom, Fabio de' Pagliaris, knew about it because he served a certain Giovanni from Procida who had had it sealed because he had deemed it

Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

unsafe. Upon striking a casual friendship with de' Pagliaris, Marco persuaded him to show him the access to the Mechanical Vault and hid his treasure there, sealing it in with the last existing copy of the special key. De' Pagliaris was richly rewarded for conveniently forgetting about it all... and was quite happy to do so. After all, Marco Polo had the last existing key.

First and foremost, the heroes have to realize that the treasure is hidden underneath the fortress, then they have to use the key to access the underground vault without blowing everything up, and finally they have to avoid both the traps and the still working mechanisms in order to get to the treasure.

SCENE 1

THE CITY OF HIPPOCRATES

Salerno is a Fief virtually made up of the sole city and a small surrounding area. Once under the rule of the Principality of Benevento, it officially became a free potentate when the city Archiaters saved the prince – then Janosh Corvinus – and part of his family's life.

Nowadays, Salerno is a place of culture and science, tolerance and freedom. The city is ruled by the Prior of the College of the Iatrophysicists, the most respected and learned physicians in the city. Tainted and Untainted, Christians and pagans, Jews and Saracens, men and women... they all are treated in the same way, and the city is managed in a transparent and communal way. The presence of countless pharmaceutical shops, sanitariums, healing herbs gardens, sellers of remedies, and of the thermal baths makes it clear that Salerno is a city of physicians and healers of all sorts, where a cure can be

found for almost any ailment. There are those who say that the Archiaters have found the Cure for the Plague but keep it hidden from the people to be able to sell it only to noblemen and rich merchants in exchange for favors and concessions.

However they reach the city, upon entering it the heroes will be met by a young student of about thirteen years of age, sent by the Archiaters to guide them and to explain to them in the span of a couple of hours all the rules, uses and important places of the city. If the heroes reached the city with Sabellicus, sooner or later they will want to go with him in search for the place where the treasure is hidden. Otherwise, he will set his spies after them and will catch up with them at a second time, together with his henchmen.

SCENE 2

A GOOD BEGINNING BODES WELL

The message left by Marco Polo to Maddalena contains some clues to the location of the treasure. This is the content of the document, roughly translated into Florentine:

"On the good beginnings hill, where Ricciarda

Embraced her mother and a mocking fate,

*A Greek marble, of an ancient monument
Of ancient vaults hides the gate.*

*Of the Mechanical Vault avoid each
snare*

*Of those old kings, of perfidy the
embodiment.*

*In the Room of the Sun retrace my steps,
Be quick, in and out, before the cave
collapses.*

Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

The “good beginnings hill” is behind the city, outside the present urban center of Salerno, but still well fortified. This hill is the first to be reached by the sunlight in the morning, which is why the elders still call it that way (a Streetwise roll, or a simple Smarts or Notice test will allow the heroes to decipher this clue).

On the hill there is an old fortress, still sturdy and strong, but by now abandoned and infested with weeds.

If the heroes investigate or study local legends, a successful Investigation or Streetwise roll will allow them to discover that in the past centuries a girl named Ricciarda found herself involved in a family drama and was killed while embracing her mother’s grave, in some underground sepulcher. It seems that her ghost is still haunting the place where she was killed, but the legends do not say where it all happened, exactly.

Faced with all these clues, the heroes should realize they have to search for some kind of crypt among the half ruined vaults of the fortress, on the “good beginnings hill”.

Once inside the ruins, it is easy to find the access to a small network of underground passages.

On the far end of these passages there lies on the ground, half covered with rubble and weeds, a huge slab of marble weighing several hundred pounds. Carved on its surface, both in Latin and Greek, there is a writing about the deeds of some Byzantine Emperor who lived ten centuries before.

The heroes can try to move the slab by themselves, but that requires 5 men with Strength d6. Characters with Strength d8

or more count for two. If they cannot make it, they can use mules, levers, winches or other methods. As an alternative, they can also try to destroy it with a bombard or in some other way. Even so, it is not an easy thing to do, because the slab is thick and has Toughness 15. Of course, any weapon less powerful than a bombard or a cannon will have a hard time trying to damage it.

Under the slab there is an iron trapdoor, with a lock that matches the key found among Maddalena Polo’s belongings.

If the heroes *do not* use the key, the defensive mechanisms set by Belisarius and Robert Guiscard will do their dirty job: to force or pick the trapdoor activates a system of chains and counterweights that will bring down whatever is left of the fortress over the heroes’ heads. Should this happen, unless they make a successful Agility roll, the heroes get crushed under the cave in and the treasure is lost forever...

SCENE 3

THE MECHANICAL VAULT

At the entrance there is a room closed by a heavy bronze door, with a brazier apparently connected to the wall by some pipes. On the brazier there is a huge sphere to which some small tubes and other contraptions are attached, while under it there is a container full of an oily, apparently still inflammable substance. A Weird Science, or Knowledge (Science), or even Smarts (but with a -2) test reveals that the object is a Greek Aeolipile, a mechanism created by Hero of Alexandria which uses steam to generate mechanical force (a concept recently perfected at the Da Vinci Manufacturing with their

Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

steam engines called “architonnerre”). If the aeolipile is activated (it is enough to set fire to the oily substance), the sphere starts revolving on itself, and a mysterious mechanism opens the door and “lights” one after the other all the oil lanterns scattered through the inner chambers and corridors. From now on, the Vault is very well-lighted.

Unfortunately for the heroes, there is no direction to where the treasure lies! At this point they have to randomly explore the underground complex.

To explore it, the players make a group Smarts roll. With each success and raise, they get an Advance Token. If the roll fails, they lose one token (they realize they have retraced their steps); with a critical failure, the heroes find themselves back to the entrance and lose all the token!

When the players collect 10 tokens, they finally reach the Room of the Sun (see Scene 4, below).

While the tokens are less than 10, at each exploration roll there is a meeting or event of some sort: you must draw a card to determine of what kind.

Each exploration roll roughly corresponds to 10 minutes.

Spades (from 2 to 6): A succession of corridors and dusty halls, but no accidents.

Spades (from 7 to 10): A swarm of rats attacks the group! See the swarm characteristics below.

Spades (Face Card): To each side of a narrow passage there are two huge sculptures of Byzantine soldiers. Looking carefully, it is possible to see that their arms are hinged at the joints. If the heroes

decide to walk through the passage, they must make a successful Agility roll or suffer an “attack” from those mechanical arms, which inflicts 2d6 damage. If they do not go through the passage they lose an Advance Miniature.

Spades (Ace): The heroes are on the right path and they get an extra Advance Token (but only if their Smarts roll was at least a success).

Hearts (from 2 to 6): A succession of corridors and dusty halls, but no accidents.

Hearts (from 7 to 10): The heroes find a weapons warehouse: hundreds of halberds, spears, pikes and swords, helmets and shields, arrows and bolts. They can take as many as they want.

Hearts (Face Card): The heroes find a warehouse full of old, dusty vials. A Knowledge (Science) or (History), or Alchemy roll allows them to realize it is Greek fire, a highly inflammable substance. The vials weigh 2 pounds each and can be thrown (range 3/6/12). Upon breaking, they inflict 1d10 fire damage within a Small Burst Template area. Unfortunately, however, those vials are very old and not all of them are well-preserved: each has a 50% probability of having become ineffective. Moreover, any character carrying one or more vials is at risk of breaking them: if they fall down or suffer any other trauma, the vials have a 50% probability of breaking, with the above mentioned effects.

Heart (Ace): The heroes are on the right path and they get an extra Advance Token (but only if their Smarts roll was at least a success).

Chapter Six
The Secret of Marco Polo



Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

Diamonds (from 2 to 6): A succession of corridors and dusty halls, but no accidents.

Diamonds (from 7 to 10): One of the Heroes steps on a hidden mechanism: the walls slide sideways and reveal two lines of ballistae pointing toward the group! If the heroes move, the ballistae fire and each character suffers 2d6 damage. If they throw themselves to the ground and crawl away they avoid the danger. If they try to jump away to avoid the damage they must make a successful Agility roll.

Diamonds (Face Card): The heroes reach a circular room with many doors. As soon as they get in the middle, the chamber starts rotating swiftly! To understand which way to go without losing their bearings, the heroes have to make a successful Notice (-2) roll. If they fail, they end up in a series of labyrinthine passages and dead ends, and they lose an Advance Token.



Diamonds (Ace): The heroes are on the right path and they get an extra Advance Token (but only if their Smarts roll was at least a success).

Clubs (from 2 to 6): A succession of corridors and dusty halls, but no accidents.

Clubs (from 7 to 10): A strong mechanical door blocks the passage. The heroes can try to break down (Strength -4 roll) or destroy (Toughness 16!) it, or else to activate its mechanism (Repair or Lockpicking roll). If they fail to open the door, they must go back and try another passage, and lose one Advance Token.

Clubs (Face Card): The heroes reach a chamber whose walls are covered with dusty mirrors. They are distorting mirrors, placed there on purpose, to confuse the weakest minds. All the characters must make a Smarts roll. Whoever fails suffers one level of Fatigue due to disorientation (he can recover in 24 hours).

Clubs (Ace): The heroes are on the right path and they get an extra Advance Token (but only if their Smarts roll was at least a success).

Jolly: The heroes are on the right path and they get two extra Advance Tokens (but only if their Smarts roll was at least a success).

RATS SWARM

The swarm occupies a Medium Burst Template area and attacks everybody in the area with every round.

When wounded, the swarm is dispersed.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d12, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Notice d6

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 7

Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

Special Abilities:

* **Bite:** A swarm inflicts hundreds of furious bites, hitting automatically all the creatures in the area and inflicting 2d4 damage to the least armored locations.

* **Swarm:** Parry +2; cutting or piercing weapons inflict no real damage. A character can stomp on the swarm to inflict his damage in Strength. Area-effect attacks work normally.

SCENE 4

THE ROOM OF THE SUN

The heroes understand they have finally reached the Room of the Sun because above the door there is a large brass disk symbolizing a shining sun.

It is a round room, with four evenly spaced doors. One is marked with a circle above an horizontal line, two with the circle halfway through the line (the heroes come in from one of these), and the fourth has no circle but only the horizontal line. Each door represents a cardinal point: the high sun represents the south, the halfway suns are east and west (the heroes arrived from the west door, which they can realize through a Survival roll), and the sunless door indicates the north.

Marco Polo's riddle refers to his journey toward the east. The heroes have come from the west, and they must exit through the east door to reach the treasure. Opening one of the other two doors will cause the building to collapse right away. In this case, unless they are successful in an Agility based Dramatic Task, the heroes will be crushed by the cave-in, and in any case the treasure will be lost forever...

SCENE 5

THE LAST TEST

Beyond the "Eastern Door" there is a narrow corridor leading – at last! – to the treasure chamber, which is just a vaulted room, far smaller than the other caves and halls of the "Mechanical Vault", decorated with tapestries representing the Lions of Old Venice and the coat of arms of the Polo family. The treasure is heaped up in the middle of the room: silk drapes decorated with strange animals and roses, finely woven "Tartarian blankets" (that is, carpets), iridescent fabrics, jewels studded with pearls, rubies and emeralds, ivory, amber, silver belts, refined horse tack, coins, ingots, small bags of assorted precious stones, gold, silver and copper ornaments, porcelains and all sorts of valuable goods, books, documents and even credit papers (by now valueless). A grimoire with a red leather cover, the *Book of the Sun*, lies among all the other treasures.

If the heroes have managed to get to this point, it is clear that this is where their final confrontation with Sabellicus and his men will take place.

The Gray Alchemist has guided his henchmen through the Mechanical Vault, and now he and his men – those who survived the traps – are ready to fight!

The leader of the renegades (Sabellicus, or Thomas Linche, see below) is ready for anything, and should things take a turn for the worse he is ready to run away and bring the vault down by setting fire to the stored Greek fire: in this case, unless they are successful in an Agility based Dramatic Task, the heroes will be crushed and in any case

Chapter Six
The Secret of Marco Polo



Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

the treasure left in the vault will be lost forever... and you must remember that the Encumbrance penalty applies to the Agility roll to get out of the vault!

SABELLICUS

Race: Untainted

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Abilities: Alchemy d10, Investigation d8, Knowledge (Plague) d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Streetwise d4, Throwing d6

Charisma: -; **Pace** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 6 (1)

Hindrances: Anemic (-2 to Fatigue tests)

Edges: Arcane Background (Alchemy), New Power, New Power

Gear: Alchemist's Bag, an already made potion for each of his powers, components (20 florins), dagger (Str+d4),

Cloak of Salamander Wool: Armor +1; Armor +3 against fire and acid damage; this cloak of Salamander Wool seems to be cursed or to transmit some mysterious illness. If a hero decides to wear it, he must draw a card for each month of activity outside the game sessions or at the end of each game session in which he used it. If it is Spades, the hero acquires the Anemic Hindrance.

Powers: *Confusion, Fear, Healing, Sleep*

SABELLICUS' RENEGADES (ONE FOR EACH HERO -1)

Race: Untainted

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Riding d8

Charisma: -2; **Pace** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Edges: Knight (renegade).

Carrying the treasure away

The abundant riches in the treasure of Marco Polo are really worth a fortune. Assuming that the heroes do not have any Encumbrance penalty, the following table shows how much of the treasure they can carry away and the corresponding penalty:

HERO'S STR	PENALTY -1	PENALTY -2	PENALTY -3
d4	20lb	40lb	60lb
d6	30lb	60lb	90lb
d8	40lb	80lb	120lb
d10	50lb	100lb	150lb
d12	60lb	120lb	180lb

Once out of the Mechanical Vault, each 10lb of treasure can be sold for d6x200 florins. Remember, the Encumbrance penalty applies to all Agility and Strength rolls and to all the associated skills!

Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

Gear: Full chain hauberk (corselet, arms and leggings), steel helmet (enclosed), long sword (str+d8).

If Sabellicus has already been defeated by the heroes in a previous episode, the Renegades are now led by his “master”, Thomas Linche, who has finally arrived from Bastion of France to regain control of the situation.

THOMAS LINCHE, RENEGADE KNIGHT

This middle aged hard and uncompromising renegade knight used to be a commander of the Paladins of France, but he was expelled with dishonor, losing many titles and a lot of influence in the Empire. Exiled to his family estates near Algiers, he has come to terms with Barbaros so that the pirates won't bother him. At his castle he has gathered some disgraced ex-comrades in arms and other French squires who have now turned into low cutthroats. After giving Sabellicus a ship and some of his trusted men, he has now decided to take care of the matter personally. He will never surrender or agree to a compromise but should things take a turn for the worse, just like Sabellicus, he will choose to run away and to bring down the whole Mechanical Vault.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Notice d6, Riding d10,

Charisma: +2; **Pace** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Hindrances: Arrogant, Greedy

Edges: Attractive, Block, Knight (renegade), Command, Leather of men, Counterattack

Gear: Chain corselet and leggings; two augmented arms (Armor +3 to the arms, +2 to Strength rolls and melee damage), steel helmet (enclosed), greatsword (Str+d10, +2 damage because of the augmented arms; Two-handed, Parry -1).

EPILOGUE

This adventure can have more than one ending.

If the heroes manage to defeat Sabellicus and to carry away the treasure, or at least part of it, they can bring the *Book of the Sun* to Melqisedeq and enjoy the fruit of their endeavor, comfortably idling the day away on a terrace of New Venice that overlooks the sea.

If they chose instead to keep both the treasure and the book, thus betraying the kabbalist's trust, most probably one morning they will wake up without both the book and the rest of the treasure, while Largo Sevillano – who is loyal – is sailing away in the distance, with the booty onboard.

Or else, the heroes might come to terms with Sabellicus, and see where this odd alliance will take them.

There are infinite possibilities, but this is where our story ends. For now...

Chapter Six

The Secret of Marco Polo

The Book of the Sun

If the heroes decide to keep the book, they might want to read it, in which case they must be able to read Arabic.

Reading the book and understanding its general contents requires one month of time and a successful Smarts roll (getting a raise halves the required time).

Whoever is successful in the roll, but doesn't have any Arcane Background, can learn a few tricks and get a smattering of Esotericism, thus gaining the Arcane Background: Witchcraft and a power chosen by the Game Master at his discretion.

Whoever makes a successful roll and already has Arcane Background: Witchcraft learns a new power (chosen by the Game Master) of Novice rank, and improves his Witchcraft by one die type if the roll was a raise.

Whoever makes a successful roll and has Arcane background: Alchemy, can now understand the real contents of the book and learn 1d3+1 new powers of any rank (chosen by the Game Master); he also improves his Alchemy by one die type if the roll was a raise. Besides these effects, the *Book of the Sun* really is one of the most important occult texts ever written, and any kind of secret, clue or mysterious power can be hidden inside it, to the Game Master's discretion. However, it was written well before the Plague, so it has next to nothing to do with it and its effects, nor does it contain any direct clue to a Cure.



Adventure Generator

Chapter Seven

Adventure Generator



his generator lets you create adventures to be played independently or to be fit within your campaigns. These adventures

start from the premise that the players are in the service of the Podestà of an Italian city, carrying out special assignments on his behalf, but the generator can be also used within different settings and with groups of characters in the service of different authorities: the Pope King of Avignon, a minor lord, a or any other kind of ruler.

To use the generator, simply roll the appropriate die on each table, and you are free to stop whenever you want, as well as to use only some of the tables to help you create your own adventures. Roll the die once on the main tables, then on the secondary tables as requested.

MAIN TABLES

MISSION (D6)

This table determines the type of assignment given to the group.

- 1 - Search:** The Heroes must find something or somebody. See **Search** table.
- 2 - Destruction:** The characters must destroy or eliminate something or somebody. See **Destruction** table.
- 3 - Capture:** The characters must capture an enemy. See **Capture** table.
- 4 - Reconnaissance:** The group is asked to explore a specific place and collect as much information as possible: what

dangers are there, general conditions, structures and other such things. See **Reconnaissance** table.

5 - Escort: The Heroes must escort something or somebody from one place to another. See **Escort** table.

6 - Complex Mission: Roll the die twice and combine the results (ignoring further 6 results).

ENEMIES (D6)

This table determines the kind of opposition the heroes will probably have to face in order to accomplish their mission. The threat posed by these enemies may already be known to the heroes or catch them unawares (odds are 50%).

1 - Common Dead: Husks, Carcasses, Drowned Ones or Carrions (number of characters +d6).

2 - Special Dead: Furies, Possessed, and even Abominations (number of characters +1).

3 - Enemies: Felons, brigands, pirates, spies, enemies, heretics and other human beings appropriate to the location (number of characters +d6). There is a 50% chance that they are Tainted.

4 - Wild Card Spawn: A Tyrant, a Chimera or a greater Abomination, + d6 Common Dead.

5 - Wild Card Enemy: The same as Enemies, but one of them is a Wild Card and the number is reduced to (number of characters +1). There is a 50% chance that he is Tainted.

6 - Enemies and more Enemies: Roll the die twice and combine the results. The two groups of enemies may or may

Chapter Seven

Adventure Generator

not be allied, and the group may have to face them all at the same time or each on a different time and place.

GENERAL DESTINATION (D20)

The group's mission could take it to faraway places! Take into account that the further the destination, more important and special will be the goal of the mission: nobody cares about destroying a score of Dead hundreds of miles away, unless there are very sound reasons to do so.

1-5 - On site: The mission takes place in the current location of the Heroes or in its immediate surroundings, and there aren't any problems to reach the specific destination, unless the area is overrun with Dead or there are other kinds of dangers: wars, uprisings, natural dangers. The journey shouldn't be more than 24 hours long.

6-15 - Short Journey: 1d4+1 travel days by horse or by ship should be enough for the heroes to reach their destination, probably some place within the borders of a very large Fief or in the Wilderness surrounding the smaller ones (such as Lucca).

16-18 - Long Journey: Reaching the assigned destination will require 1d4+1 weeks of travel, likely through the Wilderness. Travelling by sea makes it possible to reach very far lands.

19 - Exceptional Journey: This is a one-of-a-kind mission and makes it necessary to travel to extremely distant lands. Organizing such an expedition and carrying it out successfully might be the main challenge in this mission.

20 - Two Destinations: Roll the die twice (and roll it again if you get this result). The mission takes place in two stages because it is first necessary to visit one place to reach an intermediate goal (for example, the Heroes must find the object of their mission in the first place and escort him to the second one), or because the group is asked not to go back but to reach the second destination instead, there to wait for new orders.

SPECIFIC DESTINATION (D20)

This table pins down the key location for the adventure, where to achieve the goal required by the mission. Each of these places can be either still in use or abandoned, and it will probably be full of Dead or other enemies.

If it is an inhabited place, there is a 10% chance of the population being made up of Tainted.

1-2 - Monastery: A large, usually isolated, and fortified building devoted to a productive and contemplative life. It may be a monastery run by amanuensis, containing a large number of manuscripts.

3-5 - Castle or Fort: A castle or a military fort, which may have been seriously damaged by age or wars, or still be well preserved.

6-10 - Hamlet: A small town, offering little in the way of services and structures: 6d6 buildings, which usually include a mill, a well, a small church and a few houses.

11-12 - Place of worship: A cathedral, or a lesser temple (such as a shrine) belonging to the appropriate religious institution.

13-15 - Palace: A stately town house, the seat of some institution, an engineer or alchemist's lab.



Chapter Seven

Adventure Generator

16-18 - Villa or Mansion: An isolated country dwelling surrounded by fields and pastures, or a Mansion by a main road.

19 - City of Sorrow: The required goal is inside one of the Cities of Sorrow!

20 - Special: Roll the die twice and combine the results: the destination is a place having the characteristics of both, or the mission requires the Heroes to visit two distinct places. Or else, the place they must get to is one of a kind. For example, they have to reach a sailing ship, or visit Rome catacombs.

RESOURCES (D6)

If the Heroes are in the service of a patron, they will usually get from him either horses or a passage by ship in order to reach their destination, as well as money and the necessary food rations, besides any other common gear they may need (weapons, armors, Cautery, assorted tools). They may also obtain other resources.

1 - Nothing: The Heroes have to manage by themselves.

2 -Men-at-arms: 1d6+1 men-at-arms are at the character's orders.

3 - Potion: an alchemist can make some Novice Rank concoction.

4 - Healer: An ordinary man with Healing d8 may go with the group.

5 - Expert: The characters may take with them an ordinary man with skills useful for their mission: a guide, a wise man, and so on. This expert has d10 in the skill pertaining to his role, or d8 in two different skills.

6 - Special: The group can count on a unique resource, specifically fit for their mission: a guide, an ally or a contact waiting for them at their destination, or else a detailed map, permits allowing them to travel freely, disguises. As an alternative, you can roll the die twice.

DIFFICULTIES (D20)

To be worthy of being defined an adventure, the mission must have at least one plot twist or an unforeseen difficulty that will make it more challenging! Make at least one roll on this table.

1 - Overwhelming enemy forces:

This is the most dangerous difficulty. A mob of scores of Dead, or hordes of enemies of a different kind arrive at the worst possible moment. The Heroes will likely be forced to devise a good plan or a high-octane escape to get back home in one piece.

2-3 - Wrong Information: The information the Heroes received is largely wrong, and they will have to adapt and find a way to compensate: the destination or the object of the mission aren't where or how they should have been.

4-6 - Hostile Environment:

Wild animals, Fell Beasts, hostile population, unsafe ruins, claustrophobic underground passages, thick woods or labyrinthine valleys.

7-8 - Turning the Tables: An ally or one of the resources of the group results to be ineffective, or becomes an obstacle, or even a danger. An ally has been infected but he keeps it secret, or he is on the enemy's payroll; the

group's supplies have gone bad or have been infected; there are unforeseen problems with the ship or the horses.

9-10 – Unforeseen and Uncontrollable Circumstances: Storms, earthquakes, fires, floods, riots, blizzards get in the way of the group.

11-12 – Personal Matter: The mission involves a relative, a friend or another person one of the characters cares very much about.

13 – Against Time: As the adventure develops, the time factor becomes crucial: a huge Horde of the Dead or of other enemies is coming the Heroes' way; the object of the mission is running away and has to be chased down (Chase rules); the players have some "rivals" who aim to accomplish the mission before they do.

14-15 – Added Responsibilities: 1d6+1 refugees, desperate or innocent helpless people ask the group to take them to safety.

16-18 – Inquiries and Investigations: In order to carry out the mission, it is necessary to collect information, study documents, and find clues because the final destination or object of the mission are still unknown (where does the enemy – or the searched for object – hide? Who has taken over the fort on the hill?).

19-20 – Difficulties compounded by more Difficulties: Roll the die twice and combine the results!

SECONDARY TABLES

SEARCH (D6)

The characters must find and bring back something or somebody.

1 - Books: Knowledge is power. Manuscripts and documents can be very important, be them about history, alchemy, science, religion, dynastic or any other branch of knowledge. Recovering them means having access to new information, which can become the basis for new missions or may be of help against the Plague.

2 - Mysterious Invention: A mysterious machine that might prove to be useful in the fight against the Dead or in everyday life.

3 - Person: A wise man, an ally, an important person or a whole group of people are in danger and must be brought to safety. They may have been taken hostages by enemies, or be barricaded in a hamlet overrun by the Dead, or they may have disappeared or gone missing and must be found. You can make a roll on the **Escort** Table to establish the kind of person the characters will be dealing with.

4 - Resources: Gold, silver and other riches may be important in order to purchase and produce weapons and defenses against the Dead. Alchemic ingredients and instrumentations, loads of weapons and armors to be recovered are always useful, and recovering an abandoned ship is far easier than building it from scratch!

5 - Marvels: Astounding objects, alchemic products, tablets written in unknown languages. All these extraordinary artifacts often hide unique and unpredictable knowledge, purposes

and powers. You can find the rules concerning Marvels and many examples of such objects at page 122.

6 - Relics: People need things to believe in, and holy relics channel the faith and bring hope. It is said that the most ancient and famous among them possess mysterious powers as well, and that some of them may contain Manna. You can find the rules concerning Relics and many examples of such objects at page 120.

DESTRUCTION (D6)

This is a mission in which the Heroes have to wipe out or neutralize their Enemies or their logistic structures, therefore their presence is known. When the opponents are Dead, the intent of such a mission is to secure the chosen place so that the living can use it again. If the opponents are intelligent beings who are employing dark strategies, the purpose of the mission may also be to sabotage their gear and structures. Since the destination is occupied by the Heroes' Enemies, the information they have will likely be incomplete or wrong.

1-3 - Full Information: The Enemies present at the chosen spot are those already known to the Heroes: pull them back!

4-5 - Incomplete Information: Make another roll on the **Enemies** Table and add the result.

6 - Wrong Information: Make another roll on the **Enemies** Table and swap the results (roll the die again if you get the same result as before).

CAPTURE (D6)

The purpose of the mission is to capture an enemy without killing him. Such enemies may possess crucial information, or have to be taken alive in order to force them to negotiate, or to try them publicly, or to use them as hostages. Wild Card Spawn are among the most dangerous targets, and the Heroes might be asked to capture them so that their abnormal characteristics can be studied. Make a roll on this table to determine the identity of the target and add him to the enemies' ranks.

1-2 - Enemy: a felon, a brigand, a pirate, a spy, an enemy, an heretic, an escapee or any other subject appropriate to the place. There is a 50% chance that he is Tainted.

3-4 - Wild Card Enemy: He acts as an Enemy, but he still is a Wild Card.

5-6 - Wild Card Spawn: A Tyrant, a Strix, a Chimera or a greater Abomination.

RECONNAISSANCE (D6)

It entails exploring the destination (usually an isolated area or a small settlement), checking out the presence of Dead or living and estimating their numbers, establishing if there are any useful structures or resources, drawing a rough map of the place. Some possible, specific objectives are:

1-2 - Mapping the Wilderness: Exploring a long abandoned area and identifying its main elements.

3-4 - Establishing Relationships: Reaching a population, a community or a settlement and act there as ambassadors in order to forge an alliance or to enforce authority.

Chapter Seven

Adventure Generator

5 - Lay down Communication Routes:

Finding the safest and easiest way through the Wilderness.

6 - Vanguard: Riding point to a military or civilian expedition in order to identify any possible danger along the route.

ESCORT (D20)

The Heroes have to escort one or more characters or objects from one point to another, that is from their starting point to their destination or vice versa. If the die roll result refers to characters, there is a 10% chance they are Tainted.

Servants, apprentices and other such characters always are Common People.

1 - Wise Man +d6 servants: Common People.

2 - Inventor +d6 assistants: See Bestiary.

3 - Alchemist +d6 apprentices: See Bestiary.

4-7 - Nobleman or Prelate +1d6 servants: He may be a nobleman, a politician, an officer, a primate of the Church or even a popular demagogue. Common People.

8-9 - Settlers or refugees (3d4): Common People.

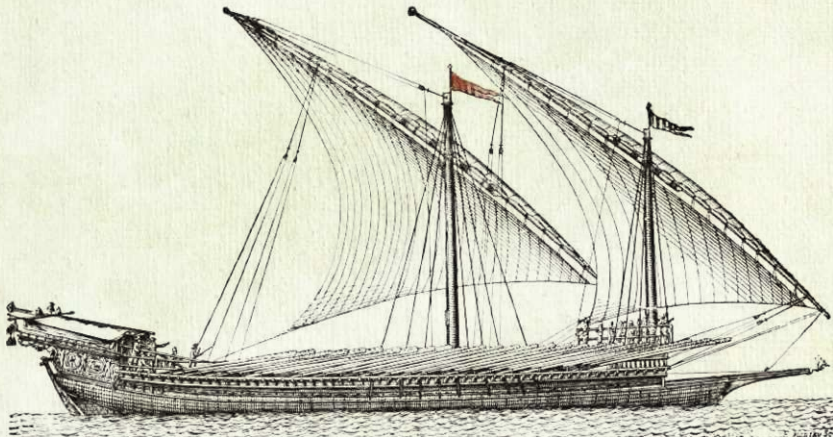
10-13 - Merchants (1d6) +2d6 servants: Common People.

14-15 - Prisoners (1d6): Criminals, enemies, felons or infectors. There is a 50% chance they are Tainted. They will surely try to run away! Usually, they are just bandits, with no gear. There is a 50% chance that one of them is a Wild Card.

16-17 - Document: An extremely important diplomatic letter, treatise or text that must reach its destination.

18-19 - Supplies: Somewhere, a settlement or a military structure is waiting.

20 - Relic: At times, Relics get used as tokens or diplomatic gifts.



Bestiary



This bestiary has been divided into separate sections, in order to better present each different type of creature:

- * *Animals*
- * *Fell Beasts*
- * *Dead*
- * *Abominations*
- * *Chimeras*
- * *Men*

The creatures are listed in alphabetical order within each section.

ANIMALS

BEAR, EUROPEAN

Vultures are ferocious predators, now adapted to attack even the men and to hit even before their victim is dead.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4 (A), Spirits d8, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d8, Swimming d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11

Special Abilities:

- * **Bear Hug:** If a bear hits with a raise, it pins down its foe, who may only try to escape, which requires a raise on an opposed Strength roll.
- * **Claws:** Strength+d6.
- * **Size +2:** European bears are huge creatures that weigh up to 1000 pounds.

BOAR

Boars are a much coveted prey, but they can also be fearful opponents.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4 (A), Spirits d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d4, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities:

- * **Berserk:** Once Shaken, a boar gets +2 to Fighting and Strength roll, and +2 in Toughness, but its Parry is reduced by -2.
- * **Crushing:** If it moves of at least 6" before attacking, a boar adds +4 to damage.
- * **Fangs:** Strength+d4.

HAWK

Hawks are often trained for the hunt.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d4 (A), Spirits d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d12, Stealth d6

Pace: -; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 3

Special Abilities:

- * **Claws:** Strength+d4.
- * **Fly:** Hawks have a Flying Pace of 8.
- * **Go for the Eyes:** Hawks and other birds of prey often go for the face when attacking opponents bigger than they are. With a raise on its attack roll, a hawk hits its opponent's face and any resulting wound is at the head.
- * **Size -2:** Hawks are relatively small creatures.
- * **Small:** Attacks against a hawk suffer a -2 penalty.

HUNTING DOG

Hunting dogs are trained to track and chase prey.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirits d6, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d4, Notice d12, Tracking d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 3

Special Abilities:

- * **Bite:** Strength+d4.
- * **Flee-footed:** Hunting dogs roll d10s when running.
- * **Go for the Throat:** Dogs instinctively go for an opponent's soft spots. With a raise on their attack roll, they hit the less protected areas of their opponent's body.
- * **Size -1:** Hunting dogs are relatively small creatures.

FELL BEASTS

Those few beasts that get infected with the Plague invariably become rabid, altered, tainted and extremely aggressive. Their attacks can transmit the Plague.

To change a common animal into a Fell Beast, simply increase its Strength and Vigor by one die type and then add the following Special Abilities.

Contagious: Characters wounded by a Fell Beast are invariably infected with the Plague.

Indirect Infection: If at risk of being infected indirectly (for example by Atrament spurts getting into an open wound or being ingested by a living person), a character has to draw a card from the deck. If it is a face card, the Plague has reached an area open to infection and the character is therefore infected. However, it is possible to avoid indirect infection spending a Benny, which will represent a stroke of luck.

Blind Hunger: Fell Beasts attack their targets recklessly and savagely, heedless of their own safety, which is why their Parry is reduced by -1 and they cannot also use a Wild Attack in a fight. Moreover, when a Fell Beast kills an opponent or makes him Incapacitated, it keeps raging on its unlucky victim (if Incapacitated but still alive, the opponent draws a card: a black card equals to a finishing blow). A Fell Beast keeps rending its victim's remains until distracted by an attack of some kind and must be considered Shaken (which means it can try to recover at each round to stop feeding).

Fearless: Fell Beasts are immune to Fear, Intimidation, and all similar effects.

Here are a few examples of the most common Fell Beasts, listed under the names often given to them in the chronicles or by common people:

CERBERUS (FELL DOG OR WOLF)

Dogs and wolves rabid with the Plague make fearful opponents, that often attack in a pack, showing no mercy.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirits d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Special Abilities:

- * **Bite:** Str+d6.
- * **Fell Beast:** These Plague consumed animals share all Fell Beasts' Special Abilities.
- * **Flee-footed:** A Cerberus rolls a d10 instead of a d6 when running.

* **Go for the Throat:** With a raise on its Attack roll, a Cerberus hits the target's most weakly armored location.

* **Size -1:** A Cerberus is a relatively small creature.

FELL BEAR

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4 (A), Spirits d6, Strength d12+3, Vigor d12+1

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d4, Swimming d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 12

Special Abilities:

* **Bear Hug:** If a bear hits with a raise, he pins his foe, who can only attempt to escape the "hug" and must get a raise on an opposed Strength roll. Claws: Str+d8.

* **Fell Beast:** These Plague consumed animals share all Fell Beasts' Special Abilities.

* **Size +2:** Bears are very large creatures and can weigh over 1000 pounds.

FELL BULL

A bull infected with the Plague is unstoppable.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4 (A), Spirits d8, Strength d12+3, Vigor d12+1

Skills: Fighting d4, Notice d4

Pace 7; Parry: 3; Toughness: 11

Special Abilities:

* **Fell Beast:** These Plague consumed animals share all Fell Beasts' Special Abilities.

* **Gore:** If bulls can move of at least 6" before attacking, they add +4 to their damage total.

* **Horns:** Str+d8.

* **Size +2:** Bulls are large creatures.

FELL CENTIPEDES SWARM

This "swarm" is treated just like one single creature; when wounded, the swarm is dispersed. It covers an area equal to a Medium Burst Template and attacks everyone in the area within every round.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirits d8, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Notice d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities:

* **Bite:** A swarm of fell centipedes inflicts hundreds of furious bites, hitting automatically all the creatures in the Model area and inflicting 2d4 damage to the least armored locations.

* **Fell Beast:** These Plague consumed animals share all Fell Beasts' Special Abilities.

* **Split:** A swarm of fell centipedes can split into two smaller swarms should their foes split up (two Small Burst Templates). The Toughness of these smaller swarms is lowered to 5.

* **Swarm:** Parry +2; cutting or piercing weapons inflict no real damage. Impact and area-effect weapons work normally, and a character can stomp on the swarm to inflict his damage in Strength at each round.

FELL RATS SWARM

This "swarm" is treated just like one single creature; when wounded, the swarm is dispersed. It covers an area equal to a Medium Burst Template and attacks everyone in the area within every round.

Attributes: Agility d10, Strength d10, Smarts d4 (A), Spirits d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Notice d6

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 8

Special Abilities:

* **Bite:** A swarm inflicts hundreds of furious bites, hitting automatically all the creatures in the area and inflicting 2d4 damage to the least armored locations.

* **Fell Beast:** These Plague consumed animals share all Fell Beasts' Special Abilities.

* **Split:** A swarm of fell rats can split into two smaller swarms should their foes split up (two Small Burst Templates). The Toughness of these smaller swarms is lowered to 5.

* **Swarm:** Parry +2; cutting or piercing weapons inflict no real damage. Impact and area-effect weapons work normally, and a character can stomp on the swarm to inflict his damage in Strength at each round. Infected rats are foiled by jumping in water.

DEVIL SWINE (FELL BOAR)

Boars are a much coveted prey, but when turned into Fell Beasts they can become fearful foes.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4 (A), Spirits d6, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d4

Pace 6; Parry: 4; Toughness: 8

Special Abilities:

* **Berserk:** Once Shaken, a fell boar gets +2 in any Fighting and Strength roll, and +2 in Toughness, but its Parry is reduced by -2.

* **Crushing:** If it moves of at least 6" before attacking, a boar adds +4 to damage.

* **Fangs:** Str+d6.

* **Fell Beast:** These Plague consumed animals share all Fell Beasts' Special Abilities.

FLOCK OF FELL CROWS

This "swarm" is treated just like one single creature; when wounded, the swarm is dispersed. It covers an area equal to a Medium Burst Template and attacks everyone in the area with every round.

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d4 (A), Spirits d12, Strength d10, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d4, Notice d8

Pace: -; Parry: 3; Toughness: 8

Special Abilities:

* **Fell Beast:** These Plague consumed animals share all Fell Beasts' Special Abilities.

* **Fly:** A flock of crows has a Flying Pace of 8.

* **Peck:** A flock, or murder, of fell crows is treated just like a swarm that inflicts hundreds of furious pecks, hitting automatically all the creatures in the Model area and inflicting 2d4 damage to the least armored locations.

* **Split:** A flock of fell crows can split into two smaller swarms should their foes split up (two Small Burst Templates). The Toughness of these smaller swarms is lowered to 5.

* **Swarm:** Parry +2; cutting or piercing weapons inflict half the damage. Impact and area-effect weapons work normally. Fell crows are foiled by jumping in water.

SHRIEKING EEL

These aquatic animals are silent and dangerous, but when they are about to feed on human flesh they surface with their head and scream.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirits d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Swimming d8

Pace: -; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 6

Special Abilities:

* **Aquatic:** Screaming Eels are fish, so they die in a few rounds if dragged out of the water. Swimming Pace 8.

* **Bite:** Str+d6.

* **Fell Beast:** These Plague consumed animals share all Fell Beasts' Special Abilities.

WOLFISH CAT (FELL CAT OR LYNX)

Wild felines, or just town cats, rabid with the Plague.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirits d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Notice d6, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 3

Special Abilities:

* **Acrobat:** +2 to Agility rolls, +1 to Parry (already included above).

* **Bite/Claw:** Str+d4.

* **Fell Beast:** These Plague consumed animals share all Fell Beasts' Special Abilities.

* **Size -2:** Wolfish Cats are relatively small creatures.

* **Small:** Attackers subtract 2 from their attacks.

THE DEAD

While the effects of the Plague are always the same and the Dead are all generally human spoils bereft of any life or intellect, and only hungering after human flesh, the way they were infected and the preservation status of the body allow us to divide them into several categories. Gravediggers, Plague Doctors, fighters and scholars have long defined them with practical terms, and refer to them as if they belonged to specific "races". Generally speaking, the following Special Abilities are applied to all the Dead.

Blind Hunger: The Dead attack their targets recklessly and savagely, heedless of their own safety, which is why they have Parry -1, and they cannot make Wild Attacks. Moreover, when a Dead kills a foe or makes him Incapacitated, he keeps raging on his poor victim through the following rounds (if the foe is Incapacitated but still alive, he must draw a card: if it is black, the effect is the same as a finishing blow). The Dead keeps rending the poor remains until distracted by an attack, and has to be considered Shaken for all practical purposes (he can therefore try to recover at each round to stop feeding).

Brain Death: Those Dead whose Smarts value has a (D) beside it are powered by blind fury and lack any brains. They cannot be distracted from their target, but at the same time they do not notice if he puts obstacles or flames in their way, or if he is drawing them into a trap. In game, however, since they lack any mental reactions, the Dead are immune to any Trick maneuvers based on Smarts (but for those attempted by a character with the Fool the Dead Edge).

Chapter Eight Bestiary



Gordon
2011

Contagious: Characters wounded by a Dead's teeth or claws cannot escape being infected with the Plague.

Fearless: All the Dead are immune to Fear, Intimidation, and all similar effects.

Indirect Contagion: If a character is in danger of indirect contagion (for example, by Atrament spurting on open wounds or being ingested by a living person), he must draw a card from the deck. If it is a face card, the Plague has reached an area open to contagion and the character is now infected. To avoid indirect infection is however possible to spend a Benny, which will represent a stroke of luck.

Resistance to Damage: Wild Card Dead suffer no wound penalties.

Undead: +2 Toughness, +2 to recover from being Shaken, called shots do extra damage only to the head (see Weakness). Arrows, spears and other piercing weapons inflict only half damage (with the exception of damage to the head). Undead do not suffer from poison or disease.

Weakness (Head): Damage to the head brings an added +2 bonus besides the standard +4, valid for all creatures.

WILD CARD DEAD

Among the different types of Dead, only Tyrants are shown as Wild Cards. This doesn't mean that you cannot create Wild Card Carcasses, Husks, Furies, Possessed, or other kinds of Dead, but only that because of their nature Tyrants are always Wild Cards.

CARCASS

A Carcass is a corpse so decomposed it's now just a skeleton, barely covered by an unnoticeable layer of Atrament and dried skin that keep the bones together. It always

moves in a straight line toward its target, to throw it to the ground (and then devour it), and it doesn't care if there are spears, fire, or trenches in its way. It cannot climb, think up any kind of strategy, or swim; a Carcass finds it difficult to climb stairs and open doors (for example, it has to make a successful Agility roll), but it will never stop until it reaches its target.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4 (D), Spirits d4, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d4

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 3; **Toughness:** 6

Special Abilities:

* **Claws/Bite:** Str+d4.

* **Dead:** This creature has all the Special Abilities of the Dead.

* **Shuffling Gait:** Carcasses cannot run.

CARRION

A Carrion is a Husk deteriorated by time and the weather, or a corpse come back to life after having been severely damaged by the living, the Dead, flames, or other things. The body is more or less whole, but it cannot stand and has to crawl. It cannot climb, think up any strategy, swim, break through barriers, climb stairs or open doors; on the other hand, it never stops until it reaches its target.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4 (D), Spirits d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4

Pace: 2; **Parry:** 3; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities:

* **Claws/Bite:** Str+d4.

* **Dead:** This creature has all the Special Abilities of the Dead.

* **Shuffling Gait:** Carrions cannot run.

FURY

Unlike Husks, Furies are Dead who still are as strong, agile and perceptive as a common human being. They have the same intelligence and ability to think up hunting strategies as Husks do (which means none), but they can cross bodies of water, climb, open doors and break through, or work their way around, any kind of barrier more easily than Husks do. Their irrational ferociousness makes them fearful foes in a melee.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4 (D), Spirits d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d4, Fighting d8, Notice d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities:

- * **Claws/Bite:** Str+d6.
- * **Dead:** These creatures have all the Special Abilities of the Dead.
- * **Improved Frenzy:** Furies may make two Fighting attacks with no penalty.

HUSK

Slow, staggering and often uttering a characteristic moan, Husks are Dead with lifeless eyes, their hands always reaching out to clutch, and a shuffling gait. They always move in a straight line toward their target, to bite and throw it to the ground (and then devour it), heedless of any spears, fire or pits that may be in their way. They cannot climb, think up any kind of strategy, or swim; they have difficulty at climbing stairs and opening doors (for example, they have to make a successful Agility roll), but on the other hand they will never stop until they reach their prey.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4 (D), Spirits d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d4

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 7

Special abilities:

- * **Claws:** Str+d4.
- * **Bite:** Str+d6.
- * **Dead:** These creatures have all the Special Abilities of the Dead.
- * **Shuffling Gait:** Husks cannot run.

HUSK, DROWNED ONE

Drowned Husks aren't necessarily men who died at sea: this is the name of a kind of Husks that have "adapted" to water and lurk along the coasts, into rivers, ponds, marshes and sewers. Unlike other Husks, the Drowned Ones can swim and drag their victims under water, to devour them while they drown. They are hairless, pale and worn out by the water, but somehow Atrament preserves them for a long time, even if they remain under the surface all the time. If forced to, they can crawl out of the water and drag themselves toward any victim who still is on dry land.

Their profile is the same as a Husk's, but you must add Swimming d4. Moreover, a Drowned has a Pace of 2 on dry land, and of 4 in the water.

OPPROBRIUM

Opprobriums are putrefied and broken masses of dead flesh, or even maimed limbs and heads almost unable to move, that can only drag themselves around, clutch and bite whoever passes by them. They often are just a corpse's torso with the head and one or both arms still attached. At times, they can be made just of body parts, detached and imbued with Atrament (a cut off head, a hand, a tongue...). An Opprobrium is

really dangerous only if nobody realizes it's there, or if it accidentally infects somebody with its sludge.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4 (D), Spirits d4, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d4

Pace: 1; **Parry:** 3; **Toughness:** 4

Special abilities:

* **Claws/Bite:** Str+d4.

* **Dead:** These creatures have all the Special Abilities of the Dead.

* **Shuffling Gait:** Opprobriums cannot run.

* **Size -2:** Opprobriums are just cut off body parts.

* **Small:** Attacks against Opprobriums suffer a -2 penalty.

POSSESSED

Possessed are Dead who still have all the strength and agility they had when alive, together with a fiendish energy and stamina; moreover, they can reason (like animals do) and make complex movements, such as swimming, using a weapon or a tool, or climbing on a rope. They cannot speak, though, and their only aim always is to feed on human flesh.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirits d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Notice d6, Swimming d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

Special abilities:

* **Claws/Bite:** Str+d6.

* **Dead:** These creatures have all the Special Abilities of the Dead.

* **Go for the Throat:** When fighting unarmed, Possessed instinctively go for an opponent's soft spots. With a raise on their Attack roll, they hit the target's most weakly armored location.

* **Hardy:** Possessed do not suffer a wound from being Shaken twice.

* **Improved Frenzy:** Possessed may make two Fighting attacks per round without penalty.

* **Weapons:** Possessed can use weapons, and they can often be seen brandishing melee weapons to kill the living before devouring them, most of all if in life they were soldiers or fighter.

TYRANT

Tyrants are one of the most terrifying Plague Spawn. Suspended between life and death, they still have all the mental and physical traits they had before being infected, and the Plague strengthens them, day after day. The price they pay is the loss of their humanity and compassion, together with an insatiable hunger for living humans' flesh and blood, that feed the Plague dormant inside them. Whoever gets this variation of the Plague is in his Second Death already, and is really difficult to destroy.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirits d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Knowledge (Plague) d6, Notice d8, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

Special Abilities:

* **Claws/Bite:** Str.

* **Control over the Spawn:** Tyrants can exert a form of mental control over the other Plague Spawn. As a free action, they can force their will on sight on any creature infected by the Plague with (A) or (D) Smarts, using them as out-and-out puppets at their orders. They can also impart simple orders those creatures will obey as best as they can, for a limited span of time, even if the visual contact should break. If two (or more) creatures with this ability want to control a nearby Spawn, they must make an opposed Spirits roll.

* **Fast Regeneration:** Tyrants can make a natural Healing roll per round, unless they have been maimed or wounded by fire or flames. If Incapacitated, they can be killed with an action (destroying the head) before they regenerate.

* **Resistance to Damage:** Tyrants suffer no wound penalty.

* **Fiend:** This creature has all the Special Abilities of common Dead, except Blind Hunger and Brain Death.

* **Weapons:** Tyrants can use any weapon, and they usually use armor and weapons, if possible.

ABOMINATIONS

Abominations are the most horrible and dreadful Plague Spawn; these horrors, fortunately quite rare, derive from unnatural mutations of infected creatures, who have acquired a size or characteristics as unique as horrific, or are the consequence of experiments made by Necromancers.

All these creatures are invariably dead and irreversibly altered, and they share the same abilities as the Dead, unless otherwise specified.

ARACHNOID

Arachnoids are corpses brought back to life, to which have been added numerous limbs, extended in length by sewing together different body parts, one after the other. These horrors walk on four long legs and have four arms.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirits d4, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d12, Fighting d8, Notice d4

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 9

Special abilities:

* **Bite:** Str+d6.

* **Claws:** Str+d6. Arachnoids may attack up to 3 contiguous targets.

* **Dead:** These creatures have all the Special Abilities of the Dead.

* **Fear:** Any character facing this creature for the first time must make a Fear test.

* **Fleet-footed:** These creatures roll a d10 when running.

* **Size +1:** The extended and added limbs make Arachnoids somewhat large creatures.

FURYPEDE

The insane creation of mad Necromancers and Vivisectors, a Furypede is a creature made up of half a dozen corpses sewn one after the other in a row, like a sort of foul centipede, and somehow controlled by the first one, which is a Fury thus endowed with a long body with multiple limbs.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d4 (A), Spirits d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d8, Notice d4

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 10

Special abilities:

* **Claws/Bite:** Str+d6. Thanks to its multiple limbs, a Furrypede may attack up to six nearby creatures.

* **Dead:** This creature has all the Special Abilities of the Dead.

* **Fear:** Any character facing this creature for the first time must make a Fear check.

* **Size +2:** A Furrypede is about as big as a horse.

HECATONCHIR

A Hecatonchir is a horrid heap of half decomposed corpses, by now permanently glued together by Atrament. It is considered a single creature to all intents and purposes, and covers an area equal to a Small Burst Template.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4 (D), Spirits d4, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d4

Pace 3; Parry: 3; Toughness: 15

Special Abilities:

* **Claws/Bites:** Str+d4. Hecatonchires may attack all nearby creatures.

* **Corpses Heap:** A Hecatonchir is made of scores of corpses, and it is therefore impossible to neutralize it by destroying its heads, some of which are hidden by the heap or absorbed into it. For this reason a Hecatonchir doesn't suffer from Weakness (Head) typical of the Dead. Moreover, conventional piercing, cutting and impact weapons inflict only half damage. Heavy weapons of any kind, as well as fire and area of effect attacks, inflict full damage.

* **Dead:** This creature has all the Special Abilities of the Dead, with the exceptions shown in Corpses Heap.

* **Fear:** Any character facing this creature for the first time must make a Fear test.

* **Hardy:** Hecatonchires do not suffer a wound from being Shaken twice.

* **Large:** Attackers add +2 to their Fighting rolls when attacking a Hecatonchir due to its large size.

* **Size +5:** The Corpses Heap has a considerable volume.

HELLISH CERBERUS

This abomination, generated by a Necromancer's sick mind, is a huge, three-headed dog, endowed with hellish strength and fierceness.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirits d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6

Pace: 10; Parry: 5; Toughness: 9

Special abilities:

* **Bite:** Str+1d6. Cerberus has three heads, therefore it may attack three times.

* **Dead:** This creature has all the Special Abilities of the Dead.

* **Fear:** Any character facing this creature for the first time must make a Fear test.

* **Fleet-footed:** This creature rolls a d10 when running.

* **Go for the Throat:** Cerberus instinctively goes for an opponent's soft spots. With a raise, it hits the target's most weakly armored location.





MUSSELER

A Musseler is a hideous Drowned One, covered with parasites, leaches and shellfish that managed to attach themselves to his skin in spite of its Atrament and are now proliferating as a corrupted and abominable version of what they were.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4 (D), Spirits d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d4, Swimming d4

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 8 (1)

Special Abilities:

* **Bite:** Str+d6.

* **Claws:** Str+d4.

* **Covered with Shellfish:** The thick layer of hard and sharp shells covering a Musseler's body gives him one Armor point all over the body.

* **Dead:** This creature has all the Special Abilities of the Dead.

* **Stinking:** The combined stink of the Husk and of the corrupted shellfish covering it requires each character within a range of 2" from a Musseler to make a Vigor roll. If the roll is successful, the character endures the stink without any consequences. If it fails, the character makes all Traits rolls at -1 until he is out of reach of the effect; in case of critical failure, the character suffers -1 on all Traits rolls and spends the next round retching.

NIGHTMARE

Through hideous alchemic procedures, some Necromancers can infect horses with the Plague and them bring them back to life to use them as emaciated steeds for Possessed and Tyrants.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4 (A), Spirits d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d4

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 10

Special abilities:

* **Bite:** Str+d4.

* **Dead:** This creature has all the Special Abilities of the Dead.

* **Size +2:** Nightmares are as large as a horse.

WORMRIDDEN

Wormridden are hideous Spawn (usually Husks) with a grotesquely swollen belly full of huge Plague ridden worms.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4 (D), Spirits d4, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d4

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 8

Special Abilities:

* **Bite:** Str+d6.

* **Claws:** Str+d4.

* **Dead:** This creature has all the Special Abilities of the Dead.

* **Swarm of Worms:** If an Eyesore suffers a body wound or is beheaded, a swarm of fell worms the size of a Small Burst Template erupts from its body, with the following characteristics:

SWARM OF FELL WORMS:

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirits d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

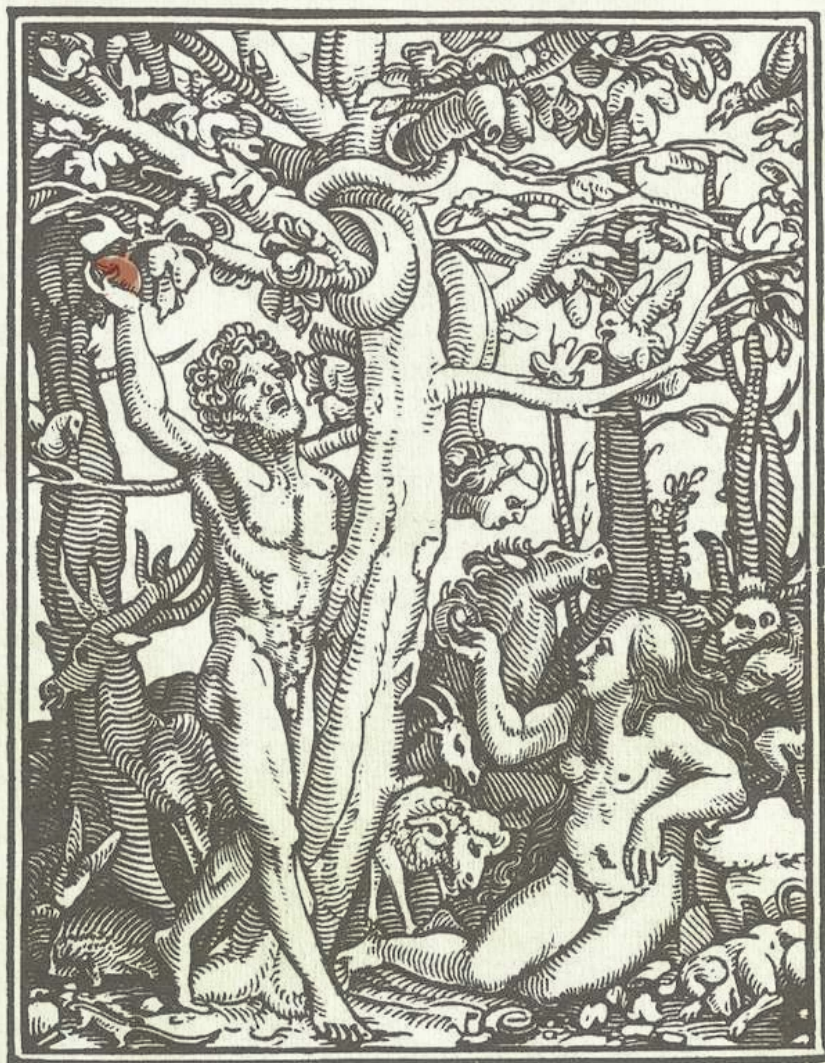
Skills: Notice d6

Parry: 4; **Pace:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

* **Special abilities:**

* **Fell Beast:** Fell Worms share all the Special Abilities of Fell Beasts.

Chapter Eight
Bestiary



* **Bite:** A swarm of Fell Worms inflicts hundreds of fierce bites, hitting automatically and causing 2d4 damage to everyone in the Template, to the least armored location.

* **Swarm:** Parry +2; cutting or piercing weapons inflict no real damage. Impact and area-effect weapons work normally, and a character can stomp to inflict his damage in Strength at each round.

CHIMERAS

Chimeras are a type of Abomination specifically created with dreadful intents by some mad Vivisector in his disturbing laboratory, or generated by a sudden and uncheckable mutation caused by the ingestion of Ambrosia.

To create Chimeras, Vivisectors and Necromancers usually start from Husks, Furies or Possessed, or from any kind of animal, Fell Beast or Abomination, or even from a common, still alive human being (either Untainted or Tainted). Thanks to their dark arts, or to the mutating power of Ambrosia, hideous mixtures of many beings, or symbioses impossible in nature, are thus generated.

Starting from the creature it derives from, a Chimera usually has Strength and Vigor increased by one type of die, and an increase in size in the whole body or in parts of it; moreover, its Smarts usually decreases by one die and may become of (A) or even (D) type, even if it is not always so.

Use the characteristics belonging to the creature of your choice, adding one or more of the following Special Abilities (or make as many 1d12 rolls as you want).

1 – Wings: The creature has developed wings (or they have been attached to it. It gains Flying Pace 10, with Climb 0).

2 – Extended Limbs: The creature's limbs have been grotesquely extended and its attacks now have Reach 1.

3 – Multiple Limbs: The creature has more limbs than normal, and gets one additional attack or adds +5 to its Pace (or both).

4 – Hypertrophy: The creature's Strength and Vigor increase by two types of die, its Size increases by +2. If its Size reaches +4, the creature also gains the Large Special Ability; **if it reaches +6, the creature becomes Huge.**

5 – Bone Blades: The creature's limbs end with long and serrated bone blades that extend from its wrists where the hands should be. These blades drip with Atrament and allow the creature two Attacks per round, inflicting Str+d8.

6 – Miasma: The creature exudes Miasma, and all nearby characters are at risk of breathing it. See Miasma, page 104.

7 – Revolting: The creature is extremely disgusting and causes Fear (-2).

8 – Bone Plates: The creature's body is covered with misshapen bones that protect it like an armor, granting 2 Armor points.

9 – Pseudopods: Slimy and strong appendages, made of flabby flesh covering gnarled muscles. This creature has the Wall Walker Special Ability.

10 – Secretion: hyper-developed glands secrete gallons of foul serum all around the creature. At the end of their action, all nearby characters must make an Agility roll or fall Prone.

11 – Deadly Breath: As an action, the creature may exhale miasmatic air from its innards. All the characters within a Cone Template are in danger of breathing Miasma. See Miasma, page 104.

12 – Black Vomit: As an action, the creature may vomit a gush of black Atrament. All the characters within a Cone Template must make an Agility roll against the creature's Vigor roll. If the roll fails, the character is coated with Atrament and at risk of Indirect Infection (See Special Ability, in the Dead Section).

MEN AND WOMEN OF THE MACABRE WORLD

Listed below you will find the characteristics of the most common types of NPC the Heroes may meet. Each has a "basic" version and one depicting a more expert, or veteran, character. In order to create your own Wild Cards you can start from either of them, depending on how strong you want your Wild Card to be.

ALCHEMIST

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirits d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Alchemy d8, Knowledge (Plague) d6, Investigation d6, Notice d8, Throwing d6

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5

Edges: Arcane Background (Alchemy)

Gear: Alchemist's bag, ingredients (20 florins), dagger (Str+d4).

Powers: Three Novice rank powers.

ALCHEMIST, EXPERT

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirits d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Alchemy d12, Knowledge (Plague) d6, Investigation d8, Notice d8, Throwing d6

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5

Edges: Arcane Background (Alchemy), New Power, New Power

Gear: Alchemist's bag, ingredients (20 florins), dagger (Str+d4).

Powers: Three Novice rank and two Veteran rank powers.

BANDIT

Bandits are men and women who make a living preying upon travelers and manor farms, in the farmlands belonging to the Fiefs or on the roads across the Wilderness.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirits d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d4, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Tracking d4

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6 (1)

Hindrances: They are usually Greedy, and often Mean.

Gear: Leather Armor, assorted melee and ranged weapons.

BANDIT, VETERAN

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirits d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Survival d6, Taunt d8, Throwing d8, Tracking d6

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 7 (1)

Hindrances: They are usually Greedy, and often Mean.

Edges: Woodsman.

Gear: Leather Armor, assorted melee and ranged weapons.

CITY GUARD

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirits d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d4, Stealth d4

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;
Toughness: 8 (3)

Gear: Halberd (Str+d8; 2 hands, Reach 2,5), plate corselet (Armor +3 to the torso), pot helm (50% protection against head shots, Armor +3).

CITY GUARD, COMMANDER

Attributes: Agility d8, Strength d8, Smarts d6, Spirits d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Stealth d4, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Shooting d4

Charisma :-; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;
Toughness: 9 (3)

Edges: Brave, Command, Head Strike, Levelheaded

Gear: Halberd (Str+d8; 2 hands, Reach 2,5), Plate corselet (Armor +3 to the torso), pot helm (50% protection against head shots, Armor +3).

CITY GUARD CROSSBOWMAN

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirits d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

Charisma: -; **Pace** :6; **Parry:** 5;
Toughness: 8 (3)

Gear: Crossbow (range: 15/30/60; damage: 2d6; RoF 1; AP 2, 2 actions to reload), plates corselet (Armor +3 to the body), pot helm (50% protection from head shots, Armor +3).

CITY GUARD CROSSBOWMAN, VETERAN

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirits d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Ability: Fighting d8, Notice d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d6

Charisma:-; Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6;
Toughness: 9 (3)

Edges: Steady Hands, Head Shot, Command

Gear: Crossbow (Range: 15/30/60; damage: 2d6; RoF 1; AP 2, 2 actions to reload), plates corselet (Armor +3 to the body), pot helm (50% protection from head shots, Armor +3).

COMMON PERSON

A common person can be a citizen, merchant, artisan, farmer, and other similar subjects. Each knows his craft or trade and has medium characteristics.

Attributes: Agility d6, Strength d6, Smarts d6, Spirits d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Knowledge (Trade) d6, Notice d6

Charisma:-; Pace: 6; **Parry:** 4;
Toughness: 5

Gear: Dagger (Str+d4) or other weapons, or improvised weapons.

DEAD HUNTER

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirits d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Knowledge (Plague) d4, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6, Survival d6

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;
Toughness: 7 (1)

Gear: Assorted melee and ranged weapons; leather armor (Armor +1), pot helm (50% protection against head shots, Armor +3); salamander wool bag, Last Hope hatchet, Caution.

DEAD HUNTER, VETERAN

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirits d8, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d10, Knowledge (Plague) d4, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6, Survival d6

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8 (1)

Edges: Brave and Head Strike, or Steady Hands and Head Shot

Gear: Assorted melee and ranged weapons, leather armor (Armor +1), pot helm (50% protection against head shots, Armor +3), salamander wool bag, Last Hope, Caution.

HOSPITALER

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirits d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Boating d4, Fighting d8, Healing d4, Notice d6, Riding d8

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Edges: Healer, Knight.

Gear: War horse, chain hauberk (corselet, arms, leggings), steel helmet, long sword (Str+d8), medium shield with the symbol of the Cross.

HOSPITALER, VETERAN

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirits d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Boating d6, Fighting d10, Healing d6, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Notice d6, Riding d8

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Edges: Healer, Knight.

Gear: War horse, chain hauberk corselet, arms, leggings), steel helmet, long sword (Str +d8), medium shield with the symbol of the Cross.

INVENTOR

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirits d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Investigation d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Shooting d6, Taunt d6, Weird Science d8

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Edges: Arcane Background (Weird Science).

Gear: Dagger (Str+d4) or other weapon.

Powers: One Novice rank power.

INVENTOR, EXPERT

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d10, Spirits d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Ability: Fighting d6, Investigation d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Shooting d6, Taunt d6, Weird Science d10

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Edges: Arcane Background (Weird Science), New Power, New Power

Gear: Dagger (Str+d4) or other weapon.

Powers: Two Novice rank powers, one Seasoned rank power.

ISCARIOT

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirits d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Knowledge (Plague) d4, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6 (1)

Chapter Eight
Bestiary



Edges: Iscariot.

Gear: Two Daggers (Agi+d4) or katars (Agi+d6). Full leather Armor (Armor +1).

ISCARIOT, VETERAN

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirits d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Knowledge (Plague) d4, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6 (1)

Edges: Iscariot and Extraction; Improved Extraction or Assassin

Gear: Two Daggers (Dex+d4) or katars (Dex+d6). Full leather Armor (Armor +1).

KNIGHT

These are a typical ordained knight's characteristics. See the new Knight Edge in order to create variations of this character.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirits d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Riding d8

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Edges: Command, Knight.

Gear: War horse, Full chainmail armor (corselet, arms, leggings), Steel helmet, long sword (Str+d8), medium shield displaying the chivalric order coat of arms.

KNIGHT, VETERAN

These are a typical, ordained knight's characteristics. See the new Knight Edge in order to create variations of this character.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirits d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Notice d6, Riding d10

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Edges: Command, Counterattack, Knight, Leader of Men

Gear: War horse, Full chainmail armor (corselet, arms, leggings), Steel helmet, long sword (Str+d8), medium shield carrying the chivalric order coat of arms.

NECROMANCER

Necromancers – Vivisectors and Egyptian Mourners included – make use of an assortment of dark arts, which is a mixture of forbidden alchemic practices, warlock tricks and unspeakable experiments conducted on the Dead. They are often responsible for the creation of Chimeras and Abominations. Their powers make use of the Necromancy (Smarts) arcane skill, which allows them to gain access to Alchemists and Witches' powers.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirits d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Knowledge (Plague) d8, Notice d8, Necromancy d8, Persuasion d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Mean.

Edges: Arcane Background (Necromancy).

Gear: Dagger (Str+d4).

Powers: Two Novice rank – Witch or Alchemist – powers.

Special Abilities:

* **Creating Abominations:** Through their dark arts, Necromancers and Vivisectors can create an assortment of hideous Spawn. Their only limitation is their own imagination and raw materials availability. This doesn't mean that every

single “experiment” they conduct is a success, but having time and enough bodies at his disposal, a Necromancer can try a Necromancy roll every month, to create an artificial Chimera or Abomination. If the roll fails critically, the created Spawn is totally out of control and immediately turns on its creator.

* **Baffle the Dead:** Most Necromancers are Tainted, and often have the Baffle the Dead Edge.

EXPERT NECROMANCER

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirits d6, Strength d4, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Plague) d10, Necromancy d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Mean.

Edges: Arcane Background (Necromancy).

Gear: Dagger (Str+d4).

Powers: Three Novice rank Witch or Alchemist powers, one Seasoned rank edge.

Special Abilities: The same as Necromancer. Some Expert Necromancers are Striges and have all the characteristics of these Spawn.

PIRATE

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirits d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Boating d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6, Taunt d6

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6 (1)

Hindrances: Greedy

Gear: Assorted weapons, leather corselet (Armor +1 to the torso).

PIRATE, VETERAN

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirits d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Boating d10, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Streetwise d6, Taunt d8

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7 (1)

Hindrances: Greedy

Gear: Assorted weapons, leather corselet (Armor +1 to the torso)

RED ODALISQUE

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirits d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6, Taunt d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Edges: Attractive, Red Odalisque.

Gear: Two sabers (Agi+d4) or scimitars (Agi+d8). Custom made red gowns (Charisma +1 in circumstances where status matters).

RED ODALISQUE, VETERAN

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirits d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6, Taunt d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Edges: Attractive, Red Odalisque, Thief

Gear: Two sabers (Agi+d4) or scimitars

(Agi+d8). Custom made red gowns (Charisma +1 in circumstances where status matters).

ROGUE

Rogues are all sorts of criminals and scoundrels, men and women who illegally live by their wits in large cities.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirits d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6 (1)

Hindrances: Usually Greedy and often Mean.

Gear: Leather armor, assorted weapons.



ROGUE, VETERAN

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirits d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Streetwise d8, Taunt d8, Throwing d8

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 7 (1)

Hindrances: Usually Greedy and often Mean.

Edges: Thief.

Gear: Leather armor, assorted weapons.

SOLDIER

These are the characteristics most soldiers, mercenaries and soldiers of fortune have in common.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirits d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d4

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 7 (2)

Gear: Assorted weapons (usually pikes or long swords), chain hauberk (Armor +2 to torso, arms and legs), pot helm (50% protection against head shots, Armor +3), medium shield (Parry +1).

SOLDIER, VETERAN

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirits d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d4

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 6

Edges: Levelheaded.

Gear: Assorted weapons (usually pikes or long swords), chain hauberk (Armor +2 to torso, arms and legs), pot helm (50% protection against head shots), medium shield (Parry +1).

WITCH

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirits d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Streetwise d6, Witchcraft d8

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Edges: Arcane Background (Witchcraft).

Gear: Dagger (Str+d4).

Powers: Two Novice rank powers.

WITCH, EXPERT

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirits d10, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Ability: Fighting d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Streetwise d8, Taunt d6, Witchcraft d10

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Edges: Arcane Background (Witchcraft), New Power, New Power

Gear: Dagger (Str+d4).

Powers: Three Novice rank powers, one Seasoned rank power.



WILD CARD NON PLAYING CHARACTERS

ANTONIO EDOARDO DE' SEVERI

A Genius. Banker. Courtesan. Philanthropist. Antonio de' Severi is one of the most charismatic inventors in this macabre Renaissance; his incredible skills as an engineer combine with his charm as a mature, athletic and self-assured man. Antonio is well renowned both as the owner of the Severian Factories and because of his wealth, his numerous love affairs and his bravery, since he is often on the frontline in fighting the Dead, usually wearing his most famous invention, the "Iron Man" hauberk. Few know about his secret disability, however: severely wounded in an accident, he had to insert inside his body a mechanical device he invented, which requires constant maintenance.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirits d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d4, Fighting d8, Healing d6, Investigation d6, Knowledge (Plague) d4, Knowledge (Science) d10, Lockpicking d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Repair d10, Riding d6, Shooting d8, Streetwise d6, Taunt d8, Throwing d6, Weird Science d10

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 9 (3)

Hindrances: Curious, Heroic, Overconfident, Stubborn

Edges: Ambidextrous, Arcane Background (Weird Science), Brave, Charismatic, Hard to Kill, Improved Block, Great Luck, Perfected Device (Fly), Rich

Powers: Smite (on both flick katars and both guns), Speed (on armor jambs), Pummel (small cannon fit on the shoulder). Fly (extendible wings on the enhanced plate corselet shoulders).

Gear: Enhanced full armor (Armor +3, covers the whole body; +2 to Strength rolls and melee damage; +1 to ranged attacks); 2 flintlock pistols (range 5/10/20; damage 2d6+1; 2 actions to reload) and 2 flick katars (Str+d4) on the arms.

**❏ GIOVANNI MACHIAVELLI,
ALSO KNOWN AS GIOVANNI DELLE
BANDE GRIGIE, CONDOTTIERO**

Feared by foes, rivals and princes, respected by soldiers, loved by women and common people, Giovanni delle Bande Grigie is the most popular among the Condottieri of Italian mercenary armies, as well as one of the most skillful Renaissance strategists. Handsome, bright and brave, he embodies the impetuous and impulsive side of the Machiavelli family, better represented by his reflective and planning brother, Niccolò, Lord of Florence.

Or maybe this dichotomy is just a ploy, and the two brothers only fake their disagreements and differences to confuse their adversaries...

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirits d10, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d10, Knowledge (Battle) d10, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Riding d10, Shooting d10, Taunt d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 10 (3)

Edges: Brave, Charismatic, Command, Counterattack, Improved Sweep, Knight, Leader of Men

Gear: War horse, full plate armor (corselet, arms and leggings), pot helm, long sword (Str+d8), medium shield carrying the Bande Grigie coat of arms, Last Hope hatchet, Cautery and Misericorde, 800 florins.

**❏ BARBAROS HAYREDDIN PASHA,
THE LION OF ALGIERS**

"Barbaros" Hayreddin Pasha is the most feared pirate haunting the Mediterranean Sea; he also is the Lord of Algiers, and the most powerful and respected captain along the coasts of Africa. Of half Greek and half Saracen blood, he is a renegade felon who doesn't recognize any authority in the world besides his own, and he is a formidable foe for the New Kingdoms. He personally leads his men in battle and lives up to his nickname, the "Lion", that he got thanks to his savagery and bravery.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirits d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Boating d10, Fighting d12, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Battle) d8, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Streetwise d6, Taunt d8

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 9; **Toughness:** 9 (1)

Hindrances: Greedy

Edges: Brawny, Command, Quick draw, Strong Willed

Gear: Long sword (Str+d8), 3 flintlock pistols (range: 5, 10, 20; damage: 2d6+1; 2 actions to reload), leather corselet (Armor +1 to torso), small shield (Parry +1), 300 florins.









Lucca and the Fair of the Dead

1. Via Fillungo – Lucca's Main Street
2. Guinigi Tower, home of the powerful Guinigi family.
3. Fair of the Dead: Weapons and War Machines Exposition
4. Augustean Fortress – Lucca Citadel
5. Saint Francis Church
6. The Clock Tower
7. House of the Mutilated
8. House of Lucca's "Executioner"
9. Postern
10. The Magician's Inn
11. Slums
12. Mazzoni's – a famous poors' hostel
13. Mansion of Ferrara's delegation
14. Amphitheatre Square, built on an ancient Roman Amphitheatre
15. Saint Martin's Cathedral
16. Confraternity of Death's Monastery
17. Plague Doctors' Guild
18. Gravediggers' Guild
19. Urban Orchards
20. Fair of the Dead: Inventions and Marvels Exposition
21. Alchemists' Guild
22. Fair of the Dead: Books and Games Exposition



— A Marabre Renaissance City —

1. Main Street: the best shops and the best inns in town
2. Mansion Tower: rich families always live in towers, safe from casual outbreak.
3. Open Fields: used for the town militia's training
4. The Citadel: last defence against dead, in the event of an outbreak inside the wall
5. A Church: Christians are divided and there are a lot of schismatic faiths, but churches are always a place where people meet and pray God
6. The Clock Tower: its bells toll every hour and let people organize their activities
7. House of the Mutilated: an Hostel and Hospital for those who've been injured in war.
8. City Wall: high and fortified expressly against the Dead
9. Postern: secret doors on the wall, from where fighters can exit and engage dead by side, or messengers can run to near towns.
10. Tenements: old and poor buildings, occupied by common people.
11. Slums: a jumble of alleys and dilapidated shacks, where crime flourishes.
12. Central Buildings: home of the middle-class – artesans, merchants
13. Artisan Districts: workshops, factories and furnaces
14. Arena or circle, used for plays, markets and games
15. City Cathedral: dedicated to the city patron saint and ruled by a Bishop; often connected with a bishopric or an abbey
16. Confraternity of Death's Monastery: usually in a lonely and isolated place, inside the walls
17. Plague Doctors' Guild: one of the most important guilds in every city
18. Gravediggers' Guild: very powerful in most cities
19. Urban Orchards: an essential place, providing fresh food even in the event of a siege
20. The Columbarium: All dead must be cremated, and this is the place where they put their remains, in cinerary urns
21. Alchemists' Guild: a palace connected with laboratories, usually far from the city center
22. Barracks and stables for the local militia

Ultima Forsan

Agility



Boating — Shooting —
Fighting — Stealth —
Lockpicking — Swimming —
Riding — Throwing —

Smarts



Gambling — Notice —
Healing — Repair —
Investigation — Streetwise —
Knowl. — Survival —
Knowl. — Taunt —
Knowl. — Tracking —

Strength



Climbing —

Spirit



Intimidation — Persuasion —

Ulgior



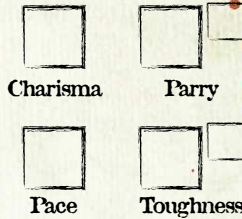
Weapon	Range	Damage	Wt.	Notes

Power	Cost	Range	Damage/Effect

Gear

Name _____
Race _____

Wild Arcane



Background

Languages

Permanent Injuries

Hindrances

Edges

V _____
X _____
XV _____

Seasoned _____
XXV _____
XXX _____
XXXV _____

Veteran _____
XLV _____
L _____
LV _____

Heroic _____
LXV _____
LXX _____
LXXV _____

Legendary _____
XC _____
C _____
CX _____

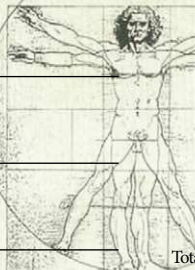
Armor

Head

Arms

Torso


Legs



Total weight _____ Florins _____

Weight limit _____ Encumbrance Penalty _____

Fatigue -I -II INC -III -II -I Wounds



At the end of the Middle Ages, the Plague of the Dead has spread through Europe, Africa and Asia giving rise to the darkest time in history. Now, in the year 1515, heroes from the New Kingdoms are ready to fight to reconquer the World. Ultima Forsan is a game of wild adventures and deadly dangers, set in a macabre alternate version of our Renaissance.

Inside Ultima Forsan Setting Book you can find:

- A new Savage Worlds Setting, made of grim horrors and indomitable heroes
- Two double-page maps: Macabre Lucca and the New Kingdoms of the West
- New Edges, Arcane Backgrounds and Rules to face the Plague Hordes
- Special weapons, augmented armors and mechanical prosthesis to fight the Macabre War
- The Secret of Marco Polo: a complete campaign ready to play
- More than thirty new, frightening monsters, plus dozens of animals, human characters and Wild Cards
- An adventure generator that will allow you to create an infinite number of adventures for your Heroes
- A scalable lethality level, allowing you to play the way you prefer, from lethal survival horror to epic action and heroism.

DEATH IS LURKING, AND EACH HOUR COULD BE THE LAST.
BUT YOU WON'T GIVE UP.
NEVER.

