

ALL FOR ONE

Régime Diabolique

RICHELIEU'S GUIDE TO

Alchemy❧ *Introduction* ❧

The science of the ancients, alchemy represents mankind's first foray into understanding the nature of his world through experimentation and observation. While it introduces the concepts of scientific methodology, alchemy is a pseudoscience, blended with astrology, religion, and mythology.

What's in a Name?

The word alchemy can be traced back through the Old French term *alquimie*, through the Latin *alchimia*, and back to the Arabic *al-kimia*. Its origins, though, seemingly lie with the Greek word *chemeia*, or "the art of casting metals." One school of thought is that the origin is far older, dating back to the ancient Egyptian word *kbmi*, or "black land" (so named after the fertile black soil that lines the Nile). Alchemy could thus be literally translated as "the art of the black land," or, more worryingly, "the black art."

A Very Brief History

Attempts to transmute base metals into noble one is not a modern endeavor. The ancient Greeks, Chinese, and Indians all practiced the art, at first developing it independently and later combining their learning with that of other cultures. The Greek alchemists, whose input did most to shape the modern art, were centered around Alexandria, the Egyptian city that became a center of learning under the Ptolemaic pharaohs.

Alchemy first became a forbidden art when Egypt fell under the shadow of the Roman eagle. Ever wary of rebellious intent, the Romans sought to curb the creation of alchemical gold, fearing it might be used to fund insurrection. Although nothing could be proven, the Emperor Diocletian reacted to an Egyptian rebellion in 296 A.D. by ordering the destruction of 300 alchemical manuscripts. Alchemy would remain hidden until after 642, when the Arabs invaded Egypt and began translating Greek manuscripts on the subject.

Alchemical texts first appeared in western Europe in the 11th and 12th centuries by Crusaders returning from the battlefields of the Levant. Robert of Chester's translations of an Arab text into Latin created a spark that rapidly turned into a fire, the strange art and its promises of wealth and immortality catching the imaginations of Europe's philosopher-scientists. Yet the texts now highly sought by Europeans were cryptic, leading to a rapid division of philosophies and methods.

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The Philosopher's Stone

The philosopher's stone (*lapis philosophorum*), the marvelous substance that, according to many mundane alchemists transmutes base metals into precious ones and can prolong life, is variously described as being white or red. In many alchemical texts the white philosopher's stone transmutes base metals into silver, while the red version transmutes them into gold.

True alchemists, those possessed of magickal knowledge, refer to the red philosopher's stone as greater stone, while the white is regarded as lesser stone.

Creating greater philosopher's stone requires an alchemist working in a laboratory to achieve 30 successes (Difficulty 5) using his Alchemy Skill. Each roll represents an entire week of work. Success creates just a single pinch. Even then, the substance is not true philosopher's stone, though it is potent. Added to a potion during its creation, a pinch grants +8 to one Magick: Alchemy roll. More usefully, that potion never spoils, remaining potent until used. A single pinch of lesser philosopher's stone requires only 15 successes (Difficulty 4). As its name implies, it is of less potency than the gold variant. Each pinch adds +4 to one Magick: Alchemy roll while creating a potion. In both instances, only a single pinch may be produced for each attempt—the modifier for creating multiple batches cannot be used.

The secret of true philosopher's stone, that rare creation that will permanently transmute base metals or prolong life remains elusive. A handful of alchemists have claimed to have produced it, but attempts to repeat their experiments have all ended with failure, and if they have indeed achieved immortality, the alchemists have vanished from public life, perhaps faking their own deaths.

Throughout the Middle Ages there was no end to the number of alchemists who claimed to have created the philosopher's stone, the key substance that would allow the transmutation of metals and extend life beyond earthly measure, yet few could repeat their claims on demand. The stone, it seemed, remained as elusive as ever.

While many alchemists sought material wealth, others saw alchemy in a different light, Paracelsus, widely regarded as one of the forefathers of modern chemistry, applied alchemy into creating medicines, chemical compounds that would remove man's need to rely on the herbal remedies of the ancients.

Despite offering much in the way of new discoveries, alchemy remained tainted by the base lust for gold. European kings and emperors indulged alchemists with vast sums of money in the hope of procuring a greater financial return. With so much money freely on offer, alchemy became sullied by charlatans. Some were sci-

entists, men who knew how to make substances similar in appearance to gold, while others used sleight-of-hand to magically produce small lumps of pure gold. The punishments for failure could be harsh—Duke Julius of Brunswick had the alchemist Marie Zeigler burned alive in 1575 for failing to produce gold, while Frederick I, duke of Württemberg, ordered the alchemist George Honnauer hanged in 1597 for a similar offense.

Alchemy is currently a forbidden art in France, banned by order of Cardinal Richelieu, who has declared it the work of the Devil, who incites men to crave material things, and as the work of charlatans. It is also locked in a battle with science: the Age of Enlightenment is dawning, and men are turning away from the hocus-pocus of mysticism into the light of true scientific experimentation.

Alchemists of the Age

Below are brief biographies for alchemists practicing in 1636 or who will become leading lights in the field in the years to come.

Arthur Dee (1579-1651): Eldest son of Doctor John Dee, the famous Elizabethan magician, by his second wife. Like many alchemists he was also a physician, appointed to the court of Tsar Michael I of Russia in 1637. He returns to England in 1637 after the death of his wife.

Daniel Stolz von Stolzenberg (1600-1660): Bohemian physician and writer on alchemy. Studied alchemy under Michael Maier (1568-1622), a famous German alchemist. By 1636 he has penned two works on alchemy.

Elias Ashmole (1617-1692): Although a young man in 1636, Ashmole goes on to become a solicitor, military officer, antiquarian, alchemist, astrologer, and Freemason. In 1661 he becomes one of the founding members of the Royal Society.

Jan Baptist van Helmont (1579-1644): Flemish alchemist and physician. Introduced the word "gas" into the scientific lexicon. Suspected of heresy in 1621, but no charges were ever brought against him.

Johann Daniel Mylius (1583-1642): German alchemist and composer for the lute.

Michał Sedziwój (1566-1636): Polish alchemist, philosopher, medical doctor, and pioneering chemist. Reputed to have created true philosopher's stone, but ceased transmutations after being robbed by a German rival (named only as Muhlenfels).

Nicolas Flamel (1332-1418): A French scribe and manuscript seller, Flamel is widely credited as the only alchemist to have perfected true philosopher's stone, achieving with his wife, Perenelle. Although there is no hard evidence, Flamel went from being near penniless to fantastic riches almost overnight. He is credited with authorship of numerous alchemical texts.

Despite officially having died in 1418 around the age of 80, many alchemists claim to have met and studied under Flamel.

Nicolas le Febure (1615-1669): Currently a medical student, le Febure goes on to become a physician to Louis XIV and Charles II of England, as well as an alchemist.

Alchemy and the Law

Historically, alchemy was an excepted art, not quite a science, but not a form of witchcraft, either. It was an art practiced by men of the cloth as a means of understanding the physical aspect of God's creation, yet also contained spiritual instruction. Kings and emperors, ever greedy for wealth to fund their endless wars and extravagant building projects, employed alchemists to make them richer. Unfortunately, the number of men who claimed to be able to transform base metals into precious ones was legion, but those proven to succeed beyond reasonable doubt numbering exactly zero. Thus, while practicing alchemy was not itself a crime, making false claims of its results was.

The default for *All for One* is that Alchemy is a form of magick and, thanks to Richelieu stirring up trouble, forbidden (at least in France), punishable by all manner of horrific methods of torture and death. Gamemasters may wish to bring Alchemy out of the shadows and reinstate it as an accepted part of life in their campaigns, albeit one still shrouded in mysticism. Practicing alchemy would thus be a legitimate profession, although using it to mislead or harm others would remain a crime.

For instance, selling curative elixirs or potions declared to have temporary effects would be acceptable, but throwing explosive compounds at one's enemies, using "alchemical gold" (produced by the temporary transformation of base metals into precious ones) to purchase equipment, or trying to sell impossible elixirs, such as ones claimed to grant permanent effects, means either a lengthy spell in jail, or, if an accusation of devilry is leveled and proven, a trip to the rack and a roasting at the stake.

❧ Alchemical Art ❧

This section looks at the art of the alchemist in more detail. It is largely background material, intended to add flavor rather than new rules.

The Twelve Processes

Alchemical experiments are defined by steps known as processes. The creation of the philosopher's stone requires all 12 processes to be followed in order, while lesser experiments, the sort that produce magickal effects, require just one or two processes to be completed.

Each process consists of a general action and one of three methods. When spoken, these are referred to as "action" through "method." The first process, for example, is Decomposition through Calcination.

Naming Potions

The art of alchemy is filled with allegorical references, pseudoscientific terms, and utter nonsense. While a player should give spells he has created a simple, descriptive name (such as "flash powder") so he can find his notes in a hurry, his character should speak of his alchemical products in more descriptive, flavorsome terms.

A flash powder, essentially a powder that when exposed to air produces a brilliant burst of light, temporarily blinding opponents, might be called *distillation of sunlight*, while a "healing potion" may simply be *aqua vitae* ("water of life;" actually ethanol).

Players looking for a list of actual alchemical substances should head to Wikipedia and search for "List of alchemical substances."

That there are exactly 12 processes is not coincidental—each process is dominated (or ruled) by one of the zodiacal signs.

* **Decomposition:** The breakdown of chemicals into elements of simpler compounds.

Calcination (Aries): Breaking down a substance through heat. It is achieved through either actual or potential calcination. Actual calcination comes from burning fuels, such as wood, while potential calcination involves corrosive chemicals, ones that produce heat without flame.

Digestion (Leo): The application of gentle heat over a prolonged period. The chemical might be left exposed to sunlight, or covered in manure.

Fermentation/Putrefaction (Capricorn): The substance is left to rot naturally and undisturbed. It typically relates to organic materials, as it would take millennia for a rock to "putrefy" (i.e., crumble to dust).

* **Modification:** Changing the nature of a substance to create a new substance.

Congelation/Coagulation (Taurus): Increasing a liquid's viscosity. The process can turn liquids into solids.

Fixation (Gemini): A process that "fixes" a volatile substance, giving it a new form (often solid) that renders it immune to further transformation by heat or fire.

Ceration (Sagittarius): Continually heating a substance that cannot be made into a liquid until the substance softens. It is used to break down hard substances into a more malleable form.

* **Separation:** Changing a substance or mixture of substances into two or more unique products. A modern example is taking liquid water and producing oxygen and hydrogen gas.

Distillation (Virgo): Separation of liquids through the application of heat. Liquids vaporize based on their boiling point, the vapor then passing through tubes to condense in a separate vessel, separating it from the original mixture and leaving two distinct liquids.

Alchemical Texts

Alchemists are both secretive and vain by nature. While they guard their experiments and methods jealously, they simultaneously boast of them in written texts. These tracts are always written in code or allegorical terms, disguising the truth behind layers of enigma.

In game terms, an alchemical text functions as a grimoire. Its Tradition is always Alchemy, but its Art varies according to the author's specialty. However, before an alchemical text can be used, it must be decoded. Deciphering an alchemical grimoire requires 10 successes on an extended Investigation: Enigmas, Linguistics: Codes, or Linguistics: Deciphering roll (Difficulty 3). Each roll represents one week of work.

Below are the names of a number of real world alchemical texts. Gamemasters may use them straight from the page as flavor when an alchemist finds a text, or as the basis for their own creations.

* *Emerald Tablet (aka Smaragdine Table, Tabula Smaragdina, and Secret of Hermes)*: Arabic translation; unknown date; reportedly written by the Hermes Trismegistus, a combination of the Greek deity Hermes and the Egyptian god Thoth.

* *Aurora consurgens*: Latin; 15th century; attributed to Thomas Aquinas.

* *Buch der heiligen Dreifaltigkeit ("Book of the Holy Trinity")*: German; 15th century; attributed to Frater Ulmannus (a Franciscan).

* *Compendium veritatis philosophicum*: German; 15th century; attributed to Basilus Valentinus.

* *Fasciculus Chemicus*: Latin; 1629; anthology compiled by Arthur Dee.

* *Hortulus Hermeticus*: Latin, 1627; Daniel Stolz von Stolzenberg.

* *Kitab al-Zubra*: Arabic; 8th century; Abu Musa Jabir ibn Hayyan (aka Geber, after whom "algebra" was named and "gibberish" gets its name).

* *Musaeum Hermeticum*: German; 1625; anthology compiled by Lukas Jennis.

* *Mutus Liber*: Latin; first printed copy 1677, but earlier handwritten copies may exist; written by Isaac Baulot (born 1612).

* *Speculum Alchemiae*: Latin (12th century); translated into English in 1597; Francis Bacon.

* *The Compound of Alchymy*: English; 1477; George Ripley.

* *Theatrum Chemicum*: Latin; 13th century; Albertus Magnus.

* *Turba Philosophorum*: Latin; 11th century; author unknown.

* *Viridarium Chymicum*: Latin, 1624; Daniel Stolz von Stolzenberg.

* *Voynich Manuscript*: Unknown language; 15th century; author unknown.

Sublimation (Libra): Transforming a substance from solid to vapor without going through the liquid state. When the vapor cools it creates solid sediment, again without ever becoming liquid.

Filtration (Scorpio): The separation of liquids from solids by means of a medium through which the solid cannot pass (such as a finely woven cloth).

* **Union**: Causing two or more substances to bond together to create a unique substance.

Solution (Cancer): Dissolving one substance into another (such as salt and water to create saline solution). Such substances may be solid, liquid, or gaseous.

Multiplication (Aquarius): Combining a substance (usually a putrefied one) with another, so as to transform the second substance into something new. Once created, the transformed substance can be divided into small quantities and the process repeated to multiply the amount available. Thus, from an initial small quantity, one can quickly build up a large stock. Each time the process is repeated, the quality and quantity of the substance increase, while the time to complete the multiplication decreases. It is said of the true philosopher's stone that its creation takes three years. However, multiplying the substance again takes but one week for the second time, then three days, one day, and finally one hour.

Projection (Pisces): Specifically, this is the transmutation of a heated substance through application of the philosopher's stone. The ideal projection is, of course, taking a base metal and projecting it to gold or silver. More generically, it involves heating two or more substances to create a new substance.

Alchemical Equipment

Many of the tools used by alchemists would not look out of place in a modern laboratory. Some of the more common instruments are briefly described below purely for added flavor. Larger items, such as the athanor and bain-marie, are not found in the alchemist kit, but instead form part of the alchemist's static laboratory.

Alembic: An alchemical still, used to distill liquids. Comprises two vessels connected by a tube.

Aludel: A series of bottomless earthenware pots designed to fit over each other. Used in sublimation as a condensing tube.

Athanor: An alchemical oven, designed to provide low heat over a long period. Also known as the Furnace of Arcana or Tower furnace (after the Tarot card of the same name).

Bain-Marie: A water bath used to provide gradual and gentle heat.

Crucible: A container in which chemicals are heated. May be clay or metal.

Cupel: An inverted truncated cone used to separate noble metals from base ones.

Hessian Crucible: A form of crucible designed to withstand high external temperatures from heating and internal ones produced by chemical reactions.

Mortar & Pestle: A bowl and heavy handled-shaped tool used for grinding.

Retort: A glass vessel with a long downward-pointing neck. Used in distillation.

Sand Bath: A sand-filled container used to provide even heat when heated from beneath.

Laboratories and Kits

Every alchemist character has a laboratory stocked with the common tools of the trade and basic chemicals. By itself, this laboratory grants no inherent bonuses—that is covered by his Refuge: Equipment Resource, if any. In contrast, the alchemist's kit represents his stock of more unusual or rarer ingredients, plus enough basic equipment to use his art while outside of his laboratory. Whereas a laboratory provides an infinite bonus, the alchemist's kit contains finite resources and must be frequently replaced or replenished. Note that a character may combine bonuses from both his kit and laboratory.

Clarification: Alchemy is not a simple process. A single elixir may require many different elements and compounds to be mixed in varying quantities and at different stages of the process. When creating a potion, each roll counts as a single use of the Skill for the purposes of using supplies from the alchemist's kit (should the character choose to use it, of course).

The Elements

Alchemy recognizes the four classical elements of air, earth, fire, and water, from which all substances are formed. Each element, and thus every substance, can further be described as having the qualities of hot, cold, wet, or dry. Fire is dry and hot, earth is dry and cold, water is wet and cold, and air is wet and hot.

There exists a fifth element, the quintessence, that transcends the four classical elements. Also known as aether or ether, it is the element that fills the universe above the sphere of the Earth, hence, the ethereal void. Ether has no qualities, is immutable, inclined to move in circles, invisible to the human eye. To Homer, it was akin to air, but reserved for the gods to breathe.

Distilatio Infernalis

Alchemy's association with devilry in France may be the result of Richelieu's machinations, but recent developments do little to lessen the fear associated with alchemists and their strange art. Should they ever become public knowledge, recent experiments would not only brand all alchemists as servants of Satan, but likely endanger the fledgling science of chymistry as well.

Desperate to create the philosopher's stone, an unknown alchemist deduced that aether, the quintessence breathed by God, might hold the key. Unable to procure

Optional Rule: Planetary Effects

Alchemy and astrology are intertwined, with each alchemical process governed by a sign of the zodiac. When the process is carried out under the auspices of the sign, it is said to be easier to complete.

At the Gamemaster's discretion, when an alchemist creates a potion he must declare which of the four actions it involves. For game purposes, Decomposition involves destruction, Modification is used for alteration or transmutation, Separation governs division, splitting, or reduction, and Union covers joining or mending.

For example, using an acid to melt iron bars on a prison cell is Decomposition. Coating clothes in a liquid that hardens them, creating armor, is Modification. Brewing a smoke bomb is Separation, as it reduces visibility. A healing potion is a form of mending, and is thus a Union.

If the potion is created during any of the three zodiacal signs overseeing the action, the alchemist gains a +2 bonus to his Magick: Alchemy rolls.

Unfortunately, for every boon there is a bane. Decomposition is opposed by Union, and Modification by Separation, and vice versa. An alchemist who tries to create a potion requiring one action during the opposite time of the zodiac has a -2 penalty to his Magick: Alchemy rolls.

For instance, creating an explosive liquid (Decomposition) is harder to achieve during the signs of Cancer, Aquarius, and Pisces, when Union is dominant. Clever players might be able to work around this by altering the function of their character's creations. One example is creating a gas that causes those who breathe it to become physically weak. In game mechanic terms, it lowers Strength. This could be explained as Decomposition (temporary muscle wasting), Separation (a reduction in strength caused by fatigue), or Modification (physically altering the muscle mass). Such creative thinking should not be discouraged.

This optional rule does mean the Gamemaster needs to keep an eye on the calendar in his campaign, or have the character's player track it.

this wondrous substance, he followed a warped path of thought, surmising that since demons were originally of Heavenly origin, they must contain traces of aether.

His madness (for no sane man would consider this) led him to summon demons from the infernal pit of damnation. At first he endeavored to bind the spiritual essence of Satan's minions with physical, earthly substances, but repeated experiments met with naught but failure. As his desperation grew and his insanity deep-

ened he hit upon a new train of thought—the physical must be bound with the physical.

In an act that surely damned his soul to Satan's realm, he offered one of his servants to a demon, allowing it to possess his body. Now fused with mortal flesh, and thinking the quintessence was surely within his grasp, he murdered the servant, draining his tainted blood into a crucible containing various chemicals and subjected them to alchemical processes. The grisly experiment failed to produce the philosopher's stone, but did produce unusual and dramatic results—it made the alchemical process easier, alleviating much of the hardship and painstaking patience associated with alchemy. Attempts to repeat the process with physical demons, such as glut-ton demons and black fogs, ended in failure. Success, it seemed, lay in the union between unholy spirit once of divine origin, and God's chosen creation—man.

That original alchemist is long dead, his soul lost forever in the abyss, but his work lives on in his manuscripts. Loosely translated from Latin as "The Process of Binding the Essence of the Spiritual with the Physical," they are vile tomes, not for the faint-hearted.

Game Mechanics

An alchemist who uses the blood of a human possessed by a demon, such as a demonic spirit, werewolf, or vampire, gains a bonus to one Magick: Alchemy roll equal to the creature's Willpower. The victim must be alive at the start of the process, and the blood fed directly into the alchemical process as it takes place. Thus, the life fluid cannot be drained and stored for later use. So much blood is required that the victim's death is assured.

Although one might philosophically argue that killing a demon's host in this manner is an act of good (a dead host forces the demon to return to Hell), the procedure involves the deliberate and intentional ending of a human life. This a damnable act, which promises shortcuts in the material world, guarantees the alchemist suffers endless torment in Hell at some future point.

Campaigns

This section provides some basic advice for playing alchemists in *All for One* campaigns.

Creating Characters

All Musketeers receive four zero-level Skills and two zero-level Resources. Alchemists receive the same general benefits, but with a few notable differences.

Alchemists are learned men and women, well versed in the properties of the elements and usually university trained. Even self-taught alchemists must have a basic understanding of matters beyond throwing chemicals together and seeing what happens next.

A minimum of two of their four zero-level Skills must come from Academics, Art, Investigation, or Natural Philosophy. Alchemical texts exist in many languages, though the most common is Latin. An alchemist must thus have enough raw Intelligence or a high enough Linguistics rating to grant him a minimum of one additional language. Other suggested languages for alchemists are Arabic, English, German, Greek, and Hebrew.

The remaining zero-level Skills should be chosen to suit the character's social class and background. For instance, the scion of a noble house might easily expect to know something of Diplomacy, Performance, or Riding, but he has had fewer chances to learn Larceny or Streetwise. No Skill is forbidden, but the player may have to defend his choices.

Unlike Musketeers, the character's choice of zero-level Resources is up to him. Patron is an ideal choice, as it represents a financier or mentor. Wealth can represent a business, perhaps an apothecary, or even secretly selling alchemical elixirs. It can also represent a basic ability to transmute base metals into noble ones, though only in very tiny amounts (not enough for the character to retire in luxury). Unless alchemy is publicly accepted in

TAKE reddish rich Virgin Earth in ♀, impregnate it with ☉, ☿, serene and dew, till the end of May: Then imbibe sprinklingly with dew gathered in May, and dry in ☉, expose all Night to the ♀ and Air, securing it from Rain. Still when it is dry, imbibe and turn the Earth often. Continue this till ☿mation. The hot ☉ (especially in the Dog-days) will make a pure Salt shoot up, which mingle back into the Earth, by turning it all over. Then distill by graduated △ as A.F. forcing all the Spirits

An Explication of the Characters which are used in this Book.

☉ Gold.	A. F. Aqua Fortis.
☿ Silver.	A. R. Aqua Regis.
♂ Iron.	S. V. Spirit of Wine.
♀ Mercury.	☿ Sublimate,
♂ Jupiter.	☿ Precipitata.
♀ Venus.	☿☿☿ Amalgama.
♂ Lead.	▽ Water.
♂ Antimony.	△ Fire.
☿ Sal armoniac.	

the campaign, Rank and Status should relate to public profession. Doctor, scientist, and university professor are natural choices, but an alchemist might serve in the army or navy, hold a noble title, or be initiated into a secret society.

Musketeer Campaigns

Playing an alchemist in a Musketeer game has already been established in the core rules in the form of one of the sample characters. Anyone wishing to play an alchemist Musketeer should also read the text below for mixed campaign and the problems that may arise from being a practicing magician in an age where burning at the stake is a very real threat.

Mixed Campaigns

A mixed campaign is one in which not every character (or perhaps none at all) is a Musketeer. Unlike other Traditions, Alchemy has access to all the Arts. While a group might benefit from having multiple magicians versed in different Arts, there is no benefit to having more than one alchemist beyond increasing the number of elixirs that can be created. In order to prevent one character from becoming secondary to another alchemist and the heroes relying on potions to save their skins, we recommend Gamemasters limit alchemists to one per group.

Although the logical public guise for an alchemist is a scientist and the obvious long-term goal creation of the fabled philosopher's stone, these are both bland stereotypes. With a little imagination, they can become more adventurous and intriguing.

Alchemists can practice any profession and come from any social class, though the requirements for education prohibit most from being peasants. In the same way that Musketeer is a blanket occupation under which a hero might be a duelist, nobleman, sniper, or spy, so an alchemist might be a churchman, physician, artilleryman, or even a skilled swordsman.

While an alchemist can utilize any Art, the player may wish to self impose limits on his character. For instance, his character might deal only with corrosives, noxious gases, and explosions, refusing to dabble in curative tonics and potions that boost Skills. Characters are under no compulsion to consider limiting their ability, and should ever be punished for not doing so—alchemy is already limited by its restriction on only mimicking plausible chemical reactions. Gamemaster may wish to reward playing such restrictions with Style points.

Of course an alchemist can quest for the philosopher's stone, but a reason beyond the base lust for wealth or desire for immortality will create a more interesting character, both for the player and Gamemaster. In the sample character section, we present just such an alchemist—he quests for the stone because he is dying of an incurable disease and believes it will prolong his life.

Is Alchemy Really Magick?

Historically, alchemy, while it produced results many once thought magickal, is merely a branch of chemistry, albeit one veiled with useless mystical references. In *All for One*, Alchemy is very much a form of magick.

In part this was done because without the restriction of requiring both a Talent and two Skills, and with the added stigma of being devilry, it would become a must-have ability, an easy way to gain lots of benefits for little cost. Thus, it is branded as magick as artificial game balance.

The other reason was because science is still in its infancy. Historically mankind had made great advances, but *All for One* is not an historical setting—it is a supernatural one, and alchemy is akin to magick, especially in the eyes of the masses.

As has already been discussed, the Gamemaster may wish to strip alchemy of its devilry label and allow it as a branch of science, complete with special effects. However, we strongly recommend that the Gamemaster retain the need for both a unique Talent and two Skills so that it doesn't become too prevalent in the campaign.

Burn the Witch!

One issue with alchemy, and one that extends to all forms of magick, is that it is outlawed, considered devilry by Richelieu, the Church, the State, and the peasants. As guardians of France and servants of the King, the Musketeers are also opposed to witchcraft.

While an alchemist presents a powerful ally for the group, his existence may cause tensions if one of the other characters is fervently opposed to all forms of magick. Group arguments are fine, and to be expected, but the game will quickly degenerate if one or more characters are trying to arrest or kill another hero.

The easiest way to avoid such problems is to have a player who wants to create an alchemist declare his intention openly to the other players during character generation and check that none of the other characters are opposed to working alongside a magician. If one player wants to be a fanatical witch-hunter who would happily burn the alchemist alive, then the Gamemaster needs to sit the players down and discuss the situation before it crops up in play and spoils everyone's fun.

The other alternative is simply for the alchemist to operate in total secrecy, as he must do from society at large. The Gamemaster should ensure that player knowledge does not creep into the game. Sure, the witch-hunter's player knows the alchemist practices magick, but his character does not—having "sudden suspicions" and beginning a witch hunt against his comrade without hard evidence is metagaming, and the Gamemaster should steer him away from such behavior.

Alchemical Fencer

Archetype: Swordsman

Motivation: Fame

Style: 3

Health: 5

Primary

Body: 2	Charisma: 2
Dexterity: 2	Intelligence: 3
Strength: 3	Willpower: 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0	Initiative: 5
Move: 5	Defense: 4
Perception: 6	Stun: 2

Skill	Base	Levels	Rating	Average
Athletics	3	3	6	(3)
Brawl	3	2	5	(2+)
Con	2	2	4	(2)
Fencing: Renoir	3	4	7	(3+)
Linguistics	3	1	4	(2)
Magick: Alchemy	3	3	6	(3)
Natural Philoso- phy: Chymistry	3	2	5	(2+)

Talents

Flurry (May attack the same opponent twice by making a Total Attack with a -2 penalty on each attack roll)

Magickal Aptitude (Alchemy)

Resources

Fame 0 (+1 Social bonus)

Followers 0 (Laboratory assistant)

Flaw

Liar (+1 Style point whenever his dishonesty causes trouble or his lies catch up with him)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	Average
Punch	0N	0	5N	(2+)N
Rapier	2L	0	9L	(4+)L

"It's all due to training, diet, and huge amounts of natural talent."

Character Background

I began taking fencing lessons at university, where I was studying chymistry. I was always inclined toward sport and exercise, believing that a healthy body gives rise to a healthy mind, yet fencing held no special appeal to me at first, for I was a man of peace.

One afternoon I became involved in an altercation in the streets of Paris. A group of ruffians had robbed a nobleman, their path of flight taking them squarely across mine. Like a good citizen I moved to stop them, using my fists to good effect until they drew short swords. It was then that a stranger appeared, using his rapier to deftly disarm the ruffians and recover the noble's purse. Although my act was instinctive, I expected some measure of reward for my part. But no, it was the swordsman who received the noble's coin and the crowd's praise, not I.

I vowed there and then that I would earn the love of the people. In my innocence, I saw my route to acclaim through the sword, for while the elite may respect knowledge, the masses favor adventurous deeds. I neglected my studies for a while, focusing my time on learning fencing and athletic prowess. Yet no matter how skilled I thought myself with the blade, I was never quite good enough—there was always someone better who stole my glory. On returning to my studies I discovered that alchemy, an art I had long dismissed as the path of fools, promised more than immortality and wealth. Certain chemicals, when mixed correctly, could boost physical strength and agility, focus the mind to improve one's prowess with a certain skill, speed up one's reflexes, and so on. The list of possibilities was without limitation.

I moved away from chymistry, using my time and resources to create alchemical elixirs. I bided my time, waiting for the right moment to test them. It came when I saw a man attacked by a gang of thieves. I quaffed my tonic, intended to improve my reflexes, and let at them, my blade flashing and whirling like lightning. At last victorious, I lapped up the praise offered by the crowd that had formed, drinking in their adulation. I of course said nothing about the source of my skill, knowing that the peasants would not understand. They need heroes in this dark age, and I have accepted the challenge.

Roleplaying

Your lust for fame and recognition has led you to stray from the path of righteousness. You are a fraud, the 17th-century equivalent of a modern-day athlete who uses performance-enhancing drugs. In your case, these are alchemical elixirs of your own design.

Charlatan Alchemist

Archetype: Natural Philosopher Motivation: Greed

Style: 3

Health: 4

Primary

Body: 2 Charisma: 3

Dexterity: 3 Intelligence: 3

Strength: 2 Willpower: 2

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 6

Move: 5 Defense: 5

Perception: 5 Stun: 2

Skill	Base	Levels	Rating	Average
Academics: Philosophy	3	1	4	(2)
Athletics	2	2	4	(2)
Craft: Medicines	3	2	5	(2+)
Con	3	3	6	(3)
Bluff			7	(3+)
Empathy	3	1	4	(2)
Larceny	3	4	7	(3+)
Sleight of Hand			8	(4)
Linguistics	3	1	4	(2)
Natural Philosophy: Chymistry	3	2	5	(2+)

Talents

Moneywise (May boost Wealth Resource as if it were a Talent)

Resources

Followers 1 (Gullible patron)

Wealth 1 (50 livres per month)

Flaw

Overconfident (+1 Style point whenever he is forced to ask for help or when his bravado gets him in over his head)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	Average
Punch	0N	0		

*"Of course it is real gold!
Feel the weight and look at the
color, my lord."*

Character Background

Despite the extravagance of my clothing and my legendary parties and feasts, I am a humble natural philosopher, tutor to scions of aristocratic houses yet paid poorly for my acquired knowledge. My fabulous wealth comes from my other occupation—ridding the gullible of their unearned riches through "alchemical" means.

Although alchemy is a banned art, there are still those who practice it, albeit from the shadows. Let me make it absolutely clear that I do not number among them, although I do understand its processes from a purely natural philosophical perspective.

It is a fundamental truth that the rich always want more money. Everyone wants more money, of course, but with the rich it is a true vice and a great weakness.

You have heard of the philosopher's stone, yes? Let me tell you that it is a myth, nothing more than a dream at which men futilely clutch. The aristocracy, though, are well aware of the alchemist's ability to transmute base metals into noble ones, and that is a very attractive venture. After all, it promises great wealth for little labor.

Flagrantly disregarding Cardinal Richelieu's decree that alchemy is the work of Satan, they secretly welcome alchemists with open arms, offering them vast sums of money in return for generating greater rewards. I merely take advantage of their desire... and gullibility.

There are various techniques I employ, but none involve magick, at least not as peasants understand the concept—the true magick of this world is natural philosophy. The simplest ruse involves nothing more than a puff of smoke and sleight of hand to slip a nugget of true gold into a crucible. A more extravagant scheme requires the creation of a gold coin coated in a thin veneer of silver. When dipped into aqua fortis (nitric acid), the silver dissolves, revealing the gold beneath. To the unenlightened mind, it appears a miraculous transformation of silver into gold. In return for such demonstrations, the aristocracy grant me money to found an alchemical laboratory or give me piles of silver coins to transmute into gold. At that, I quickly disappear from their lives.

Now, my good jailor, if you'll kindly loosen my shackles, you shall be handsomely rewarded...

Roleplaying

You are a rogue, a trickster who preys on the gullibility and greed of the aristocracy. You have no interest in helping the poor, only in lining your own pockets. That said, you don't take money from those who have little to spare.

Distiller of Demons

Archetype: Clergyman

Motivation: Power

Style: 3

Health: 5

Primary

Body: 2	Charisma: 2
Dexterity: 2	Intelligence: 3
Strength: 3	Willpower: 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0	Initiative: 5
Move: 5	Defense: 4
Perception: 6	Stun: 2

Skill	Base	Levels	Rating	Average
Academics: Occult	3	3	6	(3)
Athletics	3	1	4	(2)
Investigation	3	2	5	(2+)
Linguistics	3	2	5	(2+)
Magick: Alchemy	3	3	6	(3)
Melee	3	2	5	(2+)
Natural Philoso- phy: Chymistry	3	2	5	(2+)
Streetwise	2	2	4	(2)

Talents

Magickal Aptitude (Alchemy)

Resources

Contacts 0 (Catholic Church; +1 bonus)

Followers 1 (Monster Hunter)

Status 0 (Witchfinder; +1 Social bonus)

Flaw

Fanatical (+1 Style point whenever he causes harm or he converts someone else to his way of thinking)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	Average
Punch	0N	0	0N	(0)N
Long sword	3L	0	8L	(4)L

"Don't kill him! Hand him over to me and I shall see he is properly judged."

Character Background

I see by that puzzled look that you think my study of alchemy and service to God somehow at odds. Dismiss any doubts put into your mind by Richelieu—alchemy is knowledge, and knowledge is made evil only through misuse by man. My heart is good, and thus my art is used only for good.

By trade I am a servant of God, trained to root out and punish those who would traffic with demons. Many years ago my investigations had led me to the abode of a warlock, one who used alchemy for dark purposes. By my hand I smote him dead, sending his soul to the fiery pit where it belonged. Among his possessions I found a tome, a rare alchemical work of uncertain age. After deciphering it I discovered to both my horror and joy that it described a method of using demons in alchemical processes. The method was unorthodox, shall we say, but seemed to promise a way to immortality.

You are not the first to level the accusation that seeking immortality goes against God's divine plan, nor will you be the last. I crave immortality not through fear of death, nor to offend God, but so that I might continue his work throughout the ages. Satan's minions are legion, yet those truly devoted to the Lord are rare souls. But I digress from my tale.

My companion and I set out to prove the veracity of the claims, to capture a demon—a werewolf to be precise. We were successful, though a few peasants gave their souls to God's just cause before we had the beast subdued and chained. That night, I distilled its essence into an alchemical elixir intended to heal our injuries, watching in amazement at the transformation that took place within the crucible.

Of course, the creature died due to the process, but through the demise of a fell demon, a death which I believe ended both its physical and spiritual existence, two human souls were saved to continue God's work. The secret of the philosopher's stone eludes me still, but I did not expect the path to be a simple one. There is much still to learn, many more demons to distill, yet with each death I inch nearer my goal.

Roleplaying

You are a man of God driven by your own beliefs onto a path of utter damnation. In your eyes, those unfortunates who become host to a demon are themselves demons, their flesh forfeit, their souls forever tainted and beyond salvation. Using them in your experiments is a fitting end.

Dying Alchemist

Archetype: Doctor

Motivation: Survival

Style: 3

Health: 5

Primary	
Body: 1	Charisma: 2
Dexterity: 2	Intelligence: 4
Strength: 2	Willpower: 4

Secondary Attributes	
Size: 0	Initiative: 6
Move: 4	Defense: 3
Perception: 8	Stun: 1

Skill	Base	Levels	Rating	Average
Academics: Philosophy	4	2	6	(3)
Craft: Medicines	4	4	8	(4)
Investigation	4	2	6	(3)
Linguistics	4	2	6	(3)
Magick: Alchemy	4	4	8	(4)
Natural Philoso- phy: Chymistry	4	3	7	(3+)

Talents
Magickal Aptitude (Alchemy)
Moneywise (May boost Wealth Resource as if it were a Talent)

Resources
Followers 0 (Laboratory Assistant)
Refuge 0 (Equipment: +1 Magickal: Alchemy bonus)

Flaw
Dying (+1 Style point whenever he is incapacitated by sickness or forced to confront his mortality)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	Average
Punch	0N	0	0N	(0)N

*"I do not crave immortality,
merely a longer life."*

Character Background

I shall make my story quick, for my days are few and I have no desire to waste time in idle conversation. I am a living example of irony, a learned man who cures the ills of others but suffers from a malady from which no potion or chemical can save me. In short, I am dying.

I read the works of Paracelsus during my university days and was well acquainted with his ideas, methods, and philosophies. Indeed, I dabbled openly in alchemy, not for the vain pursuit of transforming base metals, but in order to create better medicines. I met with much success, so much so that I was able to open my own apothecary and begin practicing medicine as a professional.

It was three years ago when my life changed. A cough that would not depart my lungs heralded a slow decay of my muscles. Another irony of course, for I knew my symptoms and knew what fate was written for me. But I am not yet ready to die. Perhaps I am greedy, for I seek to live beyond my allotted time. Oh, I accept that death is an inevitability, and I have no wish to walk this earth forever, but there is so much left to see and do, so much wisdom still yet to learn.

I know, of course, of the philosopher's stone and its wondrous properties. Perhaps it might cure my of my illness, for it possesses many wondrous properties. My interest in practical alchemy has turned to deeper study, leading me into the depths of the mystical art. It is yet another irony that my chosen path to physical health would damn my soul, at least according to Cardinal Richelieu... but a man who knows Death will soon call takes whatever measures he sees fit to avoid that icy hand.

My research has so far produced many marvelous results, even temporarily ridding me of my blood-flecked sputum, but it is a temporary remedy, one for which I trade time working on curative elixirs in return for a similar number of hours without pain. Irony, it seems, follows me like a shadow. It is not a question of money. If I want for wealth I need only sell a few medicines or simple love potions to line my pockets.

No, it is a question of understanding. Somewhere out there exists the secret of perfect health, and I shall find it, even if the path I must follow leads me to Satan's very bosom. All I need is a little more time. Ah, yet another irony!

Roleplaying

The hand of Death rests on your shoulder, but you are not yet ready to turn and face him. Somewhere there is a cure for your illness, and you are prepared to walk any road that leads to it, no matter how damnable it may seem to others.

Sample Lackeys

Alchemical Doctor

Follower 1

Primary Attributes: Body 2, Dexterity 1, Strength 1, Charisma 2, Intelligence 3, Willpower 3

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 2, Perception 6, Initiative 4, Defense 3, Stun 2, Health 5

Skills: Linguistics 4, Magick: Alchemy 7, Medicine 5, Natural Philosophy: Chymistry 6

Talents: None

Resources: Magical Aptitude (Alchemy)

Flaws: Merciful (+1 Style point whenever he shows compassion to an enemy or refuses to retaliate)

Weapons: Punch 0N

Charlatan Alchemist

Follower 1

Primary Attributes: Body 1, Dexterity 3, Strength 1, Charisma 3, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 4, Perception 4, Initiative 5, Defense 4, Stun 1, Health 3

Skills: Con 7 (*Bluff* 8), Larceny 5 (*Sleight of Hand* 6), Natural Philosophy: Chymistry 5, Natural Philosophy: Geology 4

Talents: Skill Aptitude (+2 Con rating)

Resources: None

Flaws: Liar (+1 Style point whenever dishonesty causes trouble or his lies catch up with him.)

Weapons: Punch 0N

Composer

Follower 0

Primary Attributes: Body 1, Dexterity 1, Strength 1, Charisma 3, Intelligence 2, Willpower 1

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 2, Perception 3, Initiative 3, Defense 2, Stun 1, Health 2

Skills: Art: Music 5, Performance 5

Talents/Resources: None

Flaws: Vain (+1 Style point whenever he steals the spotlight or is forced to confront his shortcomings)

Weapons: Punch 0N

Debunker of Charlatans

Follower 0

Primary Attributes: Body 1, Dexterity 1, Strength 1, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 2, Perception 4, Initiative 3, Defense 2, Stun 1, Health 3

Skills: Empathy 5, Natural Philosophy: Chymistry 4

Talents/Resources: None

Flaws: Skeptic (+1 Style point whenever he proves an assertion wrong)

Weapons: Punch 0N

Geologist

Follower 0

Primary Attributes: Body 1, Dexterity 1, Strength 2, Charisma 1, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 3, Perception 4, Initiative 3, Defense 2, Stun 1, Health 3

Skills: Athletics 3, Natural Philosophy: Chymistry 4, Science: Geology 3

Talents/Resources: None

Flaws: Obsession (Collecting rocks: +1 Style point whenever his obsession causes him to do something dangerous or endanger someone else's life)

Weapons: Punch 0N

Gullible Patron

Follower 1

Primary Attributes: Body 2, Dexterity 3, Strength 2, Charisma 3, Intelligence 1, Willpower 1

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 5, Perception 2, Initiative 4, Defense 5, Stun 2, Health 3

Skills: Art: Painting 4, Diplomacy 4, Gambling 4, Performance 5, Ride 4

Talents: None

Resources: Status 1 (+2 Social bonus) or Wealth 1

Flaws: Gullible (+1 Style point whenever he is taken advantage of because of his trusting nature)

Weapons: Punch 0N

Laboratory Assistant

Follower 0

Primary Attributes: Body 1, Dexterity 2, Strength 1, Charisma 1, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 3, Perception 4, Initiative 4, Defense 3, Stun 1, Health 3

Skills: Investigation 4, Natural Philosophy: Chymistry 5

Talents/Resources: None

Flaws: Dwarf (+1 Style point whenever his size causes him severe difficulty or when he is rejected due to it)

Weapons: Punch 0N

Philosophical Chemist

Follower 0

Primary Attributes: Body 1, Dexterity 1, Strength 1, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 2, Perception 4, Initiative 3, Defense 2, Stun 1, Health 3

Skills: Academics: Philosophy 4, Natural Philosophy: Chymistry 5

Talents/Resources: None

Flaws: Inscrutable (+1 Style point whenever he is misunderstood or his mysterious motives cause trouble)

Weapons: Punch 0N