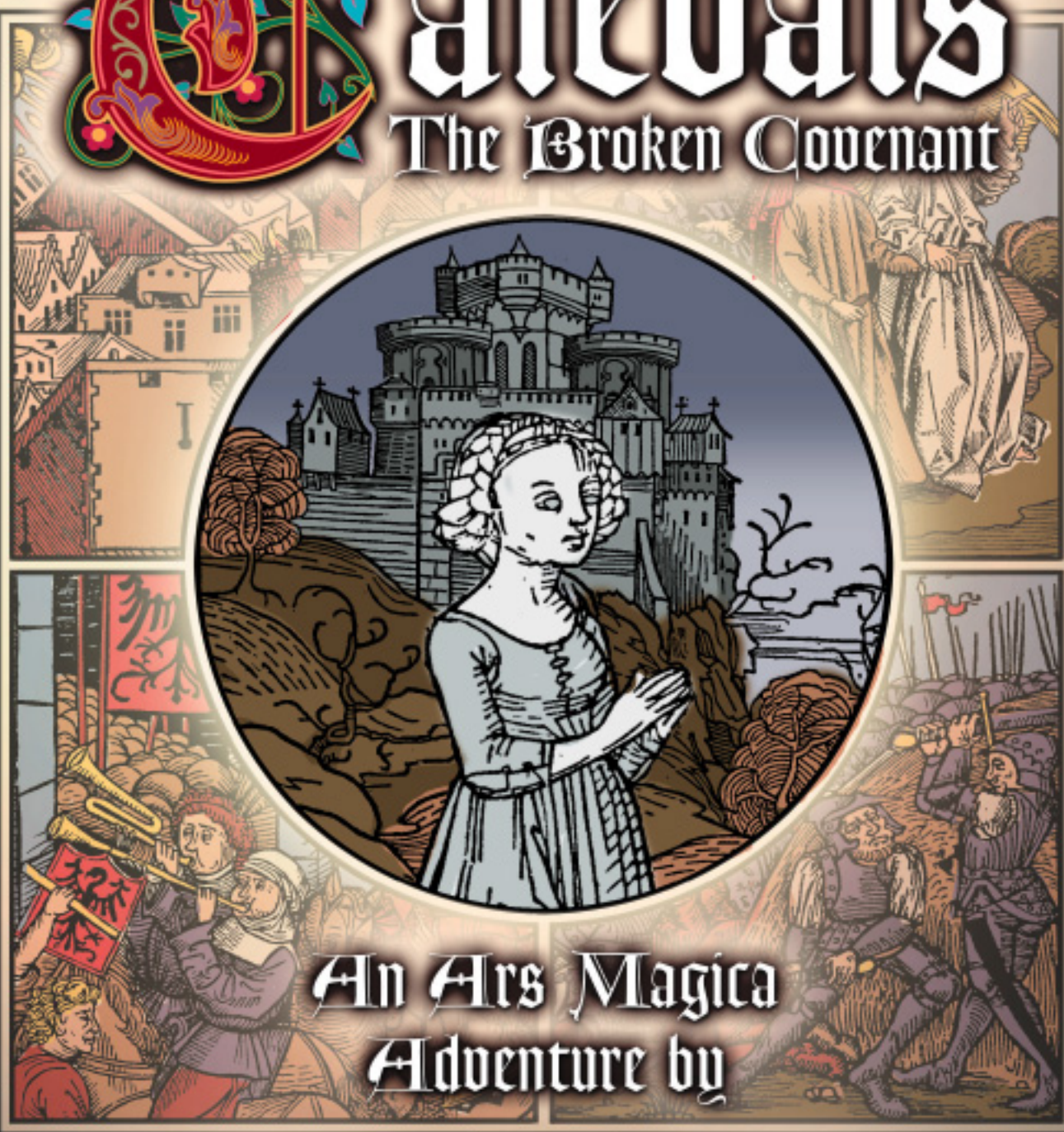


Ars Magica

C

alebais

The Broken Covenant



An Ars Magica
Adventure by

Erik
Dahl

Mark
Rein·hagen

Jonathan
Tweet

Credits

Authors: Mark Rein•Hagen and Jonathan Tweet

Fifth Edition Revision & Expansion: Eric Dahl

Editing & Development: David Chart

Production Coordinator: Michelle Nephew

Proofreader and Publisher: John Nephew

Cover Art: Scott Reeves

Graphic Design: Scott Reeves

Original Illustrations: Angela Taylor

Special Thanks to:

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Playtesters:

Jerry Braverman, Kim Braverman, Thomas Scott, Mike Graves, Patrick Murphy, Steve Segedy, Tom Zito, Matt Ryan, Robert Ahrens, Sarah Ferguson-Wagstaffe, Daniel Ilut, Jesse Koennecke, Miriam Wallace, Neil Taylor, Phil Masters, Gary Parden, Pete Windsor, Chris Jensen-Romer, Lloyd Graney, Pete Hiley, Luke Price, Kevin Sides, Paul Jenchowski, Ed Woods, Michael Bors, Rich Burrell, Harry Dyer, Joseph Freistuhler, Gary N. Mengle, Sean Mitchell, Fr. Thomas Dowd

About the Author

Erik Dahl lives in northern California and works for a major university. When he's not writing about **Ars Magica**, he plays in a “fun rock” band called Volvo Maroon, and many of their songs are freely available on the internet. This book is the synthesis of many excellent contributions from the brilliant and helpful people listed above, and is dedicated to Erik's lovely wife, who always endures his geekiness with grace and charm.

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Saint Paul, Minnesota
info@atlas-games.com • www.atlas-games.com
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Introduction



The Covenant of Calebais

The Broken Covenant of Calebais is a mystery story more than anything else. It is a story with tragedy, pathos, and much that will be unexplainable at first. The object of this story is for the characters to explain that which they do not understand — to solve the mystery.

Fifty years ago, the covenant of Calebais was destroyed and no one has yet discovered how or why. Now, with your help, the broken covenant will finally be explored, and the truth of how such a powerful and well-defended covenant could possibly fall will be revealed. The central mystery of this story is the big question of *why* — what mad force brought about the downfall of beautiful Calebais, and where is it dwelling now?

Finding the truth behind that mystery is the primary purpose of this story. It does have another purpose, however. The story you are about to read is about a dungeon — a dank, old, smelly, ruined series of caves with enough mystery and adventure to spare. If you have a lot of experience with fantasy roleplaying games, you may be tired of dungeons: bored with the senseless encounters, the lack of realism, and the perpetual rehashing of old ideas. But this is a dungeon done differently. This is a dungeon done right. *The Broken Covenant of Calebais* goes to the roots of roleplaying, to the very first “dungeons” ever explored, to the early days of fantasy stories, redone with realism, romance, mystery and magic in mind.

If you do not plan to storyguide this story, be warned. You will truly enjoy it more if you do not read any further. Just gently close the cover, and pass this book along to a person who will guide you through this incredible tale. Do yourself this small favor; it's well worth it.

A New Revision

This revised edition of *The Broken Covenant of Calebais* is the third version of the adventure to be published for *Ars Magica*. *Calebais*

was the first adventure ever published for the game, back in the days of First Edition, and it was revised and expanded for Second Edition. Now, for Fifth Edition, it has been revised and expanded once more. Although the plot, setting, and atmosphere remain the same, the text has been almost completely rewritten to integrate this classic adventure more firmly into the Fifth Edition version of *Ars Magica*.

This version of the story of the broken covenant consists of three chapters, each of which tells a different part of the story. In chapter one, the characters will unearth the mystery of Calebais and the region that surrounds it, and learn much about its history, people, and the legends that are all that remain. Chapter two contains the covenant itself, a floor by floor description of what has become of the once-grand palace for wizards and those who served them. The final chapter concludes the story by leading the characters to a convent where they can gain more information about the treasures they have inherited, including the secret of the legendary Bell of Ibyn.

While the events of these chapters are based around a framework for a story, they do not outline that story from beginning to end. Instead, they describe the places, people, and events associated with Calebais. This is a dynamic setting that should interact with the characters, and change depending on their actions. The inhabitants are independent, and act on their own initiative, as well as in response to what the characters do. If the characters choose not to enter an area, the inhabitants might instead come to them.

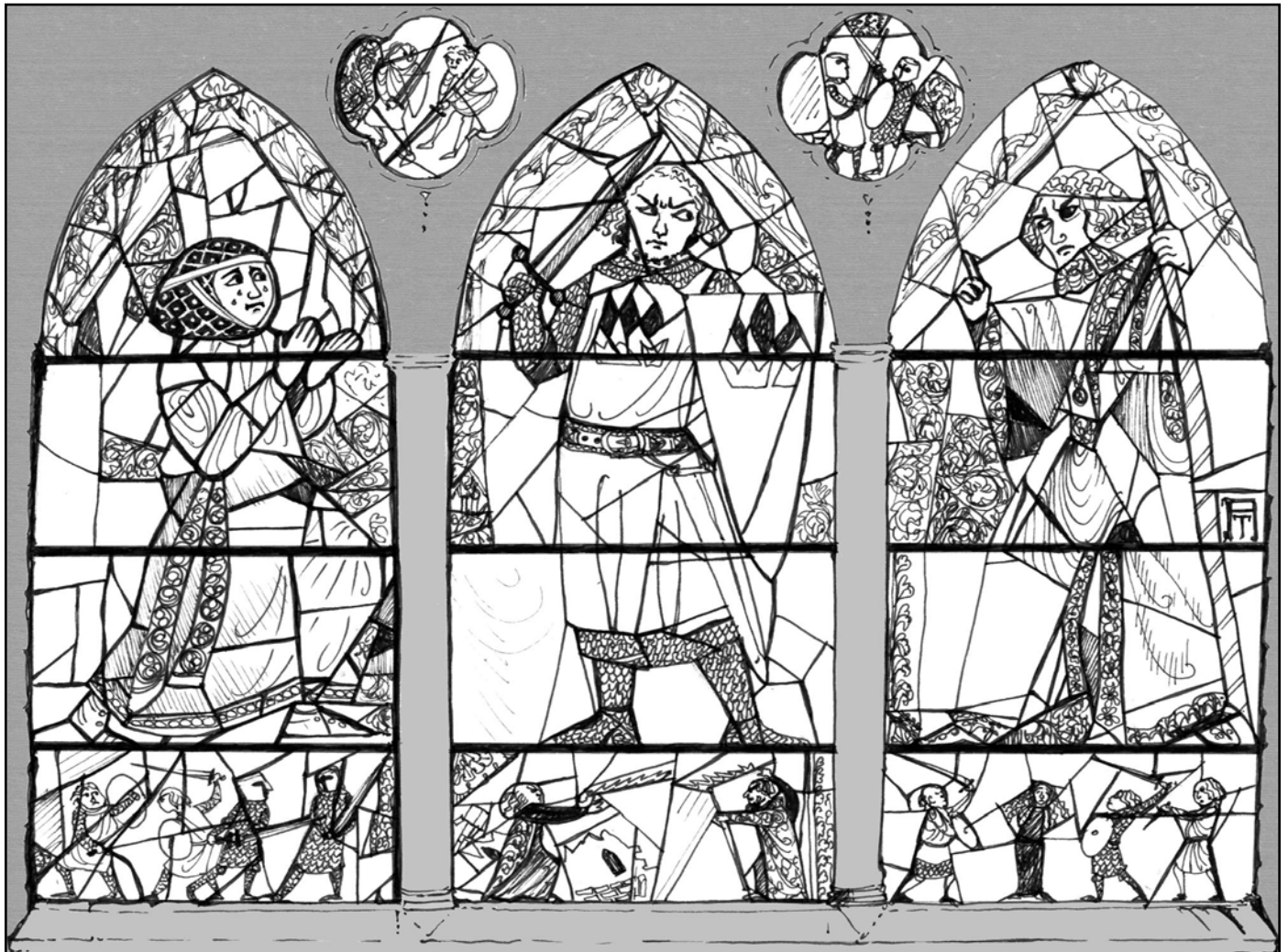
For this reason, you will need to be familiar enough with the elements that make up the story to be able to invent things as you go along. It requires a bit of extra preparation on your part, but in return you will have a better story and your troupe will have a better experience. Make sure you read each chapter thoroughly before playing it, so that you will understand all the subtleties of what is going on and can feel free to change things or make up new elements as you think appropriate.

The rewards of this story are great, and so the challenges are significant. Nothing about Calebais should be simple, though it does not need to be frustrating. When in doubt, go easy on the characters. Even if they generally have the advantage, botches on important rolls can lead to crippling injuries and even a dead character or two. Make sure they come prepared with “cannon fodder” — characters they can afford to lose if things go wrong — because many of the encounters are more dramatic when they are deadly.

The group might initially want to make a scouting mission, just to see what is in the ruins, and then use this information to return to their covenant and bring back the right tools for the job: specialized characters, new spells, better equipment. You should encourage this kind of thinking, for it is much more realistic, and will make the story more rewarding. The more familiar they become with the covenant, the more likely they are to figure out its secrets, which is the best result of all.

At the end of each chapter, several options are presented for taking the story in different directions. Consider these ideas and your own before running the adventure. Perhaps one of the players' choices will make one of the options especially attractive. Don't let your preconceptions hinder you — be ready to change your mind about the encounters as you go, to produce an exciting and fulfilling story that still makes sense.

Don't expect to be done with this supplement in just one play session, either. Five sessions is normal, and it can easily be stretched even further if the characters are very thorough. Also, the last chapter takes place long after the first two have been completed, and yet is still part of the story; you can mix in other adventures and then come back to it. The supplement works particularly well if you can introduce the story into a setting that you have already developed, so that you can both foreshadow it and refer back to it. You can even build an entire saga around the adventure, if you wish.



The Setting

In *Ars Magica*, there are some aspects of the published setting that are kept deliberately vague, so that it is easy to integrate them into your game. This story is no exception; the broken covenant does not exist in any specific place in Mythic Europe, but it *can* exist anywhere that you would like to place it. It is important to the story that Calebais has a history in the area, and possesses the regional flavor that matches its surroundings, so it is up to you to weave it into your saga.

There is no way for this adventure to predict how your covenant will be designed, or where the characters will be coming from. You must fill in these details to make this story succeed. To help you adapt the adventure to a suitable location, there follow three examples of what the area surrounding Calebais might look like in three different parts of Europe. If they are convenient enough to your saga, you can use them as they are, or they can serve as templates for you to base the design of other medieval locales.

Each setting describes three places, for use in each of the three different chapters of the story. The first is a small village with an abbey and a nearby forest. The second is deep within that forest, home to faeries and long-dead wizards. The third describes a Cistercian nunnery, the significance of which will not be revealed until much later in the adventure.

Note that none of these potential settings actually existed in the medieval world, though they are obviously inspired by history. They are portraits painted with a broad brush, intended to convey the tone and feeling of the area without perfectly depicting reality. Thus, you may personalize them without fear, changing any part of the image to conform more or less to your vision, and altering the impression they give to match the colors of your saga.

Stonehenge

The village of Byneden is situated on the southern coast of Dorset, near the almost perfectly-rounded cove of Lulworth. It is a small group of perhaps twenty families, clustered about a well-established Cistercian abbey that was built in 1149. Behind it, to the north, rise large round hills. Byneden Hill, the largest, is said to be haunted by the ghosts of Roman legions who landed here in ancient times and fell to their deaths, and the path by which the characters must arrive passes between it and a range of several lesser hills to the east, unless they travel by boat and sail into the cove.

Byneden range is thickly forested, and by skirting Byneden Hill and walking along the coast for about an hour, the characters will see in

the distance the higher ground from which Two Crag Hill may be reached. The view into the English Channel from the jagged chalk and limestone cliffs is blue and fair in summer and grey and misty in the winter, but a persistent fog covers the woodlands as characters begin to make their way to the site of the fallen covenant.

In contrast, the Abbey of St. Mary is found in the small village of Crawford, about twenty miles inland from Byneden, north and east. It was constructed near the joining of two rivers, the Tarrant and the Stour. The convent is quite wealthy, established during King Richard's reign, and built of thick stone, with the familiar tall square tower above the church. It is one of the few Cistercian convents in southern England, so it is somewhat isolated but still has a lot of autonomy.

Provence

On the Gothic March west of the Rhone River, just north of the Pyrenees and near the border of Burgundy, lies the small village of Bonnedon. It may be found on a temperate plateau about two days' walk from Toulouse, among rolling hills covered with vineyards and valleys swathed in wheat. To the northeast is a wooded area thick with brambles and brush under the twisting, dry trees; at one time the whole village looked very similar, but the Cistercian monks of the abbey have cultivated the land and brought about a near-miraculous change.

The wood has a dry, dusty smell, even in colder months, and quite strangely grows more lush as the characters travel further from the river. The trees are dense and knot together overhead, with their tangled roots sprawled about the earthy wilderness, forcing the characters to climb over and under such wooden barricades as they travel north towards Two Crag Hill.

When the time comes to visit the nuns, the characters will find the Abbey of St. Douceline in the civilized valleys further west, closer to Montauban, near the Dalinnae River. Though established in the heart of the Cistercian Order, the convent is much smaller than one might expect, considering its influence, and the nuns must work hard each year to coerce the brittle ground to meet their needs, since their charter only barely provides them with enough to make their living.

The Rhine

Maulbronn Abbey is located about forty miles west of Stuttgart, in the village of Baden on the northern edge of the Black Forest. It is an impressive structure, with thick, fortified stone walls to separate the monks from the harsh world outside, and finely-

crafted sloped roofs of brown-red rock. The buildings are close-set, conveying a sense of huddled safety within, and while most of the building is only two stories high, it seems extremely tall and narrow.

The land is rugged and wild, mountainous with forbidding peaks and thick woods that encroach upon the dark Salzach valley. By striking out southwest, the characters may follow a series of steep descending trails into the forest, taking care not to lose their step in the hostile, rocky terrain. Two Crag Hill is to the north from the base of the great peak that supports Baden, and all around is the dense, old forest that blocks out the light and dampens sound.

Far to the west, beyond the borders of Swabia, is the convent of Aywieres in Brabant, a great distance from Calebais. It is small and humble, though it will become quite famous as a home to Cistercian saints during the thirteenth century, when word of the holy sisters' visions spreads throughout the Lower Lorraine. It is a land of rolling hills and sparse woodland, and the nuns here have a much easier time than the monks at the abbey of Maulbronn.

Other Locales

As long as the characters are located somewhere in Mythic Europe, this story can still fit into the setting without much effort. Monasteries and nunneries may be found almost anywhere, and the Cistercian Rule had become very popular in the early 1200s; many existing abbeys adopted its rigid structure, even as far away as Portugal, Ireland, and Constantinople. The severe, strict piety of the White Monks helps create an interesting contrast with the proud, divisive magi, but if you cannot justify their presence in your setting, Benedictines are found in every corner of the world and are still an acceptable substitute.

The Story

In order to give you an idea of what to expect, there follows a summary of the events of *The Broken Covenant of Calebais* as they might occur in your game. Of course, this may not be how it happens in your group, whether because you change things about it or because the players make new and interesting choices that this version does not anticipate. In short, the story can happen many different ways, and there is no one best route through this adventure.

History

Long ago, perhaps two hundred years or more, a group of Hermetic magi constructed an inverted tower, tunneling down into Two Crag Hill. It was essentially a deep well with rooms carved into the sides, providing the magi with water and shelter and safety from prying eyes. In their early years they united together to aid rebels against the king, and thus took the symbol of a broken crown. These activities brought great disfavor from the tribunal, who conducted a thorough investigation and punished many of the wizards for their interference in mundane affairs. After that followed a period of inactivity as the magi withdrew into seclusion, and each of them began to fear that others, outside or working within, would try to take over their covenant. By design they lacked any central authority to regulate their activities, and the magi of Calebais soon became estranged from each other.

Over the years, personal conflicts between the members grew and flared up, but none of the magi felt confident enough to attack the others directly. To outsiders, it appeared as if nothing was wrong in Calebais: it prospered, was well-defended, had many great magical devices, and possessed a large and diverse library. Without trust or an impartial judge to work out their differences, however, the bitter grudges of the magi grew heavier and heavier and the cancer at the heart of the covenant spread and grew ever larger.

Finally, in about 1170, the situation finally exploded into violence, unintentionally catalysed by one of the wizards' great achievements. Mormulus, a master of illusions, wanted to protect himself from the prying eyes and ceaseless spying that he imagined to occur throughout the covenant. He devoted his studies to magic that could stop what he saw as the essential problem and his final creation was a magical device that effectively prevented all such spells. No magi would ever be able to peer into his or the covenant's affairs ever again.

Soon after, the Quaesitor Ornath left, unable to tolerate the wizards' infighting any further. In his absence, Mormulus's enchantment increased the wizards' paranoia, and they inexplicably concluded that they were free from the threat of retribution from the Order. As long as they allowed no outsiders into their covenant, they could aid rebels, punish their enemies, and even secretly attack each other, safe in the belief that no one would ever be able to ascertain who was to blame for what. This idea threw the unstable covenant into terrifying anarchy.

Chaos broke out in what has come to be called the Sundering by the former inhabitants. Wizards, their familiars, their apprentices, and the grogs, all of whom had conflicting loyalties, openly fought in the halls of the covenant. In the process, they killed

almost everyone and destroyed most of the covenant's possessions. The rooms and tunnels were severely damaged; little remains of what was once a place of culture and great beauty.

In terms of sheer destruction, the wizard Pitsdim was unequalled in his ability to lay waste to everything in his path, and many of the ghosts still blame him for the result. Crenvalus, too, destroyed more than his share of the covenant in a great rage, summoning an earthquake that buried Pitsdim under several feet of rock, but also caused great damage and flooded the lower levels, drowning or crushing the few living souls who remained.

From those who fled at the outset, other magi of the Order gathered that some great evil had befallen the covenant. A group of three Quaesitores went to investigate the site, to determine what had happened and report to the tribunal. One of these magi was Ornath, the only wizard from Calebais to have escaped. They found that little remained of proud Calebais, and that the ruins were already haunted by ghosts of the bitter dead. Because Ornath's anger over the destruction was immense, he wanted these spirits to suffer perpetually for their terrible acts. He realized that explorers might be persuaded by the dead to help lay them to rest, so after cursory examination, he convinced the others that the place was cursed by devils and should not be disturbed.

Since that time, no one has ever seen inside the covenant, both because the spells that they would use to examine a potentially dangerous place from a distance do not function, and because they fear traffic with demons. To this day, however, many magi in the Order are intensely concerned over what happened at Calebais, a covenant that should have been too powerful to destroy, but none have been able to penetrate Mormulus's Veil of secrecy. The ruins have thus been left entirely undisturbed.

The Adventure

After years of silence, a messenger of the Order of Hermes brings a strange document to the characters' covenant. This old, tattered letter outlines some of what happened at Calebais and tells of a bell of great magical power still hidden in the depths. The message was given to the Redcap by a nun who had once been a valuable member of Calebais, but who asked that her name and location be kept secret. She believes that the Order is in danger, that the ruins of Calebais will soon be uncovered, and asks that the characters use their powers and wisdom to convince the mortals to leave the place undisturbed, while helping themselves to what treasures still remain.

Their expedition reaches the nearby village, which is locked in silent conflict. A man has died from evil wounds, and his daughter is missing, perhaps abducted or killed. The only survivor of

the attack can remember almost nothing, and there are reports of strange devil-folk in the woods. The abbot of the monastery believes that these rumors are baseless, and wishes the whole clamor quieted; the reeve has petitioned the nobility for a force of men with which to search the woods.

In the forest, the characters come upon a group of satyrs, who have captured the young woman and intend to keep her. The nature of the forest makes it impossible for her to leave, but the characters may learn that a dryad lives elsewhere in the woods, and that the satyrs would prefer her to their captive. The dryad is bound by a bargain she made with Calebais, and the characters must solve the mystery of its destruction if they wish to free her.

At the base of the hill, the characters meet a knight-errant, Sir Gilbert. He intends to slay the dragon that is said to inhabit the ruins, and may help them break through the illusion that prevents them from approaching the covenant. This puzzle involves following each of twelve magical guides in the proper order, and then guessing the answer to their riddle. If the characters succeed, the dryad will lead them to the covenant's entrance.

Calebais is a great well, nine stories deep (and at one time even more), with chambers and balconies built off the central feature. Within, they discover many ghosts of the former inhabitants, and a ferret-like race of intelligent animals known as the Hrools. They may also explore many magical laboratories that have been left more or less intact above the flooded areas. Eventually they will discover the hidden treasure vaults, and by avoiding several traps and dealing with three ghosts who guard them, they may retrieve the legendary Bell of Ibyn.

Bearing their prize back to their covenant, the characters will find that the Bell is faulty, and cannot be repaired without understanding of its secrets. If the Redcap can be convinced to cooperate, she will take the characters to meet the nun who sent them the letter, perhaps to shed light on the problem. The story takes on a whole new tone after they travel to the convent, and learn that their benefactor has died in the meantime. They are given an opportunity to prove their virtue, after which they receive a message she wrote just before she died, finally providing them with the key to unlock the powers of the Bell of Ibyn.

The story also contains many loose ends that the characters may choose to tie up afterwards: rescuing the satyrs' captive, freeing the restless dead from their torment, determining the future of the Hrools, and even exploring submerged levels of the covenant. The story of Calebais should thus inspire many exciting subsequent adventures for you and your *Ars Magica* troupe.

Characters

Here are some notes about the characters in this adventure, briefly summarized with a page reference to help you remember their roles, explain their relationships to each other, and locate them quickly. Refer back to this list whenever you need to find information about a character in the story.

CHAPTER ONE

11	Ash, Redcap	Respects magi and the Order, dislikes being taken for granted
16	young woman	Father killed, lover injured, pregnant, held by faerie curse
16	murdered man	Killed by satyrs in the forest while protecting daughter
16	young man	Injured protecting lover, resting at abbey, lost memory, heard the Bell
16	Father Eric, abbot	Angry with the reeve for stirring up the village, assumes girl fled
16	Stephen, reeve	Investigating murder and abduction, believes great evil in forest, dislikes the abbot
21	Sir Gilbert	Friendly knight-errant, seeks dragon, knows four of the guides
21	Luc, adviser	Distrusts characters, protects Sir Gilbert
22	Paul, squire	Enthusiastic and awkward, serves Sir Gilbert and Luc
18	Boch, satyr	Speaks for the satyrs, misses the dryad, explains the abduction and the faerie curse
29	dryad	Controls the Veil, lonely, can only leave the fountain in spirit unless freed

CHAPTER TWO

42	Dargaud, ghost	UnGifted Redcap, sneaky, throws rocks, freed when he understands what happened
40	Ornath, magus	Quaesitor, disliked Crenvalus, left the covenant, headed its investigation
44	Paulo, ghost	Crenvalus's muddled shield grog, war hammer, freed by protecting Calebais
47	Josephine, ghost	Grog, thief, grieving, freed by rescuing her son Gemaric
48	David, ghost	Captain, practical, magic armor, sword, shield, freed by killing Crenvalus
51	Gemaric	Transformed child, now an intelligent rock, has little legs, flees
52	Igack, fire drake	Pitsdim's familiar, breathes fire, has a diadem
54	Ferdina, ghost	Former autocrat, gentle, burned, chime, freed by respect from magi
58	Mormulus, ghost	Merinita illusionist, lost in dream world, freed by remorse
61	Ierimyra, ghost	Bjornaer, mother of the Hrools, scholarly, freed by her children's safety
66	Pitsdim, ghost	Ignem Flambeau, insane, freed by burning to death
80	Larine, nun	Librarian, David's lover, fled Calebais to nunnery with Crenvalus's letter
69	Althea, ghost	Lab assistant, freed by satiating her hunger
74	Granorda, ghost	Necromancer, paranoid, freed by making her corpse safe
75	Crenvalus, ghost	Rego master, crafty, killed David, fears Larine and his letter
76	Uderzus, ghost	Tests the characters, magical lance, freed by answers to his questions

CHAPTER THREE

82	Hedwig, abbess	Authoritative, dignified, has a letter from Sister Larine
83	Palona, advocate	Nun, divides life into good and evil, aids Sister Hedwig
84	Alice, visionary	Saintly nun, has Faith and holy visions, aids Sister Hedwig
84	Malores, mute	Faerie nun, mute, worships the moon at night
85	Nadaline, cook	Larine's closest friend, doesn't answer questions, hard worker
88	Raphael	Fled his lord's wrath, took sanctuary in the convent stables
88	Father Martin	Priest for the convent, dour, dislikes strangers, harsh confessor

Chapter One

The Mystery of Calebais

The story begins when the characters are visited by a Redcap, one of the messengers of the Order of Hermes, who bears a letter for the magi. This Redcap could be someone the characters know, who lives in their Tribunal, or a new character that they will meet for the first time. Included is a character named Ash, a Redcap without The Gift, who you may use for this story. In any case, since all covenants need to have some connection to the Order, no matter how remote or secret the wizards may be they will eventually receive the message that introduces the adventure.

Ash

Ash is a member of a small group of redcaps who call themselves "the Broken Branches." She has spent her entire adult life as a messenger for the Order of Hermes; she loves the freedom, the excitement, and the responsibility. If she could not travel, she would quickly wither away. Her name is her own invention, and she doesn't like questions or jokes about it. She is respectful to magi, but privately doesn't think much of them or their leadership. However, she is very loyal to the Order of Hermes as a whole; this may be because the only person she's ever trusted (beside herself) was her brother, a magus, now dead.

Ash wears a magical traveler's cloak, which was a gift to her from her brother and her most prized possession. He also gave her a magic ring that can disguise her appearance, making her look and sound like a man when necessary. She intensely dislikes this, but she recognizes that it is often useful, as medieval women rarely travel without an escort and are not treated well when they do. It is one of the reasons she respects the Order, for among wizards she can simply be herself.

When Ash does something that does not fall within her official duties, she expects to be paid. House Mercere sees to her needs, but she believes that it is through special alms that magi recognize her exceptional efforts on their behalf. To her, not giving her something in return for doing something expertly is treating

her like a servant, and that hurts her pride. She will not take kindly to magi who think of her as little more than a courier, and these characters will have a hard time convincing her to do anything for them that she doesn't have to do.

This story device works best if the characters call a special meeting to hear the message, with as many magi as possible present to hear it. The Redcap will explain upon her arrival that the information she carries is interesting but not urgent, and concerns a former covenant in the area known as Calebais. It can wait a few hours while she recovers from her journey, perhaps giving the magi time to refresh their knowledge.

Rumors of Calebais

As long as the characters have some knowledge of the Order (that is, a score in Order of Hermes Lore), players may see what they know about the former covenant by making an Intelligence + Order of Hermes Lore stress roll and applying the results to the list below. You might wait to reveal all of this information until after every roll has been made, so that you can share the results with the whole troupe; don't force the players to compare notes unless the characters are particularly secretive, as several characters may recall the same things.

Characters with an hour or two to spend in a library with books on Order of Hermes Lore might be allowed to do some spontaneous research. One way to do this is to rule that if they happen to have a relevant book in their library that they can read, and they take the time to skim through it, they may add its Quality to their roll. If this information comes from a summa, this cannot increase the total beyond its Level x 3. As this is simply scanning a book for pertinent information, Virtues like Book Learner shouldn't apply.

Knowledge Roll: stress die + Intelligence + Ability
Research: Knowledge Roll + Quality
 Summa Limit: Level x 3

Ash, a Redcap

Characteristics: Int 0, Per +1, Pre -1, Com -2, Str +2, Sta +4, Dex 0, Qik 0

Age: 33

Virtues and Flaws: Redcap, Dowsing, Wilderness Sense; Enduring Constitution, Great (Stamina), Strong-Willed; Low Self-Esteem; Compulsion (travel), Temperate; Mentor (leader of the Broken Branches); Poor Student, Social Handicap (independent)

Personality Traits: Independent +3, Respectful +2, Loyal +2

Combat:

Staff (thorny): Init +0, Attack +7, Defense +11, Damage +8

Soak: +4

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, 0, -2, -4, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: 0 (1-5), -2 (6-10), -4 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

Abilities: Athletics 3 (walking), Awareness 1, Bargain 4 (services), Brawl 3 (dodging), Carouse 2, Code of Hermes 2 (Redcaps), Dowsing 4 (water), Folk Ken 3, Great Weapon (staff) 5, Local Area Lore (geography) 5, Local Language 5 (directions), Order of Hermes Lore (covenants) 4, Ride 1, Speak Latin 5 (reading messages), Survival 5 (forest), Swim 2 (while burdened)

Equipment: Ash wears a circular traveler's cloak fashioned from rough cloth with several magical effects: it protects her from harsh elements (ReAqAulg Base 1, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +2 requisites; +4 constant = Level 14), makes walking easier

by helping her avoid rough ground and snares (InHeTe Base 1, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +1 requisite; +4 constant = Level 9). The cloak also mends any rips or tears it receives (CrHe Base 2, +2 Sun; +1 two uses per day, +3 activated by sunrise and sunset = Level 8). She carries a walking stick cut from ash, enchanted with *Transformation of the Thorny Staff* (MuHe Base 3, +2 Sun = Level 5), *Sbriek of the Impending S shafts* (InHe Base 2, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +3 Hearing; +4 constant = Level 20) and a version of *Intuition of the Forest* that affects only her (InHe Base 1, +1 Touch, +2 Sun; +1 2x/day = Level 5). Finally, she has a ring that disguises her voice and appearance when worn (Mulm Base 2, +1 Touch, +2 Sun; +4 constant = Level 9).

Appearance: Ash is a tall, thin woman who looks gaunt and emaciated but is actually wiry and quite tough. Her stub nose and long, narrow face do not go well together. She dresses like a pilgrim in a tunic and footless hose, and prefers to walk barefoot.

Roleplaying Tips: Emphasize her pride, independence and toughness by holding your shoulders high and starting directly at people when they talk to you. Use your eyes to show what a suspicious and wary person she is. Let secret looks of disgust slip out when magi do something stupid. Keep your chin up and your neck elongated and tense when playing her, to mimic her startling slenderness.

If players botch their roll, their characters will remember nothing about Calebais, and might suffer other ill effects depending on the severity of the botch: they might become fatigued, lose interest in the whole subject, or even suffer a loss of Confidence Points. You can also mix up or invent information to give them, but try to avoid giving hints of what is true and what is false this way. Knowing that they botched, players will probably disregard what you tell them unless that information is confirmed by other sources.

If characters have heard something about Calebais, they may also have heard stories that are exaggerated or simply not true, and examples are included below. You can use this disinformation to provide red herrings for the players, though you may want to make another roll in secret, or provide the less reliable information to characters who are prone to recklessness or gossip. All the rumors have grains of truth about them, though, and

if the "false" ones interest you, they can be developed into additional options for this story.

You may want to note what information you give to whom, so that if the players forget you can allow their characters to remember without having to work out what you revealed.

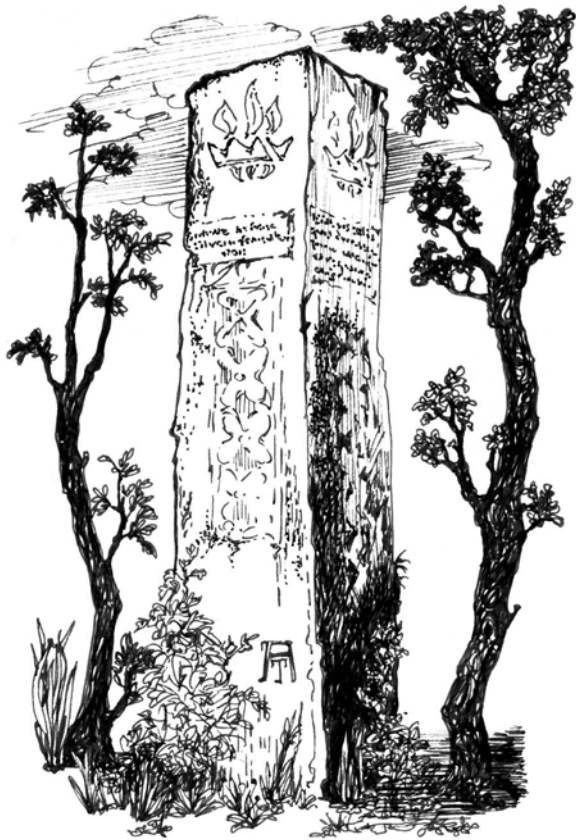
0+ (True): Calebais was a covenant that gained notoriety in its Tribunal for being destroyed about fifty years ago. The magi there were very proud, more so than most, perhaps because of their reputed great wealth.

0+ (False): The disaster that befell Calebais was said to be divinely inspired, and widely regarded as a miracle. An old man visited the covenant and called down a pillar of fire to burn up the evil wizards and everyone who served them.

3+ (True): The wizards of Calebais were known for being isolated and caring little about the outside world. They lived in tunneled halls beneath a great, craggy hill. Visitors

reported extravagant decorations, expensive tapestries, and so many magical devices that they hardly needed servants.

- 3+ (False): The tunnel in which the magi lived originally belonged to a great dragon, which the magi turned to stone. Their limitless wealth was taken from the dragon's hoard. When their magic failed, the dragon awoke and reclaimed its lair.
- 6+ (True): The covenant took as its symbol the image of a broken crown surrounded in flames. It was located within a faerie forest, but the wizards did not get along with the faeries. Magi from Calebais used to boast that they were protected by a legendary magical bell, which made them invulnerable, and its powerful magic still remains.
- 6+ (False): In fact, killing faeries was how the covenant got most of its vis. Because of this, the magi were investigated and punished many times for repeatedly molesting and angering the fay. The faeries of that area are still extremely hostile and attack wizards on sight, so no one risks investigating the ruins.
- 9+ (True): Calebais was supposedly protected by a sort of magical veil, and though the covenant fell, the veil remains,



and prevents arcane investigation of the covenant. The magi also had a device called The Bell of Ibyn, a powerful artifact of mysterious origins, and claimed that because of it, no attack or intrusion could catch the magi unawares.

- 9+ (False): The veil was a powerful version of the spell *Aegis of the Hearth*, which the magi bragged they had somehow found a way to make permanent, though they would not reveal the details to outsiders. Magi speculate the veil is somehow tied to the Bell, which had been a church bell in a great city of the Holy Land. The magi brought it back from the First Crusade and enchanted it with powerful magic.
- 12+ (True): When word reached the tribunal that Calebais was no more, a triumvirate of Quaesitors went to investigate. They reported that the magi had fallen victim to a diabolical curse, and that the covenant was destroyed because of their great pride. In light of these events, their symbol of a broken crown in flames was seen to be particularly apt, having represented a fallen group of arrogant wizards.
- 12+ (False): The Quaesitors reported that demons served one of the *custodes*, who had been corrupted, and their infernal influence spread throughout the grogs until they had enough power to take over the covenant. Few of these evil creatures remain, but those that do often appear as ghosts of the former inhabitants, to better corrupt those who take an interest in the ruins.
- 15+ (True): Many of the magi of Calebais wore unusual gold wire crowns, which were magically tied to their legendary Bell and also had powers of their own. At the Tribunal where the investigating Quaesitors announced their findings, several magi took issue with their report, accusing them of hiding the truth. These accusations were grounded in the fact that the lead Quaesitor, Ornath, had been a member of Calebais only a year before, and had left under suspicious circumstances.
- 15+ (False): These Quaesitors had ties to a rival covenant, a source of a great many political machinations in the Tribunal, and that covenant was said to have engineered the ruin of Calebais. The Quaesitors were accused of having returned there to ensure their enemies were defeated, and to erase all evidence of their covenant's involvement in its downfall.
- 18+ (True): The original founders of Calebais were punished by Tribunal for having aided rebels against the king, and it was in honor of their outrageous act that the covenant had adopted the symbol of a broken crown. Their rebellious nature was apparently carried on by tradition, because the magi were known not only for their bad relations with other covenants, but also for fighting bitterly amongst themselves.
- 18+ (False): Just before their destruction, the magi had been found to be dabbling in mundane politics again, assisting a rebel plot against the kingdom. This prompted other wiz-

ards to take action by secretly advising members of the Church and sending agents to Calebais to prevent it.

21+ (True): Ornath, follower of Guernicus, left Calebais over a dispute for leadership of the covenant with another wizard, Crenvalus, follower of Tytalus. Though he joined another covenant, he was never accorded much respect, and was only allowed to act as lead Quaesitor for the investigation of Calebais because he had once lived there and knew how to pass the magical veil. Many wizards suspect that he was just as responsible for the covenant's destruction as the others.

21+ (False): According to records they left after their deaths, Ornath and his two partners removed the Bell of Ibyn from Calebais, and spirited it away to either their home covenant or their domus magna in the Roman Tribunal. They left a fake in its place, which has none of the powers of the original, but which may contain clues for locating and reclaiming it.

If any of this information seems like the sort of trivia characters would have picked up at Tribunal meetings, from others in their House, or through their own research, you can simply tell it to them. The Redcap, if treated well, might tell what little she knows about Calebais, too. If the characters' covenant is very far away, like in another Tribunal, you might apply a penalty to their total.

Magi or those characters with long association with the Order may have heard of magi who lived and studied at Calebais. You might divide the total from the previous roll by three and choose that many brief summaries from the list below, starting with any magi from their own House, and then concentrating on the top of the list or magi that you think would have probably come to their attention.

Ornath of Guernicus, Quaesitor: Left the covenant before it fell, making known his insurmountable and violent differences with the other magi, particularly Crenvalus; once led the wizards' council at Calebais; led the investigation into the covenant's fall.

Granorda of Jerbiton: Known for her extensive practice of necromancy, and a passionate interest in Corpus; called "magister of death"; received little respect and even scorn from her House because of her unusual ideas.

Crenvalus of Tytalus: Excelled at Rego, called the "magister of control" by those at Calebais; considered an idealist by others in his House; had a red fox as his familiar.

Uderzus of Tremere: Referred to as the "magister of perception" for his accomplishments with Intellego and Imaginem; wielded a broken lance said to have divine powers; reclaimed his sigil when his master went into Final Twilight.

Pitsdim of Flambeau: Belonged to the Ignem school of his House, was known as the "magister of flames" within the

covenant; hot-tempered; used a phoenix sigil at Tribunal; said to have gone mad after many Twilight experiences.

Mormulus of Merinita: Eldest magus at Calebais; reclusive; credited with inventing a revolutionary version of *The Shrouded Glen*, called *The Veil of Mormulus*; known as the "magister of illusion"; excelled at Imaginem and Vim.

Ierimyra of Bjornaer: Had an ermine heart-beast, indicating purity and nobility; highly educated; experimented with Animal and Mentem, called the "magister of beasts."

Drinkeana of Ex Miscellanea: Called the "magister of life" at Calebais; suspected of being descended from wizards of Diedne, particularly skilled with Creo and Herbam.

Erechtheus of Mercere: "Magister of change"; had taken an unGifted apprentice.

Ventus Gorges: "Magister of weather," interested in elementals.

Malevola Vida: "Magister of destruction."

Eonus: "Magister of the mind."

Change this information or add details as you like, so that these characters fit your vision of Calebais and the Order of Hermes. Several of the magi have been left intentionally vague, even without Houses, so that you can use them as hooks for your saga.

The Redcap's Message

When the wizards gather, the Redcap will explain that an old nun, who had once been a *custos* of Calebais, gave her a letter for them. She said that the last magus at Calebais wrote it just before its end, and the nun took it with her when fleeing the covenant. It reveals the fact that one may pass the veil that protects Calebais, and describes the Bell of Ibyn, their greatest treasure. She has kept the letter hidden all these years, but recent events have made her decide to come forward. Her position at the convent would be compromised if her sisters knew of her history with the Order, so she asked the Redcap to keep her name and location secret. (The Redcap agreed, and will not yield to the characters' curiosity out of professional pride.)

Through her contacts among the Cistercians, the nun has learned that the village closest to Calebais was recently the scene of a terrible event, which could have wider-ranging consequences. A respected man of the community was found dead in the nearby forest, gored to death as if impaled on the horns of some wild beast. His daughter, too, is missing, and presumed dead. This is not the first mysterious attack of this nature, and the villagers are convinced that there is great evil in the forest — demons, they say, born in the pagan ruins that lie within the enchanted woods. Villagers are clamoring for the king's representative to gather his men and search the forest, to hunt these creatures down and destroy them.

Why the Characters?

Why does the Redcap bring the message to these characters, rather than to the magi at some other covenant? This question may puzzle the players, as they are not likely to be the most powerful wizards in their Tribunal, and even if they have a good reputation, it is unlikely that the nun would have heard of them. Here are some plausible reasons to explain why the characters were chosen.

I. Ash doesn't like other magi in the Tribunal. She recommended the characters because she knows very little about them but hopes that they will prove better than others.

II. One of the characters might remind Ash of her brother, or once knew him, and she has decided to give that character this opportunity in his memory.

III. The characters' covenant is closest to Calebais or the convent. Or, Ash wants to snub those who are closest by bringing in outsiders. This may in time give the covenant new enemies.

IV. A character might be descended from one of the magi at Calebais; perhaps one of the wizards trained an apprentice from whom a character is descended. The nun might have asked the Redcap to track down the character as a sort of inheritance. Or

perhaps the nun had a child of her own, before or immediately after she fled the covenant, and has now learned the location of her grandchild.

V. Perhaps the Redcap has a fondness for a particular House, to which one of the characters belongs. Or, knowing that the letter is from a magus of House Tytalus, she decided it would be most appropriate to give it to another Tytalus.

VI. It is a favor, and the Redcap will expect a favor in return. In fact, there is something that the characters are uniquely able to provide her.

VII. The Redcap selected a covenant at random from those within the Tribunal. The characters are her lucky winners. If they aren't interested in investigating, she'll take the letter somewhere else. Perhaps she is even taking it to each covenant in turn, and the characters must hurry if they wish to act on the information before other covenants get involved.

VIII. The Redcap has a very good reason, maybe one of the ones on this list, but isn't telling. This mystery may intrigue the characters on its own.

The nun fears that this situation could have dire consequences for the Order of Hermes. She believes that these attacks were caused — directly or indirectly — by Calebais, and that if the authorities were to investigate the area, they would discover evidence of the Order and hold them responsible for the attacks. This could turn their wrath upon other local magi, and perhaps worse — the abbot of the nearby monastery has distant ties to the Pope, and could bring the power of the see of Rome to bear. Someone must act to see that the mystery of these attacks is solved without involving Calebais, or at least ensure that there is nothing there to implicate the Order. If nothing else, this may be the last chance for anyone to rescue some of the lost treasures of the covenant before they are destroyed.

After providing this background, the Redcap produces the letter. It has been kept inside a leather case all these years, and she has not yet read it. The nun told her to say that it is only part of the letter, but it is all she has, and that it was written by a magus

named Crenvalus of Tytalus. It is torn in many places, especially across the bottom where it was ripped in half, but it is still legible. The penmanship is of very poor quality, and those who examine it carefully may conclude that it was written in a hurry. If no one objects, she will read it aloud. (See the insert.)

The nun may have an exaggerated idea of the danger, and it may be very unlikely that any of these events will come to pass. The promise of worthwhile treasure and a unique challenge could be enough to convince the magi to investigate. However, the events in the village may help draw the characters into the medieval landscape that surrounds the former covenant, and explain some of the rumors that they have heard, or will hear, about what lies in the ruins. Solving the mystery of the village is an excellent opportunity for the characters to start off on a good footing with the nuns in Chapter Three, assuming the story brings them to that conclusion, as their reputation will probably precede them.

The Letter from Crenovalus

Sodales,

I have a sad tale to tell. Calebais is no more. It has been destroyed. Heed well my warning, if you desire to avoid our fate, for I write to you from my grave. Perilous was the devil that beset us, but his embrace was not inevitable. Learn from our mistakes in dealing with this evil that covered our eyes and took hold of our hearts.

Mormulus's Veil was the beginning of our end. It was the means to bring peace to Calebais and those who lived within, but after all else, it was that which destroyed us. Though it had no power to harm of itself, it is what allowed the demon to strike, and when it finally usurped the Code of Hermes, our seduction was complete.

I beg of you, my friends, beware the pride that holds your souls captive. This sickness will destroy you as surely as it destroyed us. Be strong, unite, and bond together. Do this lest you also be beset by the curse that fell upon us.

If you think you can atone for our great sin, retrieve our great Bell of Ibyn. This device of warning served Calebais since its founding, though it could not prevent the evil that penetrated our deepest thoughts. Yet our fabulous treasure

may protect you against danger from without, as it did us, if you are already safeguarded against danger from within.

To reach the Bell, you must first pass through Mormulus's Veil. This can be done if you find the dryad who lives upon the hill. The twelve guides will lead you to her if you follow them in the correct order. The thief in red is first, followed by one who crawls through the air, one who crawls upon the earth, one who—

The letter ends abruptly, where it has been torn away.

The Redcap has been given simple instructions for reaching the covenant from the nearby village, to which she can easily direct the characters. From there they must approach Two Crag Hill from the south through the woods, and will soon come to a marker left by the magi that will tell them what to do next. She will convey this information and leave them to make their own way, or else she will agree to lead them to the village if they make it worth her while. She will not accompany them to the covenant under any circumstances, as she believes it is far too dangerous for her.

The Village

As explained in the introduction, this settlement can be placed in many different parts of Mythic Europe, as appropriate to your saga. There are, however, a few features of the village that should remain constant wherever it is located, and encounters involving those areas are described below.

The Abbey

One of the sacred duties of monasteries is the charity of giving travelers a meal and a bed, and the characters are probably aware of this, as it is a common feature of medieval life. However, depending on how common Cistercian abbeys are in their region, they may not be aware of their unusual restrictions regarding women. Bluntly, the general consensus among Cistercian monks is "if you allow a woman through the door, the devil will come in through the window." Only in unique circum-

stances would a woman be allowed past the walls: say, the Queen of the Realm wished to attend Mass. Even then, the abbot would suffer a harsh penance — at the very least, he and all the monks would have to fast for several days — and if he were held personally responsible for this terrible event, he could quite possibly lose his position.

Another rule of Cistercian abbeys is that they are forbidden to give hospitality or provision to warriors. If a suspicious group of characters arrives at the gate bearing obvious arms and armor, they will likely be turned away by the porter without even sending for the hostilar. Accidents and violence have been known to happen in guest-houses, which are typically rowdy places when there are many travelers, and monks have learned to be cautious. This stricture will probably be applied whenever the porter feels threatened, such as if he speaks to someone with The Gift, or if (heaven forbid!) a magus with the Blatant Gift tries to enter.

If the characters travel to the village with Ash, she will make them aware of these facts before they leave the covenant, so that they can prepare disguises or make other plans. She suggests they look for lodging in the village, but that they prepare a plau-

sible story for why they are traveling: nobility returning to their lands from other holdings, pious Christians on a pilgrimage, or perhaps craftsfolk traveling to a fair.

A detailed description of the abbey is not necessary, since the characters are unlikely to spend much time there. If they stay within, they sleep in the guest house and eat apart from the monks, and while they might visit the church to pray, they have little interaction with the brothers apart from the one who sees to their needs. If you find you need a better idea of the layout and buildings of a medieval abbey, there is more information in Chapter Three.

If any of the characters have positive reputations or important titles, they may be invited to dine with the abbot, Father Eric. He is a gregarious, easy man of aristocratic bearing but disarming manner, with no obvious vices. It is easy to see that the monks are very loyal to him, for he is confident and self-assured, and genuinely cares for his charges. He lives a stark and humble life for one of his high position, and sets a good example for his brethren. He may be curious about the characters, and speculate that they have come to join the search for the missing woman, of which he thinks very little. He can tell them a few facts about Sir Gilbert, a knight-errant who arrived recently and twice attended Mass, who aims to slay a dragon he believes to live in the wood. The abbot may also describe his side of the growing conflict between him and the reeve over the incident in the forest.

If the characters have any means of drawing out the brothers, who are supposed to be silent unless need or politeness demands and will avoid the characters as much as possible, they may learn some of this same information. For example, the hostiler might be persuaded to gossip a little about the conflict while seeing to their needs if the characters bring him interesting news from more distant places. He may also mention the young man, who was injured in the forest and is staying in the infirmary, but the monks have done all for him that can be done, and they will not allow the characters to see him without permission from the abbot. His story is described in the village background below; all he remembers is that his lover wanted to leave him, and the sound of a great bell in the forest.

The Reeve

The village is not particularly large, and the wealthiest family is that of Stephen, the reeve. He lives on the other side of the river and closer to the wood in a large, well-built house. Stephen believes that the recent events in the forest bode ill for the village, and hopes to play the politics of the situation well enough to recapture some of the influence that he has lost to the abbot over the last decade. His visit with his lord did not go as well as he had

hoped, for he has been ordered to investigate further before he will be sent more men, and Stephen has no idea where to begin. He has lied and said that reinforcements will be arriving soon, to calm the fears of those in the village, and may be very grateful that the characters have arrived, perhaps even pretending that he expected them. He will gladly escort them to the forest and the place where the dead man was found, if they take an interest.

The reeve's wife, Matilda, is proud of their station and eager to welcome guests into her home, so long as they do not seem dangerous or threatening. Magi, warriors and grogs will be allowed to sleep in their hay-shed while more distinguished guests sleep on comfortable pallets on the floor by the fire. If encouraged, Matilda will tell the characters more than they want to know about the surrounding area and the recent events of the village, though she will not speak highly of the monks or the monastery.

Characters with The Gift will have great difficulty in the village, for few people will speak with them, and they will be regarded with distrust wherever they go. Stephen is desperate enough to overcome his instinctive revulsion at working with such unpleasant company, but he will hate himself for it and will share none of the credit with them. If they succeed in resolving the mystery of the missing girl without help from more palatable companions, they will be thanked and quickly seen on their way. Obviously, characters with the Blatant Gift will be utterly unwelcome, driven off and watched for in case they should return.

Background: The Village

The characters may learn from the monks or the people of the village some or all of the details of what happened in the woods, described here. The story has likely grown with the telling, so freely exaggerate the aspects of the tale that seem like they will capture the players' imaginations.

A young couple of the village had been courting in the months previous, often taking long, scandalous walks together in the surrounding woods, and their relations became far more intimate than the girl's father liked. She had a wild, fighting spirit, with no head for business, but the boy was sensible and hard-working, apprenticed to the village carpenter and with a good future. Something about these woods inflamed their passions, and led them into sin and wickedness they never should have discovered. It became apparent that the girl was with child, and when confronted with this by her father, she fled the household. He suspected she would go to the young man, and followed him into the woods the next day. He told his wife that he would convince them to marry, as they must.

What happened next is not clear, though certainly they all met in the woods. The boy was injured, beaten senseless, and a head injury has destroyed his memories of the event. The father was found dead with a great wound in his chest, as from a sharp horn, and many bruises. Tracks suggested he had been attacked by a group of wild animals, though it was whispered that such animals must have walked on two legs with goat-feet. It is likely the girl had been there as well, for a strip of cloth torn from her garments was found near the men. No other trace of her has been found since, either in the forest or in the surrounding villages.

The boy would gladly accept his responsibilities and marry the girl once he recovers, but he fears she will not have him, for she had said on that terrible day that she planned to leave him. The troubles that now consume his waking hours stem from his concern for her safety. He can remember nothing else of what occurred except for one inexplicable image: he thought he heard the jarring sound of a bell, an awful sound, tolling far in the distance but still loud enough to be heard clearly. The broken tone of the bell occupies his dreams and fills his thoughts with guilt and remorse.

The abbot maintains that the girl has been lost, fled from her wanton actions and hidden somewhere far away, to atone for her sins and bear the child. He regards the death as a terrible accident, and wishes to discourage fearful rumors of demonic creatures marauding in the surrounding region. He is very angry with the reeve for frightening the villagers and attempting to mobilize his lord's men, and views these actions as a challenge to his leadership. The reeve, in turn, believes that the abbot wants the young couple too harshly punished for their sinful actions (which are quite understandable to the common people), and is using this event as an example to the community for the consequences of sin, rather than taking any interest in what happened or giving any thought to the girl.

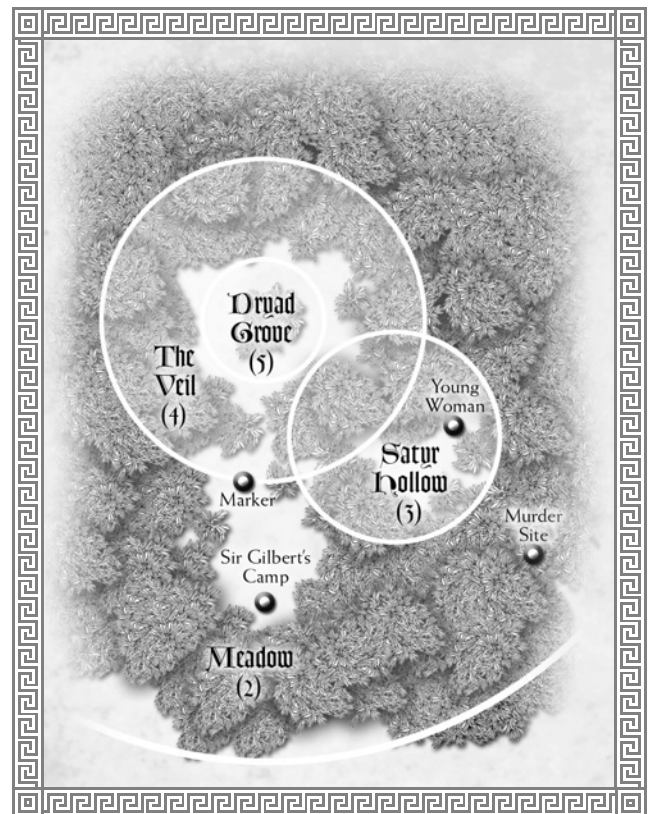
The villagers, including the reeve, have long known that there is a great evil hidden in the forest, and see this event as its return brought about by the dark times in which they live. They know there are areas of the wood that cannot be penetrated, and a particular clearing where strange visions of talking animals and other wicked things plague those who stray there. Beyond is a place of great strife and battle in years past, where flames and screams were heard day and night, accompanied by the clanging sound of a great iron being struck. Foresters have occasionally seen shaggy, bestial devil-men running in the distance in that same area. Wilder legends brought forth with strong drink tell of a sleeping dragon on Two Crag Hill, who long ago stole and devoured many of their people. With all these forces arrayed against them, it is no wonder the villagers are frightened, and do not know who will have the strength to protect them, the abbot or their lord.

The Wood

Most of the forest on the outskirts of the village has a Faerie aura of 2. A significant portion of the area also has a Faerie regio, which is unusual in that it is impossible to accidentally stumble into it. That is, unless the characters suspect a regio, they will not find it. Its strength varies from level 3 to level 5. It covers three territories, each occupying a different section of the forest: Satyr Hollow (Faerie 3), the Veil (Faerie 4), and Dryad Grove (Faerie 5). These areas are outlined in more detail below

Characters with exceptional hunting abilities may be able to find signs of the struggle, if the reeve shows them where the body lay. As several weeks have passed, a Perception + Hunt roll of 15+ is needed to find any clue, which only provides a direction to follow, and a 21+ to perceive that the trail leads a little way through the woods and ends abruptly at the edge of the regio, near the satyrs' hollow.

At the edge of the meadow, near Sir Gilbert's camp, is a stone marker. If the characters wait there, an illusory guide will come forward and beckon them to follow. It leads them into the Veil, a confusing part of the regio that is not easy to leave. From there,



the characters may also find their way into the dryad's grove, another level that overlaps the covenant site.

If the characters have any cause to suspect a regio, magic may reveal the edges of it. Intellego Vim spells allow them to step directly into the faerie woods, while Virtues like Second Sight may let them see the boundary. Intellego spells that tell about the nature of the forest may also give them an idea that something is unusual. These methods might allow the characters to reach the satyr's valley, or enter the Veil from somewhere other than the marker.

Satyr Hollow

Near the place where the man was killed is the entrance to Satyr Hollow, where a small number of the goat-footed creatures of ancient myth still live in a free, comfortable band. Here they run at will through the forest, brawl with each other in sport, or nap under the trees while listening to their faerie pipes. They embody every kind of masculine leisure in the wild. The characters will be greeted by several surprised satyrs when they first arrive in the regio, who may abruptly challenge them to a wrestling match or invite them to accompany their hunt, as if this were the most natural thing in the world.

If the characters are threatening (have drawn weapons, for example) the satyrs may circle warily, pointing thick javelins at them and demanding to know their business. The creatures are not averse to a fight, as they haven't had a good one in some time, but their numbers are waning and they fear unnecessary casualties. They would rather talk, but if the players want a battle it is easy to give them one here.

If the characters are easygoing and friendly, they will be offered wine and fruit. The satyrs have no leader, so this is more along the lines of one or two of them holding up their wineskins or gesturing to the drying figs on flat rocks. They will start to drink, carouse, and generally make merry, which may encourage the characters to join them. Characters with some knowledge of Faerie Lore may recognize this as dangerous, and you should warn characters with Common Sense that accepting food or drink from the fay is a bad idea.

The aura here is Faerie 3.

THE SATYRS

These satyrs spend much of their days hunting, chasing down faerie stags for sport, engaging in contests to see who can put

Satyrs

Faerie Might: 22 (Corpus)

Characteristics: Int -1, Per 0, Pre +2, Com 0, Str +2, Sta +4, Dex +1, Qik +2

Size: +1

Personality Traits: Lusty +5, Hasty +2

Combat:

Kick (non-lethal): Init +1, Attack +7, Defense +7, Damage +7

Horn and Kick: Init +1, Attack +8, Defense +6, Damage +11

Javelin: Init +2, Attack +8, Defense +9, Damage +8

Javelin (thrown): Init +0, Attack +9, Defense +6, Damage +10

Soak: +8

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0/0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-6), -3 (7-12), -5 (13-18), Incapacitated (19-24)

Abilities: Athletics 2 (dancing), Awareness 2, Brawling 5 (wrestling), Carouse 6, Charm 2 (taking liberties), Guile 3 (women), Hunt 3 (tracking), Local Language 3, Music 3 (flute), Single Weapon 4 (javelin), Survival 2, Thrown Weapon 3 (javelin)

Powers:

Enrage, 2 points, +0, Mentem: Satyrs can play wild, violent music, giving those who hear it +3 on Attack, Damage and Brave totals for the rest of the scene.

Revelry, 2 points, +0, Mentem: Satyr dancing music makes listeners more riotous and merry, increasing Personality traits like Reckless, Lustful, and Impulsive by 3 for the rest of the scene.

Vis: 2 Corpus in each horn

Appearance: Faerie satyrs are rugged, wild men with two sharp horns in their foreheads and goat's legs and hooves. They are very hairy, their whole bodies covered in short, dark fur, and they often sport scraggly beards. They are also a little larger than normal men. In spite of all this, they are still very attractive in a wild, virile way, for they embody pure masculinity in everything they do.

the most javelins into the neck of the beast without killing it, and so on. They do not eat meat, and they believe it dishonorable to kill unless their opponent kills one of them first. Incredibly lusty, these wild creatures live for the hunt and other earthly pleasures. In battle, they fight with horns and hooves simultaneously, hurling themselves at their enemies with dreadful force.

The eldest satyr, who will introduce himself as Boch, will quietly make the characters' acquaintance and take them aside once they have gotten comfortable. Older and wiser, he speaks the language much better than the others and bluntly asks the characters their business. If necessary, he will facilitate this discussion by playing a drowsy song on his pipes to calm down the rest after they have finished posturing for the newcomers. He assumes the characters have come here looking for the girl, and wants to head off a war without arousing the others' suspicions.

He will admit that she is here if they ask after her, but explains that she is "needed," and that she is their "wife." He can tell the story of how they captured her and what happened during the conflict, and may explain what he can remember about the arrangement with the dryad, mentioned below, if the characters negotiate. If they insist on seeing her, he will take them to her, but cautions that the others are extremely protective of her, and that in any case she cannot leave, for she "belongs with us now."

BACKGROUND: SATYR HOLLOW

These half-men, half-beasts have captured the young woman and set her up as sort of a communal wife. She has shelter that they built for her further along the valley, where she lives apart from them. They visit her when they are feeling lonely, and otherwise see that she is comfortable by bringing her food and drink and warm bedding. At first she did not go willingly into this arrangement, and the fauns were forced to harm both her protector and another who tried to stop them. She has since come to appreciate the influence she has over the creatures, though, for they listen to her and do what she asks, and she is free from the arduous responsibilities that were often imposed upon her at home. This seems to her the perfect place to bear and raise her baby, which will probably be at least part satyr because of the nature of the place.

Before the magi of Calebais set up their magical Veil, the satyrs had a similar arrangement with the dryad who lives in the forest, whereby they would visit her when they wanted company, which suited both parties very well. However, recently (that is, within the last fifty years) she has gone missing. This is dangerous for the fauns; they have become much more aggressive and violent, occasionally staging raids on the covenant by drinking their faerie wine until they are intoxicated and berserk, which

makes it possible for them to run through the Veil without losing their way or being misled by the illusions. They are searching for the dryad, but they never find her (their wine prevents them from seeing illusions, including her), and they have become convinced she is held captive at Calebais. Many of their number have been lost in battle with the strange creatures that live there, and they now have a long-standing grudge that they periodically renew in spite of the danger. Simply put, they are dying out.

Boch suggested that the satyrs capture a wife from the village, as payment for the dryad stolen from them. The fauns dislike the Dominion, but they saw the girl in the forest several times from a distance, and after a few fights to establish dominance, one of the younger satyrs decided to take her. Resolved, he and several others in his hunting party interrupted an angry confrontation between her father and her lover, and the two men attacked the fauns. It was not much of a fight, but one of the satyrs was killed, and so they killed one of the humans in their own form of primitive justice, taking their new bride and their fallen brother with them. Boch regrets this, and will do what he can to help the characters as long as no more blood must be shed.

The woman has drunk their faerie wine and eaten their faerie fruit, both of which have strange effects. Firstly, they accentuate independence and heighten reckless, lustful behavior. Secondly, they inspire a sort of temporary battle-madness, making one less susceptible to trickery and illusion and more inclined to fight. Finally, and most importantly, they prevent mortals from leaving the regio for a whole year. If any of the characters eats or drinks from the satyrs' stores, they too will be affected in this way; they can visit the dryad's palace, the Veil, and the surrounding forest, in fact anywhere within the regiones, but when they try to walk towards the village or follow the dryad into the covenant, they will simply wind up back where they started. Emphasize that the curse feels as if one's blood is racing, like running faster, or like one is "more awake" — this may later help the players piece together how to break the curse.

If the characters somehow manage to rescue the girl, even against her will, the satyrs will feel tricked and angry, perhaps angry enough to attack the village. The characters must realize that this will not address the essential problem, and Boch will do his best to explain this. Sooner or later the fauns will capture someone else, or else they will all be killed off in war with the Hrools, the village, or the characters. If this happens, the region will suffer a terrible affliction, causing all of the animals to weaken and die within a month. In fact, the characters might have seen early signs of this among the villagers' livestock. This could cause unpleasant consequences for the characters as the villagers might come to associate this pestilence with their passing through the area.

Note that Sir Gilbert (below), if he is with the characters, will be very hostile to the satyrs. They look like devils to him. Luc, too, will be frightened and urge Sir Gilbert to attack or at least retreat to the relatively safer ground of their camp. The satyrs have seen the knight and his men, but have avoided them because they do not think they fight fairly, with a horse to run for them and men with harp-strings that throw javelins. They will avoid this battle if they can.

Sir Gilbert's Camp

In the meadow just below Two Crag Hill, the characters will meet a knight-errant, his trusted adviser, and his servants, from whom they can gain information about the magic protecting Calebais. These characters might be used later in your saga as occasional visitors to the covenant if they wind up being friends, or as periodic hindrances if they become enemies. They could even be incorporated into the game as companion characters, if you are just beginning and have players who would be interested in them.

During the day, this clearing should give the characters their first glimpse of the famous crags at the top of the hill that marks the location of the covenant. If the sky is clear, the peaks show up hazily against the sky on the horizon like a ghostly gate to another world. A colorful tent striped with red and blue has been erected at the center of the large, open field dotted with wildflowers. A red pennant with a rampant golden griffon flies from the central post, and colored ribbons dangle from the supporting ropes. Tied to one side is the knight's huge warhorse, picketed with the rest of the mounts. His many retainers are spread throughout the clearing, cleaning and cooking, while others may be out hunting in the surrounding woods.

If the characters arrive at night, only one man is hunched over the embers of the fire, his head nodding with fatigue.

This is a much flashier tent than most knights would use in the field, but Sir Gilbert is a flashy knight. Or rather, knight-errant; Sir Gilbert owes no allegiance to an overlord, but also has no land. He does have a horse and arms, and so he is doing his best to make a name for himself as a hero. His current project is to slay the dragon which he has heard lives atop the hill, but so far he has been unable to penetrate the enchantment surrounding it. When the characters meet him, they have the chance to gain valuable information and assistance, but if they prefer a fight they will have little to show for it.

SIR GILBERT

Like most knights, Sir Gilbert is well-trained and well-armed. He wears chain mail, carries a sword and shield, and will mount his horse and charge with a lance if he gets the opportunity. In many ways he is a gentle and kind man, though still bold and brash, and his servants are particularly loyal for this reason. He is afraid of nothing, even wizards, and so fear will not temper his attitude towards unusual strangers. He will find The Gift distasteful in close quarters, however, and will deal with magi as little as possible.

Closely followed by his stubby beard, his holy sword is his most prized possession. It contains the knucklebone of St. Augustus built into its hilt below the leather straps. This relic gives the sword the following powers:

I. Sir Gilbert has a divinely based magic resistance of +30.

II. Three times per day, he can use a point of Faith like Confidence, as long as it serves a good purpose.

III. The first time each day Sir Gilbert prays for aid, you should consider whether he might receive a miracle. Miracles like these are subtle, and may seem like luck or a coincidence to those with no faith.

IV. Saint Augustus was an abbot known for finding lost relics, and he may lend his influence when Sir Gilbert prays for guidance; for example, he might send the knight a vision of what he seeks in a dream.

Sir Gilbert is careful to show deference to God, despite his bravery. Each week he returns to the abbey to confess his sins and hear Mass, and he sets aside time every night to pray and give thanks for his blessings. This sort of behavior may grate on wizards' nerves, but as he believes himself tolerant of their eccentricities, he will be very offended if they do not show him similar courtesy. Insulting his faith or the Church is one of the few ways characters can make him angry enough to attack them.

LUC

Luc is Sir Gilbert's personal and spiritual guide, an old friend of his family who has taken it upon himself to protect the knight from the intangible dangers of the world. He has much academic and arcane knowledge that he has learned from study and experience, and he doesn't have a great deal of pragmatism. Luc speaks four languages passably well, including Latin, but he is not as comfortable talking as he is listening, a quirk left over from living in silence as a hermit for seven years.

Sir Gilbert

Characteristics: Int -1, Per -3, Pre 0, Com +2, Str +3, Sta +2,
Dex +1, Qik +1

Age: 25

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Knight; Lesser Immunity (fear), Relic (x3);
Pious; Humble; Visions

Personality Traits: Brave +5, Friendly +2, Honorable +2, Wise -1

Reputations: Brave knight 3 (local area), Pious 2 (local churches)

Combat:

Long Sword and Heater Shield: Init +3, Attack +11, Defense
+14, Damage +11

Long Sword and Heater Shield (mounted): Init +3, Attack +14,
Defense +17, Damage +11

Lance and Heater Shield (mounted): Init +4, Attack +13,
Defense +17, Damage +12

Soak: +14

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated
(16-20)

Abilities: Athletics 2 (climbing), Carouse 1 (staying sober),
Charm 4 (gentlefolk), Folk Ken 3 (motivations), Great

Weapon 5 (lance), Leadership 3 (small groups), Local
Language 5 (straight talk), Magic Lore 2 (creatures), Ride 4
(combat), Single Weapon 5 (long sword)

Equipment: Full chain mail, helmet, heater shield, holy long
sword

Encumbrance: 0 (3)

Appearance: Sir Gilbert is a large, burly man who appears slight-
ly unkempt, his hair mussed and his beard slightly
untrimmed. He nevertheless has polite manners despite his
unrestrained demeanor. He is tall with blue, childlike eyes
and straw-colored hair.

Roleplaying Tips: Imagine a friendly, slightly overbearing coun-
try sheriff; strap on a sword, and you have Sir Gilbert. He is
pleasant company, very good in a fight, and yet still
strangely humble. He is pious, but he is also good-naturedly
tolerant of things that are strange to him. The characters
should find they like him, even if they would normally be at
odds with such a figure. Though he is something of a cari-
cature, try to roleplay him as honestly as you can.

Luc, Sir Gilbert's Adviser

Characteristics: Int +2, Per +2, Pre +1, Com -2, Str -3, Sta -2,
Dex +2, Qik -2

Age: 50

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Priest; Educated, Student of Infernal, Student
of Magic; Noncombatant, Vow (celibacy); Close Family
Ties, Social Handicap (poor speaker)

Personality Traits: Loyal +2, Skeptical +2, Humble -1

Combat:

Dodge: Init -2, Attack +2, Defense -2, Damage -3

Soak: -2

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated
(16-20)

Abilities: Area Lore 5 (politics), Artes Liberales 5 (rhetoric),
Bargain 2 (books), Chirurgy 2 (setting bones), Church Lore
6 (politics), Concentration 6 (reading), Folk Ken 4 (nobles),
Infernal Lore 2 (demons), Intrigue 3 (subterfuge), Latin 3

(written word), Local Language 6 (comprehension),
Another Language 3 (heard), Another Language 2 (heard),
Magic Lore 3 (legends), Philosophiae 4 (animals), Ride 1
(travel), Teaching 2 (pious students), Theology 3 (biblical
passages)

Appearance: Luc is a gaunt, balding, white-haired man with a
great deal more spryness to his step than his years would
suggest. His aquiline nose and bushy eyebrows give him the
appearance of a formidable and impressive personage. Only
his gentle eyes and soft but firm voice suggest his years of
quiet meditative study. He wears a pendant necklace from
which he seems to draw much of his strength of will.

Roleplaying Tips: Play up his pomposity and sense of self-impor-
tance by harrumphing after characters say something. Make
sharp but contained hand gestures and nervously finger
your imaginary pendant. Don't overdo the negative aspects
of his personality; at heart, he is a good man.

He loves to be in charge, yet has very strong religious beliefs and a strong desire to do right. If his authority is challenged he will never willingly back down, but if his need for respect is appeased, he is quite easy to deal with and can be quite charming. He carries a bronze pendant, which he has been told contains a sliver of the True Cross. He clutches it when he is afraid, and fingers it when he is unsure. It is probably a fake, but he draws spiritual strength from it anyway.

Luc will intensely distrust characters with The Gift. If Sir Gilbert seems too friendly with them, Luc will compensate with extreme hostility. He will assume the magi have somehow enchanted his lord, and take steps to remove him from their influence if he determines it to be necessary.

If questioned about his personal interest in the ruins of Calebais, he will speak of secrets to be found "in the hill," secrets about which he admits he knows nothing. If he begins to trust the characters, he

will tell them about a story he heard of an evil spirit that lived under the hill, who plotted against the king. He would like to guide Sir Gilbert to fight and defeat such a base enemy.

PAUL

In many ways, Paul is a perfect squire for a great knight: he is diligent, clever, and knows how to mimic the behavior of his master. However, he is also young and inexperienced, and likely to break into conversation at inappropriate times. He can be rather awkward with social graces. He will probably never become a knight; his aptitudes are much more directed towards being a man of the cloth. Paul also admires Luc, whom he serves nearly as much as Sir Gilbert. Fighting doesn't really appeal to him, though, he will only fight to protect his lord.

Paul, Sir Gilbert's Squire

Characteristics: Int +2, Per 0, Pre 0, Com -1, Str +1, Sta +2 Dex 0, Qik +1

Age: 15

Virtues and Flaws: Custos; Carefree

Personality Traits: Excited +3, Servile +2, Brave -2

Combat:

Long Sword and Heater Shield: Init +1, Attack +8, Defense +12, Damage +9

Soak: +14

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

Abilities: Artes Liberales 1 (grammar), Awareness 3 (watching), Athletics 3 (lifting), Brawl 1 (wrestling), Church Lore 2

(politics), Folk Ken 3 (anticipating needs), Latin 1 (formal), Local Language 5 (formal), Ride 1 (long distances), Single Weapon 3 (long sword)

Equipment: Chain hauberk, heater shield, long sword.

Encumbrance: 2 (3)

Appearance: Paul is a competent young man, not yet sixteen with black curly hair. He tries to be the consummate squire, and is both obsequious and enthusiastic.

Roleplaying Tips: Overdo the servility and use your "courtly graces" as much as you can. Try so hard to please others, even when the occasion does not call for it, that you make a mess of things.

Sir Gilbert's Men

Characteristics: Int 0, Per +1, Pre 0, Com 0, Str +1, Sta +1 Dex +1, Qik 0

Personality Traits: Brave +1, Loyal +1

Combat:

Long spear: Init -2, Attack +7, Defense +9, Damage +7

Crossbow: Init -5, Attack +8, Defense +2, Damage +10

Soak: +5

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

Abilities: Awareness 4 (searching), Bows 3 (crossbow), Carouse 2 (camping), Great Weapon 4 (spear), Hunt 5 (tracking), Survival 3 (woods)

Equipment: Full leather armor, helmet, long spear, crossbow

Encumbrance: 2 (3)

SIR GILBERT'S MEN

These are trained foresters and huntsmen, but they will be very afraid of characters with The Gift. They will express their fear through tense anger and hostility, but they will not strike a blow without Sir Gilbert's or Luc's command. They are armed with spears or crossbows and wear leather armor. When fighting together, they will form a double rank and fire on alternate rounds, but raise their spears to meet a charge.

The men standing guard will stare openmouthed when they see the characters approach, because their camp has not been disturbed since they arrived. Eventually Paul, the squire, will call to Luc, the adviser, who is inside Sir Gilbert's tent. At first, only Luc will emerge because Sir Gilbert is busy praying (or is asleep), but he will soon rouse his master when he sees the approaching party for himself, most likely to inform him that a veritable army has descended upon them, if there are more than a few armed characters.

Sir Gilbert will be friendly to strangers, for the most part. He treats visitors as if they were old friends, come to have a cup of wine and a bit of a talk (though this attitude doesn't extend to obvious servants, bandits, wizards, or peasants). He will be astonished if there are noblewomen in the group, and will immediately inquire after their health, their comfort, and what brings them into this dangerous wilderness. He will be very interested in the purpose of the party, and will be intrigued (though wary) if he learns that they are magi.

While Sir Gilbert speaks, Luc will remain at his side, intent that the kind-hearted knight will not be tricked. If he senses The Gift, he will expect deceit and villainy from them. Nevertheless, he is still curious about the knowledge that legendary figures like wizards might possess, and as Sir Gilbert is seeking a dragon, he will attempt to tease any information from the characters that might aid his lord.

Sir Gilbert will openly reveal his purpose and tell what he has learned if he judges the characters to be good people, that is, if they are respectful and courteous, have obvious gentlefolk among them, appear wealthy, or seem like honorable allies. He will reluctantly agree to work with magi so long as they promise to leave the dragon to him, and may invite non-magi to accompany him on his expedition if Luc doesn't object too strongly.

BACKGROUND: SIR GILBERT'S CAMP

Through diligent prayer and two weeks' worth of experience within the forest, Sir Gilbert has learned valuable information about the Veil. He will share it in pleasant company over a meal



or a few cups of drink. His demeanor is expansive among gentlemen; solicitous and speculative with ladies; and distant to servants, grogs, or those with an unpleasant aura about them.

- I. The dragon surely lives within the hill, for though no one has seen it for many years, he has witnessed black clouds of smoke, and was awoken once by the booming sound of flames exploding up from the hill like a volcano, lighting the night sky for miles.
- II. The woods are perilous, for several times he has gotten lost in them for hours, even with the strange guides that appear to lead him, for they do not take him anywhere that he can find again without their help. Once he managed to return to the campsite by following a white dove, which he believes was sent by God.
- III. He thinks that to reach the hill, the guides must be followed in a specific order, and he has had four dreams in which he followed one: a fox, a spider, a snake, and a squirrel. He believes this is the order in which they must be followed. If he keeps at it long enough, he thinks he will discover the proper sequence. He has faith in the truth of his dreams, but will be pleased if the characters confirm his discovery with their letter. (The letter will make Luc very suspicious, though, and he will certainly ask to read it himself.)
- IV. A stone pylon, inscribed with arcane symbols and weathered runes, stands on the slope nearby. Luc has managed to translate some of the message, but none of it meant much to Sir Gilbert, and he doesn't remember any of it except for one phrase, "the kiss of fire," because that sounds like dragon's breath to him. (Luc translated "Calebais" as "cali[dum] bas[ium].")
- V. There are other strange creatures in the forest. His men have heard large animals, and one claims to have glimpsed a shaggy man with goat's feet. Sir Gilbert thinks he saw something himself one evening when he was returning from the Veil. What he saw looked more like a group of large weasels, one of them standing on its hind legs to smell the

air. He stared at them, blinked from weariness, and they were gone. Sir Gilbert will not tell this story unless they have been talking for a long while, because it seems foolish to him.

VI. There has been no sign of the missing woman. His opinion is that the girl is still alive, for he heard that she had good reason to get married, and that her father had taken the soon-to-be husband out to the forest to teach him a lesson. Perhaps it was the young man who killed her father, inventing a story about demons for protection, and driving the girl into hiding. Instead of searching the forest, he thinks the king's men should be searching the cloisters. He has not visited the site, but believes the reeve is embellishing the story for his own reasons.

The Marker

At the edge of the southern slope of the hill, just outside of the regio, is a stone pylon about nine feet high. Sir Gilbert, if he is with them, will bring the characters over to see it, since Luc could not understand all of what it says. It is worn and ruinous,

The Marker Inscription

INTRATE IN HANC SILVAM FASCINATUM NON
(in-TRAH-tay in hank SEAL-vahm FAH-skeen-AH-toom nobn)
"Enter not this enchanted forest."

NISI VOS SCITIS QUOS DUCES SEQUOR PRIMUM
ULTIMUSQUAE ET RESPONSUM AENIGMAE SUI
(NEE-see vohs SKEE-tees kwohs DOO-kays SAY-kwor PREE-
moom OOL-tee-MOOS-kwy ET ray-SPOHN-soom eye-
NEEG-my SOO-ee)

"Unless ye know which guides to follow, first and last,
and the answer to their riddle."

SI OPTATIS NOS ALLOQUOR MANETE IN LOCO
HOC UNUS DE NOBIS PERVENIAM MOX
(see ope-TAY-tees nobs ah-LOH-kwor mah-NAY-tay in LOH-
kob hock OO-noos day NO-bees pair-VAY-nee-abm moks)
"If ye wish to speak with us, wait here, one of us will be
with you shortly."

SI ESTIS SODALES SALVETE AD CALEBAIS
(see AYST-ess so-DAHL-ees sabl-WAY-tay odd CAH-lay-BAH-ees)
"If ye be our friends, be welcome to Calebais"

and looks like an ancient artifact of a bygone age. At the top is carved a broken crown and three flames, which characters might recognize as the symbol of Calebais. Weathered inscriptions may be read on each of its four sides (a Perception + Speak Latin roll will give an idea of how much the characters can make out, with a 6+ producing a few words and a 12+ yielding at least the substance of the entire message).

If characters wait beside the marker, one of the guides will eventually approach and beckon them into the regio (see The Veil, below).

BACKGROUND: THE MARKER

When the covenant was active, those who were not welcome and became lost in the regio would eventually be hunted down. Before the Sundering, those who waited at the marker would be perceived through a magic mirror (see page 48), and someone would be sent to show them the way through. The newer effect that Mormulus added to his Veil, preventing Intellego Imaginem magic, made the mirror cease to function, so no one in the covenant will see the characters' approach. The marker is not in any way magical, except that the mirror has a fixed arcane connection to it.

When translating the message for Sir Gilbert, Luc thought that the word "Calebais" might be a name derived from "calidum basium," or "fiery kiss," but it was too hard for him to decipher from context. If players ask how to say "kiss of fire" in Latin, perhaps because of Gilbert's use of the phrase, or if the characters ask Luc about that part of the inscription, they will realize the misunderstanding.

The Veil

Calebais and the surrounding area are protected against unwanted visitors by a powerful enchantment, similar to the Hermetic spell *The Shrouded Glen* (ReMe40). It prevents people from entering the covenant and its environs without being admitted by the dryad, who acts as a sort of gatekeeper. Merely wandering through the area will not suffice, as the magic on the mundane level of the forest will turn explorers away without their realizing it, and in the regio the illusions will keep them occupied and confused. It is this "veil" of mystery that Sir Gilbert has been trying to penetrate, with limited success. The characters must find a way to understand the riddle before the dryad will allow them to enter the ruined covenant.

Another effect of the Veil is that it prevents almost all Intellego Imaginem and Intellego Mentem spells in the area from func-

tioning. That is, it reduces the strength of this magic by 60 spell levels. This should cause all spells that could penetrate the illusion or read minds to fail, including Intellego spells that have Imaginem or Mentem as a requisite. This effect covers the entire hill, including the covenant and the dryad's palace.

If characters have the means to identify the magic, they will see at least seven different effects of tenth magnitude or higher. Four are Perdo Vim, one is Rego Mentem, one is Intellego Mentem, and one is Creo Imaginem. They are Ritual-level effects that cover the entire hill and do not seem to have an obvious source. Residual magic might reveal that the Perdo effects are more recent than the others, as they were added only about fifty years ago, while the rest are at least a century old.

This part of the regio also has a Faerie 4 aura, which will boost the characters' spells but will also increase their chances for disaster should they botch their magic.

Once the characters enter, phantom images will occasionally appear one at a time, each speaking a cryptic message in a language every character can understand, and motioning for the characters to follow. Each guide leads them to its "den," an illusory location within the regio. Other guides will then appear periodically, even those that the characters have already followed, each speaking its message and beckoning to the characters. If the characters do not follow any of the guides, no matter how carefully they aim or how accomplished their sense of direction, they will eventually wind up back at the pylon or emerge from a different part of the forest, perhaps even on the other side of the hill.

The secret to the order of the guides is simple: the characters must follow the fox, and from then on they must follow the guide who begins its message with the last word of the previous guide's message. For example, the fox's statement ends with the word "realms," and so the next guide must be the black spider, who begins his statement with "realms." After the spider comes the snake, and so on, until they have followed all twelve guides in order. Then the dryad's image will appear, and ask them for the answer to the riddle.

Remember that the guides will not appear in the proper order. While waiting at a creature's den, characters may be approached by several of the wrong guides before the right one comes along. This may be a random process, or calculated to make the puzzle easier or more difficult. If you have one, a twelve-sided die is useful for this, but don't assign the creatures the number that corresponds to their place in the sequence below or the players might catch on. If the characters lose sight of the guides or leave the dens on their own, they will have to find their way back to the pylon and start over.

On pages 26 and 27 are the guides, their messages, and the brief description of their dens, in the order in which they must be followed. If you photocopy the pages, cut out each of the riddles and give them to the players as they are encountered, it will make this section much easier to run and much, much more enjoyable to play.

If all the guides have been followed in the right order, the image of the beautiful white-haired dryad, dressed in a living gown of leaves and flowers, will appear at the top of the cliff. She calls out to them with a voice like rushing wind and water, saying: "Be welcome, friends, if you can answer the riddle that goes before you. Tell me: What am I?"

The answer to her riddle is a crown (and you might congratulate whoever solves it with a Confidence Point). If the characters guess correctly, no matter how many tries it takes them, she will descend the cliff on a hidden path, and extend her ghostly hand to lead them through the pass to the ruins of Calebais. The trail cannot be seen no matter how hard the characters try, because of the illusion, but if they follow her carefully they will reach the top without mishap.

THE DRYAD

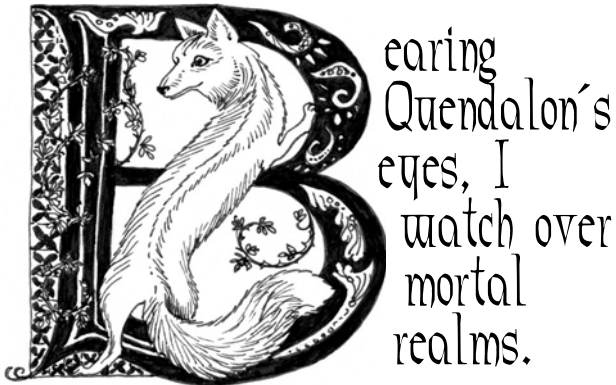
The dryad is bound to Calebais by a bargain she made with Mormulus, whereby she has promised to serve as guide and bearer of the Veil, and the wizard agreed to see that she and her forest were protected from harm. Because of this, she remains bound to the covenant and cannot leave, and, over the years, she has become very lonely. She will welcome guests merrily, and thoroughly enjoy the time she has with them as they try to guess the riddle before she leads them up the pass. It is not their conversation or their appearance that she enjoys, but rather their company; she desires the feeling of having people nearby.

The dryad cannot break her agreement under any circumstances. However, she can enjoy a short respite if a character agrees to take her place as wearer of the Veil for a day and a night. She will agree to this bargain only if the character wears a diadem, indicating that he or she has the authority to command her, or if the character accepts a gift from her in return. All of her gifts will have beneficial effects, but will also curse the recipients with faerie sleep, as described below. A character wearing the Veil can show the other characters through the pass while unconscious, though he or she will not be able to join them in the covenant or leave the faerie regio until the curse is broken.

If threatened, the dryad can bend the forest to her will, but it is unlikely that she will need to do so since she appears at will and is always insubstantial. Nevertheless, if she is somehow

I. Red fox

It is supernaturally dexterous and svelte, and leaps about a great deal. Its ears are large and pointed, and its den is a large, tangled briar patch. It says:



earing
Quendalon's
eyes, I
watch over
mortal
realms.

(Note: those with more than passing knowledge of Hermetic history may remember that Quendalon was said to have gems for eyes.)

II. Black Spider

This frightening creature is about the size of a small child, covered in stiff hairs. A variety of trinkets and tools hang about its body. It lives in a sinkhole, about twenty feet in diameter. Its message is:



realms have
crumbled in
lust for my
power.

III. Tiny Snake

Brightly colored and not much larger than a dagger, this creature leads the characters to a flat rock that sits in the middle of a flower-covered glade. It says:



ower and
majesty
are my
humble
gifts.

IV. Squirrel

This creature is twice its normal size, with a coat more deeply red than that of other squirrels, and waves its tail in agitation. It lives in an enormous oak tree, and says ""



ifts like me
are given
only by the
holiest of
men.

V. Red Drake

A skittish dragonlike creature without wings, about the size of a pony; its scarlet scales are tinted with gold. Its den is a shallow cave in a small cliff. Its message:



en covet
my bright
skin, &
desire the
glorious
wealth
within.

VI Gray Cat

This guide is hard to follow as it continually disappears behind rocks and trees, only to reappear again somewhere unexpected. Its den is a nest of soft moss with a ray of light shining on it from above, and under the moss (should the characters think to move it) is an etching of the symbol of Calebais: the broken crown in flames. It says:



ithin my
compass
lay all of
Solomon's
wisdom.

VII. A Young Man...

...dressed in green, with very dark, distinctive eyes. He is formal and polite, bowing deeply when he meets the characters, and he leads them to a large, ruined cabin built of stone. When he speaks, he says:



Wisdom is not all that those beneath me are lacking.

VIII. Mole

It nuzzles along the ground, never looking at the visitors, and leads them directly to its den, a large mound of earth overgrown with small trees and plants. It mumbles:



Making a center, but round as a wheel, I tumble into valleys and climb sharp peaks.

IX. Falcon

A beautiful yellow and red peregrine falcon, with a golden wire band circling its head, meets and leads the characters by flying over them. Its den is the top of a tall stone column, ten feet high, and a basin at the top serves as a bath for a flock of red-brown sparrows. It cries:



Peaks of stone made the roof that covered my first home.

X. Rooster

A plucky, bold bird three feet high leaps out of the bushes, perhaps startling one of the characters. Its comb is not red, but silver, and it jumps in the blink of an eye. It lives beneath a small bush covered in berries, and says:



Some I have again in stone, in great halls hewn by mighty crafters' hands.

XI. Ghost

A nebulous, floating apparition with a raspy voice moves slowly through the forest. It leads the characters to a dark grove of seven trees, barren and littered with needles, and intones:



Wands can barely lift my weight, and hearts cannot bear the burdens I bring.

XII. Ermine

A white ferret, walking on its hind legs, brings the characters to the face of a large cliff face, about thirty feet high. It is difficult to understand as it speaks through clenched teeth:



Bring me duty and service, for I sit above all the lords of the land, no matter how noble their bearing.

destroyed, the effects of the Veil will end, and all the crops in the region will suffer a terrible disease and waste away, causing seven years of famine. While they may not know the reason, the people in the village may come to blame the characters for this, as their troubles will have started “just after those strange folk came through here,” and the characters may subsequently gain a poor reputation that could make its way to the convent in Chapter Three.

If the characters are having a hard time with the riddle, the dryad may encourage them by making the guides speak. Although she is bound not to give away either the solution to the riddle or tell the characters the secret to the proper order of the guides, she can give vague hints or choose the order in which the guides approach, and she might make them appear one after another to emphasize the first and last words of each riddle.

If they are really stuck, the dryad (speaking through the guides) might suggest an exchange: if one of the characters will come to her grove, she will allow that character to take her place in the Veil, and so provide access for the rest of the characters. This exchange has consequences that she does not reveal, though, for that character will fall asleep, and because of the nature of the faerie regio will be unable to leave for an entire year.

In any case, characters should not be able to force their way through the riddle. The dryad will not respond to threats or bribes, and she and the guides are merely illusions. The Veil prevents spells designed to find a direct route to Calebais, and even if the characters climb the cliff face where the dryad appears, they will wind up on one of the crags, still unable to see the covenant or approach the hilltop. Mormulus, the engineer of this illusion, was extremely clever, and there should be no flaw that the characters can exploit.

As a last resort, if the characters wait long enough, a group of Hrools will pass by, led by an ermine Hrool wearing a diadem. They are returning foragers, bearing wood and game. They do not know the secret of the riddle, but wearing a diadem allows the leader to see through the illusions, and thus pass directly through to the covenant. The characters may follow them or try to take the diadem. It will be obvious to anyone who wears this crown that they can see the forest in a new, different way (and feel free to rub it in, after the story is over, that the answer to the riddle was literally right before their eyes).

BACKGROUND: THE VEIL

Mormulus did not wish to remove all contact with the outside world, but he did wish to prevent people from accidentally stum-

bling upon the covenant. Thus, the Veil was not originally intended to keep everyone out of Calebais, only to present a challenge for those determined to get in. Because of the powers of the Bell, those who wore diadems could sense whenever someone set foot on the hill, and thus would have plenty of time to prepare while visitors were delayed by the riddle. If they won through and were still not useful to the covenant, their memory would be modified and they would be released back into the wood. In the face of a concentrated attack, the dryad would be instructed not to let anyone through, and the invaders would be waited out or hunted down.

The effects of the Veil cover all of Two Crag Hill, which is a Boundary target. It has lasted fifty years, so it must be a continuous effect of a device. Yet devices cannot affect a Boundary, as that requires a Ritual spell. How is this possible? The reason is that Mormulus bound the dryad to his service and enchanted *her* with the Veil. Her involvement makes it possible for him to target the entire area via a specialized form of magic. While it might be possible for other magi to learn this mysterious art of binding spirits, rules for it are beyond the scope of this adventure.

The Dryad Grove

At the center of the Veil that protects Calebais is the area that contains the dryad's home and her grove of trees. This area corresponds to the top of Two Crag Hill, and overlaps the mundane layer — the covenant — with a regio and a Faerie 5 aura. It is impossible for the characters to find this place without being led here by the dryad herself or by searching for regio boundaries from within the Veil. Note that Intellego Mentem and Intellego Imaginem effects here are also reduced by 60 spell levels, as explained above.

The site is beautiful: there are six trees entwined in a living sculpture, with a large tangle of long roots arching over a round pool formed in the hilltop (the faerie version of the entrance to the covenant). A set of natural stairs made from narrow, straight branches lead up the side of the trees to archways that lead into the inside of their trunks, a series of six rooms that glow with the golden light of polished wood and smell of timber. It is much larger inside than outside. Tables, beds and baths are formed from living vines, leaves and branches, and the palace is unnaturally comfortable, almost decadent.

The dryad is not here; she is bound to the fountain in the covenant and her image in the Veil can only be seen after following the guides in the proper order. She leaves out food and drink for visitors and does not begrudge them helping themselves to her hospitality. The provisions are peculiar: wooden

bowls filled with rich, heady mead, thick and sweet; and wooden plates piled with cold, spiced meats, salty and flavorful. If mortals eat or drink of these pleasures, they soon become very drowsy and fall fast asleep. This unnatural sleep lasts for an entire year. With a lot of effort, characters can rouse themselves into a state of bleary consciousness for a short while (the equivalent of Dazed), but they cannot leave the faerie forest — they fall unconscious before they can cross the threshold — and they cannot be carried out, for they become too heavy to move. This curse is effectively cast by the dryad, and thus very difficult to dispel.

If the characters combine the dryad's hospitality with that of the satyrs (wine and meat, or fruit with mead, or any other combination), both curses will be lifted and the afflicted characters will suffer no further ill effects; they will find that they can easily leave the faerie regio. The two curses counter each other, for one speeds mortal blood and the other slows it down. This is the method by which they can free the satyrs' captive, if they have otherwise dealt with the threat the faeries pose to the village, and it is perhaps the only way that they can circumvent the penalty for accepting the faeries' gifts.

The Dryad

Faerie Might: 45 (Herbam)

Characteristics: Int 0, Per +3, Pre +3, Com +1, Str 0, Sta +2, Dex +2, Qik +2

Personality Traits: Lonely +3, Protective +2, Kind +1

Powers:

Control Herbam, 0 points, +5, Herbam: The dryad can control plants within the Veil, causing them to respond to her command. This is equivalent to a sixth magnitude Hermetic effect.

Infatuation, 1 point, +0, Mentem: By drawing her spirit close to a mortal, the dryad can cause intense desire for her and a willingness to do her will.

Insubstantial Form, 0 points, +5, Imaginem: The dryad cannot be affected by physical things, though she also cannot affect them. This is the only way she can manifest as long as she is bound to Calebais.

Vis: The dryad has no vis, since her magical essence is part of the enchantment of the wood.

Appearance: The dryad is old, white-haired, and wise, but still beautiful and earthy. She wears a living gown of leaves and flowers.

Options: The Mystery

- I. The characters may somehow sneak women into the abbey, which could have the effect of profaning the services, for it is strictly against the Cistercian Rule to say Mass while women are present. This could create a chink through which evil forces can penetrate this fortress of holiness. The divine aura may weaken, and the site could become more vulnerable to infernal attacks. Because of their flouting of tradition, the characters may discover that they have helped a demon gain a hold on the abbey and corrupt it. This demon would probably also be interested in tracking down the characters and corrupting them too, in thanks for their aid, since they seem to be ripe fruit for plucking.
- II. If the characters manage to rescue the young woman, by bringing her mead or food from the dryad's grove, she won't want to return to the village, and she will be desolated if the characters have killed off the satyrs or freed the dryad. She might be convinced to join the characters' covenant. If the satyrs replace her and the characters ignore her plight, she will eventually escape on her own and return to the village, where the abbot will instruct her to join a convent. The characters may encounter her again in Chapter Three, but she will not speak kindly of them to the abbess.
- III. Perhaps the characters cannot find their way out of the Veil, and are stuck wandering the forest for days or even weeks, eating up their supplies and scrounging for food. This will probably make the players good and mad, and could cause rifts between the grogs and their masters. If you're going to do this, go all the way, and play out these scenes in detail. Try to get everyone involved, since this option is likely to inspire a lot of angry character development.

Chapter Two

The Ruins of Calebais

This chapter concerns the inside of the fallen covenant, inhabited by the ferret-like Hrools, strange magical creatures, and the ghosts of many of the former residents. Evidence of its mad destruction is found all about, and while there are signs of its former grandeur, the beauty of Calebais is gone forever. Characters will find much to attract their interest amid the rubble, including exquisite sculpture, enigmatic artifacts, and the sordid and twisted tales of the dead. However, much of the covenant's great wealth has been lost; characters will have to search carefully to find the few treasures that remain and uncover the clues to what happened from beneath the dust of decades. The mood should emphasize increasing fear and brooding mystery, and the best story involves a fine balance between roleplaying with the ghosts and intrepidly exploring the ruins.

Before the characters make their way into the tunnels, there are a few facts that you should make sure the players know. Because of their association with the Order of Hermes, magi and those who serve them would take these things for granted, and emphasizing them will help to bring the most mysterious aspects of the tale of Calebais into sharp relief.

- I. Magi are not allowed to spy on each other with magic. The Code to which every wizard swears states that scrying upon the affairs of other magi is strictly forbidden and punishable by death. This is difficult to regulate, though, since only the wizard who is so violated is aware of it (and not even then, if the spell is powerful enough), and it is very difficult to figure out who was responsible without scrying in return. But Quaesitors investigating a Hermetic crime are allowed to ignore this rule, and so magi who are inclined to break the law must be careful that they leave no evidence that can be magically discovered later. (It is probably this fact more than any other that kept the magi from attacking each other for so long, and why Mormulus's Veil caused such chaos; it led the wizards who began the conflict to believe that they could get away with murder, for they thought no one could ever prove what they had done. If they had considered more carefully, they

might have realized there are many other methods to reveal their crimes — methods that the characters might employ during their expedition — but they were anxious to take advantage of Ornath's recent departure and acted rashly.)

- II. Magi rarely slay each other, preferring to resolve their differences through certamen, the non-lethal wizard's duel. When they do commit violence upon each other, it is always under very strict conditions — a challenge issued during the full moon, a month of preparation, the conflict itself lasting only a month, and so on — and these conventions are strictly enforced by the Order of Hermes. The customary punishment for killing another magus outside of these conditions is death. (The scale of violence among magi that happened at Calebais is unthinkable, almost inconceivable. It is not surprising that Hermetic investigators would have concluded that the covenant must have been the victim of a powerful and diabolical curse. In a sense, it was, for the diadems have a dangerous side effect that was also partially responsible for their fall.)
- III. Most wizards have a sanctum, designated by a warning mark at the entrance. If a wizard enters a sanctum belonging to another, it may be taken as evidence that the transgressor intended harm. Therefore, slaying a wizard found in your sanctum is generally considered an act of self-defense, and many magi protect their private quarters with deadly magical traps and guardians. Such places, even in a deserted covenant, can be very dangerous to enter. (For a long time, before hostilities broke out, intruders into their sanctums were the only outlets the magi had to practice their destructive magic. Vestiges of these spells remain to harm those who explore what is left of the labs.)
- IV. Strange things can happen in magical places. A magical aura can alter things, living and dead, magical and mundane, and the characters cannot have any sure idea of what to expect. Because of this, as storyguide you have license to freely suspend the natural laws of Mythic Europe and circumvent the rules of the game when they do not support the story you are telling. (This fact may help players develop a stronger sense of fear and wonder within the broken covenant.)

Magic in the Ruins

Once one descends into the ruins of Calebais, there is a Magic 5 aura. As in the forest above, though, all Intellego Imaginem and Intellego Mentem effects anywhere on the hilltop or in the covenant are reduced by 60 spell levels, effectively canceling them, as the Veil of Mormulus covers the entire area. This means that common spells like *Whispers Through the Black Gate*, *Prying Eyes*, or *Thoughts Within Babble* will simply fail without providing any information.

Inside Calebais

The interior of the covenant shows evidence of incredible destruction. Rubble, scorch marks, broken weaponry, and bones litter the floors. Nearly all of the wood in the covenant, including doors and furniture, has been burned or smashed apart. The stone walls and even sections of the ceilings bear many cracks and holes, especially in the lower levels. Pools of water have formed in various depressions throughout the rooms.

In most areas, the ceilings are between eight and ten feet high, though some of the corridors are only seven feet high. There is about five feet of solid rock between levels, with magical reinforcement where necessary. While many of the walls were once covered with beautiful tapestries, their deterioration causes voices to sound hollow and echo ominously. The dank air is laden with moisture and heavy with rot.

Originally, the covenant was heated and lit by magical devices that made sections of the ceiling glow like the morning sun. Carved periodically along the tops of the walls in most areas of the covenant is the shape of a flaming phoenix, set seamlessly into the stone, the rock bright with inner fire. These engravings still shine in many of the rooms of the covenant, though moss also grows over them and blocks out some of the light. Smashing apart these devices ends their effects.

The major denizens of Calebais are the Hrools, and evidence of them is everywhere. In most rooms where Hrools travel, there is a powerful odor of musk, and trails of them walking or crawling through the dust. Characters might find clumps of their droppings buried in piles of rubble. The Hrools only travel to the first few levels to hunt, so there will be no more than glimpses of them until the explorers go deeper, but characters might repeat-

edly hear shuffling footsteps or sniffing ahead or behind them, and on the lower levels the characters will be brazenly approached and challenged.

Magical, gray-green moss grows almost everywhere, covering the walls and ceilings. In areas where magic was practiced often, such as wizards' laboratories, it grows profusely. It is an excellent source of *Herbam vis*, though the amount that characters must gather to produce one pawn (about five rooms' worth) is prohibitive for exploratory expeditions. An armload of moss is an adequate meal for a human-sized creature, tasting a bit like dry bread or mushrooms when compacted into a solid loaf.

On the upper levels, the rats eat as much of the moss as they can reach, leaving clear a small stripe along the bottom of the walls. On the lower levels, the Hrools collect it to feed their livestock. Because of this, it is found growing most densely in areas where small animals cannot reach, such as high along the ceilings and in labs that are still guarded. Be sure to point out the abundance or lack of moss in different rooms so that you can appreciate the players' attempts to fathom its significance.

The vermin of the tunnels can also be heard if one listens quietly. Bats flutter about in the well, and there are many rat warrens dug into the rubble along the walls of the upper levels. Cobwebs hang in undisturbed areas or cover unused doorways. The aura and their magical diet has affected many of these creatures, making them preternaturally large and vicious, and the Hrools have basically abandoned the seventh level to those creatures that have grown too large for them to handle.

The Hrools

Hrools are ferret-like creatures about the size of toddlers or small dogs that inhabit the ruins of Calebais and possess human intelligence. The maga lerimyra brought them to the covenant years before the Sundering and enhanced them with specialized magic (see the Appendix). For a time, they served as her personal guards, much to the disgruntlement of the other wizards and grogs, and in fact lerimyra had grandiose plans (or a fateful vision) that one day her children would "rule" the entire covenant.

Hrools sleep a long time, about fifteen hours a day, and therefore many of them may be taken by surprise if caught in their dens. They post guards for this reason. When frightened, or just after they wake, Hrools tremble visibly. They make interesting clucking, chuckling sounds when excited, and hiss loudly when angry. They also spray a thick, foul-smelling scent to mark their territory or to scare away enemies, and characters fighting them or traveling through their living areas should make periodic

Stamina checks against an Ease Factor of 3, or 6 in particularly strongly-smelling areas, or suffer penalties to their actions because of the powerful odor. In general, those penalties should not exceed -1, unless a character botches the Stamina roll.

Like most animals, Hrools can sense The Gift and it disturbs them. Magi quite literally make their fur bristle and set their teeth on edge. While they might revere some wizards as benevolent, like Ierimyra, they know of others like Pitsdim who are capable of great destruction and evil. If they sense The Gift, or especially the Blatant Gift, they will naturally assume characters fall into this second category and attack immediately, or bolt in terror if battle seems hopeless. Under no circumstances will they help or trust magi who do not have the Gentle Gift.

When Calebais fell, the Hrools forgot most of what they had learned about civilization and reverted to their more feral nature. Many Hrools were slain out of malice by the grogs and magi, and many more died trying to protect Ierimyra. Enough remained, however, to repopulate the covenant after everyone else had died or fled. They retain their ability to reason, they still use tools and weapons, and a few have limited magical powers, all of which appear to be hereditary. A Hrool's lifespan is short — usually about twenty years — and several generations have been born and died since they were introduced to Calebais.

A few of the Hrools can speak Latin, though it has become garbled by years of isolation and their limited vocabulary. The rest of them speak Hrool when they speak at all, which sounds something like growling and barking in the local language. Characters fluent in that language might understand a few words

of their chatter, but will find it almost impossible to speak their dialect understandably.

Due to their increasing numbers and their violent, scrappy nature, the Hrools have split into several semi-autonomous groups, usually led by the albinos ("ermines"), who have white fur instead of brown or black, and inherent magical powers. The main group of Hrools remains in the warrens that Ierimyra built for them, where they raise domesticated rats in a sort of primitive stockyard community. Another smaller group has set up camp in the banquet hall on level three, from which they hunt the rats on the upper levels and make occasional forays into the wood. A final group broke away to occupy the indoor garden on level five, and lives on the bats that nest in the cracks of the well. About a dozen independent Hrools keep the remaining vermin under control, ranging throughout the covenant individually or in small groups, and all groups occasionally make foraging sorties to the other levels.

Combat is a matter of status among the Hrools. Small groups of satyrs from the faerie forest occasionally raid the covenant, and the Hrools take great pride in slaying them. The ermines fashion totem necklaces for the warriors, and they attach the satyrs' horns to these as a symbol of their prowess. Thus, the strongest warriors among the Hrool have the most satyr horns, and while most have only one or two, a few have as many as four or five. These champions usually claim any magical heirlooms that the Hrools have scavenged through the years.

The ermine Hrools do not wear necklaces. Most of them wear diadems connected to the Bell of Ibyn, and they use these to

Adult Hrool

Magic Might: 5 (Animal)

Characteristics: Int +2, Per +2, Pre -2, Com -3, Str -2, Sta +2, Dex +1, Qik +2

Size: -3

Confidence: 1 (3)

Personality Traits: Curious +3, Tricky +2

Combat:

Bite: Init +4, Attack +5, Defense +5, Damage -1

Stone (thrown): Init +0, Attack +3, Defense +5, Damage +2

Soak: +3

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-2), -3 (3-4), -5 (5-6), Incapacitated (7-8)

Abilities: Animal Handling 4 (rats), Athletics 3 (climbing),

Awareness 3 (sentry), Brawl 2 (grapples), Speak Hrool 3

(directions), Swim 3 (diving), Stealth 3 (hide), Thrown Weapons 2 (rocks)

Vis: 1 Animal

Appearance: Adult Hrools look like ferrets or weasels, but larger than normal, alternating between crawling on all fours and walking like humans on their hind legs, and wearing sorry attempts at clothing fashioned from torn cloth and dirty rags. They have an excellent sense of smell and good hearing, often standing still and listening for unusual sounds in the dark corridors.

Note: Adult Hrools are used to working in groups, and in combat they can band together under an ermine's or champion's leadership, giving up to five of them a +10 bonus, usually to defense.

Warrior Hrool

Magic Might: 5 (Animal)

Characteristics: Int -2, Per +1, Pre -2, Com -3, Str -1, Sta +3, Dex +2, Qik +3

Size: -3

Confidence: 1 (3)

Personality Traits: Brave +3, Protective +2

Combat:

Axe (stone): Init +2, Attack +8, Defense +10, Damage +7

Bite: Init +5, Attack +8, Defense +8, Damage +0

Club: Init +0, Attack +7, Defense +10, Damage +5

Short Spear: Init +4, Attack +7, Defense +8, Damage +3

Javelin (thrown): Init +0, Attack +7, Defense +4, Damage +7

Stone (thrown): Init +1, Attack +4, Defense +5, Damage +3

Soak: +4

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-2), -3 (3-4), -5 (5-6), Incapacitated (7-8)

Abilities: Athletics 3 (climbing), Awareness 1, Brawl 4 (grapple), Hunt 3 (rats), Leadership 2 (combat), Single Weapon 4 (club), Speak Hrool 2 (orders), Stealth 1, Swim 3 (diving), Thrown Weapons 1 (rocks)

Vis: 2 Corpus in each satyr horn, 1 Animal

Appearance: Warrior Hrools look like regular adult Hrools who have been put through a training program. They are stronger and meaner, with darker coats, wielding wooden clubs made from fallen tree branches or stone axes. They wear necklaces strung with satyr horns around their necks.

Note: Warrior Hrools are used to fighting in trained groups of 3-5 under the leadership of their champion or an ermine. This means the group receives a +12 combat bonus to either attack or defense.

Ermine Hrool

Magic Might: 18 (Animal)

Characteristics: Int +2, Per +3, Pre +1, Com -2, Str -4, Sta +1, Dex +2, Qik +2

Size: -3

Confidence: 1 (3)

Personality Traits: Prudent +2, Loyal -3

Combat:

Bite: Init +4, Attack +6, Defense +5, Damage -3

Soak: +2

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-2), -3 (3-4), -5 (5-6), Incapacitated (7-8)

Abilities: Athletics 2 (climbing), Awareness 1, Brawl 2 (grapple), Concentration 3 (rock sculpting), Craft (sculpture) 3, Finesse 3 (Terram), Hrool 4 (giving orders), Latin 2 (insults), Leadership 4 (combat), Penetration 2 (Rego), Swim 2

Powers:

Sculpt the Mystic Rock, 1 point, +0, Terram: With careful concentration, an ermine Hrool can change rock into clay while digging at it or sculpting it into a primitive shape.

Wielding the Invisible Sling, 1 point, +5, Terram: Ermine Hrools can magically throw a small stone at a target, causing +5 damage, or +12 if the stone has been specially sharpened. The Hrools keep many of these stones at hand, marked with their special symbols for war and magic.

Banish the Haunting Spirit, 3 points, +0, Mentem: By standing on their hind legs and hissing, ermine Hrools can drive away a ghost with a Might of 15 or less. They can also work together, so that two of them can drive away a ghost with up to 20 Might, and three can affect those with 25. Ghosts cannot stand the sound of their hissing, and must flee the room or vanish when they use this power.

Vis: 3 Rego

Appearance: Ermine Hrools are leaner and spindlier than their weasel-like counterparts, with pure white fur and pink eyes. Many wear golden wire crowns bent around their heads, with a green gemstone shaped like an eye at their foreheads. They wear almost comical attempts at wizard robes gnawed from tattered tapestry remains, and wrap rings of bark or sculpted stone around their claws or through holes poked in their ears.

occasionally lead their tribe through the Veil to hunt birds (a rare delicacy) and find wood. The Hrools have lost almost all of their original armaments to breakage and time, so now they use tree limbs scrounged from the forest as clubs. The ermine Hrools also have some magical ability to shape rocks, which some Hrools have learned to tie to wooden handles and use as tools or weapons.

Hrools from different groups often have territorial fights, but these conflicts rarely end in bloodshed. If they spot intruders, they will attack raucously but will flee if seriously threatened. Years of fighting experience has taught them where to ambush their opponents and some very good battle tactics. It may be easy for a group of stout warriors to fend off even a large number of Hrools in the corridors, because the Hrools are proficient at using their superior mobility to retreat until they have the advantage from terrain or reinforcements. A common ploy is to send small groups to attack the characters from the flanks or rear. Groups of Hrool can move surprisingly quickly, and their scurrying can be heard even climbing up and down the well.

They act differently when defending their homes, however. There, they will liberally use Confidence to represent their ferocity, and fight without regard for casualties or pain. Those who intend to challenge them must take into account not only their cleverness but also their spirit. They scream barely intelligible threats and intimidate their attackers with heinous and desperate acts of violence. They spit and curse and bite opponents in the face, even attacking their opponents' weapons to break them. The Hrools have such a strong loathing for people who attack dens that other tribes might even hear their cries and come to their aid.

If a battle is taking place near the well (in the garden or in front of Ierimyra's quarters, for example), two or three adult Hrools will charge their opponents and try to push them in, riding along for the plunge into the water. Then they simply dive down to the submerged rooms and swim back up through the flooded stairways, as they can hold their breath for several minutes at a time. This tactic is an effective action for the non-warrior Hrools to use, as they can fight as a group to receive a bonus to their attack. They can also throw rocks or try to trip up characters by sneaking around behind them and clawing at their clothing or rifling through their packs.

Elementals

Some of the wizards at Calebais practiced magic that allowed them to bind spirits into physical objects, and Mormulus's Veil is one example of this. Other magi at the covenant experimented with similar forms of sorcery before their demise, and left behind

several creatures known as "elementals," so called within the Order because they are typically made from one of the four elements: water, air, fire, or earth. These raw materials are magically animated with a supernatural presence that might be called alive, or at least aware. While rules for summoning and controlling these creatures are beyond the scope of this adventure, here are some guidelines for dealing with those that the characters might encounter.

Firstly, as elementals are magical, they can be dispelled. A *Perdo Vim* spell, or *Perdo* with the appropriate Form, will decrease an elemental's Might just as *Demon's Eternal Oblivion* affects a demon or *Lay to Rest the Haunting Spirit* affects a ghost, eventually destroying the animating force and leaving the body an empty shell. Similarly, elementals may be warded away with *Rego* (Form), essentially creating magical versions of *Ward Against Faeries of the Waters* (et al) or *Circular Ward Against Demons*.

Secondly, elementals are bound to the physical realm by the material which gives them form. Breaking apart an elemental body has the same effect as dismembering flesh: cause enough damage and the being is destroyed. This can be done with physical attacks, pummeling or cutting apart an elemental, or by using *Perdo* magic with the appropriate Form to damage it. Warding against attacks or taking control of this material is also possible with *Rego*. Use the Animal guidelines for suggested effects of the different Techniques at different spell levels.

Finally, as each of the elements naturally opposes the others, so elementals may be disrupted with other elements, much like medieval doctors affect a bodily humor by manipulating its opposite. For example, *Creo Ignem* can cause water to evaporate, and *Creo Aquam* can extinguish flames. These effects can also be duplicated with *Muto* in the elemental's Form; *Muto Terram* can turn earth into dust, and *Muto Auram* can disperse a storm. Treat each of these spells as *Perdo* effects of half their level when determining how much damage they cause an elemental.

Like any magically animated thing, elementals have an inexplicable sense of their surroundings. That is, while they cannot see or hear (they have no eyes or ears), part of the magic that binds them allows them to perceive their environment. How elementals do this might be characterized by their element: earth and air elementals sense movement across the ground or through the air, while fire and water elementals sense changes in temperature. As long as they are within their element, they are considered part of that element and can sense everything foreign that comes into contact with it.

When elementals are summoned and bound, they are given a purpose. This is the essence of their existence; it is all that they do. The commands can be simple, such as "guard this room," or

more complex, such as "obey my instructions." They have no mind, so they cannot reason or become frightened, and if they somehow break their bonds, like a deluge or an avalanche they will proceed to destroy whatever is in their path. Elementals without purpose are simply powerful forces of nature unleashed.

Elementals that are defeated (but not dispelled) may leave behind raw vis appropriate to their form.

Ghosts

Calebais is haunted by the ghosts of many of its former inhabitants, disembodied spirits still confined to earth because of their actions in life, or because of a supernatural desire to complete some task left unfinished. Many ghosts are dark, sinister souls, living tormented existences beside the physical world without being able to affect it in any real way. They are often confused, sometimes violently insane, and may hate and fear the living or take pleasure in making others share their suffering. Others may be of good heart and seek only to put right what their passing made wrong, or were made ghosts simply because they lived too long in a magical aura. Ghosts are as individual as living beings, and each has its own distinct personality.

The appearance of ghosts can also vary, from seeming completely substantial, so real that they even feel solid, to a luminous haze in the air with only vague similarities to the human form. All ghosts at Calebais can become invisible at will, hidden from those who cannot perceive the spirit world, but only a few come close to a state resembling solidity; most remain translucent and rippled, like a reflection in deep water. As they spend their Might Pool, they also lose their clarity, fading away completely when exhausted.

Apart from coming to terms with their non-corporeal nature, ghosts cannot learn or change; they are trapped with the mindset and skills they had when they died. They may be able to teach others some of what they knew, but the distance of the grave combined with the difficulty of maintaining their existence means that they tend to forget what they are doing very easily. Characters studying from a ghost must start over each day, reintroducing themselves every time. This will be frustrating for the characters and for the ghost, and should be more trouble than it is worth.

Many ghosts do not realize they are dead, and refuse to believe those who say that they are. Only ghosts who accept their nature and have become used to their incorporeal forms can move through solid walls, ignore Fatigue penalties or wounds, or in any way act as if they were not living, breathing humans. Ghosts are solid to one another, of course, and interact in all



ways as if they were flesh and blood. For most ghosts, the physical world is as real as ever, except that people seem to play tricks on them or do not always see them.

Ghostly magi can also cast spells, just as they did in life. The ghosts of Calebais are described with some spells to represent their specialties, to give you ideas of what they might do, but they also have suggested Arts for spontaneous magic, and you should give them other spells that you think that they would have learned before death. These spells are not physical and cannot affect the physical world, but they are realistic illusions. A *Perdo Corpus* spell might cause a flash of pain, while a *Creo Aquam* spell might cause a powerful chill as ghostly waters rush past. However, *Imaginem*, *Mentem*, and *Vim* magics still affect the living normally, as can some *Animal* (animal minds) and *Ignem* (light) effects.

Most ghosts also have some sort of magical power to affect the physical world, even if it is only a mundane activity appropriate to their duties and desires in life. Ghostly magi typically have the power to make their spells "real," affecting the living as if their magic were cast in the flesh. These powers often cost them some of their Magic Might to activate, but they gain this back over time, and a day is typically sufficient to bring them back to full strength. If they lose all their temporary Might points, or are injured or killed by magic or other ghosts, they will return after

a day or so, as whole as before, with no memory of what happened. Permanently destroying a ghost is extremely difficult.

However, every ghost has fetters that bind it to life. When ghosts deal with the tasks they left unfinished, or address whatever circumstances prevent them from passing on, they fade away forever. This should be a very rare occurrence, worthy of more than a simple declaration; you should describe the process in detail, portraying a vivid event. A ghost leaving the confines of the mortal world is an awe-inspiring affair. Treat this scene with the reverence it deserves, and make it memorable.

When they pass on, ghosts can leave raw vis behind. This vis is often as ghostly as they were, tied to a spiritual memento of the haunting, though there are magical ways to harvest this vis. A Muto Mentem spell with a physical requisite can make the item and the vis temporarily solid. Rego Mentem can transport ghostly objects, and Rego Vim can siphon the vis into some other container. Finally, even if they cannot move it, magi can always use ghostly vis simply by touching it.

Voices in the Dark

The ruins of Calebais abound with fearful sights and sounds. There are ample opportunities to check the characters' courage by making Brave Personality trait rolls. Depending on the circumstances, anything less than a 6+ might cause characters to hesitate or falter, and botches might cause them to flee in terror. Fear can take many forms, and remember that without fear to overcome, there cannot be true bravery.

There are also many opportunities throughout the ruins for players to make Perception + Awareness rolls. As they may come to rely on the solid information they receive from success, knowing when they have botched or rolled low, you might want to roll for them, or have them make Personality checks at the same time. If they lose heart while peering into dark corners and sifting through ancient graves, color the information they receive accordingly.

The central well serves as a sounding box for a myriad of sounds made by the inhabitants of the ruins. These noises should serve to remind the characters that there are things moving through these ruins all the time, and that while there may be nothing in their current location, they are not necessarily safe. Whenever the action slows down, or the players are just talking among themselves, have the characters make rolls to hear something strange and enigmatic reverberate through the tunnels. Here are some examples, though you should feel free to invent other sounds as you think appropriate.

- I. Barkish laughter, often a hideous cacophony of many voices (Hrools)
- II. Gruntlike sniffing and soft shuffling footsteps nearby (Hrools)
- III. The rhythmic pitter-patter of drops falling into a pool of water
- IV. Pitiful wailing and crying echoing up from the bottom of the well (Althea)
- V. Low-pitched, tremulous growls (Igack)
- VI. A distant or nearby explosion, and the crackling of flames (Pitsdim)
- VII. Maniacal laughter (Pitsdim)
- VIII. The flapping of many wings (bats, especially at dusk)
- IX. Splashing noises far below (rocks shifting from level seven)
- X. Distant cries of "Gemaric! Gemaric!" (Josephine)
- XI. Screams of rage (David)
- XII. A low-pitched moan from above (wind blowing past the mouth of the well)
- XIII. Scratching noises inside the walls (rats)
- XIV. Snatches of hauntingly beautiful singing (Mormulus)
- XV. Deep rumbling noises and tremors (the Undertakers)
- XVI. Sounds of yelling and stone breaking (Paulo)
- XVII. Powerful winds blowing up and down the well
- XVIII. A flute whistle, playing a steady tone
- XIX. The soft ringing of a bell (guard post on level six)
- XX. Carousing grogs, mournfully singing an off-key air in the distance
- XXI. A hollow, dejected sigh, from somewhere very close

Also, whenever a person dies, even only a grog, describe a dull, toneless clang that echoes through the covenant. This is the Bell of Ibyn, but the characters will be unable to pinpoint the sound's exact origin.

Free-Moving Encounters

Some of the inhabitants of Calebais are given definite locations where they may be found, but since most are free to move about, you may have them appear wherever and whenever your story demands it. If the characters draw attention to themselves, or the game is moving slowly, bring in a free-moving encounter. Below is a list of events that could take place in a variety of locations throughout the ruins and can be used at your discretion. Not all of them are necessary, but you might note the ones you definitely want to include for future use. Don't let this list limit your imagination if you have other ideas.

- I. One of the ghosts, or even a group of ghosts, confronts the party.
- II. A curious lone Hrool stalks the characters. Perhaps it's a pup, and not as good at remaining hidden as the others.
- III. During an encounter with a ghost, either a friendly one or a threatening one, a small party of Hrools with their ermine leader charges onto the scene, screeching and using its power to drive the ghost away.
- IV. The characters come upon two groups of Hrools, each gathered in an opposing line to watch their champion warrior brawl. They immediately stop what they are doing when they see the characters, and charge them with a guttural whoop.
- V. Wandering Hrools begin to follow the party, fleeing if challenged, slowly increasing in number until the group is large enough to attack. Attempts to communicate with them might be successful, while shows of force might frighten them off.
- VI. The characters find an abandoned Hrool that was incapacitated during a fight. It snarls fiercely at the characters, and its howls might bring other Hrools to investigate the commotion if it is attacked.
- VII. When the characters look down the well into the water, they see a bright, luminous creature undulating around the dragon. (This is probably Dargaud, climbing around on the statue.)
- VIII. The characters are losing a fight with a large number of Hrools when Ierimyra enters. The Hrools stop fighting to worship her, giving the characters a chance to escape. If any of the Hrools have been killed, Ierimyra will cry loudly and piteously, mourning the deaths of her children and making other ghosts very uncomfortable, since she never wept when she was alive.
- IX. The sounds of combat attract a particular ghost, or perhaps all three at once: David, to lead the battle; Ferdina, to stop the fighting; or Pitsdim, to join in.
- X. David comes to the magi characters to report that there is great fighting and confusion and that he is requesting new orders. He will also demand that the grog characters report to him for duty. Later, he may suddenly realize that he doesn't recognize the characters and decide that they are intruders, ordering the grogs (using his special ability) to apprehend them.
- XI. During a battle, Ferdina arrives and orders everyone to stop fighting, desperately pleading with them to stop if they continue anyway. It is likely that no one takes any notice of her until after the fight is over, since she is barely able to watch the bloody scene. If David is present and begins to demean her authority, she talks frantically and loudly over his comments.
- XII. The characters are getting along well with a ghost when Pitsdim shows up and launches a huge fireball at the room.

It doesn't hurt the living, but the ghost is slain (to return later with no memory of the event).

- XIII. Dargaud comes creeping through the covenant from one of the lower levels, looking for his master Erechtheus or one of the covenfolk to torment. He sees the characters, and decides to stealthily follow them to discover what they are doing here.
- XIV. A character searching through the rubble disturbs a copper-colored centipede over a foot long. The character must make a Quickness + Athletics - Encumbrance roll against an Ease Factor of 9 to get out of the way before being bitten. The poison has an Ease Factor of 6, and causes a Medium Wound. The centipede scampers back into the debris after delivering its bite.
- XV. While moving a tapestry, pile of wood, or a large curtain of webs blocking a doorway, the characters disturb a nest of spiders, more than a dozen of them, each one the size of a man's fist. Frightened, they crawl chaotically about the room, even over people, before fleeing into the corners, giving the characters (and, one hopes, the players) fits and a nasty scare.
- XVI. Large rats, big enough to come up to the characters' ankles, made brave with hunger, creep out of a hole in the wall and attack the characters or the Hrools, trying to bite them. After drawing blood, they retreat into the shadows. Later, injured characters might find their wounds have become infected.
- XVII. A group of three satyrs from the faerie forest raid the covenant and attack, drunk on wine and unable to recognize or interact with the characters in any way but to fight. Hrools arrive during the battle, brutally counter-attacking the faeries with surprising efficiency and skill.
- XVIII. At sunset, a huge flock of bats flies out of their nests in the well, and out through the opening into the darkening sky. Watching the cloud rise across the horizon like a column of black smoke is ominous and eerie if seen from the outside or one of the balconies.

The Entrance

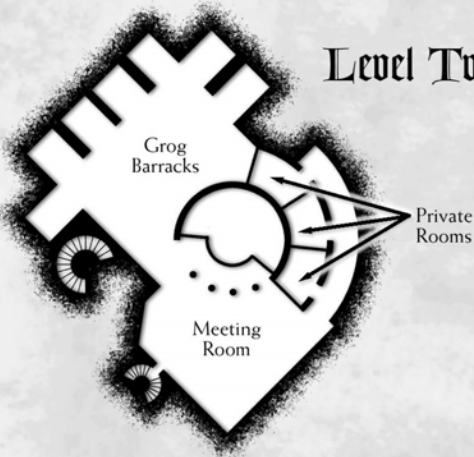
The dryad leads the characters up a steep trail, which crests the hill and passes between two great crags, then descends a few feet and levels off. All that is visible from the surface of the ruins is a pit, 30 feet in diameter, circled by a 10 foot wide band of paved rock. Six large oak trees grow around the sides, concealing it from viewers in the air or on the surrounding hilltops. A wide set of stairs is cut into the rock at the edge, extending into the hilltop, not into the well.

The Ruins of Calebais

Level One



Level Two



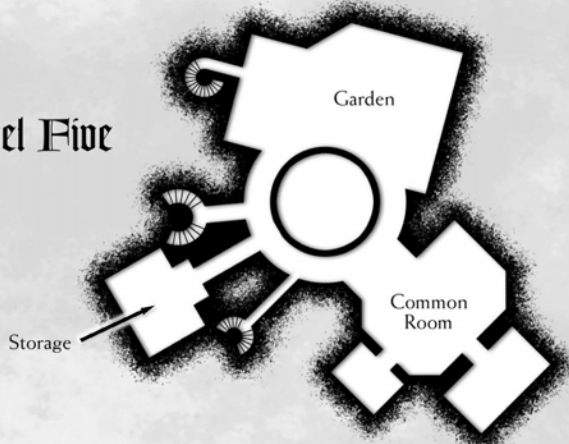
Level Three



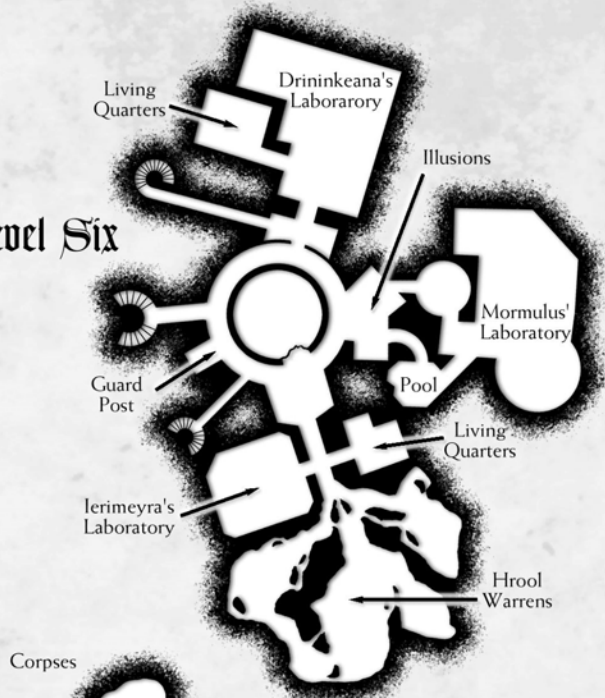
Level Four



Level Five



Level Six



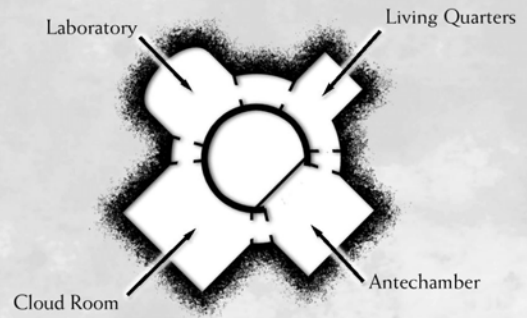
Level Seven



Level Eight



Level Nine



A WARNING

Sitting directly in front of these stairs is a two-foot high, four foot square, roughly hewn stone slab (sloped up away from the stairs), onto which is carved the following message signed by Ornath, follower of Guernicus, Quaesitor.

The Warning

OMITTETE HAS RUINAS EXSECRABILIS

(ob-MEET-tay-tay HOSS roo-EEN-abs eck-SEHK-rah-BEEL-ees)

"Let these cursed ruins be."

ET MANDATE MANEM AD
SUAM FATUM PROPRIAM

*(et MAHN-dab-tay MAH-name odd
SOO-abm FAHT-oom PROH-pee-abm)*

"And leave the dead to their well-earned fate."

BACKGROUND: A WARNING

After investigating what had become of Calebais, and convincing his fellow Quaesitors that some diabolical curse had affected the covenant in his absence, Ornath left this marker in the hope that it would dissuade people from entering. He feared that others might aid the ghosts, or free them from their torment, and he preferred that they suffer here as long as possible.

THE DRAGON

When the characters first look down the deep well (180 feet total), they see an eerie, muted, yellow light at the bottom, shining up from a strange, coiling design in silhouette. If they look more carefully, have them make a Perception + Awareness roll. On a 9+, characters see that there is water at the bottom; at 12+ they recognize the coiling design as serpent-like; 15+ lets them see bubbles coming out of the water from the mouth of the creature; and at 18+ they can see that it is probably a statue. You may want to roll the dice for the players and let them know privately what they see. This is about the right time to start building a sense of mystery about the ruins, so keeping the players unsure of what is happening is a good idea. If any characters botch, they suffer a powerful sense of vertigo from staring into the long drop and may even lose their balance; roll Dexterity + Athletics - Encumbrance and use the severity of the botch to

determine the difficulty of remaining on their feet. If they fail to either catch themselves or grab the ledge, they fall; from here it is 140 feet to the waterline.

Falling into the Well

If any characters fall into the well, they will plummet down the long shaft into the water. This is actually the best outcome, since the water will cushion some of the damage. If a character slips and falls from a ledge, he or she might be able to land on one of the other ledges, such as the large balconies on levels two, three, seven and nine. You can look at the maps to determine if the character would fall near a ledge, and allow a Dexterity + Athletics roll to see if the character can make it. There is about 15 feet between each floor, so if you use this option, calculate the distance accordingly, and remember that landing on a hard surface doubles the damage.

Falling characters take one point of damage per two feet fallen, doubled if they hit a ledge, halved if they hit the water, or negated if they make a Dexterity + Swim roll of 12+ (diving). For example, if a character slips from the very top, he would fall 140 feet, taking +35 damage from a relatively soft landing in the water. If he instead landed on level three, he would only fall 45 feet, but take +45 damage from the solid impact.

Characters may be able to climb out of the water in the bottom of the well to the ledge on level nine (see page 68), but remember that they might be hindered by armor. Swimming in chain mail is almost impossible; they will probably have to abandon their protection just to keep from drowning, assuming they aren't incapacitated by the fall.

There isn't much to see through the darkness while falling, though characters who can magically slow their descent or find some way to climb out of the depths might encounter one or more of the ghosts or a curious Hrool. If they fall relatively early, Paulo (see page 44) may witness the accident and rush to help them. Later, Pitsdim (page 66) may intimidate the characters from the other side of the arch on level eight, or they might catch a glimpse of the lush garden that spills out of the enormous windows on level five.

BACKGROUND: THE DRAGON

At the bottom of the well, now completely submerged, is a stone statue of a dragon. Flooding in the lower levels has made it completely inaccessible, and it sits beneath about 40 feet of water. The statue was carved for three reasons: 1) since the covenant design was based on a dragon burrow, the statue gives honor to the connection; 2) the powerful magical light that shines from its eyes once helped light the well from the bottom up; 3) the air magically emanating from the dragon's mouth provided fresh air to the lower tunnels.

If Sir Gilbert sees the dragon statue for what it is, he will be greatly disappointed and may become so despondent that he cannot continue.

OUTER BARRACKS AND STABLE

Parts of the two craggy outcroppings of rock that give the hill its name have been dug out, with cave entrances on the covenant side, shielded from sun and view from above by large overhangs. Characters probably won't notice these if they are focused on the entrance and the warning that stands before it.

The southeastern cave is one large room, covered in dust, with many overturned beds, tables and other pieces of metal and stone furniture, but no valuables. It does not appear to have been disturbed for many years, but was ransacked and emptied very thoroughly at one time. A few broken tools remain in one corner: rusted pickaxes without handles, a few cracked stone hammers, ripped leather hauberts, splintered lances, and an assortment of barrel rims amid a pile of hardened clay. A few small holes are cut at intervals into the northern and southern walls, large enough to let light into the cave or to fire arrows down the other side.

The cave to the southwest has been partially blocked with a barricade made of all manner of large, heavy pieces of rock and wooden beams. The large entryway is not difficult to clear if the characters are willing to spend the time, but doing so will earn them the attention and resentment of Dargaud, a ghostly young redcap who haunts this area.

DARGAUD

From the moment the characters step into the covenant environs, Dargaud will be watching them through the chinks in his painstakingly-fashioned screen. He will not interfere with them, and in fact they will probably have no idea he is there unless they disturb his barricade. Doing so will enrage him, and he will

dog their steps to learn who they are and what they are doing from that moment on. If he sees a good shot, he will throw a rock at them, but not so that it is obvious it was him. He still has the exuberance of youth, and enjoys a good challenge, but he is essentially capricious and spiteful.

Dargaud thinks he is an excellent hunter, and believes himself to be extremely good at hiding, so much so that he can walk right behind the characters without making a sound. In life, he had many magic items that made this easy. These items have since been destroyed, but because he has no image, only other ghosts or those with Second Sight can perceive him, and then only if they beat his Quickness + Stealth roll. He has no difficulty traveling through the water (for him, it isn't there), but when submerged he gains an eerie luminosity that perfectly outlines his shape. If spotted, he will abandon any pretense at sneaking, yelp comically, and flee.

He keeps his voting sigil nearby at all times, for it was this token that proved he was a full member of the wizards' council, even though he did not have the Gift and by tradition did not vote. His status as a redcap raised him higher than the other mundane



Dargaud, the Redcap

Magic Might: 11 (Mentem)

Characteristics: Int +5, Per +2, Pre 0, Com -2, Str -1, Sta +1, Dex 0, Qik +1

Age: 20

Size: -1

Personality Traits: Patient +3, Curious +2, Forgiving -2

Combat:

Fist and Kick: Init +0, Attack +1, Defense +1, Damage +2

Stone (thrown): Init -1, Attack +4, Defense +5, Damage +3

Soak: +1

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-4), -3 (5-8), -5 (9-12), Incapacitated (13-16)

Abilities: Athletics 4 (climbing), Awareness 3 (movement), Brawl 3, Guile 2 (lying to authority), Latin 5 (vocabulary), Local Language 5 (vocabulary), Order of Hermes Lore 3 (places), Ride 1, Stealth 4 (hiding), Survival 1, Thrown Weapons 3 (rocks)

Powers:

Kinesis, 1 point, +4, **Terram**: Dargaud can pick up a small physical object, no bigger than his head, and throw it. While he is holding it, the object becomes ghostly and invisible, but he can only hold one thing at a time because he holds his sigil in his other hand.

Vis: 2 Mentem in his voting sigil, if he learns the details of how he died

Appearance: Dargaud is completely insubstantial, and cannot be seen unless he is submerged in water, when he appears hazily as a bedraggled, mousy young man wearing the red cap of House Mercere. He never goes anywhere without his voting sigil, a small ordinary stone with a flat base and his name carved into the bottom.

Roleplaying Tips: If characters find a way to communicate with Dargaud, they will find him alert but almost unintelligible. He uses a great many words, with an amazing vocabulary, but none of them make any sense together. "Traversal boundless undersea lyceums without meticulousity," or "Where abrogate certamen equals extremist succedaneum." Slowly speak a sentence like this, throwing together whatever interesting words you can think of, and then while the characters are puzzling it over, have him throw a rock at them and try to run away.

What He Knows: Dargaud is aware that something is wrong with the covenant, but not what. He can act as a guide, as he knows the layout of the covenant well, but only as it was fifty years ago. If coerced, he can give vague descriptions of the magi, though he does not remember much about them. He was just an apprentice almost all of his life at Calebais, and rarely interacted with the other magi, since he only passed his Gauntlet a few weeks before the Sundering. He was given a diadem, but never participated in the Bell ritual.

men and women at the covenant (who hate him and will drive him off if they see him), and he abused his position terribly, ordering others to perform the simplest of tasks. He needs this reminder of his authority, and he will never willingly set it down.

Dargaud was hiding in the lower levels of the covenant when they flooded, and he drowned. His body lodged halfway up the escape shaft, and his ghost climbed out into the stables. He does not remember any of this, but he does have a nagging feeling that something unpleasant happened, and he doesn't want anyone to go down the tunnel. He needs to know why before he can be at peace. He doesn't recognize anything different about his surroundings — the covenant looks the same to him — but he does notice strangers like the characters, and he listens to what they say. He will pay special attention when they discuss the covenant, or things that he cannot perceive, such as Ornath's warning. If Dargaud learns that a magical tremor caused the flooding of the lower levels, and who was responsible, he will accept that he is dead and pass on.

This cave is shaped just like the other, only it is clear of debris and shows no signs of being inhabited. As in the other cave, there are several deep holes cut into the walls that act as windows to let the light in. The remains of a few collapsed stalls (pieces of fencing that were not incorporated into the barricade), a pair of damaged buckets, and a bald and discarded brush may reveal to the characters that this was a horse stable, but there is nothing of value remaining here for them to find.

At the very back of the room is a trap door, which has been extremely well-hidden. It is covered with about an inch of dirt and what was probably straw, and appears in all respects to be part of the floor. Only characters who are intensely searching have any chance of finding it, and then only on a Perception + Awareness roll against an Ease Factor of 15. Obviously, it hasn't been opened for decades, and it leads to a narrow shaft that is only large enough for one normal-sized person. Rough, uneven rungs are carved out of the stone, descending into darkness.

Second Sight

Characters with Second Sight may be able to see through all sorts of illusions and magical effects in Calebais. However, asking the players to make a Second Sight roll may give away some of the mysteries of the covenant, such as the fact that there are otherworldly features to be perceived. For example, if you have them roll to recognize that the figure behind the arrow slits is a ghost, they will probably think of him a ghost when they meet him later, even if they fail the roll. Instead, you might wish to note the characters' Second Sight scores, and then ask for Perception + Awareness rolls instead. You should then be able to calculate whether the characters see anything unusual because of their magical sight. The players will be alerted that there is something to see, but even that may serve to heighten the sense of paranoia that should be inherent in the idea of exploring magical ruins.

About thirty feet down, another tunnel branches off to the west. This leads to the base of Two Crag Hill, ending in a covered exit hatch masked by grasses and bushes on the other side of the forest, though still within the Veil. The ladder also continues down about a hundred feet, where it encounters the waterline, and continues far below that into the lower levels, though Dargaud's corpse is lodged in the way at a place where the shaft narrows a little, wearing a diadem. If the characters can travel underwater and want to move the body aside, feel free to invent what they discover at the bottom of the escape tunnel, as the flooded parts of the covenant are not part of this story.

STAIRWAY AND BRIDGE

Behind the slab with Ornath's warning at the main entrance, a stairway winds thirty feet down the side of the well. As the characters descend the stairs, they can see a line of arrow slits across the shaft from them. Perceptive characters might see the figure of a man in the archer's room beyond, and characters with



Premonitions might get the feeling they are being watched. This is Paulo, the ghost of one of the guards (see below).

At the bottom of the stairway, a dilapidated footbridge spans the well, scorched black in places, patched and reinforced with bones, vines and branches. It will creak and bow ominously when anyone crosses it. For each character, roll a simple die + Burden + (Size x 3). If two or more characters cross at the same time, add their rolls together. If the result is 12+, the bridge breaks and those on it fall into the central shaft, 125 feet from the water (see Falling into the Well, above).

ENTRANCE ROOM

A rubble-strewn entrance room lies beyond the crumbling bridge, on the other side of the ornate heavy doors, reinforced but left ajar. In its center sits a small, green marble fountain, four feet in diameter, now dry. Its centerpiece is a life-sized female statue pouring water from a basin. You may make a Perception + Awareness roll for each of the characters; on a 6+ they notice a

similarity to the dryad in the Veil. If any of the players ask about this possibility, they also notice the resemblance.

There are two short corridors leading from the entrance room to spiral staircases, and a large double door made of iron occupies the wall between them. The larger staircase is the wizards' staircase, and the smaller is the common staircase. A short flight of stairs in the far wall leads to the archers' room.

The corridor nearest the entrance, leading to the wizards' stair, is blocked by a large, carved boulder — flat on the bottom, round on the top — beneath which is the ancient skeleton of a Hrool. In the ceiling is a depression about the same size as the rock. The top and sides of the slab are partially covered by rubble. If a few minutes are spent clearing it away, the boulder is easy to crawl over.

Four feet in front of the stone are two large broken crown symbols, faintly glowing, one on the floor and one on the ceiling. If any character walks past those symbols without saying "regno vicem regis" (RAY-gnoh WEE-chaym RAY-geese, "I rule in place of kings"), a very loud boom sounds. (If the boulder trap were reset, it would fall a few seconds later.) Ghosts and Hrools may be attract-

Paulo

Magic Might: 21 (Mentem)

Characteristics: Int -3, Per +2, Pre 0, Com -3, Str +4, Sta +2, Dex +2, Qik +1

Age: 39

Personality Traits: Loyal +3, Determined +2, Hopeful -2

Combat:

War hammer: Init +1, Attack +13, Defense +10, Damage +18

Short Bow: Init -1, Attack +11, Defense +4, Damage +12

Soak: +7

Abilities: Athletics 5 (stairs), Awareness 5 (guarding), Bow 4 (short bow), Brawl 4 (wrestling), Carouse 4 (songs), Great Weapon 6 (smashing stone), Latin 2 (listening), Local Language 3 (listening), Single Weapon 5 (long sword), Stealth 3 (shadowing), Thrown Weapon 5 (javelin)

Powers:

Smash Stone, 1 point, +1, Terram: Causes stone to weaken and crack when hit with his hammer.

Equipment: War hammer, short bow, metal reinforced armor (half).

Encumbrance: 0 (3)

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

Vis: 4 Mentem in his ghostly war hammer, if he does a good deed for the covenant.

Appearance: Paulo is a very strong, broad-shouldered man in heavy leather armor and a metal helmet that covers his head like a hat, wielding a large hammer. He is determined and slow-witted, and deeply sad. He is also a ghost, though it is not easy to see this at first glance.

Roleplaying Tips: Sway back and forth when you speak, standing ready for anything. Be distrustful, but very respectful of magi. Nod a lot even if you don't understand, and never do anything you could not do if you were a real person. With little or no provocation, suddenly become very angry and begin smashing walls. As characters get to know Paulo, they should come to expect this behavior.

What He Knows: Very little. He knows the difference between the two staircases, and that the wizards live on the lower levels. He does what his bosses tell him. Crenvalus once told him to watch the entrance, so he watches the entrance. He doesn't know where everyone else is. Those in authority he obeys, those who threaten the covenant he attacks.

ed to the boom and some of the Hrools may even set up an ambush at the bottom of this staircase on the third floor. Most of the ghosts habitually mutter the password when they go into this stairway, even though they no longer need to.

The ghost of Paulo is on this level, continuing the guard duties that occupied him in life. By the time the characters reach the entrance hall, unless they are extraordinarily sneaky, he has seen them and has hidden in the corridor leading to the common staircase. It has not occurred to him that the characters are intruders, though he thinks they might oppose his master, Crenvalus, so he watches them from a distance. He will retreat if they move to take the common staircase, or follow them if they take the wizards' stairs.

PAULO

Paulo is a warrior grog, extremely strong but passive. Presently, he wanders about, mournful and sad, lamenting in monosyllabic grunts the end of his days as the strongest grog of the covenant, when he proudly served his master Crenvalus. Paulo mumbles a lot but also screams sometimes; he has seemingly forgotten how

to speak, though if he must he will warble in a strange singsong manner, as if his voice were long out of practice.

Like many of the ghosts at the covenant, Paulo does not realize he is dead, and it is his stubborn determination and refusal to see this fact that keeps him here. He becomes very agitated when he is forced to recognize there is something wrong, and thus repeatedly undergoes strange mood swings: listless and not quite sure where he is one minute, angry and violent the next. When unoccupied, he fades into invisibility, disappearing into the shadows and muttering to himself, but when he finds a task he reappears and charges into action with a mighty cry of determination.

His main armament is a large hammer, with which he periodically hits the walls of the covenant when he is upset, actually causing them to crumble. He might become infuriated with the characters and smash walls and such around him in order to scare or harm them or even to block off their avenues of retreat. It costs him some of his Might each time he does this, and it takes about five blows to completely seal off a corridor. Other than this form of attack, he cannot hurt the characters, though he can fight other ghosts.

The Fountain

The fountain is a powerful magical artifact; it is the device that binds the dryad who powers the Veil of Mormulus to the covenant. It is extremely heavy, and not at all easy to move, as it is attached to the floor with thick, iron brackets. A Rego Terram ward prevents damage to the statue from physical objects, and a Rego Aquam effect transports water from the bottom of the well to fill the basin when it becomes low, keeping the water in motion to prevent it from becoming stagnant.

If the fountain is pried up from the ground and carried out of the covenant, the spirit of the dryad (page 29) will appear in the wood and beg the characters not to proceed. Carrying the statue out of the Veil will kill her. If they continue anyway, she will use her powers to confuse and mislead the characters, but if they have a diadem (see page 78) they will see right through these illusions. If they do not heed her, she will command the forest to attack as her last defense, trying to either damage or recover the statue.

At the edge of the regio the characters will feel a powerful tug, and if they persist, the statue will shudder and crack and its color will fade as the dryad dies. The Veil of Mormulus will fail, though the characters may not recognize this from outside. If they spend a season in the lab investigating the enchantment, they may learn something of how the device worked, but not very much because it is no longer magical once the faerie is dead.

If the characters find a way to damage the statue significantly (such as dropping it down the well) without removing it from the forest, they will release the dryad without destroying the Veil. The stone will lose some of its color, and a faint breeze will stir from the cracks, with a distant sound of buzzing bees and a thick, musty smell of papery bark. From then on, the dryad may be found in her palace, the satyrs will lose interest in their captive, and the Veil will be impassable for any characters not led by someone with a diadem (see page 24). Without the dryad to control them, the illusionary guides will become increasingly chaotic and garbled, perhaps misleading or even attacking visitors.

If Paulo can do one last good deed for the covenant, something that protects it or the magi from terrible evil or desecration, he will pass on to the next world. One moment he will be there, proud and smiling for the first time since he died, and the next moment he will fade away into the shadows, but his ghostly hammer will remain.

STORAGE ROOM

Adjoining the entrance room is the equipment room with the large, iron double doors. At one time it contained much of the equipment the magi and grogs used on their journeys. These doors are now barricaded from within and require spells or an impressive feat of strength to open. A Strength + Athletics roll of 21+ will break through; if multiple people push, add each character's Strength and use the highest Athletics score. Running shoves will add twice as much to the roll but may cause injury — subtract Soak from the total contribution and take any remainder as damage.

Two skeletons and a pile of chests and equipment are propped against the other side of the door, barricading it from within. Most of the armor, extra weapons, rope, oils, tents, tools, and dried food supplies are either damaged by fire or deteriorated with age, though if searched there is a good chance that a fairly common, mundane piece of equipment can be found. It will by no means be in perfect condition, however.

ARCHERS' ROOM

A short set of stairs leads ten feet up to a small archery chamber, with arrow slits facing the stairs on the other side. It is now in partial ruins, with gouges in the walls, and is empty. Paulo often stands here in the shadows, guarding the entrance, and if characters manage to enter invisibly and quietly enough to slip by his watch, he will be brooding by the arrow slits, gloomy and insubstantial.

The Second Level

The next level is where most of the grogs lived, serving as a bulwark against any mundane attack upon the covenant. Their barracks and meeting room are located here, as are several private rooms for their leaders. The ghost of Josephine, a grog of some distinction, may be found on this level.

MEETING ROOM

A large balcony overlooks the well from the meeting room, and characters falling from the upper level or the top may very well land here. A huge pile of rubble, rotting wood, ruined tapestries, and rusted metal lies in one corner. This is the lair of a family of rats, each two feet long with gleaming red eyes. When anyone enters the meeting room, a soft scuttling sound will fill the air as the few rats in this room retreat into their tunnels in the pile of rubble. They will wait there until they are alone again. The rats fight only when cornered, and their bites will not infect the characters with disease unless the players need a challenge.

PRIVATE ROOMS

Two of the companions' rooms still contain their personal belongings, but whatever can be found in the way of clothing and equipment is in a very sorry state; everything is in ruins.

The first room (closest to the stairs) is empty, but the ghost of Josephine, one of the covenant's *custodes*, haunts the middle room. She is crying, lying on an imaginary bed with her arm hanging over her eyes. Her sobs are interspersed with lamentations about her son, Gemaric.

JOSEPHINE

Josephine will only speak to other warriors, and will be very frightened if a character with higher than grog status attempts to speak with her. She will vanish if she is threatened by any non-grogs. She is very suspicious and believes that everyone lies to her. She can be boring and repetitive, but she is also easily angered if ignored.

Josephine served Ornath until he left the covenant. She was slain during the confusion of the Sundering, and has been driven almost mad with grief. She is obsessed with telling others about the fall of the covenant and how terrible it was. There was a lot of fighting, which she describes in gruesome detail. The grogs from the outer barracks set fire to the bridge, and they had to shoot at them through the smoke. Her husband died in a skirmish in the banquet hall. She had to kill her cousin Michael, who took part in the rebellion. She tried to sneak her son Gemaric out through the lower levels when the magi began fighting, but they were caught and punished by Uderzus, and she never saw the boy again.

Josephine believes that her son is still alive; she pleads with the characters to tell her where he is. She is convinced he is some-

Josephine

Magic Might: 15 (Mentem)

Characteristics: Int 0, Per +1, Pre -1, Com -1, Str +1, Sta 0, Dex +3, Qik +1

Age: 25

Personality Traits: Suspicious +3, Obsessed +2, Forgiving -2

Combat:

Long Spear: Init +1, Attack +10, Defense +11, Damage +7

Short Sword: Init +1, Attack +10, Defense +8, Damage +7

Soak: +3

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

Abilities: Athletics 4 (stairs), Brawl 4 (dodge), Bows 2 (short bow), Great Weapon 5 (spear), Legerdemain 5 (stealing), Local Area Lore 3 (families), Local Language 5 (slang), Single Weapon 4 (short sword)

Powers:

Filch, 2 points, +1, Terram: Josephine can attempt to steal an item using her Legerdemain. If she succeeds without being detected, the item becomes ghostly until she ditches it.

Equipment: Long spear, short sword, metal reinforced leather armor (hauberk).

Encumbrance: 1 (2)

Vis: 3 Mentem in her ghostly spear, if Gemaric is rescued

Appearance: Josephine is a very hazy ghost of a strong, young woman in torn leather armor. She clutches a spear and has a short sword buckled at her side. Her cheeks are lined from tears, and she bows her head and covers her eyes with her forearm as she shakes with grief.

Roleplaying Tips: Pretend to grasp the shaft of her spear, and let your hands tremble as you speak; the violence of your grip symbolizes her pain and loss.

What She Knows: She can sketch some of the details of the fighting among the grogs, three factions that began fighting each other at the orders of their magi. One was Crenvalus's, one was Granorda's, and the rest were neutral.

where in the ruins and that the five year old boy is suffering. If she finds him, speaks with him, and decides that he will receive proper care without her, she will pass on, as she will feel her earthly duties are finished. If Gemaric is taken from Calebais by characters who Josephine believes will not take care of him, her ghost will accompany them and haunt them as viciously as she can.

In life, Josephine was an accomplished pickpocket and even as a ghost she cannot resist lifting the occasional bauble from a purse. To this end, she can use 2 Might points to attempt to filch an item. She must go through the motions, rolling her Dexterity + Legerdemain against her victim's Perception + Awareness. Stolen objects become ghostly, but return to physical form when Josephine releases them.

The last room, like the storeroom upstairs, is locked and barricaded from the inside (ease factor of 12+ to open it). Paulo's body is within, with most of his personal things, such as his clothing, armor, and wages. If characters search carefully, they may find some sinister items under the collapsed boards of his bed: black candles, a small statue, and a book of evil prayers. These occult paraphernalia are merely trinkets he picked up on one of his missions for the covenant; he can't read. Characters may notice the candles have never been used.

If Paulo watches the group enter his room, he will be sorely tempted to attack, as their behavior may cause him to realize

that they are not guests. He will wait to see if they find his treasures, and then ambush them when they leave.

BARRACKS

The remains of bunks sag inside each of the alcoves (four in each), and wooden chests are strewn in pieces across the floor. There are piles of rubble along the wall, but the center of the floor is mostly clear. The remains of more than ten human skeletons, still wearing armor and bearing rusty weapons, can be found amid the refuse. Cheap jewelry and silver may be found if the characters search carefully. Crude sexual pictures are drawn on the wall in the alcove near the large staircase, and broken chamber pots lie where they rolled into the main room.

The Third Level

Here were located the kitchen, banquet hall, storage rooms, and greeting hall for visitors. Now, the floor is wholly occupied by a tribe of Hrools who live mainly in the banquet hall. Some Hrools are likely to be spread out on this level, but if they hear the adventurers coming, they will group together in their lair.

When the characters enter this level (and maybe before), they will hear David's shouts coming from the Greeting Hall.

GREETING HALL

The ghost of David paces up and down the room, shouting at the walls with uncontained rage. There are stone benches built into all the walls, a rotted wooden table and some chairs running down the middle, and a five-foot-wide magical mirror hangs on the wall opposite the door. At one time, this heavy looking glass showed the surroundings of the stone pylon that stands at the entrance to the Veil of Mormulus, and the captain of the guard

would use it to watch for visitors to Calebais who waited at the pylon for a guide. Because of Mormulus's spell, however, the mirror stopped functioning, and dark clouds roll across its image. If taken outside of the Veil, it will work once again, but it will still show only the pylon and its surroundings.

DAVID

David spent the Sundering trying to regain control of the grogs, but they had divided into factions long before then, each favoring different magi who promised rewards in return for their support. The covenant developed into a disparate group of armed

David, Captain of the Guard

Magic Might: 29 (Mentem)

Characteristics: Int 0, Per 0, Pre +2, Com 0, Str +2, Sta +1, Dex 0, Qik 0

Age: 27

Personality Traits: Commanding +3, Loyal +2, Merciful -2

Combat:

Long Sword and Kite Shield: Init +2, +9, +12, +18

Soak: +1

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

Abilities: Athletics 4 (stairs), Awareness 4 (alertness), Brawl 3 (dodging), Carouse 1, Folk Ken 2 (magi), Latin 4 (receiving orders), Leadership 5 (small groups), Local Area Lore 4 (directions), Local Language 5 (giving orders), Single Weapon 4 (long sword)

Powers:

Command Warrior, 3 points, +0, Mentem: Forces up to a Group of trained warriors to perform an action he commands that falls within their normal duties, unless resisted with a Loyal roll of 9+.

Ghostly Flames, 4 points, +1, Ignem: David's sword passes through shield and armor, but the flames still damage flesh. When he uses this power, ignore his opponent's Defense and Protection, and treat Damage as +8.

Equipment: David has ghostly versions of his sword and heater shield. If the characters should come across the real versions or his suit of chain mail, he will claim them, and merge them with their ghostly counterparts. The chain mail gives him +9 Soak and 1 Encumbrance.

Encumbrance: 0 (2)

Vis: 6 Mentem total in his ghostly sword, shield, and mail (or their physical counterparts if he has them), if he sees Crenvalus defeated.

Appearance: David is a well-formed, whole-body apparition of an experienced warrior, with the symbol of Calebais (the broken crown and flames) emblazoned in full color on his surcoat and shield. He carries a large sword at his side, and his abdomen is wrapped in bloody bandages.

Roleplaying Tips: Assume a strong demeanor and a leader's tone of voice. Don't let anyone give you crap. David will either see the characters as superiors to whom he can report, or intruders whom he must scare away, and it all depends on what they say or do. Strong, decisive leadership will quickly gain his respect.

What He Knows: David can give visitors directions and advises them to stay in their quarters where it is safe. If they are willing to help him restore order, he can describe many of the magi and outline the general timeline of the Sundering. He thinks a group loyal to Granorda initiated the conflict, but almost everyone died in the rebellion, the great tremor, or a sudden attack of satyrs who made it all the way to the sixth level. He has never seen the Bell, but Larine told him about it; she said she there was a strange book in the library that described its origins. He does not know what became of her and hopes that she is hiding somewhere safe. He will recognize Crenvalus's letter if it is shown to him, but it will drive him into an incoherent rage that he cannot explain, and he might even try to destroy it.

camps, and David could not restore unity. He is still energetical trying to figure out what is going on, and to report what he has found to the council so he can receive new orders. He may come to realize he is dead, but he is used to unusual happenings and will continue to serve as long as he can.

Before he died, David was injured in battle against a group of satyrs. Even though he is dead and technically has no physical body, he fights as if he were still recovering from his wounds, giving him a -2 penalty to his actions. If he realizes he is a ghost he may ignore this penalty.

If David encounters Ferdina, the autocrat, he will forget his mission and berate her for failing to prevent the Sundering. He yells at her, "That's what we were paying you for!" He lauds her accounting skills and ridicules her leadership. David has nothing but contempt for the pathetic way she went to the magi who were organizing the fighting and begged them to stop.

David has the power to command any trained warrior to perform an action that normally falls within his or her duties. He can also damage living beings with his sword, flailing at his opponents with unstoppable blows. Both of these powers weaken him, so he will wait until the situation is dire before he uses them,

Hofot, Champion Hrool

Magic Might: 10 (Animal)

Characteristics: Int -2, Per 0, Pre -2, Com -3, Str +2, Sta +2, Dex +2, Qik +2

Size: -2

Confidence: 2 (5)

Personality Traits: Brave +3, Protective +2, Generous -2

Combat:

Long sword: Init +4, Attack +11, Defense +10, Damage +18

Stone (thrown): Init -1, Attack +2, Defense +2, Damage +8

Bite: Init +4, Attack +5, Defense +9, Damage +2

Soak: -1

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-3), -3 (4-6), -5 (7-9), Incapacitated (10-12)

Abilities: Athletics 3 (climbing), Brawl 3 (grapple), Hunt 3 (rats),

Leadership 4 (combat), Single Weapon 4 (long sword), Speak

Hrool 2 (orders), Swim 3 (diving), Thrown Weapons 1 (rocks)

Equipment: David's long sword (wielded two-handed), ill-fitting leather gloves, and a hastily-constructed hauberk.

Encumbrance: 0 (2)

Vis: 2 Animal, 10 Corpus in satyr horns

Appearance: Hofot is an extremely large, bulky Hrool wearing a leather jerkin that appears to have been chewed to fit and carrying David's magical long sword with both paws. Flames burn brightly along the edge of it. He wears a tattered leather coat and a necklace made from five satyr horns, and his arms are completely white.

Note: Hofot can lead up to five Hrools as a trained group, and usually leads five warriors. Each group receives a +15 bonus to either attack or defense.

Captain's Sword

The sword has the symbol of Calebais sculpted into the hilt, and is an invested device with three powers. It can cast *Blade of the Virulent Flame* (CrIlg Base 5, +1 Conc; +5 maintain concentration = Level 15), activated by holding the sword aloft as if to catch the light, and this effect is reflected in both Hofot's and David's stats. The sword also resists physical damage and rust, maintaining its edge throughout the years (CrTe Base 5, +2 Sun; +1 two uses per day, +3 activated by sunrise and sunset = Level 19). Finally, the sword cuts through magical defenses, taking down wards and even

Parmae. Whenever the sword comes in contact with a non-ritual spell of more than Momentary duration, roll a stress die (no botch). That spell is canceled if its level is (20 + the roll) or less; Parmae are cut down if (20 + the roll) is more than (5 x Parma Magica). (PeVi Base 4, +1 Touch; unlimited +10, penetration 30 +15 = Level 30). If the ward would resist the effect, as Parma would, the sword's power must penetrate the magic resistance.



instead hanging back and watching his opponents for weaknesses, relying on his shield and armor (and his lack of substance) to protect him.

David and Larine were lovers, and if her name is mentioned, he will ask after her and will do nearly anything to ensure she is alive and safe. (Larine is the nun who gave the characters the letter, though they probably do not know this when they first meet him.)

David hates the wizard Crenvalus. He doesn't remember being murdered by him, but he does think him a lunatic, responsible for initiating the Sundering, and goes into an irrational fury whenever he hears his name. If he ever happens to meet up with him, he will use his all of his powers of persuasion to get his companions to attack, and then flank the wizard while his attention is diverted. David cannot rest until he has punished Crenvalus for what he has done.

If any of the characters wear a diadem, David will react badly, demanding to know who gave them the authority to wear it. He can be bluffed, but it had better be a good story, backed up with some facts about the covenant.

BANQUET HALL

The ceiling near the fireplace is only nine feet high, but it slopes upwards. Where the walls are parallel, the ceiling is 25 feet high. Against the far wall is a set of stairs leading up to a musicians' loft, fifteen feet above the floor. The stone bowls and containers that litter the room are broken shards, mostly empty, and the remains of many rusted and worthless swords and axes are also strewn about. The fireplace vents out into the well. Nothing remains of the furniture that once filled this area. In the middle of the room sits a gilded dragon's head, carved of stone and about ten feet long, clutching a broken crown in its mouth. It is covered with moss, lies on its side, and has a small statue of a Hrool placed on its snout.

Eighteen Hrools live here, including two ermines that live in the loft. There are all kinds of shamanic equipment stored there: dolls dangling from sticks, necklaces, geometric statues, and stones carved in the shapes of Hrool body parts. Dozens of foot-long statues of wizard-like figures and Hrools are stacked along the walls.

This is probably the first time the characters have encountered the Hrools. Besides their leaders, there are four adults, who are likely to be sleeping, six warriors, who will be startled and wait for instructions, and five pups, who are noncombatant and helpless. Their champion, Hofot, carries David's sword and ignites it at first sign of trouble. The ermines, Nungasing and Yuzod, watch from the loft and support the others with their magic if the fight goes badly. Nungasing wears a diadem (see page 78).

BACKGROUND: THE BANQUET HALL

The dragon's head fell from above, where the ceiling dips down, from a huge stone relief of a dragon that once looked down upon the room. The body is gilded too, and even though it is partly covered with moss, its striking image is undiminished. If the players don't seem to be noticing the symbolism of a broken dragon in a broken covenant biting a broken crown, you may want to casually mention it to them.

KITCHEN

This once busy kitchen is now in ruins, though some heavy stone tables are still standing. The remains of bones, kitchen tools, platters and other refuse are found throughout. A large basin magically transports water from a source far below. The fireplaces vent out into the well, and the balcony was once used

to gather baskets lowered from the outside. Because of its positioning, characters falling from first setting foot on the bridge are more likely to land here than any of the other balconies.

The Fourth Level

The craft shops of the covenant were located here, as well as more private rooms of some of the *custodes*. In particular, an unusual rock (Gemarc) and a fire drake (Igack) inhabit this level. A few rats can be seen and heard scrambling about, and if it is day outside, bats will be sleeping inside many rock cracks and crevices.

Gemarc, Josephine's Child

Erechtheus of Mercere gave Gemarc a magic stone during the Sundering that transformed him into a rock, to protect the young boy. Unfortunately, the generous wizard died soon after, and Gemarc cannot cancel the effect. So, for all the intervening years Gemarc has remained a rock, unable to move, dreaming away his time. Yet his essential nature is that of a man, and it has recently begun to reassert itself. Perhaps because of the magic in the area or some talent of his own, Gemarc has grown legs and gained the ability to move about. He still has his sense of touch and his sense of hearing, but after exploring this level of the

covenant he found little to interest him and lapsed into his dream world. He spends most of his time immobile. Even when alert, his idea of the outside world is vague. If the magi can magically speak with him, or if he somehow learns to communicate (perhaps by drawing pictures in the dust), they will learn all this. If they are able to make him human again, or cancel the magical stone's effect, they will produce a man in his fifties with the mind of a child and an incredible imagination. If Josephine sees him, she will recognize him no matter what his form and plead with the characters to make contact with him.

The Magical Stone of Erechtheus

This item is about two feet wide and a few inches thick, and looks very much like Gemarc in his transformed state. It is a lesser magic device enchanted with one constant effect that changes it and whatever person is carrying it into a rock (MuCoTe Base 25, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +1 for special effect; +4 constant = Level 49). If its effect is dispelled, it will slip from Gemarc's hands, but whoever picks it up might be affected by it the next time it triggers. Since part of the stone's effect is that it

changes itself along with its wielder, the stone will remain part of Gemarc if he is magically given another form, and will change him back into a rock as soon as the new spell wears off. Investigation in the lab will reveal that there is a way to cancel the effect, which requires that the person make a particular sign with the fingers on either hand, and wiggle like a snake. These gestures cannot be seen by others, but the device knows when they have been performed.

WOOD SHOP

Piles of rubble cover the floors about three or four feet high, especially near the walls. Old rusted carpentry tools can be found throughout, as well as numerous pieces of wood and shavings.

Hiding here is Gemaric, a child in the form of a small rock about two feet wide. When the characters enter this room, the rock will shift a bit, but characters will decide that it merely settled. If they look closely, Perception + Awareness rolls of 9+ reveal that it is not dusty, unlike everything else in the covenant. If they come within three feet of it, it jumps up a foot or so, quickly uncurls four little spindly legs, and attempts to run out the door. The rock has Quickness +5, so it will be difficult for the characters to catch. It darts out the door, sprints down the hall, and dives into another room to hide itself among the rubble. If characters begin searching among the rocks of subsequent rooms, Gemaric remains as still as he can, but Perception + Awareness rolls of 15+ notice him quivering. Gemaric will run again only if touched. Then, he will run until he cannot run anymore, and if sorely pressed he may accidentally slip into the well or lead the characters to Igack (see below). For a time, however, he will try to lose his pursuers in a merry chase through private rooms and the wood shop.

SMALL STORAGE ROOM

This room belongs to Igack, a small fire drake who was once Pitsdim's familiar. When his master died he was devastated, but he did not waste away because Pitsdim continued to visit him regularly. The mystic cords that connected them were severed, though, leaving Igack aimless and more simple-minded than he once was. Now, he hunts down rats and several Hrools each month to stay alive (he enjoys terrorizing the ones in the garden, below), but otherwise he rarely leaves this level of the covenant.

IGACK

Igack is frightened, lonely, and prone to treating intruders to the same fiery greeting that his master employs. He may even consider his breath affectionate, since it has never affected Pitsdim, who encouraged him to breathe at anyone who approached. In general, Igack is a trusting, friendly, and simple-minded creature. He can speak Latin if encouraged, but his pronunciation is abysmal and he only understands basic concepts.

Igack, a Fire Drake

Magic Might: 18 (Igm)

Characteristics: Int -4, Per -1, Pre 0, Com -2, Str +1, Sta +3, Dex +1, Qik +2

Size: -1

Personality Traits: Hasty +3, Friendly +2, Generous -2

Combat:

Bite and claw: Init +2, Attack +7, Defense +8, Damage +6

Soak: +10

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-4), -3 (5-8), -5 (9-12), Incapacitated (13-16)

Abilities: Athletics 2 (jumping), Awareness 5 (alertness), Brawl 5 (play-wrestling), Hunt 7 (Hrools), Latin 2 (simple words), Local Area Lore 6 (Calebais), Survival 3 (Calebais)

Powers:

Fiery Breath, 2 points, +4, Igm: Breathes fire that does +10 Damage to a single target within five paces.

Dominate Animal, 3 points, +0, Animal: Gives an animal a silent order that it carries out to the best of its ability, delayed up to a month later. This doesn't work on the Hrools.

Equipment: Diadem

Vis: 3 Igm

Appearance: Igack is a dragon-like serpent with shiny red scales and sharp teeth. He has no wings, but he does breathe fire and can move quickly on four legs. He is proud of the gold diadem he wears, a C-shaped crown with a green gemstone shaped like an eye that sits in the center of his forehead.

SMITHY

The forges where the weapons and much of the wizards' lab equipment was forged and blown can be found here. Some unfinished examples of the smiths' work are strewn about on the floor: sword handles, glass bowls, iron forceps, and wire cages.

LARGE STORAGE ROOM

Two large stone bins along the wall hold sand and ingots of bronze and iron. Small chests that have obviously been forced open sit beside them. A tall pile of rotted wood planks lies in the middle of the room and broken shelves line all the walls. A series of locked chests (Dexterity + Legerdemain roll of 12+ to open) hold sundry components for spells and magical research such as stork feathers, boar hair, lye, mercury, and salt. They are in very poor condition.

FOUR PRIVATE CHAMBERS

At one time, something obviously occupied these rooms, but now they are full of rubble, rubbish, and a few rats that have escaped Igack for the time being.

LEATHER AND CLOTH SHOP

This room looks like someone took pleasure in reducing every smooth surface found in it into a mass of rubbish. The room is completely full of rubble, and even the ceiling has been broken up; therefore, there is no light here. Perhaps some of the old crafters' equipment could be found after much digging, but it is difficult even to walk through this chamber, let alone dig it up. Perceptive characters (Perception + Awareness roll of 9+) notice many old leather pelts mixed in with the rubble and a few rotted rolls of cloth.

The Fifth Level

On the fifth level lies the garden of the covenant and more rooms used by the *custodes*, including a common room where they gathered together. Many Hrools may be found on this level, as well as the ghost of the autocrat, Ferdina.

COMMON ROOM

At one time, this room was very comfortably furnished, but now most of its luxuries have deteriorated. Some rickety chairs and tables still stand, and a large keg that smells of vinegar (it was once wine) rests on a stand in the east corner. The two rooms connected to it are relatively clear of rubbish, but are empty except for some piles of rotting wood and rubble strewn about.

Ferdina, the autocrat, spends most of her days sulking here. She frequently imagines that she is again offering advice to Larine, the librarian, or sharing jokes with Parcimides the scribe, or keeping an eye on Dargaud, or deep in conversation about the parameters of magical theory with Erechtheus. To her, these old friends are quite real, and a person outside the chamber might hear voices other than hers as she talks.

FERDINA

Ferdina was the autocrat of Calebais, a term that older covenants use to describe the person responsible for the covenant's mundane activities: keeping track of money, entertaining guests, supervising the staff, and so on. She was a marvel of organization and at any time could recite innumerable details about the financial status of the covenant. During the Sundering, she tried desperately to stop the fighting, but she found to her horror that the authority the wizards had given her was taken away as soon as they felt they had no more need for her. Pitsdim casually slew her because he found it annoying when she ordered him to stop burning the books in the library. She does not remember this and is still trying to regain control over the covenant so she can stop the fighting.

Ferdina grew up at the largest and most politically active covenant in this Tribunal, and was offered to Calebais in an attempt to stabilize it and bring peace. She failed utterly, and now she mainly thinks about how the folk of Calebais never listened to her, rather than considering her own lack of ability. She is humiliated by her failure and angered by the fact that she was "never given a chance." If she is blamed too vehemently for the Sundering (by David, for instance), she will in turn blame David, arguing that it was his poor leadership that fractured the loyalties of the grogs, and that she had warned him of this repeatedly. It is extremely important for her to avoid blame for the Sundering; she will not admit that she had something to do with it. In all fairness, once they hear the whole story, the characters might realize how difficult Calebais would have been to manage. She will pass on if one of the wizards listens to her tale, and after hearing her side acknowledges that, indeed, she tried, and that she did her job until the end. This in turn will allow her to

Ferdina, the Autocrat

Magic Might: 25 (Mentem)

Characteristics: Int +3, Per +1, Pre +2, Com +2, Str -2, Sta -2, Dex 0, Qik 0

Age: 41

Personality Traits: Gentle +3, Loyal +1, Brave -3

Combat:

Dodge: Init +0, Attack +0, Defense +0, Damage -2

Soak: -2

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

Abilities: Artes Liberales 6 (Mathematics), Athletics 3 (stairs), Awareness 3 (alertness), Bargain 4 (arcane items), Carouse 2 (abstaining), Civil and Canon Law 2 (trade), Charm 2 (guests), Concentration 3 (reading), Etiquette 3 (hosting), Latin 5 (magical terms), Local Area Lore 4 (nobility), Local Language 6 (trade), Other Language 4 (trade), Magic Theory 2 (Hermetic limits), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (wizards), Philosophiae 3 (metaphysical)

Powers:

Ring the Chime, 15 points, +0, Mentem: When Ferdina strikes the memory of the chime she carries, the bell in the council chamber on the eighth floor will ring with a strange, ominous sound, and the ghosts of all the magi in the covenant will be compelled to attend a council meeting. Such a meeting is likely to end in (ghostly) bloodshed fairly quickly, but Ferdina may be able keep order for one or two items of business before the remaining magi remember their grudges and renew their battles.

Equipment: Council chime

Vis: 5 Mentem in ghostly chime, if she earns the wizards' respect for her actions

Appearance: Ferdina is a thick, white, glowing apparition of a woman who has been badly burned (no hair, burn scars, blackened clothes). She might have a fearful, hunted look in her eyes, which contrasts with her otherwise erudite and noble bearing. She carries a ghostly magical chime, which is the last vestige of the respect and status she once held at Calebais.

Roleplaying Tips: Speak crisply and precisely, keep your back straight, and never forget your manners. Let this thin veneer crack under pressure, though, especially if other ghosts taunt you and tell the characters the truth about your failure here. Ferdina will accept pity. If she is treated with respect, she will be astounded and will likely aid such "dignified folk" as much as she can, even going so far as to betray the covenant if she believes she is truly appreciated.

What She Knows: Ferdina was a member of the council, and knows all of the magi at least by reputation. She can describe their accomplishments (she doesn't know as much as she thinks about Magic Theory, but she gets some of the details right), including the newest effects of Mormulus's Veil and how to activate Malevola Vida's talisman. She used to have a diadem before the Sundering, and can tell some of what it did, but the magi took it away from her. She has never seen the Bell but she does know where it is (in the chambers on the other side of the magic door).

recognize that she also bears some of the blame, which is what allows her to recognize and accept that she has died.

Ferdina carries the ghost of magical chime that was the formal means by which a council meeting was called. The chime caused the bell in the council chamber to reverberate in a low tone, which the magi knew meant to convene for a council meeting. Its physical counterpart has long since been broken, though she can will it to ring as it once did. If Ferdina passes on, she will leave the ghostly image of the chime behind, containing 5 pawns of Mentem vis.

If the characters encounter Ferdina outside of the common room, it will most likely be in the lower levels of the covenant rather

than in the higher, because her authority in the grogs' territory was always fairly tenuous. In particular, she tries to avoid David if she can.

THE GARDEN

The covenant's garden has fared well. It has fared so well, in fact, that it is now overrun with plants. The bright light emanating from the ceiling continues to work, and clear water still trickles in off the walls. Vines and branches tumble out of the large window and hang down the side of the well. A few chirping birds can even be found here.

Malevola Vida's Talisman

This black iron rod with a dark onyx at its tip has the power to shatter rock or metal anywhere within the sound of the wielder's voice. It blasts a hole three feet deep and three feet wide in the shape of a half-sphere, leaving rough or jagged edges (PeTe5, +2 Voice, +1 Part; +10 unlimited = Level 30). The Hrools mistakenly wielding it as a weapon don't know how to use it. You must say "Posse visum durare in aeternum" (POHS-say WEE-soom doo-RAH-ray een eye-TAYR-noom, "May the vision last forever") and then swing the rod over your shoulder, back in front of

you, point the gem at the rock to be broken, and thrust the wand forward.) Magi may learn this through magical investigation in the lab, or by talking with Ferdina, for whom Malevola demonstrated it. This wand was going to serve as Malevola's talisman, though she had not yet attuned it when she died. It was opened as an invested device, but this effect is the only one she completed. Or, if you wish, perhaps she instilled other effects that require magical investigation to reveal.

Eight Hrools live here in the vegetative morass of confusion, and they find it easy to hide from, or ambush, any who enter (+6 to difficulties for spotting them with Perception + Awareness checks). There are two warriors, four adults, and two pups; their numbers have been thinned dramatically by Igack (page 52) and they are frightened and desperate. One of the warriors wears a diadem (see page 78) and fights with a club, and the other wields a wrought-iron rod with a large gem on the end of it like a mace (combat stats: +3, +8, +10, +7), which was actually the wizard Malevola Vida's talisman.

A small magical spring bubbles out of a boulder and into a small pool. It has strange powers of fortification; if used to help cleanse wounds, it gives +1 to recovery rolls (CrCo(An) 10). It can also be collected as *Creo vis*; each pitcher of water is worth one pawn, but there is only enough water for four pitchers' worth, and it takes a year to refill completely.

Also within the garden are various marble garden benches and a marble table with a chessboard etched into its surface. Overgrown plants cover all of these, and hundreds of flowers grow all about: tulips, pansies, lilacs, hyacinths, buttercups, shamrocks, and amaranths. The scent is almost overpowering, although it is not magical.

A concealed door hides a staircase down to Drininkeana's lab. To find it, characters must search thoroughly and make a Perception + Awareness roll against an Ease Factor of 9, or search halfheartedly and make a roll against an Ease Factor of 15. Even when found, the door is hard to open because there are no handholds on this side. It is made of stone, so a spontaneous *Rego Terram* spell will open it, or characters may clear away the vines and branches and pry it open.

STORAGE ROOM

This room was thoroughly burned, and nothing is left but ashes that have long since compacted into spongy dirt.

The Sixth Level

The sixth level is where three of the magi had laboratories and private chambers. These magi had the least authority in the covenant, as they had little to do with ruling Calebais and instead oversaw their own private domains. They took little interest in the events that followed the Sundering, and were taken by surprise when others came for them.

The floors on this level are cracked and jagged in places, perhaps showing through to the destruction on the level below, and the northern stairwell is filled with dirt. The seventh level was buried under tons of rubble as the rock that made up its ceilings collapsed during the events of the Sundering, and while this level still seems relatively unharmed, some sign of the underlying devastation may still show through, and it would be relatively easy for characters to widen cracks in the ground or even fall through if they are not careful. The magic that keeps the floors from collapsing is not strong enough to withstand concentrated effort.

GUARD ROOM

The alcove in the hallway between the two main stairways is empty except for a stone bench that runs the length of the chamber, built into the wall, and a large bell one foot high fastened to the ceiling. A chain hangs down from the bell's tongue,

and pulling the chain rings it. In the days of old, this alcove served as a guard post — the bell has a distinctive gong-like ring to it that can be heard up and down the well, and it may cause some of the ghosts to investigate, as it was common practice to ring the bell in case of an emergency, such as when someone fell into the well. Most of the ghosts will assume it means another attack, and those who do not like conflict will hide in their rooms, while others (like David or Pitsdim) might come running.

DRININKEANA'S LABORATORY

Drinkeana was quite skilled with plants and other forms of life and was the most knowledgeable wizard at Calebais in matters concerning growing things. She spent much of her time in the forests surrounding the covenant and it is because of her influence that it is such a haven of diverse herbs and plant life. She also took charge of the gardens on the floor above, and even had a private staircase leading up to it from her lab. The entrance to the gardens is concealed by a stone door that can be barred from the inside and is nearly flush with the outside wall.

A large bronze door stands at the entrance to her quarters, marked with the sanctum symbol recognized throughout the Order. It has been broken in and now hangs at an angle by one hinge. The inside of the lab can be clearly seen. The floor is made of rocks and dirt, and all of her laboratory equipment and personal possessions have been ruined and at least partially buried. This rubble is at least fifteen feet deep and part of level seven, below, where the rock that separated the two floors was destroyed and has been built up with dirt. Sticking up at an angle through the earth floor is a bronze pillar about three feet high with a sundial set into a small dish on the top. Moss grows in great profusion here.

Three massive guardians live in the ground beneath Drinkeana's lab. If anyone steps inside, from either the entrance or the stair, one of them quickly bursts forth from the ground and crushes the intruder, and attracts the attention of the other two. Only if all three of these guardians are engaged in combat or destroyed can characters enter safely. The Hrools avoid the lab for fear of the guardians, so the moss goes unharvested. If any of the ghosts are friendly to the characters, they will warn them about these creatures, which they call Undertakers.

THE UNDERTAKERS

An Undertaker is a kind of earth elemental that moves beneath the ground like an octopus swimming in water, but can hear when someone steps upon the earth above. These creatures are

The Undertakers

Magic Might: 20 (Terram)

Characteristics: Int -5, Per -2, Str +5, Sta +8, Dex +2, Qik +3

Size: +2

Combat:

Tentacles: Init +3, Attack +7, Defense +10, Damage +8

Soak: +26 (they take double damage from edged weapons)

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-7), -3 (8-14), -5 (15-21), Incapacitated (22-28)

Vis: 4 Terram

Appearance: Undertakers are hard to see, because they spend most of their time underground. They are made entirely of tightly packed earth, and have four tentacles that sprout from the surface to grasp a victim. When they envelop or swallow intruders, they might appear to have mouths as they fold in on themselves, but they have no need of eyes, ears, or even a humanoid shape, as they are simply dirt that has been animated to take an efficient, mutable, and malevolent form.

charged with protecting the area from intruders. Each attacks with four tentacles that launch up from the ground beneath a target, grappling and pulling it into the loose dirt on subsequent rounds, leaving the corpse buried. Add their initiative roll to their first attack when they surprise a character in this way. When facing a concentrated attack, the Undertakers will try to knock their victims out in a scuffle, but they will not stay exposed for long before they retreat to ground, dragging whatever they have managed to grab with them.

The guardians periodically stir up the floor in this room, so if characters leave and return, they may notice that things are not where they were before. If the characters defeat the guardians and sift through the dirt, rocks, and garbage, they may find one or more of the following:

- I. a number of intricately carved walking staves, each using a different plant as a motif
- II. the remnants of what was once ornate and gilded furniture made of rare woods, Palestinian cedar, and faerie oak
- III. two impossibly well preserved silk robes
- IV. an irregular, three foot wide slab of many-hued glass (once the bulk of Drinkeana's lab equipment)



BACKGROUND: DRININKEANA'S LABORATORY

Drininkeana chose to deal with the Sundering by locking herself in her sanctum, relying on her undertakers to protect her and the moss to provide for her needs. She had a strong *Parma Magica*, and yet someone snuck into her room and slew her. The assassin was probably motivated by the stash of *vis* she kept under her bed — more than forty pawns' worth, now gone. No one knows who was responsible for her death.

Her crystal plants were a gift from a powerful magus for whom she did a great favor. Drininkeana had a study requirement *Flaw*, and this exquisitely crafted set of lesser devices allowed her to increase her understanding of *Herbam* to master levels without needing to leave the covenant. She valued these so highly that she gave more thought to protecting them than herself; when the fighting began, she sealed the doors and cast a *Watching Ward* to alert her if they were tampered with. Alas, these preparations did her little good, since no one else cared about her great treasure, and they have been left undisturbed since her death.

- V. a total of about six small, colored glass balls, half an inch thick, each containing one pawn of *Vim vis*.
- VI. satyr bones and horns (8 pawns of *Corpus vis*)
- VII. eight crystal vials, stoppered and containing water charged with magical effects that are cast on whoever drinks them: three green ones are *Gift of the Frogs' Legs* (ReCo15), two light blue ones are *Converse with Plants and Trees* (InHe25), and four deep black ones are *The Leap of Homecoming* (ReCo35), which include arcane connections to this lab.

The small room adjoining her laboratory was Drininkeana's personal quarters, and it is not as ruined as her laboratory, since it does not have an earthen floor, though there are cracks in the stone and the floor has settled in places. The room is drier than the others and most of the walls are still covered with extremely dusty tapestries depicting life in a tranquil forest setting. Portions of the tapestries will break away to the touch, so they cannot be removed. An unstained cedar table lies overturned in the middle of the room with two high-backed chairs. The top of the table has a large ink stain on it. A chest near the table contains decaying parchment, a variety of broken quill pens, and two books written by Drininkeana: a Level 5 *Herbam* *summa*, and a tractatus on *Creo*, both Quality 9.

Against the northeast wall sits a large, beautiful bed frame made of unstained cedar, its mattress rotted away on top of the bed boards. Beside it, near the door, is a long trunk about four feet long full of desiccated clothing, and on the other side of the bed is a large, free-standing cedar closet. Inside is Drininkeana's skeletal corpse. She wears the remains of a long white gown and has a jeweled dagger stuck through her heart. It looks like she was thrown here on top of a pile of what was once elegant clothing. A small, unlocked chest lies beneath the bed and is partly filled with four jeweled rings, four finely-crafted vine-shaped wooden bracelets, five pairs of insect-shaped gold earrings, and three topaz necklaces.

On the northwest side of this room is a pair of huge bronze doors, almost taking up the entire wall. They are inscribed with various symbols (an *Intelligence + Magic Lore* roll of 12+ reveals that they probably mean "danger"). The doors have two huge handles, but have been welded shut, though a spontaneous *Perdo Terram* spell could loosen the seal. Behind the doors are row after row of two foot deep shelves, each with hundreds of gleaming, fragile, translucent crystal plants and flowers in small vases. The beautiful "sculptures" are all perfect replicas of their respective species. If one of the plants is held for a few seconds in a living person's hand, it suddenly turns into a real plant. (If it was being held anywhere but by the stem, for instance by a leaf, it might break and fall to the ground.) The flowers and plants are exquisite specimens, and their colors still gleam brightly, as if they were picked less than a minute ago. If undamaged, they return to crystal form once released.

MORMULUS'S LABORATORY

A heavy curtain hangs in tatters before the entrance to Mormulus's laboratory, embroidered with a version of the symbol for a wizard's sanctum. Beyond is a web of confusing images, part of an elaborate trap Mormulus had set during the Sundering to keep himself safe from the fighting. His entire laboratory is an invested device designed to create an illusory landscape, which changes according to his whim. This enchantment backfired when a grog wandered into his realm while Mormulus was sleeping and became disoriented, violently swinging his weapon about, and killing Mormulus with a lucky hit.

Somewhere among these illusions, as an integral part of them, you should introduce the ghost of Mormulus. He may be sitting under an oak tree singing a ballad to himself, or leaping from cloud to cloud trying to escape a flying demon. When the characters first meet him, he will not look anything like himself; rather he will be some other character who fits well into the current illusion. In fact, the only other person the characters will ever interact with here is Mormulus. Since the room is so small, the characters will never lose track of each other and will usually be able to see and interact with one another. Only after exploring all the dramatic potential of this scene should the characters finally encounter Mormulus as he truly is.

Mormulus, Magister of Illusion

Magic Might: 60 (Mentem)

Characteristics: Int +2, Per -2, Pre +3, Com +3, Str 0, Sta +1, Dex 0, Qik -3

Age: 140 (25)

Size: 0

Personality Traits: Curious +2, Focused -3, Passionate -5

Combat:

Dodge: Init -3, Attack +0, Defense -3, Damage +0

Soak: +1

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

Abilities: Artes Liberales 4 (rhetoric), Carouse 4 (storytelling), Charm 5 (over time), Concentration 7 (lab work), English 5 (storytelling), Etiquette 3 (faeries), Faerie Lore 5 (nature), Finesse 3 (Imaginem), Folk Ken 7 (magi), French 5 (storytelling), German 5 (storytelling), Guile 2 (elaborate lies), House Merinita Lore 4 (personalities), Intrigue 3 (alliances), Local Area Lore 3 (faeries), Magic Theory 6 (enchantment), Music 3 (sing), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (spells), Parma Magica 9 (Mentem), Penetration 6 (Intellego), Philosophiae 3 (metaphysics), Sneak 3 (hiding)

Arts: Cr 30, In 25, Mu 15, Pe 30, Re 12, An 5, Aq 9, Au 5, Co 30, He 12, Ig 5, Im 40, Me 20, Te 5, Vi 40

Powers:

Ghostly Image, 0 points, constant, Imaginem: When he wishes to remain hidden, Mormulus cannot be perceived, even by other ghosts. When he does manifest, he may appear as any human-like figure he can imagine, and seem as solid as he likes.

Ghostly Magic, 1 or more points, -3, by spell: Mormulus can make a spontaneous spell affect the physical world by spending 1 point of Might per magnitude of the effect.

Ghostly Wisdom, 0 points, uncontrolled, Mentem: Mormulus can sense things about the characters, which gives him a very good idea of what they are thinking about. He can also see glimpses of their past and future. You can use this power to have him subtly warn the characters about events to come, or to design illusions that let the characters re-live events that happened to them long ago.

Wizard's Sigil: Mormulus's magic always included some representation of his eyes. For example, in an outdoor illusion, characters might notice how the sun seems to reflect light like a pupil. All the characters he plays in his illusion have the same small, dark eyes, like tiny mulberries.

Vis: 12 Imaginem in the ghostly version of his diadem, if he can be made to feel remorse

Appearance: Mormulus is a vivid image of a magus with a multi-colored robe, wild hair, and a confident though strangely detached demeanor. While he may look very young, he has more than a century of experience in his eyes. He wears a thin wire crown with a green gem at his forehead.

Roleplaying Tips: When the characters meet the true Mormulus, never pay attention to any one person for a very long time and even while listening, constantly look away from them into the living world of illusion that surrounds you. Play his dazed, confused qualities as thickly as you can.

Illusions

In *Ars Magica*, images created by magic are real, even though the things they appear to be are not. This means that a spell that creates the image of something solid can mimic feelings associated with touch: temperature, texture, sharpness, "give," and even solidity. Illusions may thus appear to have substance. Much like they would instinctively draw their hands away from a flame, characters will instinctively hesitate before charging blindly into what seems to be a solid wall. The Mentem effects that form part of Mornulus's illusions back this up, influencing characters' minds so that they subconsciously avoid doing things that would show the illusions for what they are. However, the Mentem effect has no penetration, and thus does not affect any characters with magic resistance.

Despite the Mentem effects, the illusions have no actual substance, and a character who does charge at an illusory wall, or stumbles back into an illusory table, will pass right through. This feels extremely odd. Characters who have some experience with illusions can deliberately move their hands towards and through an apparently solid surface, to see if it really is.

Although characters are likely to quickly determine that the images in Mornulus's laboratory are nothing but illusions, this does not help them much. The images are real, and knowing that there is nothing solid behind them does not help the characters to see through them, or overcome the confusing Mentem effects.

Items the characters might find include:

- I. Weirdly shaped stone tables, but with all the equipment ruined and in pieces on the floor
- II. Broken furniture, as well as the rotting contents of various trunks and cabinets
- III. A small pool of water
- IV. A statue of a mushroom, about three feet high
- V. A statue of a broken crown set into the floor, two feet across
- VI. The corpse of Mornulus, long decayed (could be anywhere)

One of the diadems is also here, and it is the real treasure of this room. Therefore, it should only be included in the final part of the illusion, when the players can see Mornulus as he looks to himself. The actual diadem will be found somewhere near the remains of his body, for he kept it on him but did not usually wear it all the time, but the characters will be unable to find it unless Mornulus removes its ghostly counterpart.

Those who wear diadems can see through these illusions if they wish, or take control of them after Mornulus is gone, but cannot see Mornulus or his diadem unless he wills it. Those with Second Sight might see past the illusion to perceive the true nature of the room, but only with a Perception + Second Sight roll of 24+, because the effect is so powerful. The effects that generate these illusions have Creo, Perdo, Rego, Imaginem, Mentem, and Vim components, and the highest is Level 80.

If a character seems to be figuring out the illusions, you can rule that everything still feels like the illusion, even if they know better. If the characters begin to run around, let them run into the walls, but change the details of the setting so that some sort of wall is really there, and then insist that it was there all along. If you can evoke the confusing nature of these illusions through your storytelling style, even though it may frustrate players who prefer more direct action, this scene will be greatly enhanced.

Magic may seem to have an effect in this dream world, though this is simply part of the illusion and the spells will not actually succeed if they are cast at something that does not exist. If a spell is cast that affects one of the tables, or Mornulus, or the images created by the room, then it will probably work (though it may be resisted), and this may or may not be reflected in the illusion. Spells cast on people will usually work, if they are where they seem to be. All targeting rolls are at -5, however, due to the confusing nature of this place.

Imaginative characters can actually change the illusions, simply by suggesting them to be something else, as this is part of the nature of the faerie magic that Mornulus practices. In particular, characters with Free Expression may find that they have powers in this room that rival those of magi. However, if they try to make the room appear as it actually is, they will instead produce a distorted reflection of it, depending on what they think is where, and they may find themselves in an unpleasant battle of wills with Mornulus.

This part of the story can take as long as you like, if the players don't seem to be enjoying themselves, cut it short, but if they are really interested, let yourself go wild. Don't let the game get out of control, of course. Underneath the chaos, everything should make sense (if only to you) so that you can explain everything after the scene is over. All in all, the secret to running this part of the story is to have fun with it. It may be hard to manage, but it will be well worth the effort.

MORMULUS

Mormulus was an energetic, youthful magus in life, and his vibrant energy has carried over to his ghostly existence. He rarely questions himself and takes joy in watching the unraveling of the illusionary world about him. If questioned about the reality of the images in his room, he will laugh and say, "But all of life is an illusion, don't you know that?" The new images and scenes that the characters bring in with them will delight him; if he can, he will try to manipulate the illusions to keep the characters in his chambers as long as possible. He won't answer questions about the Bell or the covenant.

His corpse is lost somewhere within the room, and he does not remember that he has died. After many decades in his room of illusions, he has a hard time separating truth from fiction. He may periodically lose interest in the characters, even after they explain things to him, because he still is in the habit of treating everything as illusions that he can ignore or change when he grows bored with them. If the characters can get him to recognize that he is wearing a diadem, he may take them more seriously, since he knows that one of the crown's powers allows him to see through his illusions. This may cause him to question if there is something wrong with the effect, and ultimately realize that he is not actually wearing his diadem, giving the real one to the characters.

Mormulus is fascinated with the role he played in destroying the covenant. He mulls the events over and over in his mind and often reenacts the deaths of his *sodales* and *custodes* in an attempt to feel something, but he has never felt any emotion concerning what happened. For some reason, his heart and mind feel empty. Until he can feel remorse over his tragic mistake, he cannot pass on to the next world. This is not likely to happen unless the characters play through the events of the Sundering with him to find something that he can recognize as "real," and then bring what remains of it to him. For example, he may remember that it was Paulo who killed him, or realize how he has abandoned the dryad, or he may feel sorry for his *sodales* when he learns what happened to them. When he confronts the consequences of his detachment, he will overcome it. This should take him a very long time and a lot of thought; characters will probably have to leave and return several times to redeem him. In fact, it is better saved as a loose end for characters who return to the ruins after the Bell is recovered.

Until then, you can let your imagination and creativity carry you, because the whole room is constantly filled with some kind of illusion. These can take any form, including entire landscapes that extend to the horizon, and can change in the blink of an eye (but don't do this too often — players will become very confused if you abuse this effect). The settings can be weird and exotic, such as a faerie palace on a mountaintop, or strangely

mundane, as a deserted city street. However, there are never people that the characters can interact with in the illusion, unless it is Mormulus himself playing the part.

Mormulus can sense things about the characters, and he works this knowledge into his enchantment. If you would like to develop this scene into an entire session, have all the players secretly write down some event that was important in their characters' pasts: events that might be in the backs of their minds while they are exploring the ruins. Also note powerful scenes that have happened since they entered Calebais, or scenes that you suspect will happen later and you would like to foreshadow. Take these ideas and mix them up with all the things that Mormulus is thinking about (the early days of the covenant, the Sundering, his Veil and the dryad, the Bell of Ibyn) to create a web of confusion and illusion worthy of a master storyteller.

Go through each idea for a landscape in turn, but have them fade smoothly from one to another. Don't simply go from caverns to the ocean; instead tell the characters that they find a pool in the caverns, and as they look into it they find themselves mesmerized by their reflections, the patterns in the water and the soft tinkling of the ripples, which grow bigger and louder until they find themselves tossed and turned by the waves of the sea.

The floor is pitted and cracked from the great damage to the level below, but this will never be visible as it is always incorporated into the illusion. Characters may be able to feel their way around different objects; they will not affect the environment of the room directly, though they may also play a part in the illusion. If the characters close their eyes and crawl about the floor, they may be able to feel out these items, but even then it will be difficult, because the wizard's spells also affect the sensation of touch.

IERIMYRA'S LABORATORY

These rooms were owned by the wizard Ierimyra, and her ghost still lives within them. They are also inhabited by Hrools — lots of Hrools. Two huge wooden doors that once stood at the entrance to her sanctum now lie on the ground before it, partially covered with rubble and refuse. Beyond, characters will probably encounter Ierimyra's ghost pacing between her living quarters and her laboratory, as she regularly does.

IERIMYRA

One of the other wizards, Eonus, destroyed Ierimyra's mind during the Sundering, but she survived, tended by her Hrools. A few years later, however, raiding satyrs made it past her guards and killed her. She does not quite realize that she is dead. She is still driven by a powerful need to protect the Hrools, for she is dimly aware that they are in great danger at Calebais. However, it is almost impossible to get her to recognize that the Hrools are safe, even if taken elsewhere, because she cannot leave. Without the Hrools, she be overcome with grief, though perhaps if the characters return after several years with a few older Hrools she will see that they are secure and will be comforted.

Ierimyra brought the first Hrools to Calebais and through years of lab work and experimentation granted them human intelligence (see the Appendix). Even though she is now feeble-minded, the Hrools still practically worship her and try to follow her orders — whenever she says anything that can be understood, that is. In a fight, she will aid the Hrools directly, and something about her close emotional connection to them makes her able to affect them physically, even if she cannot affect other things of the real world. This will involve healing them, calling for reinforcements, or giving them magical strength. She may not even be aware of the characters, or may confuse them with satyrs or the other wizards of Calebais when she does see them, but will remain focused on her children and their needs.

Ierimyra, Magister of Beasts

Magic Might: 42 (Mentem)

Characteristics: Int +3, Per -1, Pre 0, Com 0, Str 0, Sta +1, Dex 0, Qik +1

Age: 79 (40)

Personality Traits: Maternal +2, Megalomaniacal +1, Calm -3

Combat:

Dodge: Init +2, Attack +7, Defense +7, Damage +0

Soak: +2

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

Abilities: Animal Handling 3 (ferrets), Animal Ken 5, Artes Liberales 5 (logic), Concentration 6 (spells), Craft: Sculpting 4 (figurines), English 5 (spoken), House Bjornaer Lore 2 (history), Latin 5 (spoken), Local Area Lore 4 (magical places), Magic Lore 2 (places), Magic Theory 4 (enchanting), Parma Magica 7 (Corpus), Philosophiae 6 (natural), Survival 3 (forest), Teaching 4 (animals)

Arts: Cr 20, Mu 10, Re 15, An 22, Me 12, Te 8

Powers:

Ghostly Magic, 1 point or more, +1, by spell: Ierimyra can make a spell affect the physical world by spending 1 point of temporary Might per magnitude of the effect.

Ghostly Vis, 1 point or more (special), +1, by spell: Ierimyra can permanently expend her Magic Might as vis, with each point lost equivalent to one pawn.

Spells Known:

Soothe Pains of the Beast (CrAn20, Ritual/+54)

True Rest of the Injured Brute (CrAn20/+43)

Champion's Strength (CrAn40, Ritual/+54): Increases an animal's Strength by one, but no more than one beyond the animal's natural score (Base 35, +1 Touch).

Mend the Broken Figure (CrAn40, Ritual/+54): Heals all wounds.

Ierimyra seems to sculpt the animal's flesh during the spell, as if it were made of clay (Base 35, +1 Touch).

Gift of Man's Fortitude (MuAn15/+33): As *Gift of the Bear's Fortitude*, but for animals.

Commanding the Harnessed Beast (ReAn30/+38)

Mind of the Beast (MuMe30/+33)

Vis: 8 Creo in a ghostly figurine of herself, once she accepts that her Hrools are safe

Appearance: Ierimyra is only a hazy, translucent image of a woman who wanders aimlessly with a vacuous expression on her weasel-like face, wringing her hands and desperately unsure what to do about matters that have become too great for her. She wears forester's clothes (breeches, shirt, short cloak, cap), and is bloody from a ghastly puncture wound in her stomach, which she seems to have forgotten about. Her heart-beast is an ermine, but she is so lost that she doesn't even remember how to change any more.

Roleplaying Tips: Don't just roleplay a drooling idiot, try instead to sound like an absent-minded professor who was hit on the head. Ierimyra is very emotional and responds to others only on an emotional level. Rational and intellectual arguments mean nothing; the Hrools mean everything. Answer questions with more important, more desperate questions that no one can understand: What about your children? Does anyone have any cloth? Where is everything hidden?

Ierimyra's laboratory is not overrun with Hrools as one might expect — it's taboo to them. The Hrools will not knowingly allow anyone into the room to loot it. It was partially ruined during the Sundering, and narrow crevasses in the floor reveal the darkness of the level fifteen feet below. Wider cracks in the walls demonstrate the force of the tremors that affected this area. Bottles, scraps of parchment, flasks, tubes, and other equipment are scattered all about. Her U-shaped stone lab table still stands in the center of the room, and piles of rubbish fill the corners. A large variety of different-sized iron cages, which contain the remains of both magical and mundane animals, cover the north wall. Four of the skeletons contain pawns of raw vis: an otter with 1 Aquam; a giant worm (now a husk) with 2 Terram; a dog with horns, 2 Muto; and a boar with golden tusks, 2 Perdo. All the cages are locked and heavily rusted. Moss, of course, grows thickly here.

The ground is safe to walk on, though it might not look like it, being paper-thin in many places. Most of the floors of the covenant had devices that kept them structurally sound, since in many places only a few feet of rock separated the two levels. Almost all of this material was brought down upon the labs below during Crenvalus's great tremor spell, but the magic of the floor tiles still keeps this room intact. Still, it would not be wise to jump up and down or start hitting the floor with large, heavy objects.

Diligent searching through the garbage may uncover some of the following, based on Perception + Awareness rolls:

- I. Small crystals scattered among the rubble next to leather pouches that once held them. These contain a total of 8 pawns of Vim vis. Moss has grown over them.
- II. A bronze, stoppered beaker filled with acid, about two feet long, stuck in a crevice in the floor, against a wall. If found, it can be pried out, though care should be taken to keep it upright when traveling.
- III. A large scroll with lab notes. It explains in detail the process Ierimyra followed to give the Hrools sentience, and if a wizard spends a season studying it, he or she will learn the methods described in the appendix.
- IV. Nine three-inch-high green stone statues of Hrools buried in the room. Anyone who searches will find them in the remnants of a wooden box wrapped in yards of mushy felt.
- V. A scroll with poetry concerning the beauty of wild animals (deer, wolves, hawks, etc.) and a few thoughts about how the natural magic of animals works in conjunction with their symbolic qualities (which may strike the interest of a player magus).
- VI. Eleven splintered and fragmented stone platters with maps carved on them, on and around the table. These lead to dragon holes, sources of raw vis, and sites of danger in the surrounding region. They are glossed with many comments, though they have begun to fade with time and the direc-

tions are not always clear, since they are relative to each other. If care were taken in collecting them, it would not be very hard to reconstruct them, but if the characters just throw them into a bag, it will take at least a season to piece them back together. Use these maps as starting points for new stories — the magi should at least be able to obtain leads to some good sources of raw vis.

VII. Under the table is a blue marble mortar and pestle, about the size of a soup bowl.

VIII. Ierimyra's gold wire diadem (see page 78), was kicked beneath the cages. Characters cannot see it in the darkness without shining some sort of light underneath.

In contrast, Ierimyra's living quarters are stark and clear of rubble. Where parts of the walls or floors have collapsed, the rock has been taken away and the cracks swept clean of dust. The only moss that grows here is high on the walls and on the ceiling. In the center of the room is a pile of Hrool skeletons, fifteen feet across and five feet high. As may be obvious to the characters, this room is used as a cemetery. If characters look closely, they will notice that all the skulls have been broken apart or have large holes in them, and that some bunches of bones have been tied together with vines.

Beyond the antechamber and laboratory are the Hrool warrens. The lighting is very poor; there is only an occasional patch of magical light on the ceiling. Along many of the walls are surprisingly detailed carvings, which characters will realize were made by the Hrools. They depict their rescue from a dark, frightening place by a shining goddess, arrival in a kind of heaven, and then the destruction of that heaven when the gods made war on each other. The lumpy figures of the beings pictured can be described as childish at best, but they are usually recognizable as Hrools and magi. There is even a certain degree of beauty in the carvings, as evidence of young minds learning important life lessons.

The warrens stretch far into the rock in three directions, and even slope below the floor level. The ground is rough but any holes or cracks have been perfectly patched, and the ceilings are so low that most characters will have to stoop. Empty bowls and other containers litter the area; broken shards and a collection of heavily rusted (and worthless) swords and axes are strewn about. In the far corner of one cavern are six pups, which scamper through the rooms, play fighting and squealing. They will take no notice of what happens in the caverns, though if the Hrools have advance warning of approaching characters, they will hide the pups throughout the rubble for safety.

A pair of Hrool-sized tunnels lead to their "livestock pens," where they raise rats in primitive cages sculpted from stone. The Hrools also keep a reservoir of drinking water pulled from the well in a great covered stone jar here, and have a large storeroom for fodder, packed close to full with moss (about two pawns' worth). There is another

Hukla, Champion Hrool

Magic Might: 10 (Animal)

Characteristics: Int +1, Per -1, Pre -3, Com -3, Str 0, Sta 0, Dex +3, Qik +3

Size: -3

Confidence: 2 (5)

Personality Traits: Careful +3, Dedicated +2, Brave -2

Combat:

Bite and shield: Init +6, Attack +7, Defense +10, Damage +1

Spear and shield: Init +5, Attack +10, Defense +14, Damage +4

Soak: 0

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-2), -3 (3-4), -5 (5-6), Incapacitated (7-8)

Abilities: Athletics 2 (climbing), Awareness 3, Brawl 2 (grapple), Leadership 4 (combat), Single Weapon 5 (spear), Speak Hrool 3 (orders), Stealth 3 (hiding), Swim 3 (diving)

Equipment: David's shield, and a wooden stake.

Encumbrance: 2 (2)

Vis: 2 Corpus in each satyr horn (8 total), 2 Animal

Appearance: Hukla is a hero among his kind, exceptionally lithe and fast and dotted with white spots over his furry body.

He wears a necklace with four satyr horns, a sign of great status among the Hrool. He carries a magical heater shield, which he can lift though it is bigger than he is, and usually carries a long spear.

Captain's Shield

The shield David carried is emblazoned with the symbol of Calebais, and has two powers invested in it: it is resistant to wear and age, preventing rust and mending itself when damaged (CrTe10, +2 Sun; +1 twice per day, +3 activate at sunrise and

sunset = Level 24). Also, if held still for six seconds, it can turn the bearer and everything he carries invisible for as long as he remains in one place. (PelM4, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +1 twice per day, +3 activate at sunrise and sunset = Level 19).

Captain's Mail

David's chain mail has three magical powers that were designed to trigger automatically every sunrise and sunset, though wounds do not heal naturally while the mail is worn and reopen soon after it is removed. These effects are: "heal the debilitating effects of disease, poison, or injury" (CrCo20, +1 Touch, +2 Sun; +1 twice per day, +3 activate at sunrise and sunset = Level 39), "heal an incapacitating wound" (CrCo30, +1 Touch, +2 Sun; +1

twice per day, +3 activate at sunrise and sunset = Level 49), and "reduce the intensity of all of a person's emotions" (PeMe4, +1 Touch, +2 Sun; +1 twice per day, +3 activate at sunrise and sunset = Level 19). The mail is also resistant to wear and age, preventing rust and mending itself when damaged (CrTe10, +2 Sun; +1 twice per day, +3 activate at sunrise and sunset = Level 24).



exit tunnel that leads to the level below that they keep blocked. All of these areas have been carved from the rock by the ermines, and the doorways look almost chewed, as if Hrool-sized fistfuls were simply scooped out of the walls.

There are two ermines here, Arz and Kremin, and each one wears a diadem. There are also 22 adults and 11 warriors, though feel free to change this number if the characters are weak. This group of Hrools possesses David's shield (carried by their champion, Hukla) and his chain mail, which is too big for Hrools to wear, so they keep it hidden on one side of the warrens. These Hrools fight with wooden spears that were once pieces of furniture or tool handles but that have been chewed into sharp stakes.

The Seventh Level

This level is almost completely impassable. Two laboratories and living quarters for magi were located here, but Crenalus collapsed the floor above with a huge *Rego Terram* spell designed to kill Pitsdim, whose decaying remains are buried somewhere beneath tons of rubble. Only the smaller, western stairway and the well remain clear; the rest is full of dust, dirt, support timbers, rusted metal, and huge slabs of rock.

Feral Hrools and verminous creatures may be found burrowing through the maze of crawlspaces and tunnels that have been excavated throughout this level, and on the eastern side the Undertakers live in the earth directly beneath Drininkeana's lab. Small chambers may have been unearthed at various points within the dirt and rock, and any of these areas would serve as lairs for all manner of strange inhabitants.

Play this floor by ear. Or, if you wish, you can instead leave this level clear and stock it with ideas of your own: other ghosts, magic items, traps, or whatever you think appropriate.

The Eighth Level

The eighth level is the location of the wizard's council room, its antechamber, and the covenant's formerly large library. It also hides the entrance to the covenant's treasure vault and many of the answers to the questions that surround what happened at Calebais.

LIBRARY

The library is a large chamber with two lines of pillars giving the twenty foot high room a grand feeling. The upper parts of the walls have gilded carvings on them, depicting the potential of education. The north wall shows a maga standing proudly before a bearded, bare-chested giant sitting on a throne. The east wall shows a magus finding an enchanted clearing in a jungle-like faerie forest. The west wall depicts a maga with hand outstretched standing before a vast panorama of gold gilded stars. The south wall pictures a magus leading a sea of people up a mountain.

Perceptive characters might recognize the hand that wrote this as the same one that wrote the warning outside the covenant, Ornath of Guernicus.

All the books in the library have been burned. It looks as if some madman had a good time in here (and in fact, that's exactly what happened). If the books had been in good shape, they would have made a fantastic treasure. Unfortunately, they have been thoroughly destroyed. The blackened husks of the covers and shelves can be found throughout the room. They are covered with ashes, and it appears as if someone dug through them, perhaps to be sure that they were all ruined. Small middle sections of certain books might be read, but they will be of no real use to the magi. If they were carefully pieced together after months of work, perhaps some mundane information could be retrieved,

The Engraving

Etched in careful letters across this panorama are the following words.

CRENALUS VISUS TUTUS FALSUS ERAT

(krane-WAH-loos WEE-soos TOO-toos FAHL-soos ay-ROT)

"Crenvalus, your vision was wrong."

HABUIT SUPERBIAM NIMIAM

(hab-BOO-eet soo-PAIR-bee-abm NEE-mee-abm)

"You had too much pride."

POSSEMUS LABORARE SIMUL UNA

(Pob-SAY-moos LAY-bore-AH-ray SEE-mool OO-nah)

"We could have worked together."

but to study books requires that they be essentially complete, and these books cannot be mended.

There are six semi-private study alcoves built into niches along the walls. They are almost separate rooms that once had wooden screens blocking them off from the rest of the library. Some had simple lab equipment within. However, like the rest of the library, these alcoves are now useless.

ANTECHAMBER

The antechamber to the council room has stone benches built into the wall opposite the well, and its floor is covered with a complicated mosaic of colored tiles, detailing a golden dragon flying out of grim, dark hole in the hollow of a mountain. There is no rubble in this room and only a few decaying tapestries litter the floor where they fell from their hooks.

COUNCIL ROOM

The council room has a long, crafted stone table running down the middle of it. Around it are twelve chairs of different kinds, all of them large and ornately carved. Bright lights shine from above on each of the chairs, causing the dust in the air to sparkle and lending the room an air of majesty. The chamber is in fairly good shape, and some heavily tattered tapestries still hang on the walls. The only one on which a design may be deciphered has a map of the region around Calebais, but much of the detail has worn away.

Standing on the table is Pitsdim, the mad wizard, though the characters may not recognize him unless they have encountered him elsewhere. He is casting relatively minor fire spells (probably *Pilums of Fire*) towards the ceiling, and will be delighted to see that he has visitors.

PITSDIM

Pitsdim caused great damage within the covenant before he was slain by Crenvalus. He was one of the main perpetrators of the violence that brought the covenant down, and all the other ghosts hate him. He still wanders the covenant in the same frame of mind he had during the Sundering, best described as "Burn! Burn! Ha ha! Hee hee! Burn!" The characters may hear snatches of his maniacal laughter from below them as they explore the upper levels. He also hates Crenvalus, and when he is not lighting fires and giggling loudly, he mumbles to himself about the evil wizard's plan to destroy the covenant.

He can cast powerful *Ignem* spells, and if he sees someone in the well or standing on a balcony above him, he may send a burst of flame at them, and if it misses it may continue out of the well and burn in the sky above the hill for a few seconds (these sorts of displays have fueled the rumors about a fire-breathing dragon in town). Alas, few of his ghostly spells have an effect on the living. Those struck feel and look burned, but the illusion passes quickly and leaves no damage. If he sends a bolt of fire at the party, they may think they are injured, for they will feel the burning sensation of the flames, but will realize that it was an illusion once the initial shock has worn off. He is used to fending off intruders with his magic, but he forgets that he must use his *Might* to affect the physical realm. Wait until the players encounter him in the council chamber before he begins using his "real" powers to devastate their ranks, and remember that he can still temporarily blind characters with bursts of illusory light, or cause fear or anger if he can catch a character's eye.

In spite of the evidence, Pitsdim does not know he is a ghost, and since he is terrified of ending up in Hell's fire, he will not accept that he is dead. His consuming fear of the inevitable has fueled his destructive insanity, and this mindless violence has kept him on earth. He will destroy those who try to convince him he has died rather than listen to what they have to say. He may heed his familiar, but since their bonds are broken, they must speak. Pitsdim will probably never accept his guilt, however. If the characters do manage somehow to defeat him with ghostly fire or convince him to burn himself up, he will not return, and his ashes will contain 7 pawns of *Ignem vis*.

If the characters manage to defeat or subdue Pitsdim, they will notice more of the details of this room. Most of the chairs around

Pitsdim, Magister of Flames

Magic Might: 38 (Mentem)

Characteristics: Int +2, Per +1, Pre -2, Com -3, Str +2, Sta +2, Dex +2, Qik +2

Age: 82 (50)

Personality Traits: Megalomaniacal +2, Brave -2, Loyal -2, Peaceful -3

Combat:

Dodge: Init +2, Attack +7, Defense +7, Damage +0

Staff (iron-tipped): Init +1, Attack +8, Defense +12, Damage +8

Soak: +2

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

Abilities: Awareness 4 (alert), Brawl 4 (dodge), Concentration 3 (spells), Finesse 6 (Igm), France Lore 3 (battles), Great Weapon 4 (staff), Local Language 5 (slang), Latin 2 (spoken), Magic Theory 3 (spells), Parma Magica 8 (Igm), Penetration 8 (Creo)

Arts: Cr 25, Co 15, Ig 25, Me 15, Vi 15

Powers:

Ghostly Magic, 1 or more points, +2, by spell: Pitsdim can make a spell affect the physical world by spending 1 point of temporary Might per magnitude of the effect.

Ghostly Vis, 1 or more points (special), +2, by spell: Pitsdim can permanently expend his Magic Might as vis, with each point lost equivalent to one pawn.

Spells Known:

Flash of the Scarlet Flames (CrIg15/+56)

Ignite the Inflammable Item (CrIg15/+56): Sets fire to a slightly flammable object. (Base 5, +2 Voice)

Pilum of Fire (CrIg20/+56)

Arc of Fiery Ribbons (CrIg25/+56)

Ball of Abysmal Flame (CrIg35/+56)

Conflagration of Light (CrIg50/+56): An enormous burst of fire launches from his fingers, burning each member of a group for +30 damage, and blinding those who see it as with *Flash of the Scarlet Flames* (Base 25, +2 Voice, +2 Group, +1 additional effect).

Dive of the Dying Phoenix (CrIg50/+56): A small, flaming bird speeds from the caster to any target within sight and explodes on impact in a tremendous blast of flame, causing +30 damage and setting the target on fire as with *Coat of Flame*, though there is no Rego requisite to keep the flames from spreading. (Base 25, +3 Sight, +1 Conc, +1 flashy effect).

Panic of the Trembling Heart (CrMe15/+43)

Rising Ire (CrMe15/+43)

Encumbrance: 0 (1)

Vis: 7 Igm in his ghostly ashes, if he burns away.

Appearance: Pitsdim is a frightening image of a middle-aged, obviously crazy magus in burned and tattered robes, with wild, dusty hair and even wilder eyes, violently swinging an iron-tipped staff. He is missing many of his teeth, and cackles hollowly to himself while he sets fire to everything in sight.

Roleplaying Tips: Practice the maniacal laugh (though not within hearing distance of people who wouldn't understand) and speak with gusto. He is obviously insane, violent and without remorse; if you want to try to give him some depth, he is also frightened and childlike. His grand speeches are barely intelligible, full of clichés and insulting banter, clearly a preamble to him burning everything in sight.

the council table are made of wood (still intact), and some are made of stone, and still others are made of tarnished bronze or brass. Many of the chairs are covered with moss, as is most of the table, but close inspection may reveal their high artistic quality. On the back of each chair (in Latin) is one of the following phrases:

MORMULUS, MAGISTER OF ILLUSION
EONUS, MAGISTER OF THE MIND
ERECHTHEUS, MAGISTER OF CHANGE
CRENVALUS, MAGISTER OF CONTROL
UDERZUS, MAGISTER OF PERCEPTION
VENTUS GURGES, MAGISTER OF WEATHER
GRANORDA, MAGISTER OF DEATH
IERIMYRA, MAGISTER OF BEASTS

PITSDIM, MAGISTER OF FLAMES
DRININKEANA, MAGISTER OF LIFE
MALEVOLA VIDA, MAGISTER OF DESTRUCTION
DARGAUD, STUDENT OF ALL THINGS

There are no inscriptions at the base of the table, and though a light shines down on a space at the head of the table, there is no chair. A window looks out over the well and carved on the opposite wall is a huge gilded sculpture of the symbol of Calebais: a broken crown in flames. It is fully visible from the council table. A small bell, two feet high, hangs in the corner, mounted on a wooden frame five feet above the floor. Made of bronze, it is round and only lightly engraved with some circular patterns running along the bottom edge, and the symbol of Calebais repeats three times around the middle.

On the far wall from the entrance to this room, behind the head of the table, is a magical door. One of the ghosts (David or Ferdina) might tell the characters about it, if properly questioned and treated respectfully. They know that the wizards would cast a spell every time they wanted to go through the wall, and then they pushed their way through the rock. There is a tunnel beyond it, though they probably do not remember more than that.

Another means for characters to find out about the door is by noticing the skeletal hand sticking out of it. Characters are likely to overlook it when they first enter the room because the walls are splotted with stains and moss and the light in the corners is dim. After dealing with Pitsdim, however, when they approach the far wall they will see the hand sticking out about three and a half feet above the floor, as if someone were trying to reach out from the stone. They may also notice the tattered remains of a letter beneath it (if Pitsdim's powers haven't burned it to a crisp), but most of the page has been torn away, and age or fire has made it impossible to read.

The door is magical, and Intellego Vim spells will reveal that it is an active device with Muto Terram, and Intellego Vim effects. If a magus casts a spontaneous Muto Terram spell on it, of any magnitude, a six foot by five foot section of the wall becomes passable (Sun duration). The spell is the means to activate the item, and does not make the change itself. The first time this happens, the mummified corpse (David) will crumple and fall partially out into the council room. Those walking through the door must hold their breath and force their way through five feet of pudding-like rock until they get to the other side. Characters may need to make Brave checks of at least 6+ to attempt to cross. A low Brave roll or botch might mean that characters panic while inside the rock, digging in their heels or thrashing about as if drowning. Another spontaneous Muto Terram spell causes the door to close again.

David will be very uncomfortable in this room, and will become very angry if anyone treats the corpse badly or the magi use magic on it. He will decline offers for a proper burial as long as he is still a ghost, but will have great respect for any who propose one for him. He will have particular trouble passing through the door, but will manage it if he is ordered to go through and the magi proceed first.

The door leads to the inner chamber and the tunnel that leads to the vault.

BACKGROUND: THE COUNCIL CHAMBER

The bell that hangs here is not the Bell of Ibyn, but merely a bell that was used to call magi to council meetings. It sounds toneless

and flat when hit, for it was activated by striking the magical chime that Ferdina carried. Only the autocrat can now cause the bell to ring properly; if she does it will echo with an otherworldly quality, and the ghosts of the remaining magi will be compelled to gather in the council chamber.

Ornath's simple wooden chair was removed after he departed. It used to sit at the end of the table, to represent his position as head of the council. With thirteen magi, Ornath only voted during ties, and decided the agenda for council meetings. It was his role to keep order, and the chaos that followed his departure was when the fighting began. Without him, the council was deadlocked, and no one was willing to give up their votes to control the proceedings, so his duties were given to the autocrat. She did not have their respect, however, and as soon as she became a hindrance to the plans of the ambitious magi, she was abandoned.

The letter remnant, once clutched by David's skeletal hand in the doorway, may look familiar to the characters, since they received the other half at the beginning of the story. If they rescue it from the flames and manage to make the faded writing visible, they will see that it reads:

Crenvalus' Letter

... hoards green treasure, one who hoards gold treasure, one who hunts in the village, one who hunts in the forest, one who is blunt, one who is sharp, one of bright silver, one of tarnished silver, and the thief in white.
The answer is: A Crown.

Make your way to our council chamber, seven levels down. There, you may pass through the door of stone by inventing a spell of Muto and Terram, and then you must break through another wall that seals the corridor beyond. When you see the sun, speak the words "The crown is broken" to bring you safely through the tunnel, but ignore the chests and avoid the pitfalls in the floor to find the cavern where our greatest treasure lies.

Use our former glory for good, and share it justly and mercifully with your sodales, for I travel now to a place where wealth and power cannot help me. Think no more ill of Crenvalus, but pray instead for my soul, and perhaps I will see you from afar and thank you for your mercy.

Farewell, my friends; so passes Crenvalus, follower of Tytalus, and last of the wizards of Calebais.

Crenvalus wrote this letter in a terrifying fit of remorse, and killed himself immediately afterward. He had given the message to David with instructions to take it to the redcaps, ensuring that it would spread throughout the Tribunal, but when he saw that he was not dead he had desperate second thoughts. He swept after David, and inexplicably closed the portal just as the captain was passing through, killing him. Yet David had stretched his hand bearing the letter through to the other side, and Larine, waiting for him and seeing what had happened, tore the letter from his grasp and fled the covenant, grieving for her lost love. Crenvalus cried after her to burn the letter, and never to betray the secrets of Calebais, but he does not know if she heard his ghostly commands. As time passed and no one made their way into the vaults, Crenvalus came to believe that she had done as he instructed.

The Ninth Level

The laboratory here has no contact with the rest of the covenant except through its balcony, so it is unlikely that characters will wind up here unless they have descended the well, either on purpose or by accident. The balcony is ornately carved with a bas-relief of a great eagle in flight on the wall above, and some gleams of gold remain from the gilt. Characters may be able to see this balcony from the upper floors.

VENTUS GURGES'S LABORATORY

This area was the home and workplace of Ventus Gurges, a powerful magus who specialized in Auram and Aquam. A huge tapestry of a cloud, woven with silver thread against a black background, which is still largely intact, dominates the antechamber. It is more than twenty feet long and eight feet high, and bolts of lightning run from the cloud to the bottom of the tapestry. On the balcony is the emaciated corpse of Althea, Ventus Gurges's assistant, and her ghost haunts this level. The characters will probably meet her almost immediately, because she will not wait long to approach guests to her master's lab.

ALTHEA

Althea starved to death after her master died in the Sundering, because his laboratory has no physical connection to the rest of the covenant, and her broken leg prevented her from climbing out. She was struck by falling rocks during a massive earthquake that shook the covenant, and pinned down. She could only get free by permanently damaging her leg. She has always been physically weak, emaciated, and cowardly. She is only a labora-

tory assistant, not an apprentice, and had no magic. She remains spiteful to magi, for she believes their petty squabbles and lack of involvement in the day-to-day affairs of the covenant caused the Sundering. Sometimes she sits on the balcony and pours out her bitter sorrows in fits of loud weeping.

She will tell everything she knows about the laboratory if someone will give her some food to quiet her desperate hunger, which has grown over the last fifty years. To feed her, something edible must be given a spiritual component, as with a spontaneous MuAn or MuHe spell with a Mentem requisite. She also has the power of possession and may take over someone's body so that she may eat. This may result in a humorous episode, but try to make it grim, too. Once fed, she will go to sleep near her remains and quietly pass on.

The laboratory was once well equipped, though little sign of that equipment remains. Rubble lies strewn about everywhere. Large boulders, fallen out of jagged depressions in the ceiling, sit within a maelstrom of destruction. The walls are cracked and falling in many places.

If anyone touches the massive table in the center of the room, a bolt of lightning (CrAu35) flies from a small silver knob on the west wall onto the table's center, accompanied by a loud crack. If the lab were still functioning, this would light the materials here on fire, causing a mighty explosion, but the fuel is long gone and the trap is not as effective, save perhaps to knock intruders to the floor.

The north wall of the laboratory is covered with niches of all sizes that have been carved into the wall, floor to ceiling, creating a mosaic of square holes. Many are full, though very little of value remains. Most of the books have been ruined, but two tractatus on the history of the Order of Hermes, three on Roman history, and five on storm weather spells (Auram) are still legible, all of them Quality 8. Five goblet-sized glass containers each hold a bubble of viscous blue-black smoke, each worth a pawn of Auram vis. Three bucket-sized clay urns, sealed with wax, feel light enough to be empty, but each is labeled *tempestat intestae* (tem-PASTE-ahs in-TASTE-eye, "tempest in a pot"), so characters should know to be careful; each contains a different kind of weather spirit or air elemental, and as they have not been bound in service they will simply wreak havoc if released. Some other niches hold bottles with strange and mundane liquids inside, while others hold jars of fur or butterfly wings, and a few hold silver objects formed into small, hand-sized sculptures symbolizing clouds and lightning bolts.

The room across the well from the laboratory has a large, gray cloud in the middle, thirty feet around, and the bowl-shaped floor is partially filled with water. Soon after the characters enter, the cloud begins to rain. This was once a test area for Ventus Gurges; he practiced his magic here and designed and perfected new Auram spells using the cloud. If the characters attempt to cast Auram magic at it, they find it is exceptionally easy to affect and manipulate.

Althea

Magic Might: 15 (Mentem)

Characteristics: Int +3, Per +1, Pre -3, Com +3, Str -3, Sta -2, Dex +1, Qik 0

Age: (70)

Decrepitude: 3

Size: 0

Personality Traits: Forgiving -2, Hopeful -2, Brave -3

Combat:

Dodge: Init +0, Attack +1, Defense +0, Damage -3

Soak: -2

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

Abilities: Artes Liberales 4 (mathematics), Bargain 4 (food), Charm 4 (begging), Church Lore 3 (schools), Concentration 4 (writing), Latin 5 (reading), Local Area Lore 3 (history), Local Language 2 (academia), Magic Lore 3 (creatures), Magic Theory 2 (writing), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (labs), Philosophiae 2 (moral), Profession: Scribe 6 (Hermetic books), Theology 4 (history)

Powers:

Possession, 3 points, +0, Mentem: Althea can take over a living body as if it were her own. Each round, the victim may make an Intelligence roll to resist, adding an appropriate Personality trait (e.g. Rebellious). On a 9+, she is driven out. On a 6+, the two wills are in conflict and neither may act. Otherwise, Althea may use the body as she wishes.

Vis: 3 Corpus in her corpse if she manages to eat something

Appearance: Althea is an elderly, emaciated woman in rags, hobbling on her cruelly fractured left leg, her eyes wild with hunger.

Roleplaying Tips: Let your head dangle from your neck, and speak in a raspy, trembling voice. Stop speaking entirely every few seconds and look woeful.

What She Knows: Althea was a relative of Ventus Gurses and came to work at the covenant late in her life, not long before the Sundering. She rarely left his laboratory, eating meals in her living quarters, and thus does not know much about the covenant. She does know that an earthquake killed her master and flooded the well, and that most of the lab notes she copied are kept in the library. She remembers seeing a text about a magical bell, though she recalls nothing of the substance.

More debris is spread through the small living quarters, and nothing else is left of the wizard's personal belongings except for an occasional pile of rubbish. Angular, silver symbols ten feet high crowd the walls of the room, gently lit from above by a myriad of stars shining on the otherwise black ceiling.

Further Levels

The remaining levels are completely flooded, buried under water and sharing the depths with the great dragon statue that fills the central section. Many more laboratories and living quarters were located in this area, though not all of them had direct access to the well. If the characters have the means to explore them, you can extend the adventure, developing your own ideas for what they might find, but a better way to continue the story would be to put more detail into the upper levels and use these flooded levels to design a later expedition, after several game years have passed ("Return to the Broken Covenant").

The Vault

This level will probably mark the end of the long journey the characters began by exploring Calebais, and it is rich with exam-

ples of the paranoia, power and pride that came to possess the magi. Unlike the ghosts on the sixth level, or Pitsdim on the eighth, the wizards who have gathered here are the ones who had the highest status. There is little trace of their labs or living quarters, as they are buried under rock or submerged beneath tons of water, so the ghosts on this level inhabit the rooms where they can remember and revel in their influence and their covenant's former glory.

Remember that these are the magi who were directly responsible for the disaster, even if they didn't cause all of the damage, and each of them has a lesson to teach. They have all committed ruthless and cunning acts, but don't give away their secrets until the moment is right. Instead, allow the players to become lulled by their ghostly stereotypes, and let the scenes drag on a little with their heavy symbolism. Then, before the characters lose interest, surprise and frighten them with sudden, swift, terrible action.

The characters will not necessarily leave here with the Bell of Ibyn. Defeating the foes that will oppose them and avoiding or surviving the traps that lie in wait will take great presence of mind and a good deal of luck. Even finding the chamber where the Bell lies will not be easy. Don't be tempted to keep giving the players hints until they figure it out; the Bell is so powerful and useful that the characters should not be guaranteed success. If they don't find it, they don't find it.

Furthermore, the final battles should press the characters so hard and cause so many casualties that they seriously consider retreating. Both the nearby village and the faerie forest can act as safe havens where the characters can rest and regain their strength for another assault. If they insist on pressing onward, no matter what the cost, you and the players must be prepared for characters to die in the attempt. For such a royal treasure, a high price must be paid or it will lose its value. Only the most brave and clever of players should have a chance at complete success.

THE INNER CHAMBER

When the characters push through the magic door from the council room, they will emerge into pitch darkness (this section of the covenant is not magically lit). Once they make light, they will see a rough-hewn cave sloping down, with a wall made of smooth stone at the far end, obviously blocking the passage. Near the wall is a skeleton in rotted wizard's clothing, still

clutching a staff (which is not, alas, magical). Etched crudely into the wall is a message, and a Perception + Latin roll of 6+ allows characters to make out the words.

There are numerous ways to break through the ten-foot thick wall, including enlisting the aid of Paulo, wielding magic, using the onyx-tipped staff, or applying brute force with picks and shovels. For magi, the wall will surely not be a major impediment. The air behind the wall is very stale, however, and it becomes heavily laden with dust as the characters walk around. From this point on, have characters check for the loss of a Fatigue level after each round of heavy exertion, rolling Stamina against an Ease Factor of 6.

Characters who explore the corners of the chamber may find the burned and dried husk of a dead fox (Crenvalus's familiar), the crumbled remains of several wooden shelves, a scribe's table, and a decaying stack of vellum that contains ancient and unreadable covenant records. The writing on these documents is faded and indecipherable, but its volume suggests it predates the Sundering by several years.

BACKGROUND: THE INNER CHAMBER

This area is where Crenvalus lived out his last hours, and his corpse lies without dignity on the floor. Since he couldn't catch the crafty mage, Pitsdim killed Crenvalus's familiar instead. Mad with rage and thirsty for vengeance, Crenvalus collapsed the entire seventh level, crushing Pitsdim but causing incredible damage to the rest of the covenant, flooding the lower levels and killing many of the remaining magi and their servants. Overcome with guilt, Crenvalus organized a mass grave for those of the fallen who could be recovered. David helped him carry their bodies to the burial chambers below, and then he sealed the tunnel with a solid wall of stone. Then, here in the simple chamber once used for covenant records, he composed his final message before taking his own life.

David stood loyally by his side through all this, and after seeing the wizard fall dead, he said a prayer and took the letter as he had promised, turning to slowly make his way back through the portal that would remain open until sundown. But Crenvalus found himself still standing when his body fell, and in confusion he frantically commanded David to stop, stop, for it seemed he was not dead, and everything was for nothing. Tormented and impotent, he grew furious with David, who stupidly no longer obeyed him, and in the blink of an eye he decided that he must make sure that the captain could not deliver his cursed letter. He quickly closed the portal, sealing David within.

The Message

REVERTITE AD MUNDUM VESTRUM PROPRIUM
(ray-VAIR-tee-TAY odd MOON-doom VAY-stroom PROH-
pree-oom)

"Return to your own world."

HIC SEPULCRUM CALEBASIS EST
(heek say-POOL-kroom KAH-lay-BAHS-ees est)
"This is the tomb of Calebais."

SOMNUM INCOLAE INQUIETATE NON
(SOHM-noom in-KOH-lie in-KWEE-ay-TAH-tay nobn)
"Do not disturb the inhabitants' slumber."

**PERMANEBO IN LOCLO HOC PROTEGAMQUAE
RELIQUAS MERSERICORES EOES SEMPER**
(PAIR-mab-NAY-bob in LOH-kob hock prob-TAY-GAHM-
kwai RAY-lee-KWAHS mare-SAIR-ee-KOH-rays ay-OH-rabs
SAME-pair)

"I shall always remain here to protect their pitiful
remains."

IGNOSCETE NOBIS INSIPIENTIAM SUAM
(EE-gnob-SKAY-tay NOH-bees een-SEE-pee-AYN-tee-um
SOO-abm)

Soon, Crenvalus came to understand the intricacies of his new form, though he lost much of his wisdom and became driven instead by paranoia, and he eventually pushed his incorporeal form through the great wall he had created to join the other ghosts in the chambers below. Having seen the devastation and ruin he has wrought, he will not choose to leave the treasure chambers now, but instead remains with his *sodales*, guarding their precious Bell against those who would steal it.

THE TUNNEL

Once they discover a way past the wall, the characters will find a tunnel fashioned into a ramp that spirals down into the darkness. The walls are very rough-hewn and uneven, as if they were dug out with a huge scoop, and the ramp descends forty feet, making four complete revolutions.

Thoughtful characters (Intelligence + Awareness of 15 or more) will realize that this path will take them below the water line of the flooded well. Characters with Premonitions or similar powers will begin to get a sense that they are in danger from "fire in the air" and "water in the earth" (Ease Factor 3).

If Paulo is still with the characters, you may want to remind them of his unpredictable tendencies by having him yell and begin causing trouble again. Characters should have a chance to remember his violent temper and the power of his war hammer before they proceed down the tunnel.

PERILOUS SUN

Halfway down the ramp is a stylized picture of the sun with three clouds surrounding it etched into the ceiling. Have players make a Perception + Awareness roll of 9+, but roll a separate die yourself. If any players succeed when you roll a 0, tell them that they see the symbol of Calebais instead (a broken crown with three flames), until they examine the picture more closely. This extra roll may throw off players who have come to rely on Perception rolls.

As the first character walks past this motif, a thunderbolt flies from its center and strikes that character's head. If that character is under the influence of active magical effects or has the Gift, two bolts strike instead. Each bolt does +30 damage (a CrAu35 effect, with +25 Penetration), and because it specifically targets the head, the character will be knocked unconscious if this damage causes a heavy wound. In addition, all characters within thirty feet are deafened for several minutes unless they roll a 6 or better on a simple Stamina roll. The crack of thunder is loud enough to be heard from both the council room and the treasure chambers below.

Only the first character to pass the trap is struck, since it only activates once every twenty rounds, but if anyone says "Corona fracta est" (coh-ROH-nah FROCK-tah est, "The crown is broken") while standing beneath the picture, or in fact any sentence in Latin that contains the words for "broken" and "crown," the trap will be disarmed for several minutes.

PERILOUS WATER

Just after the corridor turns again, it will be evident that water is seeping in through cracks in the wall and trickling down the ramp. The rest of the journey is very tricky, because the wet rock is very slick. All characters should make Dexterity + Athletics - Encumbrance rolls against an Ease Factor of 12 to avoid sliding down the ramp (remember to take into account Virtues like Perfect Balance and Troupe Upbringing). Falling characters can catch themselves by succeeding on a subsequent Dexterity + Athletics roll against an Ease Factor of 9, but otherwise they tumble all the way to the bottom and suffer +16 damage.

At the bottom of the ramp are three large caverns, which Perception + Awareness rolls against an Ease Factor of 9 will reveal to be mostly natural. The caverns are already partially submerged with about two feet of water, as a result of the slow rivulet that has been trickling in. This water is very cold, and characters should make additional Fatigue checks as they wade through it.

By the time the lead characters have made it down the ramp, Paulo will begin smashing the wall holding back the water, assuming he is with them and they have not taken steps to prevent what should be predictable behavior. Those who do not recognize the danger ahead of time will reach the bottom of the ramp just in time to hear Paulo's yelling as his first swing hits the wall. They will then have to choose between fleeing back up the ramp to get above the flood, rushing blindly forward, or attempting to stop Paulo.

To either flee up the ramp past Paulo or race down to the relative safety of the far caverns requires a Quickness + Athletics - Encumbrance roll against an Ease Factor of 6. Stopping Paulo is hardly an option at all, since once he has started swinging the characters will have, at most, one round before the rock cracks, and Paulo is probably not within their line of sight. Wizards will have to rush back half the distance and try to fast-cast a spell, and this requires at least a 12+ Initiative roll. Even then, the cracks will be widened a little because of his first blow, and it will be only a matter of time before they burst.

Characters caught in the deluge will be dashed against the stone floor and knocked down into the caverns below, taking +30 damage. If they make it into the near caverns before the wall bursts, they will only suffer +10 damage from battery as the water rushes

in. The caverns will fill almost completely with water, but characters who are able to stay afloat (ditching heavy armor) can eventually work their way out. Retrieving the spoils of the treasure vault at this point will be extremely difficult without powerful Rego magic and either the ability to breathe underwater or some way to drain the area fast enough to keep ahead of the flood.

TREASURE CHAMBER

A great deal of treasure was stored in this room at one time, but almost all of it has rotted away under the still waters. Characters will feel the ground slide about beneath their feet as they wander about. If they start digging through the muck, they will find an assortment of ruined goods: pieces of furniture, metal rods, lengths of chain, carved chess pieces, tattered tapestries, rusted arms and armor, and more. Feel free to reward tenacity by slipping in exotic objects that might be useful in a lab or lead to other stories.

Three large chests sit spaced across the far wall, their lids clearing the surface of the water by about six inches. Massive locks still hold each of these chests shut, and the Ease Factor to pick them is 18 because of rust, though more forceful methods might be easier. Two of the chests hold a sizable fortune of silver coins, and the last once contained the covenant's stores of vis, unfortunately depleted during the Sundering.

Whenever any of the chests are opened, a pair of magical hands — similar to those in the spell *Hands of the Grasping Earth* (ReMuTe15) — will emerge from the ground in front of the chest and grab the ankles of the closest person within five feet. They require a Strength roll against an Ease Factor of 12 to break free, though the water will cause them to deteriorate over time, reducing the Ease Factor by 3 each round. At the same time, two arms of a similar consistency emerge from the wall and begin to pummel the immobilized character with one-two punches (combat totals: Init +0, Attack +7, Defense +4, Damage +8). Each set has +25 Soak and no magic resistance, but hacking weapons do double damage against them. If not otherwise dealt with, they vanish at sunrise or sunset. Fortunately, the grasping hands will probably prevent unconscious characters from drowning, but unfortunately they are not easy to escape, especially while being punched in the face.

CORRIDOR AND PITFALLS

At the north side of the cavern is a corridor twenty feet long leading into the second cavern. In the middle of this corridor is a pit, the effect of which has been somewhat altered now that the area has been submerged in water. It is ten feet across and twenty feet deep, with spikes at the bottom, and an illusion of floor covering it.

Characters cannot see this illusion because of the water, and if they step into the pit, they will not sink quickly enough to damage themselves, though they could drown if they are wearing heavy armor. They will need to make Strength + Swim - Burden rolls against an Ease Factor of 6 to make their way back to the surface.

When characters come within ten feet of the pit, have them make a Perception + Awareness roll. A large boulder with accompanying noise will appear behind them, as if it rolled in from somewhere in the other room, and any characters who did not botch their roll will see it coming towards them. This boulder is an illusion, intended to make intruders run towards the pit, but since it was not designed to account for water on the ground, something about it will look and sound odd to characters with a roll of 6 or better. Those with 12 or more on the roll, or anyone who stops to take a close look at it, will perceive exactly what is wrong with it and see through the illusion.

GRANORDA

Granorda loves mortal men and all of the decadent pleasures of life, even in death. Yet despite her specialty in necromancy and her hedonistic interests, she is generally an honest, open woman interested in justice and the survival of all that is pure and beautiful in the world. Underneath her brash exterior she is a caring, compassionate soul who is genuinely concerned for the well being of others.

Granorda needs to feel exonerated for her involvement in the Sundering. She allowed others (particularly Pitsdim) to commit violence that aided her goals, and kept silent about their crimes so long as they served her interests, partly because she disliked Ornath, and partly because she admired Crenvalus (even though she suspected he was responsible for the covenant's troubles). She came to believe that Crenvalus was unworthy of ruling Calebais, but she did not see her own faults and decided that she was the only possible choice to replace him. He killed her with surprising ease after she attacked him in his sanctum, and she still fears him for this reason.

Now, Granorda is also obsessed with her death and her physical remains. She is intimately aware of the power magi have over the spirits and the flesh of the dead, and is frightened beyond reason that her corpse will be violated or destroyed. She cannot help it — she suspects everyone of coveting her remains, and of desiring to commit foul acts with them. She feels incredibly helpless in this regard and is desperate to protect herself. If the characters can somehow seal her grave, she will pass on as soon as she gives up her ties to Calebais. One way for characters to help her with this is to convince her that they would do great good with the Bell. If she believes them, and if they swear an oath not to disturb her corpse, she will give them her blessing

and thanks, and soon go to her eternal rest. However, even if she had been their "leader," the other magi will certainly object to this, and they will fight twice as hard to prevent the characters from taking the Bell without their consent.

CRENVALUS

Crenvalus has a distinct dislike of not being in control of a situation, and in life he took great pleasure in manipulating the actions of other people. It was his constant efforts to take charge of the covenant and his repeated squabbles with Ornath that precipitated the Sundering, and his ill-planned vengeance that made him finally realize he was also unfit to rule. Yet when he realized that death was not the end for him, he found he could not bear the thought of anyone else ruling Calebais, or else he decided he really wanted to continue after all, and acted to ensure that no one would ever disturb the covenant again.

Though he has many weaknesses, Crenvalus was basically a good man who tried hard to preserve the honor of the covenant and the Order of Hermes. Anger comes quickly to him, however, and he has never practiced much restraint. He is also half-mad, though it

may not be apparent at first, his extreme paranoia and xenophobia will eventually manifest with sudden and violent ferocity.

When the characters arrive, Crenvalus will decide that Larine betrayed them. During the events that follow, he may curse her, and this is vital to the story as it reveals the name of the nun who sent the characters his message. If you don't think the players will get the hint, you can have Crenvalus begin to talk to Larine, as if she could actually hear him, or even become convinced that one of the characters is Larine. His last words might be something like, "Curse you, Larine! May you suffer forever if you have given them the key to our mighty Bell!" If this doesn't make the characters curious enough to track her down, nothing will.

If asked about the skeleton in the portal, Crenvalus will try to remain calm and explain that there was an accident; a companion was helping him carry bodies of the fallen to a mass grave, he will say, and became trapped in the doorway. He could not help him because he was already dead by then. He will then quickly change the subject. If David has come with the characters, there will be no time for talk, as a battle will begin immediately once David sees him and begins using his command powers. If confronted and killed by his hand, both Crenvalus and David will be laid to rest, free to go to wherever their spirits ultimately belong.

UDERZUS

Hot-tempered and cynical, when Uderzus first meets the characters, he will probably size them up and ask, "Well, what are you waiting for? Don't you know how to loot a treasure trove?" He likes people who are able to accomplish things, and will scorn those who fail. He may indirectly warn the characters that they face more danger here than they think, but after that he will simply wait and watch to see how they deal with it.

If he happens to be the "leader" when the characters arrive, he will feel it is his duty to hinder the party. He will create illusions using both *Imaginem* and *Mentem* to misdirect the characters, laughing with glee when they fall for one of his tricks, and giving short, constructive praise when they see through them. If Uderzus is not in charge of things, he will watch from a safe distance, cheering on the characters, and enjoying the show. He will make liberal use of his lance in battle if the characters insist on attacking him, and will sow great confusion among their ranks with spells like *Well Without Light*.

Uderzus believes Calebais failed because nobody but him was able to do anything productive, and he died early on during a surprise attack on his sanctum. He still has questions about the Sundering, and will not rest until they have been answered to his satisfaction. Firstly, he does not know the details of David's

The Ghosts

The ghosts of three of the magi may be found in this area, either gathered together in the Burial Chamber or moving throughout the caverns. They are each trying to seize control of Calebais from the others while watching over their once mighty covenant's last great treasure, the Bell of Ibyn.

Try to emphasize their interactions as you play them. They have haunted these caverns for fifty years, and have had plenty of time to explore each other's personalities and weaknesses. They know themselves far too well, and for the most part they hate each other. Each would like to put the blame for the Sundering on the others, and they periodically re-enact ghostly battles to achieve temporary dominance. On any given day, any one of the three may be nominally "in charge" of the covenant, though of course this distinction is childish and serves no purpose other than to feed that wizard's ego. The other ghosts will reluctantly yield to their leader, but they will also undermine his or her authority at every opportunity.

Granorda, Magister of Death

Magic Might: 45 (Mentem)

Characteristics: Int +1, Per +1, Pre +1, Com +3, Str 0, Sta +1, Dex 0, Qik -2

Age: 95 (40)

Personality Traits: Megalomaniacal +4, Brash +3, Just +2, Kind +2

Combat:

Dodge: Init -2, Attack +0, Defense -2, Damage +0

Soak: +1

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

Abilities: Artes Liberales 3 (grammar), Awareness 3 (keeping watch), Charm 5 (common folk), Concentration 5 (spells), Etiquette 2 (nobility), Finesse 2 (Corpus), Folk Ken 2 (men), Guile 2 (faking authority), Infernal Lore 3 (undead), Intrigue 3 (plotting), Local Language 5 (old dialects), Latin 5 (Hermetic), Leadership 2 (intimidation), Magic Theory 3 (spells), Medicine 3 (anatomy), Parma Magica 6 (Corpus), Penetration 3 (Corpus), Philosophiae 3 (natural), Teaching 3 (men)

Arts: Cr 20, In 25, Mu 5, Pe 5, Re 25, An 5, Aq 5, Au 5, Co 25, He 5, Ig 5, Im 5, Me 25, Te 8, Vi 5

Powers:

Ghostly Body, 0 points, constant, Mentem: Granorda is aware she is a ghost, and can turn invisible, pass through walls, ignore physical attacks, and otherwise take advantage of her spirit form.

Ghostly Magic, 1 or more points, -2, by spell: Granorda can make a spell she has cast affect the physical world by spending 1 point of temporary Might per magnitude of the effect.

Ghostly Vis, 1 or more points (special), -2, by spell: Granorda can permanently expend her Magic Might as vis, with each point equivalent to one pawn.

Spells Known:

Charm Against Putrefaction (CrCo10/+49)

Incantation of the Body Made Whole (CrCo40, Ritual/+52)

Grip of the Choking Hand (PeCo15/+31)

Awaken the Slumbering Dead (ReCo35/+51): Animates a Room of corpses (Base 10, +2 Voice, +1 Conc, +2 Room).

Enchantment of my Lover's Eye (ReMe20/+51): Like *Aura of Rightful Authority*, except that the target acts as if he were in love (Base 5, +1 Eye, +2 Sun).

Coerce the Spirits of the Night (ReMe20/+55)

Incantation of Summoning the Dead (ReMe40, Ritual/+57)

Vis: 9 Corpus in her physical remains

Appearance: Long black hair and a disheveled, dirty black gown are the most prominent features of this well-built woman. She is attractive, but not by ordinary standards; it is her confidence and her mystery that turns heads. Although she walks about as if she were statuesque and queenly, her physical features are much more mundane.

Roleplaying Tips: Be calm, never lose your cool, and until you have made up your mind, treat people with respect. Be interested in good-looking men. Speak with a slight lisp and practice daintiness, careful mannerisms. Glance away often, as if worried about something, but refuse to explain if caught. Trust no one, for you have been betrayed before. If you decide that someone is vile and contemptible, you must get rid of that person as quickly as possible.

death, but is suspicious of Crenvalus's "accident." Secondly, while he knows that Pitsdim caused the most damage to the covenant, he wonders why the other magi (especially Granorda and Crenvalus) did not settle their differences to deal with their common enemy. Finally, he believes that Crenvalus did something terrible to the covenant, some great and disastrous spell, but does not know what it was, because it happened after he and Granorda died and Crenvalus will not speak of it.

BURIAL CHAMBER

This chamber contains 22 different corpses hidden beneath the water, five of which are incomplete (only arms, heads, or the like). Characters wading into the room will invariably run

against the strangely well-preserved bodies, but they might not realize what they are at first, and are likely to be distracted by the three ghosts (Granorda, Crenvalus, and Uderzus) that they will probably encounter here.

When they first enter this cavern, they interrupt a discussion (or battle) between the magi to determine who will lead the covenant today. Regardless of the outcome, Crenvalus will eventually see the characters and begin speaking to them. Uderzus, too, will see them (probably before Crenvalus), but unless he is the leader he will remain silent. Crenvalus politely invites them into the chamber, stepping back to make room for them, and magnanimously introduces himself and his two *sodales*. Uderzus will make a rude comment or two about the characters, warning them through his demeanor that the situation is dangerous, but Crenvalus will soon regain control of the conversation. Granorda says nothing and tries to overcome her

Crenvalus, Magister of Control

Magic Might: 52 (Mentem)

Characteristics: Int +2, Per -2, Pre +1, Com +2, Str +1, Sta 0, Dex -1, Qik +2

Age: 115 (40)

Personality Traits: Megalomaniacal +5, Honorable +1, Trusting -3, Humble -3

Combat:

Dodge: Init +2, Attack +2, Defense +5, Damage +1

Staff: Init +2, Attack +4, Defense +11, Damage +3

Soak: +0

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

Abilities: Artes Liberales 2 (logic), Awareness 5 (alertness), Brawl 3, Concentration 5 (spells), Finesse 6 (Corpus), Great Weapon 3 (staff), Guile 4 (manipulation), Intrigue 3 (plotting), Latin 6 (covenant usage), Leadership 6 (intimidation), Magic Theory 4 (spells), Parma Magica 8 (Mentem), Penetration 5 (Rego), Philosophiae 3 (moral), Spanish 5 (poetry), Theology 1 (Bible)

Arts: Cr 5, In 7, Mu 5, Pe 12, Re 35, An 30, Aq 5, Au 5, Co 35, He 5, Ig 5, Im 5, Me 35, Te 30, Vi 5

Powers:

Ghostly Body, 0 points, constant, Mentem: Crenvalus is aware he is a ghost, and can turn invisible, pass through walls, ignore physical attacks, and otherwise take advantage of his spirit form.

Ghostly Magic, 1 or more points, +2, by spell: Crenvalus can make a spell he has cast affect the physical world by spending 1 point of temporary Might per magnitude of the effect.

Possession, 3 points, +2, Mentem: Crenvalus can take over a living body as if it were his own. Each round, the victim may make an Intelligence roll to resist, adding an appropriate Personality trait (e.g. Rebellious). On a 12+, Crenvalus is driven out. On a 9+, the two wills are in conflict and neither may act.

Otherwise, Crenvalus may use the body as he wishes, including casting his spells in the physical realm.

Spells Known:

Tossing the Brawling Brute (ReCo10/+70): Throws a person 15 feet in the air or 25 feet in any direction, causing falling damage if a solid object intervenes (Base 4, +2 Voice).

Topple the Brutish Band (ReCo20/+70): As *Tossing the Brawling Brute*, but affects a Group (Base 4, +2 Voice, +2 Group).

Strings of the Unwilling Marionette (ReCo25/+70)

Confusion of the Numbed Will (ReMe15/+70)

Aura of Rightful Authority (ReMe20/+70)

Enslave the Mortal Mind (ReMe40/+70)

Earth Shock (ReTe30/+65)

The Earth Split Asunder (ReTe30/+65)

Pitsdim's Downfall (ReTe50/+70): Shakes and collapses the ceiling of an entire level of caves to which you have an arcane connection, causing damage to other levels as well (Base 3, +4 Arc, +1 Diam, +1 Part, +5 size).

Vis: 10 Rego in his ghostly staff, if killed by David

Appearance: Crenvalus is a long, lanky, sinewy apparition with dark, bronzed skin and thick, heavy eyebrows. His white hair cascades across his head like a lion's mane, but his eyes are narrow and suspicious, and his smile should seem tense, like a trap ready to spring. He wears simple, well-made robes that are neither humble nor kingly, and carries a plain wooden staff.

Roleplaying Tips: Ensure that every other thing you say is an order of some kind, though not necessarily malicious or pompous ("Get me a chair; my feet grow weary.") React poorly to those who don't show you proper respect, and reject anything that sounds like a command. Give your eyes a haunted look, and stop moving them only when you speak, but take care never to look at a player directly, staring instead at a point directly behind them. You are crazier than you seem; let that slip occasionally. Start to lose it if questioned about David and the magical portal. When you can't take it any more, start screaming (and actually scream, to shock the players), "I should be in charge! I was the last! I survived! I was the best!" Slowly regain your composure, and then begin again.

natural anxiety about visitors, watching them closely to see that they don't somehow trick her or make any sudden moves. She will be interested in them, because she wonders if with their help she would be able to break the stalemate that exists here. Crenvalus does his best to keep talking, and keep the characters talking, continuing conversation for as long as possible before making his move, since his only aims are to find out what they know and then see them dead.

The questions he asks are intended to stall the characters while subtly convincing Granorda that they are a threat and intend to

desecrate her grave. For instance, he might say something like "Naturally, you've come here to find valuable resources for your studies?" or "Tell me what you would do with the magic that remains in our covenant, if we allowed you to harvest it." The players should be thinking of vis, while Granorda is thinking of her corpse. Uderzus watches this play carefully, but does not interfere. As he speaks, Crenvalus moves towards the characters, focusing on the one he believes to be the most dangerous. When the time is right, and Granorda has been worked into a state near terror, he suddenly shouts, "I see it all now — they want to

defile your corpse with unspeakable acts and hideous experiments! *Quickly, Granorda, wake the dead, wake the dead before it's too late!*

If the characters have been courteous and respectful, and if some of them are very handsome or have Virtues like Venus's Blessing, Granorda might hesitate long enough for the characters to interject and convince her that they seek no such thing. If they have been threatening, have Flaws that detract from their appearance

or are simply not very attractive, or if you and the players just want to play a climactic fight, battle ensues.

Crenvalus will attempt to possess the senior wizard of the group, his spirit rushing through the (hopefully) open mouth. If that fails, he will try to take over other wizards on subsequent rounds. If he succeeds, each round that character fails to regain control he will use his new body to cast spells, using up the character's Fatigue lev-

Uderzus, Magister of Perception

Magic Might: 49 (Mentem)

Characteristics: Int +1, Per +3, Pre +3, Com -3, Str +2, Sta +1, Dex -1, Qik -2

Age: 94 (50)

Personality Traits: Megalomaniacal +2, Patient -2, Straightforward -2, Tolerant -3

Combat:

Lance: Init +1, Attack +7, Defense +4, Damage +9

Soak: +1

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

Abilities: Artes Liberales 1 (astronomy), Awareness 9 (searching), Concentration 3 (reading), Finesse 4 (Mentem), Folk Ken 3 (magi), German 5 (understanding), Great Weapon 4 (lance), Latin 5 (reading), Magic Sensitivity 3, Magic Theory 3 (enchantment), Parma Magica 7 (Corpus), Penetration 3 (Intellego), Second Sight 5, Sense Holiness and Unholiness 4

Arts: Cr 25, In 30, Mu 15, Pe 15, Re 15, An 5, Aq 15, Au 15, Co 25, He 5, Ig 15, Im 25, Me 25, Te 15, Vi 25

Powers:

Ghostly Body, 0 points, constant, Mentem: Uderzus is aware he is a ghost, and can turn invisible, pass through walls, ignore physical attacks, and otherwise take advantage of his spirit form.

Ghostly Certamen, 0 points, special, special: Uderzus can participate in certamen with living magi, and can also initiate certamen against other ghosts. The phantasms are real to them, and attack and defend as normal, but instead of causing Fatigue, Weakening Totals affect ghostly opponents' Might Pool.

Ghostly Magic, 1 or more points, -2, by spell: Uderzus can make a spell he has cast affect the physical world by spending 1 point of temporary Might per magnitude of the effect.

Uderzus also carries the spiritual counterpart of his Sundered Lance, once a holy item, which retains two divine powers, both of which have penetration 30:

Pierce the Mail of Falsehood, PeVi20: The lance reduces the casting total of any non-ritual Creo or Rego magic at which it points by 20 spell levels.

The Trembling Lordling, CrMe30: Characters with noble blood at whom the lance is leveled experience a glimpse of terror so frightening that they are afraid of it for the rest of their lives. The source of the terror is different for each character, i.e. one person might see a mouse while another experiences extreme claustrophobia, and this power can only ever be used against each character once.

Spells Known: Uderzus also knows many Intellego Imaginem and Intellego Mentem spells, but they do not function in Calebais as long as the Veil is active.

Eyes of the Bat (InAu25/+46)

Vision of Heat's Light (InIg20/+46)

Well Without Light (PeIg25/+30)

Sight of the Active Magics (InVi40/+56)

Wind of Mundane Silence (PeVi40/+41)

Wizard's Sigil: Uderzus is evidenced by tiny cracks in his spells, like flaking paint. This shows through in his powers, above; for example, the darkness in his *Well Without Light* fractures in places, allowing threads of light (but not enough to see anything) to show through, and his illusions might have subtle but telltale cracks.

Vis: 9 Vim left in his ghostly lance, if his questions are satisfactorily answered

Appearance: Uderzus is short and squat, he is missing his left hand and has difficulty standing up straight. His ghostly image is very solid and quite realistic. He has flame-red hair in patches, but other parts are white and gray. His burlap tunic is scorched and ripped, and he leans against his seven foot lance, the last foot of which has broken and splintered at the end.

Roleplaying Tips: Purse not only your lips but your whole face. Laugh happily when others fail, but give grudging admiration when they succeed. Practice grimaces in the mirror and perfect a series of taunts. Don't forget to have trouble positioning the lance you always have with you, and remember that you are stronger than you appear. When faced with characters casting Creo or Rego spells at you, aggressively swing the lance to point at them and haughtily stop them in their tracks.



els instead of his Might. Once the character is nearly unconscious, he will use the body destructively, making it leap against other characters, dive underwater, or hit itself.

Granorda, meanwhile, raises the water-logged corpses from the water (this does not include her own, which is encased in a coffin at the back of the room or in another part of the burial chambers). Suddenly, all around the characters, partially decomposed bodies will rise from the black, icy waters, moaning and spreading their withered arms menacingly. These corpses are soft and pulpy, not tough like corpses buried in the ground, so they are not very powerful. Still, it will be a deadly fight. Consider:

- I. The corpses, 17 full and 5 partial, rise from all around the party, ahead and behind, assuming the characters have come to the center of the room. They will probably be outnumbered. The first round, just have one corpse attack each character, but after that they should start ganging up.
- II. Various independent body parts (including those caused by the fight) move through the water, grasping, biting or kicking the characters' legs. This attack is mostly ineffectual, but it can be very creepy and demoralizing.
- III. This section of the ruins is not magically lit, so the party may be depending upon torches or lanterns to see, which will go out if dropped into the water or the bearer is pulled down.
- IV. Characters should suffer a -3 on Attack and Defense rolls, due to the poor fighting conditions. These circumstances include at least three extra botch dice for any 0s rolled, taking into account fighting in water, the cold temperature, bad air, limited visibility, and the partial body parts that may trip or pull characters down. Botches probably mean that the character loses his footing and is pulled down.
- V. Unconscious or Incapacitated characters are likely to drown if they are not rescued immediately, as they will fall underwater, and the corpses will try to hold them down.
- VI. Crenvalus will continue to try and possess magi, keeping them off-balance and using his powers whenever he has a firm hold.

Corpses

Magic Might: 0 (Corpus)

Characteristics: Str +3, Sta -3, Dex -3, Qik -3

Combat:

Punch and Grapple: Init -3, Attack -3, Defense -3, Damage +3

Soak: -3

Wound Penalties: -0 (1-5), -0 (6-10), -0 (11-15), Splattered (16-20) (yes, "splattered")

Appearance: Each of these creatures is a bloated corpse, remarkably well-preserved, animated but mindless. What little clothing or few possessions they carried are tattered and decayed.

Note: The corpses can only fight as untrained groups.

These corpses are mindless, and do not fear anything; they cannot be affected by Mentem spells of any kind. They cannot really see or hear either, but simply have a magical sense of where the characters are. They ignore wound penalties and have no fatigue. If their bodies are searched afterward, there might be trinkets or other small objects of value on them, but this sort of looting will frighten Granorda into casting more spells to protect herself.

If the players are doing badly, Granorda might end her spell, intending to speak sharply to the characters after properly chastising them. Uderzus might also intervene, driving Crenvalus back with his lance and casting *Wind of Mundane Silence*, berating the characters for allowing things to reach this point. If he is overpowered, Crenvalus will go completely mad, and charge out of the room shouting "Larine has brought our doom; let us bury this covenant and our pitiful dead forever!" He will race out of the vaults, intending to make his way to the surface and shake the entire covenant to pieces, but he will settle for the tunnel. If the characters don't stop him, he will cause another earthquake that could collapse the treasure chambers, and will certainly release the deluge described above.

BELL CHAMBER

The third chamber, assuming the caverns haven't been destroyed or flooded, is filled with three feet of water. In the center is the Bell of Ibyn, the legendary device described in Crenvalus's letter, which provided a magical warning system for the covenant of Calebais worthy of the wizards who founded it. There is also a small chest beside the Bell, completely submerged, in which may be found three more diadems (see page 78).

Getting the Bell out of the chamber and up the well to the outside world is a monumental task, and if you have time you should roleplay through the activity, as it is a relaxing opportunity to develop characters and visualize the extraordinary situations in which they participate. If you need to wrap up the session quickly, however, simply call for a general roll from every character to see how they do, and briefly describe their journey back. The players have already proven their worth by getting hold of the Bell in the first place, so it can be assumed that such competent characters can find a way to haul it home.

Once other magi learn that the characters have retrieved the Bell, their covenant may have many visitors who wish to see it or study it. Though it would probably be improper and seen as unreasonably greedy to ask for something in return for merely allowing a magus to look at it, asking for a minor sum of vis in exchange for a season of studying it is quite acceptable. If they actively spread word of their find, the characters and their covenant may receive Hermetic status and positive reputations among others in the Order.

Options: The Ruins

- I. The characters might be able to convene a meeting of the council of Calebais, using Ferdina's ghostly chime or by

personally coaxing the spirits to gather. There are seven council members, which according to their charter is enough to vote on covenant business, and Ferdina can act as council head to introduce issues: hearing proposals, inviting magi to join, giving away their treasure, ending hostilities, or even disbanding the covenant. It is unlikely that the ghosts will remain for long unless magically coerced, but it is possible that the characters could convince them to vote on one or two issues before everything breaks apart.

- II. The Hrools may be searching for a new god to lead them now that their old god has grown weak and lost most of her powers. Perhaps some of the Hrools have heard stories about Christianity and ask the characters to help them convert. If the characters use magic, the ermines may prostrate themselves and call out to the almighty characters for mercy, and some members of the tribe might gather their things and follow the characters when they leave Calebais, whether they are invited or not.
- III. Perhaps Crenvalus is demon-plagued, and has been for a long time. In order to gain the power and dominance that he desired, he made a pact with this creature that lasted beyond his death, and it has gradually taken command of his will. This explains the dual nature of his personality more directly. If Crenvalus is laid to rest, the demon will crawl out of his heart and fly away, after making a short speech ("Pedifilers, mortifilers, villifiers, you! Curse your rapturements for murdering my useful worm! Expect my return, right soon, with flames to burn your pitiful fleshy skins!").

The Diadems

The diadems are the C-shaped crowns made of gold wire, each with a green gemstone shaped like an eye worn at the forehead. The back of a diadem is open, and it naturally clasps any normal-sized head. They have specific powers of their own, but since they are mystically connected to the Bell, their powers are few until the Bell is mended. There were twenty-four of them in all, but many of them have been lost. Luckily, characters only *need* one, though the Bell will be more useful if they recover more.

- I. Those who wear a diadem can see through any illusion cast by Mormulus, including all illusions in the story except those creat-

ed by Uderzus. This allows them to walk through the Veil without having to answer the riddle and perceive Mormulus's lab as it really is. (InIm30)

- II. A diadem is a mark of authority in the covenant, and those who wear one may command the dryad to change the riddle, refuse entry to Calebais, or temporarily give up the Veil for a day and a night. The wearer falls into a deep sleep and takes control of the Veil in the meantime.
- III. If characters are foolish enough to wear a diadem all the time, they will quickly gain Warping points for being under a constant mystical effect, producing a Major Personality Flaw:

The Bell of Ibyn

One of the more well-known magical artifacts in the Order of Hermes is the Bell of Ibyn. This is not so much because of its power (though it is formidable) or because of its strange origins, but rather because of the pride the magi of Calebais had in it. Older magi or students of Order of Hermes Lore will remember how magi of Calebais were known for boasting that their covenant was immune to attack because of their precious Bell. The characters will probably know of these stories and be eager to begin using their treasure. However, they will soon find that it is more difficult to use than they might think. In fact, it will have little effect at all until they can discover the key to unlock its powers.

The Bell is partially submerged, but has not been tarnished at all. It does not look like a normal church bell, oval with a round bottom and a round knocker inside; instead, it has two convex sides that meet at either of its edges, and a flat top with a massive bracket that was at one time attached with ropes to the rotted wood frame. It is three feet wide and five feet tall, and weighs nearly 600 pounds. Viewed from the bottom, it looks like an eye, though without a clapper or pupil. The sides of the Bell are inscribed with strange, non-Hermetic runes. There is also a series of twelve knobs on each side, each knob a round projection about two inches long and an inch thick, marked with a different strange and unfamiliar symbol. The knobs on the front protrude outward, while those on the back are rounded into the interior of the Bell.

The Bell has no readily discernible powers, except that it is certainly magical if tested with *Intellego Vim*. Only by playing about with it while wearing one of the diadems can the magi get a glimpse of its power. Approximate levels are provided in case the characters investigate it in a magical laboratory, but since it is unusual magic, not entirely conforming to Hermetic Theory, it may not work as the players expect, and the effect levels may not correspond to those of other Hermetic devices. The powers they might discover are:

I. Whenever the Bell rings, such as when someone strikes it with something, it will toll with a horrible, flat sound that will slowly die after five minutes of ringing. This sound is not so loud as to harm those standing nearby, yet can be easily heard throughout the entire covenant. (Relm15)

II. Any time a human dies within the boundary that surrounds the covenant, the Bell will ring from one to six times, depending on the victim's power and importance in the covenant. If any of the characters die during the story, even in the forest that surrounds Calebais, the Bell will ring, but with a horribly flat sound. (InCo20)

III. When a person wearing a diadem touches the Bell and says "Corona fracta est" (coh-ROH-nah FROCK-tah EST, "The crown is broken"), they will be able to see all the surrounding area of the covenant from the perspective of any creature or person within that radius. They have no control over the subject, and it will not know it has been possessed. This effect works even at Calebais, despite Mornulus's Veil, as the Veil was designed to exclude the Bell from its effects. (InAnMe25)

If the characters devote time to magical study of the Bell, they may learn of the following properties, in addition to those described above:

Level 10: To use any of the powers of the Bell, you must wear a diadem.

Level 30: The Bell is damaged, and many of its powers are not accessible.

Level 40: The Bell uses strange, non-Hermetic magic, which has been intertwined with effects designed by magi from the Order of Hermes. Its unusual origin makes it difficult to identify its powers as long as it is broken.

Level 55: The Bell is out of tune, and must be adjusted in order to function properly. This involves filing down the knobs, but as some of them are already worn, this is dangerous without sure knowledge of how to go about it.

Level 80: The knobs are tuned to resonate with the personalities of those who wear the diadems, and there must be at least twelve different people involved to create the proper sound.

Once the characters realize that there is important information they lack in order to understand how to use the Bell, they will probably question the ghosts that remain, but none of them know or remember the details of the ritual, since it was Ornath who traditionally led the ceremony. Laboratory investigation may yield some of the information they seek, but all of the effects are of such high magnitude that it is doubtful they will be able to learn more than a general idea that it is magical and has very powerful effects. Eventually, however, one of the characters should remember Sister Larine and Crenvalus's cryptic curses about her giving the magi the key, and resolve to track her down to see if she can provide the information they need.

Chapter Three

The Legacy of Calebais

If the characters have successfully dealt with the ruins of the covenant and solved the mysteries that surround its fall, they will eventually come to investigate the secrets of the Bell of Ibyn, which does not seem to work as reputed. The events of this chapter should not happen immediately after their expedition to the ruins; they should have plenty of time to rest and begin preliminary investigation of the Bell on their own. Only after several seasons of study should they come to the irrefutable conclusion that the Bell is damaged.

When all other avenues have been exhausted, the players should think of the nun who provided them with the letter in the first place. To help them along, you can have the Redcap from the first chapter arrive at the covenant again and ask how they fared. This may remind them that there is another source of information about Calebais, if they can convince Ash to tell them where she is.

Ash will not be easy or cheap to persuade. She gave her word that she would not tell the characters Sister Larine's name or where she lives, and she will not break it. She might agree to bring them there to see her, but only if she has no doubts that the characters can be trusted. Essentially, there are three factors that they must address for her to feel comfortable with taking them to the convent.

Firstly, they must prove to Ash that there is no need for secrecy, either because they have already learned or deduced the nun's name, or because they also swear to keep her identity secret. Knowing who she is, they might be able to track her down without Ash's help, but the Redcap will not take kindly to threats that she is not needed and will be furious if she learns that the magi went to the convent without consulting her.

Secondly, the characters must convince Ash that there is a good reason to visit the convent, because the nuns will not think well of magi, and will certainly think less of Ash and Larine for bringing them there. They must persuade Ash, either by promising not to bring characters who could frighten the sisters (i.e. only wizards with the Gentle Gift and no companions with strange habits or bizarre appearances), or by explaining the situation and impressing upon her that Larine is their only hope of unlocking the final riddle of Calebais. If Ash understands the wizards' desperation, she will feel more personally involved in their plight, and perhaps decide that she can risk the consequences of the nuns' disapproval for the greater glory of the Order of Hermes.

Finally, Ash must like and/or respect the characters. If they treated her particularly well in the first chapter, this requirement will not be hard to meet, so long as they continue to go out of their way to

Characters

None of the characters in this chapter have been fully developed according to the rules of *Ars Magica*. This is by design, to encourage you to roleplay as much as possible, and to give you the freedom to use them however you think is best for the story. This is an opportunity for you and the players to develop characters through choice and desire, and thus you should find yourself using the dice and the rules for nothing more than

Personality tests, and then only when characters behave in ways that are contrary to their natures. For example, the players will probably figure out that they are supposed to be on their best behavior for the abbess, and after they have had a chance to settle in and become complacent you may want to have them make a roll or spend Confidence points whenever they want to act in some way that is particularly out of character for them.

earn her favor. She expects good treatment as a member of the Order of Hermes, and believes that she deserves additional respect as one who performs a valuable duty. The characters will have to do something special, beyond what she feels she is entitled, to gain her notice. If she is not ill-disposed toward them, the characters can gain this trust with a little effort. If the characters have offended her, they will have to make substantial amends, and even then she will probably feel like they are trying to buy her off.

If the magi can address all three of these points with Ash, she will agree to escort them to the convent when they are ready. It is probably a fair distance, perhaps about sixty miles from the abbey that the characters visited in the first chapter, though it can be anywhere if you would like there to be more distance between these two expeditions. After their long journey, the characters will arrive at the convent tired and anxious, and will unfortunately find a great disappointment waiting for them.

The Convent

Sitting high on a rocky hill overlooking the water below, the convent is a collection of whitewashed stone buildings surrounded by a high wall. The four-story church tower is the focus of the entire structure, and is the only building more than two stories high. In the surrounding area are gardens, orchards and fields. Short walls covered with vines separate the different crops. Nuns in pure white habits, twenty in all, work silently outside, and the whole setting is pastoral and picturesque.

The White Sisters

During the journey, Ash will tell the characters about the prioress and her domineering ways, and joke that only those outside of the Order need such authoritarian leadership. As they reach the outskirts, she will make sure that they know the name of the nun who gave her the letter (Sister Larine). Then, after making sure everything is in order and that they can find their way back, she asks for some traveling money and bids them farewell. She does not wish to be further involved; she stays at the nunnery often when traveling and would rather not be seen with the characters, just in case something goes wrong.

As they approach, the nuns outside might see them from a distance and watch them curiously, and those in the courtyard will greet the visitors formally and send for the abbess. They will not be invited into the convent until after she has seen them and determined their business, so they may wait a few minutes outside the gate while the

The Gift

Remember that characters with The Gift have grave difficulties when dealing with normal humans. Without the Gentle Gift, magi will have a very hard time convincing the abbess to see them, and the nuns will eye them warily the whole time they remain. Wizards will also be at a great disadvantage in the tests that follow, for it will take an incredible show of virtue to convince Sister Hedwig to help them. As for characters with the Blatant Gift, it is doubtful that they would be allowed into the convent at all.

When the abbess arrives, she will brusquely ask the characters their business, and if she deems it important she will arrange to meet with them later in the day. She will ask three of the nuns to make temporary quarters ready, where the characters can bathe and rest. If some of the characters are of noble bearing, they will be taken to the guest house, but a group of primarily warriors and other disreputable sorts (including characters with The Gift) will be shown to the hayloft that is built above the stables against the convent walls.

sisters try to avoid staring at them. If the characters ask about Sister Larine, the nuns will look surprised and say very sorrowfully that she has died. They will answer no other questions, silently shaking their head and politely returning to work. If the characters force them to talk, or speak sharply to them, the nuns will grow very agitated and try to avoid them, and word will spread throughout the convent of the uncouth strangers.

SISTER HEDWIG

An aristocrat from birth, Hedwig now enjoys a position of respect similar to a baroness. Within the convent, she is indisputably in charge, making all decisions that affect their relationship with the outside world: entertaining visitors, expelling unwanted members, overseeing repairs and new construction, and so on. Her authority does not bother the other nuns, at least the more spiritually advanced among them, as it means that they need not bother with such matters, and can concentrate on bettering themselves. She is generally a good leader, but very used to getting her own way.

Hedwig is not the first abbess at the convent, but she is the first abbess under the Cistercian rule. Her guidance has seen the nuns

Sister Hedwig, abbess

Characteristics: Int +1, Per -1, Pre +1, Com +1, Str -3, Sta +1, Dex -2, Qik -2

Age: 58

Personality Traits: Authoritative +3, Careful +3, Kind +2

Appearance: The abbess is a stocky woman in her late fifties who retains the energetic poise and demeanor of her youth. Her hair is well groomed, and her voice is strong and authoritative. Her majestic frown betrays what she thinks of inefficiency or lack of ability in others.

Roleplaying Tips: Speak with a deep, steady tone and use a voice that says "obey me" without seeming overbearing. Your gaze should be steady and your face full of dignity. Sister Hedwig is sharp and direct, but also wise and very kind. She will allow no mischief within her convent walls.

into a new age, and distinguished the nunnery very highly, pleasing both the secular potentates and her father-abbot, not to mention a large number of other influential Cistercians. Thus, her convent is accorded a great deal of leeway, and she feels she can bend the rules on occasion when she has good reason. For example, it would probably be frowned upon for any abbess to allow male guests to stay within the walls of the convent for more than a night, or encourage the nuns to interact with strangers to gauge their worth. However, Hedwig believes this sort of liberality will ultimately lead to good. If caught, she would probably suffer only a mild penance, and then only if it could be shown that her actions caused great harm.

In fact, Hedwig is the reason the convent is Cistercian in the first place, because she is related to a well-known bishop with close ties to Rome. Because of his influence, when she petitioned the order to be allowed to join, the Pope issued two bulls in favor of the nunnery, from which it draws most of its political might. One stated that the convent was to be directly subject to the Holy See. The other confirmed it as a member of the Cistercian order and raised its rank from a priory to an abbacy, increasing its power and independence from the diocesan bishop.



Sister Palona, advocate

Characteristics: Int +2, Per +2, Pre -3, Com +2, Str -3, Sta -3, Dex -2, Qik -2

Age: 61

Personality Traits: Devoted +1, Calm -3, Nice -3

Appearance: Sister Palona walks hunched over with a limp, and has a small round nose which is frequently reddened and raw as she is often sick. She is strident and shrill, and gesticulates with wide, aggressive gestures when she speaks.

Roleplaying Tips: No matter what anyone else says, react to it as badly as you can, and let your thoughts show clearly on your face. Stare people in the eye, as that's the best way to see into their hearts, but look away disdainfully if they stare back. Remember that even though you are vile and constantly suspicious, you're also a nun.

SISTER PALONA

Sister Palona finds meaning in life by strictly separating the divine from the diabolical. Everything in the world must be either from God or from the devil, and she is intent to determine which side the characters favor, as that is how she interprets the duties that Sister Hedwig has assigned her. She is very sharp, and will report everything she finds to the abbess, who is wise enough to extract the truth from Palona's polar views. Though arduous and difficult, Sister Hedwig finds her extremely valuable as she is well-versed in law and an excellent orator.

Sometimes they do clash wills, though; Palona once believed she should have been made abbess instead, and Hedwig has had to discipline her harshly on several occasions where she has overstepped her place. Palona still quietly dreams of this appointment, and tells herself that it is God's will that she will one day take on those august duties. She will likely transfer much of her lingering resentment for Hedwig to the characters for the duration of their stay.

When she was young, Palona fled her home and inheritance with a lover, intending to elope with him. He brought her to the convent to make her safe until he could come back for her, but he never returned. Worse, she learned many years later that he lives in another village in the region, married advantageously. If the characters learn this, her bitterness may be explained, but she will forever become their enemy if she realizes her secret is known.

Because of her exalted independence, Hedwig can even travel to the meeting of abbots in Clairvaux every year, though she is not allowed to participate. She and her advisors crowd the sessions with other influential nuns of the order, engaging in judicious lobbying on the outskirts and subsequently meeting at Tart for a general chapter of their own, deliberating and voting on issues that affect the Cistercian nunneries. The abbots have not seriously penalized them for these outrageous acts, but only weakly decreed that they must abstain from wine while on their journey. Thus, while the abbots would seem to wield great and conclusive power over the nuns, in most cases the women are simply too much for their father-abbots to handle. It is in this environment that Sister Hedwig makes her political nest, and she finds it quite comfortable and well-suited to her.

When she is ready, the abbess will send for the visitors, instructing their leaders to meet with her in the parlor. She will be attended by two others, Sister Palona and Sister Alice. These nuns are her senior advisers, and she will not meet with the characters without them, for the sake of propriety as well as the extra boost to her authority.

The abbess will begin by asking their business, and once she confirms they are seeking Sister Larine, she will apologize for their loss, for Larine died in the time since they last heard of her. Yet their journey may not have been for nothing, she tells them, as Larine gave some information to the abbess before she died. If it is relevant to their reason for coming here, and she believes that by helping them she will do good, she might be willing to share it.

She will ask why they wished to see Larine, and how they knew her, for she was not aware that she had any living relations outside the convent. Together with her advisers (one excelling at logic and argument, the other a saintly visionary) she will question the characters thoroughly on these matters, attempting to discern their true intentions and find the weaknesses in any lies they tell. The cross-examination will be brisk and may even unearth secrets the characters would rather keep quiet, due to Alice's holy insight. Magic bothers Sister Hedwig, especially its being used for ill; they also will not aid those who have committed evil acts in the past — through whatever means — if they fully intend to do so again.

Eventually, the abbess will ask for three days in which to consider the matter. She must reflect on what the characters have told her and decide whether or not they are people of virtue and righteousness. If the characters are willing to wait, she will see them returned to their lodgings and kept comfortable and occupied in the meantime. If not, she will nod sadly and escort them back to the gate.

If they stay, Sister Hedwig will secretly arrange several tests for the characters over the course of the next few days. These tests are included as story hooks in the sections that follow. They are designed to offer them opportunities to be virtuous and to sin, so that she may observe how they truly act.

SISTER ALICE

Alice is a poet of sorts, deeply immersed in the ascetic mysticism that the Cistercian order supports and encourages. Local theological scholars may have read her verses concerning emotional imagery of heaven, or descriptions of dreams she has had of Christ motioning to the wound in his side. She frequently has divine visions which have led to her increased commitment to holy pursuits and peace of mind. She will not take much notice of the characters unless they have something of spiritual significance to say, but her first impressions of them will be accurate and deep, and Sister Hedwig will greatly value her insights. If the characters have truly helped others in the past, Alice will recognize this and suggest that the abbess aid them in return.

Because of her holiness (many believe she will ascend directly to heaven when she dies), she is highly respected by the other nuns, even those who resent the abbess's strict rule. The characters, especially the magi, should recognize that something about Alice is very different from their own experience. It is like she has The Gift, only instead of it disturbing and prickling others with its strangeness, it fills others with awe and wonder at the divine. She may be the closest the characters ever come to meeting a saint, and she should have a memorable effect on them.

If this brief description of Alice does not impress them, remember that she has a divine magic resistance of 60. If any of the magi tries to cast a spell at her, she may find them later and tell

them this in her own terms: "If you wish to touch me with your will, you must first bring your heart closer to God. You are twelve great steps removed from the edge of my sphere; you have turned your back on Him and pursued His shadow upon the earth before you; yet the distance is not so much that you cannot make your way back with His help, if only you would turn your gaze to the light."

SISTER MALORES

This beautiful young woman is actually a faerie who once lived in the wild areas tamed by the sisters. The Dominion makes her slow-witted, and she was found unconscious by local villagers and brought to the nunnery. With nowhere else to go, Malores eventually became a nun herself, but from what she understands of theology, she worries that she cannot go to heaven when she dies as she does not have an immortal soul. Occasionally, she acts in strange ways and has been severely punished in the past for leaving the dormitory to pray beneath the full moon. Sister Palona says of her "She is corrected by word of mouth without result; she is urged by blows but there is no improvement."

Sister Malores does not age, and the nuns already suspect there is something supernatural about her. She has the faerie sight, and will recognize magical characters. She will feel drawn to them, and they will continually find her following them whenever she

Sister Alice, visionary

Characteristics: Int 0, Per +2, Pre +3, Com +1, Str -1, Sta 0, Dex -1, Qik -1

Age: 39

Faith: 6 (6)

Personality Traits: Compassionate +4, Somber +2, Joyous +1

Appearance: A powerful and saintly visionary, preoccupied with heavenly distractions, Alice has piercing gray eyes and a very thin frame.

Roleplaying Tips: Focus completely on either your own thoughts (ignoring your surroundings) or what is happening immediately around you (tuning out the other world in your head). Hunch your head and look at the floor with your eyes closed, or else don't move your face or body as you look at the person who has your attention. When you do reveal your intuition, speak quietly but confidently.

Sister Malores, mute

Characteristics: Int -3, Per +3, Pre +4, Com 0, Str -2, Sta 0, Dex +1, Qik -1

Age: 55 (29)

Personality Traits: Joyous +5, Curious +3, Distracted +1

Appearance: Malores is lithe and willowy with a vacant and serene expression, and appears about thirty years old, though the nuns all know she has lived at the abbey for at least that long. There is definitely something fay about her, perhaps in her eyes or a slight point to her ears.

Roleplaying Tips: Though she cannot talk, she will attempt to communicate through pantomime. Consider this a challenge. Play out her desperation, her sense of being completely lost, and the special quality of innocence she has about her.

can. She cannot speak within the divine aura, but if she spends a month in a magical or faerie place, she will regain her voice.

SISITER NADALINE

Nadaline was Sister Larine's closest friend, for they were very close all of her life at the convent. Nadaline was given to the convent soon after Larine joined, and they latched on to each other. There are many things about Larine that puzzled Nadaline, in particular her love of the sound of the church bell. Once she said that "the bell could hear her devotion," but did not elaborate. Nadaline refuses to answer questions about her past or Larine's, and becomes very angry if pressed about it, because she knows very little and misses her very much. She works hard and obeys her superiors. She generally dislikes the sisters who come from noble descent, as she feels they are incapable of hard work. She does not allow criticism in her kitchen, though in other places she is more meek and retiring.

Sister Nadaline, cook

Characteristics: Int +1, Per +1, Pre -2, Com -2, Str +2, Sta +2, Dex +3, Qik -1

Age: 55

Personality Traits: Brave +2, Discerning +2, Patient -3

Appearance: Nadaline is white-haired, wrinkled, with strong blue eyes, hefty build, and an intimidating demeanor. She always seems to have some sort of tool in her hands: a rolling pin, bucket or plucked chicken.

Roleplaying Tips: Emphasize her doughty girth and toughness by holding your arms out and squaring your jaw. Expressively wave around whatever she happens to be holding.

You should play through all three days of living at the convent in detail, to give the players a sense of what such pious and secluded life would be like, and perhaps allowing their characters to grow and change from the experience. The quiet and subtle nature of this chapter has remarkable power and strength if you take the time to develop it properly.

Test: Magic

If the abbess learns that the characters have been using sorcery on the convent grounds, she will be very upset and summon them to meet with her and her advisers again. This may evolve into a theological debate about the inherent evils of magic, which will demonstrate that Palona and Alice have opposing views. Nonetheless, Sister Hedwig will firmly ask the characters to refrain from such activities while they stay with them. Her poor opinion of them might be lessened a little if the characters clearly used their powers virtuously.

After pondering this development, Sister Hedwig may decide to use it to test them further. She will arrange for the characters to be placed in positions similar to the conditions that caused them to use magic, and watched carefully to see if they do so again. She will also give them very hard work to do, such as digging up brambles or repairing the roof, to see if their magic has made them too lazy or proud to help.

Daily Life

The rule that the Cistercian nuns follow is extraordinarily strict, even more so than the typical monastic oath. They do not speak except when there is clear need, they are supposed to travel in pairs or groups of three, even within the abbey walls, and they do not leave the convent. They own no property and dress in identical white habits without adornment. Their duties involve many hours of hard work each day, periodically interrupted by the services, in which they all gather to chant and worship. Each of these services takes about twenty minutes and is an essential part of monastic life; nuns may only miss them if they have been given particular dispensation by the abbess.

Every new day begins in the same way. The nuns are awakened in the middle of the night for Matins and Lauds, where they gather in the church to sing the service and then return to their beds. They do this quietly, so as not to disturb guests, by sending a sister through the dormitory, and descending down special stairs that lead directly to the church. It is a soft and sleepy office, and creates a feeling of intimacy among the holy sisters that often bridges grudges and hostility that they may have for each other.

In the morning, the nuns gather for Prime, the service named for the first hour of daylight, when the bells are rung to welcome the new day. This occurs usually at about 7:00. Guests will probably be awoken by the tolling of the bells, especially if they do not live near a monastery and are not used to hearing them ring the offices. After Prime, the nuns have a simple breakfast in the rectory, during which time a reader appointed by the abbess recites a devotional passage for the day, and then the nuns wash and attend to the necessities of nature before beginning household chores such as laundry, cleaning, or working in the kitchen.

Test: Early Risers

All of the nuns rise every morning for Matins and Lauds, and believe that keeping this rigorous schedule helps make them healthier and holier. While going to the office, if any of the nuns sees the characters up and about in the early hours engaged in prayer, study, walking or other wholesome activities, the abbess will hear of it and be impressed. She will not think less of her guests if they sleep all the way through Prime, but she will if she learns they have complained of being awoken by the bells.

The third hour (about 9:00) marks the ringing of the bells again and the nuns gather for Terce, followed by the liturgy, and then a chapter meeting among the nuns to read from the Rule and discuss abbey business. This is when the sisters will inform the abbess what they have seen and heard of the characters, and when she will direct them what to do during the following day. The nuns spend the rest of the morning performing manual labor in the vestry, the gardens, or vineyards, though not on Sundays, when instead they attend Mass.

At noon the nuns chant Sext, the sixth hour, and then gather for a hearty meal, consisting of a pound of bread, and fruits and vegetables in season, but no meat. On cold days, this might be a warm, hearty soup, and there is often a choice of two dishes. Guests might be invited to lunch with the abbess, if she would like to keep an eye on them or ask how they are doing. As the nuns do not speak during meals, the room is silent except for the reading of more Scriptures and the shuffle of bowls, spoons, benches and feet.

Test: Spying

At each chapter meeting, the abbess will inform the sisters that she has not been convinced the characters are worthy of hearing Sister Larine's last message, and that she is not going to tell it to them. All the nuns know that when she makes up her mind, no amount of persuasion will change it. She will tell them this whether it is true that she doesn't intend to help them or not (though she is not, strictly speaking, lying, she will not be convinced until three days have passed, and she doesn't intend to tell the characters anything, for she actually has something to show them). This misinformation is a test to see if the characters are spying on her and the nuns, or if the nuns are communicating with them. She reasons that if they overhear this, or somehow convince one of the nuns to tell them, they will show their true colors or give up and leave of their own accord, neatly punishing themselves.

After lunch the nuns rest briefly and engage in quiet, artistic activities in the afternoon, such as embroidery or copying devotional texts, further prayer, or meditation. Those who have been assigned unusual duties by the abbess will carry them out at this time. This sedentary stretch of the day is interrupted by Nones, named for the ninth hour, which is observed at about 15:00.

Test: Gardening

While many of the nuns are resting and otherwise occupied, the characters might notice Sister Palona sneaking off to a distant corner of the compound. If they follow her without her noticing (and she is very alert and will be cautious), they will find she goes to tend a very small but beautiful flower garden. She cares for the greenery lovingly and with surprising tenderness, humming softly to herself. This may soften the characters towards the sour-faced and bitter woman, and the abbess will notice this and approve.

When all the work is done and the day is over, the bells ring for Vespers, and the nuns gather again to sing the service and herald the approach of evening. They then take a light supper while listening to more Bible readings, study, and gather one last time to sing the closing service, Compline. They then go to bed.

Test: Curiosity

In the late afternoon or early evening, a pretty young nun seeks out one of the male characters, probably a handsome grog or companion. She shyly asks him if he would like to help her gather grass for the refectory table. She is very curious what he will do when he is alone with her; having lived at the convent most of her life, she knows little of men and would like to know more. If the character behaves as a gentleman, this event will eventually be another positive mark for the troupe when the abbess finds out. However, if things get out of hand, it may ruin any chance of the characters ever impressing the nuns. This is such a perilous test that you might want to allow another character to see them go off together, so that other players can intervene or get help if the situation looks like it might end badly.

By every day's end, the nuns have worked for about six hours, prayed together for about four hours, engaged in quiet contemplation and study for about eight hours, and slept for eight hours. While this routine may seem severe, it is very attractive to the nuns as an escape from the uncertainties of life in dangerous times. The convent offers food, shelter, education, and community, and also the chance to learn and develop spiritually. It is an extremely attractive medieval lifestyle, producing a flowering of deep and fulfilling devotion, and on the whole the nuns are quite content.

Places in the Convent

The place where the nuns make their home is fairly typical for the middle ages. Most monasteries and nunneries were built to this plan, as this convent was originally a Benedictine house. It may seem large, but wealthy abbeys often support a number of lay brothers, men called *conversi*, who were not monks but vowed to serve and help with the labor. The nuns do not have any such help, and do all the work themselves.

The convent is built around a great square courtyard, called the cloister, which is open to the air with a covered walkway around all four sides. During times of prayer or exercise the nuns might walk around this path, and should not be disturbed. The cloister is to be silent at all times. It is bounded on all four sides by the important areas of the building.

To the west is the *hospitium*, or guest house, where the characters might stay. There are four separate rooms, and plenty of space to accommodate a large group on narrow bunks. Water is heated for two guest washrooms. Farther south is the abbess's house and the parlor, accessible from the principal refectory, where guests eat.

Test: Chores

The cook, Sister Nadaline, asks (or perhaps orders) the characters to bring several baskets of bread from the bakery and a cask of wine from the storehouse. If they humbly assist her, or at least don't make much of a fuss about it, news of their charity will reach the abbess. Nadaline may press her luck, though, and then conscript the characters to help her in the kitchen for several hours. The abbess will not think well of her for doing this. She may also become suspicious of the characters if they don't complain, and decide to leave them alone for a day to see what they do when they are left aimless.

Sister Palona may spot the characters carrying the heavy barrel into the kitchens, and purposefully stumble into them. If they react poorly, she will simply walk away smugly. If they are polite and deferential, she will begin to berate them, blaming them for getting in her way. She will do everything she can to anger the characters, even causing a scene by breaking the cask they were carrying, spilling the wine everywhere and screeching at their clumsiness. Obviously, word of the encounter will be carried back to the abbess.

The south side of the cloister contains the common refectory and day-room, where the nuns take their meals. It is a long, vaulted chamber with pillars that direct the eye upward and inspire the nuns to contemplate the heavens while they sit. The kitchen lies between the two refectories, with easy access to both. Beyond are the gardens and vineyards on their gentle slope towards the river.

Test: Malores

The second night at the convent is the full moon, and the characters might be awakened by a quiet keening sound. Those who investigate discover the mute sister in the garden chanting in a strange whispering voice. She is clearly praying to the moon, which might strike characters as pagan worship. Sister Hedwig will not think well of the characters if they tell her about this, or spread word of these strange activities throughout the convent, as she regards it as divisive and unkind, and forces her to have Malores punished. She thinks this is cruel, because the voiceless sister cannot understand why what she is doing is wrong.

Above the refectories is the dormitory, where the nuns sleep. Beds line the simple chamber, though there are also several private rooms for nuns who have been granted more privacy, or who are ill and need to sleep apart. There are two sets of stairs; one leads down to the common refectory, while another leads past the scriptorium to the south transept of the church.

Test: Raphael

Staying with the nuns in secret is Raphael, a young squire once employed by the local baron who has taken sanctuary at the convent. He was a little too friendly with the baron's wife, and was furiously dismissed by his lord, who also challenged him to a fight of honor. Raphael fled the duel and hides in the stables fearing the baron's vengeance, and he has no idea what he will do once his thirty days end, when he will probably be hauled out forcefully by the baron's men. He is a skilled manservant, and good at music, but no one in the area would hire him now. One day he will inherit land, but he doesn't think he will live that long in his current situation. He will avoid magi, but he might show himself to a companion or grog, perhaps making light of his situation at first by making fun of them, "common ruffians, mingling with noble blood," and accidentally provoking a fight with his insensitivity. If the characters help him, Sister Hedwig will be pleased. If they hurt him too badly, it will also reflect badly on them.

On the east side of the cloister is the chapter house, where abbey business is transacted, and the vestry, where materials for the services are kept and where the priest prepares the Mass. A small penitent's cell is also nearby. A long hall leading to the outer courtyard allows access to the outer gate, where the small gatehouse limits all contact with the outside world. Against the wall are several storehouses and specialized buildings, such as the stables (which usually quarter only a pair of mules), the bakery, and the laundry.

To the north is the church, built in the shape of the cross, with a long pillared nave leading east to the choir, where the nuns sit before the high altar, and two transepts making a north-south crossbeam. The common altar and pews fill the western half of the church. A great door in the northern transept leads to the outer courtyard, and allows access to the church without passing through the convent. Elegant pointed arches cap the ceilings, and give the windows a distinctly Gothic look that the Cistercians are just beginning to make famous.

Test: Mass

The priest, Father Martin, arrives at the convent on Sunday to give Mass. He is a dour, tired man in his fifties who gets along well with the nuns but does not like strangers. He will likely be dismayed at the guests, and may even spread ill word of them through the village if they do not mollify him. Yet if they want to impress the abbess, they must attend the service, and she will be particularly impressed if they visit confession. The father will assign them strict and tough penance for their sins.

The Letter

After three days have passed, if the characters have not embarrassed themselves too terribly, the abbess summons them to her again, but this time without Sister Palona and Sister Alice. By now, she has probably made up her mind, and she would like to give them an opportunity to explain themselves before she acts as she thinks best. Her opinion can still be swayed if the characters do particularly well or poorly at this interview, however.

Sister Hedwig will speak candidly with the characters about what happened during the days they spent at the convent. She

Sister Larine's Last Letter

Magi of Hermes:

I will soon leave this world, and so I will my remaining knowledge to you, that it will not be lost forever. I hope that the letter I once carried reached you. I hope you were able to prevent disaster and recover the good works of Calebais from within the fallen walls.

You may not realize that the Bell of Ibyn is much more than it appears. If you have not yet retrieved it, as it is well hidden, you should persevere. It is more powerful a force of good than I can describe. It will protect you from all evil, save that which preys upon the soul. Though, if you wish to avoid the fate of the wizards of Calebais, do not wear the crowns that control the Bell for any longer than is needful, for they will change you assuredly!

To reach the treasure vault of Calebais, you must find the magical doorway in the wizards' council room. You will discover my former love's hand to guide you. I do not know why, but the wizard Crenvalus sealed David in the door as he passed through, and I took the letter from his hand as he died. I beg you, please retrieve his remains and see that they are given a Christian burial, for I wish him to be at peace.

To make use of the Bell, you must complete a special ritual. Each rune on the Bell has its own meaning, and describes a particular virtue or vice. They are tied to the knobs on either side, which are opposites. I do not remember what each rune meant, but they were often compared to the figures in the forest and the wizards' titles, and everyone who participated in the ritual represented one of them. I remember that my trait had to do with "devotion."

During the ceremony, the leader of the ritual held a mallet with which to strike the Bell, and did not wear a diadem, for he would have been deafened by the sound if he had. Each of us would put on a crown, and come forward to stand

beneath the Bell when our symbol was announced. He would then strike the knob, which would make the Bell toll most awfully if that person was participating for the first time. The leader would then file the knob that corresponded to that person's trait until the tone had become clear.

A few times, the magi decided after unsuccessfully tuning the Bell that a person did not best epitomize the trait, and brought forth another. This caused great arguments, for the magi feared that the Bell would lose its powers when the knobs were filed down too far. Yet every time one of us died, the magi would perform the ritual again.

After every knob's particular tone was realized, the leader would break five magical stones he carried, to release the magic that increases other magic, what they called vis. I believe from what he said while doing this that these stones bound all of our essences to the Bell.

Once the ritual was complete, the many powers of the Bell would become apparent. You will find that some of them may be used even before it is tuned, for the will diadems allow you to see through illusions, and if you wear one and say "The crown is broken," you may see great distances through the eyes of others.

The sisters have always been kind and true to me, and I revere Sister Hedwig as my holy mother and friend. I am deeply grateful for their help. If my convent is ever in need, promise me you will give us aid however you can, in return for my pains on your behalf. May the good Lord bless you on your perilous road and deliver you safely from evil.

Yours with Christ

Sister Larine

will ask specific questions about why they did what they did, revealing for the first time how closely she has been observing them. After discussing the details and how they have affected her opinion of them, she will ask them if they have felt any change come over them during their stay. Encourage the players to treat her as a sort of confessor, and allow that their characters might have been transformed a little by this story. Even if they have done terribly before now, they can still receive the reward if they repent and accept penance for their actions.

Finally, Sister Hedwig will give the characters one final test, to see how they react to defeat. She wants to know if their behavior at the convent is true or merely a show for her benefit. She

will inform them gravely that she is sorry, but she cannot help them, as they are not virtuous enough for her standards. Gently, she will suggest that they take some time away from the convent and return when they feel they are ready. She will stand peremptorily, announce that their discussion is at an end, and escort them to the gate, watching them carefully for signs of humility and resolve.

After this last event, if Sister Hedwig has decided to help the characters, she will stop them with a word and motion for them to follow her, leading them back through the refectory, around the cloister, and into the church. She kneels at the back of the nave, crosses herself, and murmurs a short prayer. Then she goes

The Ritual

As the letter describes, the characters must perform an intensive magical ritual to bring forth the hidden powers of the Bell of Ibyn. This involves determining what traits the 24 symbols on the Bell represent, and finding characters to best represent each one. This may be the source of many interesting stories in the future, if the covenant does not have enough people or if they do not embody certain traits. The details of these traits are left to you to decide, based on what works best for your saga, but you might start with traits of the animals in the Veil or traits based on the titles of the magi on the council. You might use this hook to encourage players to design characters with traits that they otherwise would not consider playing, with the powerful incentive that if the characters do not embody their traits well enough, the Bell's powers will begin to fade.

The ceremony needs at least twelve participants, a diadem, and a leader, who must have the Gift. He calls a person forward to stand beneath the Bell, and strikes it with a mallet, tuning only one knob on either side to fit that person's traits. If he wears a diadem during this process, he will be permanently deafened. Once the Bell is in tune, he spends five pawns of Vim vis. If the ritual is carried out correctly, the diadems will resonate with the tone of the Bell, vibrating slightly whenever it is struck.

The new powers of the Bell include:

- I. Those who wear diadems and who are within the Bell's boundary will be magically directed towards any people who were not within the boundary during the tuning ritual. They sense a tug in the direction from which strangers approach, and may easily follow this sense to locate them. (InMe30)
- II. Diadem-wearers may make the Bell ring at will, from any distance. The control is not very fine, and can only be activated once every round, so it is not very useful for sending complex messages. The sound is tuned to match a pitch

that corresponds to the wearer, though, so it is possible to recognize who activated it. (ReTe30)

- III. If any magical creatures or devices which were not within the boundary during the ritual come within a mile of the Bell, it will give a huge, deep toll of warning. (InVi40)
- IV. Those who wear diadems can hear the sound of the Bell ringing, no matter how far the intervening distance. (InIm20)
- V. Those who wear diadems may cast the spell *Aura of Rightful Authority* three times per day. Doing so causes the Bell to ring very gently at a particular high pitch. (ReMe20)
- VI. While characters wear diadems, their Personality traits associated with the ritual become emphasized, increasing or decreasing by 3. Characters will be compelled to act on these traits as if they were Major Personality Flaws. (MuMe20)
- VII. If anyone who was part of the tuning ritual dies, the Bell will toll twelve times, becoming more and more out of tune as it rings, and it will again cease to function. (InMe20)

A note of caution: the repaired Bell of Ibyn is an extremely powerful artifact, and it may be unbalancing if your players are new to the game and have only starting-level characters. You might consider suggesting ways for the characters to get rid of the Bell in return for rewards appropriate to their station. For example, the characters' masters might expect their descendants to hand it over, and will cause them more trouble than it is worth if they refuse. Or perhaps the covenant that Ornath joined registered a prior claim with the tribunal, stating that as the last living member of the covenant, Ornath was entitled to the Bell, and that if recovered it should be delivered to his descendants in accordance with the former covenant's charter. They might nicely settle out of court with the characters, perhaps paying them a hefty amount of vis, but promise them all kinds of political grief if they dispute it.

down the aisle to the high altar, reaches behind it, and removes a sealed parchment.

Bearing this prize, she returns to her quarters, still leading the characters, and places it before them, saying: "Though Sister Larine was weak, she still found the strength to lift a quill and write this letter for you in her last hours. Perhaps it will answer your questions about the life she forsook when she came here.

Only I know of it, and if you wish to ensure it remains secret, you need only deal with me." She says this last piece with a smile or with deadly seriousness, depending on how she believes her speech will affect the characters.

If Sister Hedwig were aware of the contents of this letter, she would probably have burned it, as she has no interest in encouraging the practice of magic or teaching magical methods. She

would also think less of Sister Larine for passing on such knowledge, and if the characters are wise they will politely thank her for the letter and leave, rather than read it in her presence and tempt her curiosity.

This story ends after the delivery of the letter. Because of their actions at the convent, the characters may have made new friends or enemies, and as long as they impressed the abbess they will be welcome if they pass by in the future. She and the other nuns may make contact with the characters in the future, as part of other stories or inspiration for new ones.

There are other ways the characters could retrieve the letter, of course. For example, they could try to coerce the abbess into telling them what she knows. Against this eventuality, she is careful not to mention that there is a letter, instead making it seem that Sister Larine told her something before she died. Yet there may be ways for the characters to discover this information using magic, guile, or force; you should simply decide whether you want that kind of behavior to be successful.

Perhaps Sister Alice had a vision several months ago, and warned Sister Hedwig some of what would happen when the characters arrive. Sister Hedwig isn't sure how much of these visions to trust, but you can rule that the letter isn't where the characters would find it. That is, if they ransack the church, she has hidden it in her quarters. If they search her house, she has buried it in the garden. If they dig up the fields, she has given it to another convent for safekeeping.

If characters are failing at the tests, you can allow desperate players to find it with searching, but anyone who attacks the defenseless nuns or murders them to retrieve the prize should suffer dramatic consequences: besides being cursed by God, they will probably have to go into hiding as most of Mythic Europe (shocked nobility, an outraged Church, even the angry Order of Hermes) will pursue them. There are some things that go beyond the pale, and slaughtering innocent sisters is about as horrible as you can get. Warn the players of this if they seem set to pursue this course, as it could ruin the rest of their saga.

Options: The Legacy

I. The abbess asks the characters for help in combating the demands of a local baron concerning land and a village that were donated to the convent. He maintains the land is his, and has taken it away from the convent by force. They are fighting the situation politically, lobbying for support within the Church, but in the meantime the baron is vindictively abusing the folk who live there and overworking the fields. If the characters intervene on the convent's behalf, teaching the baron and his hirelings a lesson, Sister Hedwig will give them the letter. This option is a good choice if your troupe prefers combat as part of every story.

II. If the characters have failed to convince the abbess to help them, perhaps Sister Larine has not died, but is only in hiding. She cannot bear the thought of facing wizards again, for in her senility she fears they would punish her for leaving the covenant. However, her devotion to her former masters finally gets the better of her, and a strange old nun approaches the characters as they leave. She feebly whispers "Larine," and though the abbess voices strong disapproval, she summons the strength to tell the characters what she knows of the Bell. If you don't mind being melodramatic, she dies as she finishes. Because of this, the nuns will come to blame the characters for her death after they leave, and they will receive a bad reputation in the region.

III. Before the characters leave the convent, Sister Malores meets them and silently begs them with gestures and body motions to take her with them. She desperately wants to return to a place of faerie, or even magic, and is very uncomfortable in the Dominion. To leave with her, the characters will have to negotiate with the abbess, convince Malores to leave on her own, or kidnap her, but once drawn up as a character she might make an interesting addition to their covenant, or become a source of new adventures if they are willing to help her return to Faerie.

Appendix

Awakened Animals

In the story of the broken covenant, the animal maga Ierimyra rescued a group of magical ferret-like creatures and brought them to Calebais. These animals of virtue were larger and more intelligent than their mundane counterparts, and by experimenting in her lab she created and fostered a human intelligence in them. The changes she made are clearly inheritable by their offspring, though variations can still occur — for example, only the ermines have magical powers — and while they closely resemble mundane ferrets, all of them have developed specialized advantages that compensate for their weaknesses.

These Hrools are designed to act as interesting, unusual denizens of Calebais that take the place of goblins, kobolds, and other small humanoid creatures that typically inhabit a fantasy dungeon setting. However, unlike their counterparts, the Hrools are not simply creatures to be fought and killed, but rather unique adversaries and potential allies that you may be interested in studying, adopting, or even playing once the adventure has ended.

Awakening Animals

To duplicate Ierimyra's work, you must first understand the Hermetic breakthrough that made her experiments possible. This will take at least a season of study, and require you to either uncover and comprehend Ierimyra's lab notes, bring a living Hrool back to your lab for magical investigation (the effect is level 15, or level 30 for an ermine Hrool, and you must study an ermine to learn how to invest magical powers), or seek out the original source of the breakthrough by tracking down the wizard or wizards who first taught it to Ierimyra (perhaps it was learned through initiation into deeper levels of the Bjornaer mystery cult). In any case, to create intelligent animals, you must investigate beyond the concept and theory to learn the specifics of the magical method that follows.

You must then find a living subject, a naturally fine animal representative of its species, with some amount of Magic Might. Similar standards to those for finding and befriending a familiar apply, though not quite as strictly since these results are more akin to a parent-child relationship than a bond between true friends or lifelong companions. The animal simply should be open to being tamed or domesticated, and not hostile as you will be spending a lot of time with it in the lab.

Next is the ritual in which you give the animal human intelligence, known as "awakening." Your laboratory total is $\text{Creo} + \text{Mentem} + \text{Intelligence} + \text{Magic Theory}$, and bonuses from aptitudes, attunements and the like may apply (though not the special bonus given to initiates of Verditius). The level of the ritual is level 25, plus the animal's Magic Might, plus or minus five times its Size. This is similar to the formula for enchanting a familiar, and so a creature with Might 5 and size -3 would require a lab total of 15, while a creature with Might 20 and size -3 would be level 30.

As when you are binding a familiar, your lab total must equal or exceed this level for you to complete the ritual, which takes one season, and you must spend a pawn of either *Creo* or *Mentem vis* for each five levels or fraction thereof. You can also awaken multiple creatures of the same species in one season if your lab total is high enough, by multiplying the base level by the number of animals awakened.

Awakening Lab Total: $\text{Creo} + \text{Mentem} + \text{Intelligence} + \text{Magic Theory} + \text{Aura Modifier}$

Awakening Level: $\text{Animal's Magic Might} + 25 + (5 \times \text{Size})$

Awakening Cost: 1 pawn of *Creo* or *Mentem vis* per five levels or fraction

Once the initial awakening ritual is complete, you can spend additional seasons to imbue the intelligent animal with special powers, which it can activate with its Might. This is very similar

to crafting an invested device, for the animal has been prepared for enchantment as part of the awakening ritual. Note the amount of vis you spent to awaken the creature, because it limits how many powers you can give the animal.

Determine each effect with which you want to instill the animal, just as if you were designing an effect for an invested device (see ArM5). If it matters, the creature is considered both the wielder and the device for these powers. Then, invest the effect as normal, calculating your lab total based on the level of the invested effect. Verditiis bonuses for crafting items do not apply to this process, either. The total level of all effects cannot be greater than ten times the number of pawns of vis invested in the awakening ritual. That is, if awakening a creature cost three pawns of vis, it cannot possess more than 30 levels of magical effects.

This process still takes an amount of time based on your lab total and the level of the invested effect, a minimum of one season per power, and while you cannot instill multiple powers with different Arts during the same season, you can give the same power to multiple animals, using the rules for multiple laboratory activities (see ArM5).

You do not have to spend vis on these powers. Instead, each power will cost the creature 1 point of its temporary Might for every 10 levels of the effect. However, you can spend vis to reduce the cost: five pawns associated with any of the Arts in the power reduces the activation cost by 1 Might point. For example, the ermine Hrools have a ReTe10 power, which costs them 1 point of temporary Might to activate. To reduce the cost to nothing would cost five pawns of either Rego or Terram vis. Their ReMe30 effect costs 3 points, and lowering it to 1 point would cost 10 pawns of Rego or Mentem vis. This can only be done at the time the power is instilled; you cannot make the power cheaper later.

**Power Lab Total: Technique + Form + Intelligence
+ Magic Theory + Aura Modifier**

Power Level: as an effect instilled in a device

**Power Cost: 1 temporary Might per ten levels or
fraction of the effect, minus 1 for every 5 pawns of vis
of the effect's Technique or Form**

Once an animal has been awakened, it is no longer suitable for binding as a familiar. The awakening ritual causes such dramatic changes to an animal that the magical cords can no longer bind it. In a sense, an awakened animal is bound only to itself.

Most unfortunately, the ritual doesn't always "take." You may find after breeding awakened animals that their offspring are all simply mundane versions of their parents. It is a sad and bitter truth

that magic is not always predictable, and some magi have devoted years of study into awakening only to discover that their *magnum opus* is a temporary thing, an illusion of achievement with no lasting effect. This may happen because of some weakness of the animal, or perhaps because the wizard's own spirit is flawed.

Awakened Behavior

An intelligent animal, which Hermetic scholars might call an *animula* (ah-nee-MOO-lah, "little soul"), requires an incredible amount of effort to raise, very similar to sacrifice involved in taking an apprentice or having a baby. Once an animal has been awakened, it will go through stages similar to those of a newborn child; at first it may be in shock, and slowly become more aware of itself and its new environment, eventually interacting with and learning from its parent. As part of the awakening process, the animal gains the power of speech, though it may take some time for it to learn how to use it.

Mechanically, the following changes occur: the animal's Cunning becomes Intelligence, and it gains Presence and Communication scores. It can also learn Abilities, have Virtues and Flaws, and age as humans do. Thus far, no *animula* has been found to possess The Gift, but perhaps that is only because there are so few of them. Or, it may be that Gifted animals have been discovered, but were secretly incorporated into House Bjornaer and taught to change into a human shape to protect them from the ignorant.

The animal's new characteristics are considered from a human perspective: Presence is how attractive the creature is to humans and other awakened animals, and Communication describes its ability to speak and comprehend human sounds. For example, a beautiful white horse might have a high Presence, as people would find it very attractive, while a scruffy rat would not receive as positive a reaction. A creature with sharp teeth and pointed snout like a dog would probably not speak very well, but a songbird with a musical voice and captivating song could have an excellent Communication score.

In all ways, *animulae* are natural, living creatures, and they usually pass on their awakened traits to their offspring. They are still animals in most respects, as their physical bodies are affected by Animal rather than Corpus spells. Magi who are aware of these creatures argue that since they are animals, they are meant to be commanded by humans, for though magic may give them an animating spirit, it cannot give them a soul, and so they can never equal or exceed their human masters. Others argue that the ritual which opens animals' eyes also gives them the knowledge of right and wrong, and that these *animulae* must receive souls when they first become awakened, just as newborn chil-

dren do. Intelligent animals have free will, they say, and like people, they should be taught to avoid sin, not forced to do man's bidding.

This is an important philosophical argument, for each position outlines a very different method for treating awakened creatures. Those who believe that *animulae* are simply animals are likely to treat them as servants in the best case and slaves in the worst. They might even breed and slaughter them for vis. On the other hand, those open to the idea that intelligent animals are essentially humans in unusual bodies are likely to feel terrible pain on their behalf when the animals are rejected by others and prevented from seeking salvation, and outrage at the many forms of abuse they might endure. Those of either opinion will encounter dangerous opposition from those who think differently, as there is no middle ground or definite answers to an issue like this, but the Order of Hermes is traditionally disdainful of the idea that intelligent animals are equal to humans, as it is a common punishment to execute a wizard's familiar, but not his *custodes*.

Regardless of their opinion on these philosophical matters, many of the magi who know the secret of awakening view it as a powerful experience, much like having a child of their own. For older magi, or those who have performed a longevity ritual, an *animula* is the closest they can come to creating new life, and more than training an apprentice or crafting an item, it allows them to leave a piece of themselves to become a part of a smaller, magical person who follows them.

Note that familiars have many similarities to *animula*, as they are also intelligent, though they cannot pass on their intelligence to their offspring and cannot be given invested powers in the same way as awakened animals. However, these same ideas may be just as useful for developing stories about wizards' animal companions.

Awakened Characters

Since *animulae* can have human characteristics, Abilities, Virtues and Flaws, and other attributes, it is possible to play one as a character, as long as your troupe approves. They are probably best suited to companions, as this emphasizes their uniqueness, though like Ierimyra an Animal-oriented magus might choose to awaken a *turba* of animal grogs, despite the difficulties they would have interacting with others. If you intend to play such characters, design them as normal, and assume any natural advantages you gain due to size or rarity are compensated by the increased difficulties you will face avoiding and interacting with others, and with finding other magical animals like yourself. Here follows several Virtues and Flaws appropriate for an awakened animal character, including the *Animula* Status Flaw.

MAJOR STATUS FLAW (REQUIRED)

Animula: You are an animal that has been granted magical intelligence by a benevolent magus. Few people at your covenant treat you with respect, and you are usually considered a lesser person, in many ways a natural slave or servant. Outside the covenant, you frighten people so terribly that they probably attack you on sight. This flaw essentially encompasses three minor flaws: Judged Unfairly, Feral Upbringing, and Social Handicap, all of which you possess, though their penalties vary depending and are magnified when you are among humans or normal animals of your species. You age as an animal, not a human, so you may begin making aging rolls much earlier in life. Finally, you have Magic Might equal to 10 – your Size (add your Size if it is negative), and if killed your corpse could contain a number of pawns of vis equal to your Magic Might divided by 5, of an Art appropriate to your form.

MAJOR GENERAL VIRTUES

Greater Powers: You were imbued with great powers by the wizard who awakened you. Take up to 60 spell levels in magical effects, or spend 10 of these levels to reduce the cost of one of your powers by 1 point, though not below 0. You may take this Virtue more than once.

MINOR GENERAL VIRTUES

Ferocity: Like companion and magus characters, you have Confidence points, even though you are only a grog. However, your Confidence points may be used only in situations where your natural animal ferocity is triggered, such as when defending your den or fighting a natural enemy. Describe a situation that activates your Confidence, and take three points for you to use when those circumstances are met.

Improved Might: You have twice as much Magic Might as is normal for animals of your species; add (10 - your Size) to the amount of Magic Might with which you begin the game.

Lesser Powers: Your master imbued you with supernatural powers during your awakening ritual. Take up to 10 spell levels in magical effects, or reduce the cost of one of your powers by 1 point (though not below 0). You may take this Virtue as many times as you wish.

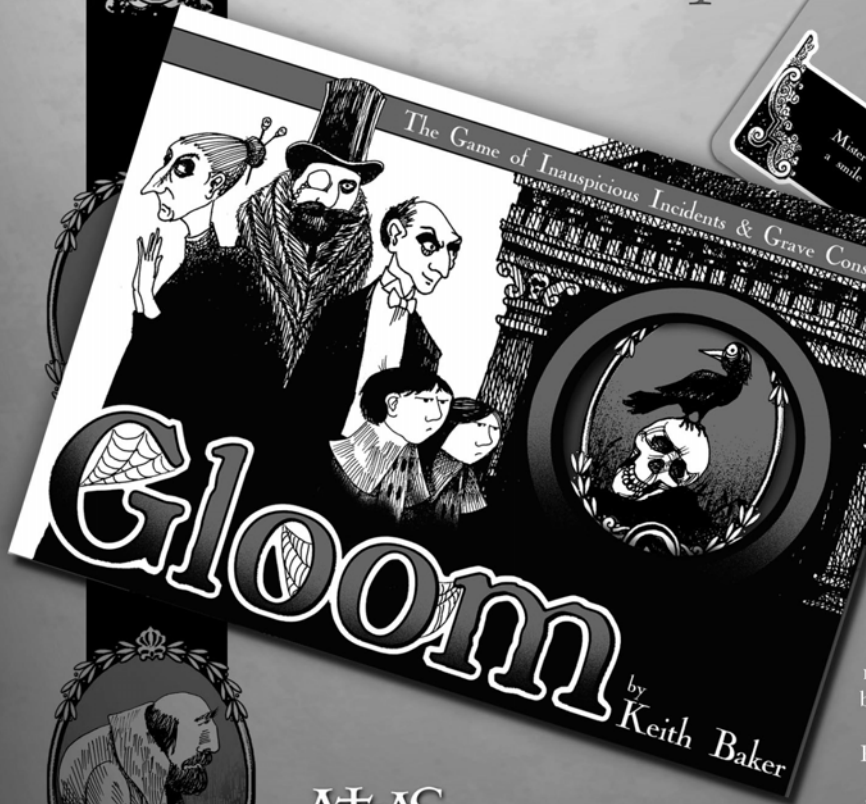


Poor Cousin Mordecai.

He fell down the stairs,
And was bitten by bears.
He was overcome by the measles,
And devoured by weasels,
He choked on a bone,
And died old and alone.



We should all
be so lucky.



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