

Ars Magica

Legends of Hermes



by Ferguson, Lawford,
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Legends of Hermes

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Chapter One

Introduction

Today, the Order of Hermes enjoys a new golden age of cooperation and enlightenment. The trials of the past have been overcome and the Order is all the stronger for the strife it has endured.

But the history of the Order is defined not only by political shift or internal conflict and resolution, but also by the lives and achievements of its individual members. This book introduces five such magi who shaped the Order as it exists today. All of these magi have become legends within the Order, though the truth behind their stories has been embellished and blurred by time, deception, and rumor. But their stories are far from finished — each has left behind treasures waiting to be rediscovered by living magi.

Magi of Legend

Each chapter is devoted to a single magus, presenting a faithful telling of that wizard's story as well as describing his or her singular achievements. Each chapter also provides the framework against which stories of the magus' rediscovery can be told, and once-lost legacies can be brought back to the Order.

Conciatta of Bonisagus

Lifetime: c. 885 AD – 1007 AD
(Final Twilight)

Overview: A brilliant researcher who advanced Bonisagus' theories, unify-

ing the four Realms under Vim magic. It's said she left behind the secret of fueling Hermetic magic with Divine auras. But her spirit — fractured into four aspects — guards this secret and more.

Conciatta of Bonisagus occupies a singular place within the Order. Early in the tenth century, a hundred and fifty years after the founding of the Order, Conciatta successfully extended Bonisagus' grand theory such that all the four supernatural realms were included under the art of Vim, something that the original theory did not support and generations of magi before Conciatta wrestled with. But while her advances forever changed the theory and her name lives on both in the primers that apprentices study and in the hallowed records of House Bonisagus, perhaps her greatest discoveries have yet to be published.

Conciatta spent her early years defending herself against the prejudices and preconceptions of her House and the stigma arising from a master fallen into corruption. But against this backdrop of hardship she published an extension to Hermetic Theory that few among her peers even thought possible. Her fame spread as fast as copies of her work, and soon the whole supernatural world was laid open to the Order of Hermes.

With the aid of her loyal friend and later husband, Currito of Jerbiton, Conciatta traveled Iberia and beyond seeking out auras, regiones, and powerful spirits from which she could learn. She was not content with her initial discoveries,

though, and became driven to extend Hermetic Theory further. For many, especially those in House Bonisagus, this was a sign of hubris, or even delusion; she had made her great discovery and to attempt more was surely arrogance. And so she became isolated. Fearing ridicule, she did not share her research with the Order and she became withdrawn.

Those magi she did meet on her travels later talked of ramblings concerning a lost city, a city ruled and populated by ghosts, and even a trip to Hell itself. Through this the loyal Currito followed her and protected her. But eventually, he too left and Conciatta continued her research alone.

While the name of Conciatta is known to every apprentice brought up in the Order, her fate is only guessed at. Her original research is venerated but her arrogance, at least within House Bonisagus, is held up as a cautionary tale.

Currito rarely talked about the research and discoveries that he'd seen; indeed, he rarely talked about Conciatta at all. But in his less-guarded moments, when he felt the time was right to tease out some of her secrets, he told of a great prize — the ability to fuel Hermetic magic from the aura of the Dominion itself.

Fortunata of Jerbiton

Lifetime: 986 AD – 1123 AD
(Final Twilight)

Overview: A master of ancient magics, who created a Mystery Cult of her

own. Her hidden island is still the domain of spirit servitors that are bound into and power magic devices.

Fortunata of Jerbiton is famous as a writer, historian, and translator of ancient texts, and for having acquired power as a supernaturally gifted necromancer who bound spirits as servants, or as power for her devices. She traveled surrounded by a shimmering cloud of spirits, and her familiar (some say lover) was an incorporeal spirit.

She was a daughter of a prince of Milan, but on her Gauntlet she adopted the Hermetic name of Fortunata of Jerbiton. Her parents were proud as she became known as a fine scholar, but she was wracked with envy of other magi, and came to desire magical power more than the art of her House. Spurning the ideals of Jerbiton, she mastered ancient rites of power and created a Mystery Cult for herself — but the sudden acquisition of power led rivals to accuse her of dealing with devils, and of using magic to spy on other magi. Though false, the rumors and accusations drove her to retire to a hidden island in the Mediterranean, where she stored her Initiation Scripts, spells, magic devices, and bound spirits.

Hérissou of Bjornaer

Lifetime: c. 857 AD – 1002 AD

Overview: An advocate of peace slain on the eve of the Schism War, whose pacifist teachings changed the philosophy of House Bjornaer. His magical garden hosts a war of its own even today, as well as the secret of growing vis.

A magus of House Bjornaer who lived immediately before the Schism War, Hérissou's heartbeast was an urchin (hedgehog). It is rumored that he was a descendant of one of Myanar's followers who fled to House Bjornaer after

losing a contest for leadership of House Merinita to Quendalon, and his magical aptitudes lay principally in the Arts of Herbam and Vim. To Bjornaer magi, he is the most famous member of Clan Arelie, and the spiritual (if not actual) father of the Harmonist movement.

The time in which Hérissou lived was a time of great strife, both between the expanding mundane populace and the Order, and between members of the Order itself. Hérissou believed these tensions to have a fundamental cause — the struggle over a limited supply of raw vis. Magi resented the clearing of forests and wildernesses to make room for agricultural land, since these places contained magical resources upon which they relied. Magi also quarreled with each other over the ownership of vis sources, the lust for which Hérissou held to be at the root of the strife that ultimately led to the Schism War. Hérissou claimed to have found a way out of the cycle of conflict, a route to practi-

cally unlimited vis, and he was a fervent preacher of the way of peace to any and all who would listen to him.

Hérissou never saw his teachings bear fruit. On the very eve of the Schism War he was slain in a Wizard's War by a member of his own House, who accused him of colluding with House Diedne. Whether these accusations have any basis in reality is unknown, but it is certain that Hérissou met with prominent members of the Order — House Diedne included — in an attempt to sooth the brewing tensions. His legacy is felt even unto this day however; following the end of the Schism War with the destruction of House Diedne, his pacifist teachings were the impetus for the formation of the *Concordarii* (the Harmonists), a political movement within House Bjornaer that holds that humankind is not intrinsically inimical to the magical world, and that magi can dwell alongside nobles, priests, and peasants. No



evidence of his research into vis production exists, and some claim it is just a myth — an embellishment by his followers who seek to elevate their hero's reputation. Others believe that the answers are to be found in Hérissou's Garden, his legendary sanctum and laboratory, but its location has never been found despite more than two centuries of searching.

Hermanus of Tremere

Lifetime: c. 940 AD – 1098 AD
(Final Twilight)

Overview: A master strategist and obsessive constructor of magical defenses charged with protecting Coeris, who disappeared along with part of the covenant itself.

Hermanus of Tremere was a veteran of the Schism War who took on the responsibility of making the domus magna of House Tremere — the covenant Coeris — into a location that was secure enough to safely protect the accumulated riches of that House. Hermanus headed the Vexillation of the Adamant Rook — a group of enchanters — and for many decades poured his full energy into creating defenses for the covenant. Hermanus marshaled all of the knowledge, vis, and talent that House Tremere could muster into this single goal.

In 1070, the Primus of House Tremere declared the defenses of Coeris to be adequate and dissolved the vexillation. But Hermanus did not cease his task of continuing to strengthen the defenses of the covenant, and for the next 28 years he crafted, studied, and politicked constantly, all with a mind to shoring up what he saw as weak spots in the defenses of Coeris.

In 1098, a portion of the covenant of Coeris — including Hermanus, his laboratory, and several rooms surrounding his laboratory, along with

their contents and secrets regarding the domus magna's defenses — suddenly disappeared.

The achievements of Hermanus that gave him his legendary reputation were not in the opponents that he vanquished or in magical understanding that he discovered, but in the accumulated defenses created by more than eighty years of single-minded dedication to a single vision both in politics and in the laboratory.

Thomae of Tylalus

Lifetime: c. 1122 AD – 1198 AD

Overview: The flamboyant creator of the most audacious enchantment the Order has yet seen — a flying castle — and a host of lesser magic items. Both the adventurous Thomae and his castle went missing only a few decades ago.

Thomae of Tylalus was a 12th-century magus famous for his flying castle. This vast structure, apparently made of magical bronze, caused great alarm in the Order. Many elder magi felt that the nobility would not permit such an obvious threat to their rule. To avoid Wizard's War, Thomae agreed to hide his castle in a distant range of mountains. After a few years, Thomae became bored and secretly flew his castle to many of Europe's desolate locations. The castle vanished on one of these journeys. Efforts to find Thomae have failed, but he vanished only 22 years ago. Most magi assume that some hint of him will emerge, eventually.

Thomae is remembered as a master of the magic of flight. His castle was itself impressive: a mobile covenant that he could set down in any abandoned place, seeking excitement and doing mischief in obscure parts of Europe. His lesser enchantments also aroused the envy of magi — his magic items, it is said, could defend the castle from any attack, and

could grant his entire turb the power to fly. His riches, pilfered from the far places of Europe and Africa, may be exaggerated in folklore, but many magi ask themselves "If I had a flying castle, where would I go? What would I do?" Many wonder what Thomae's answers to these questions were.

Many factions of wizards are interested in finding Thomae's castle, and would pay handsomely for the device if the player characters did not wish to retain it. The Hermetic Architects wish to examine it for breakthroughs in the mysteries. The militant houses want it as a weapons platform, a logistical device, or a drop-in command center. House Mercere wants to use it as an exchange point for messages. Even the lesser items of Thomae — rumored to allow easy transport between the flying castle and the ground, manipulate the weather, and spew gouts of fire at enemies — might prove valuable to the player characters.

What the Order Remembers

Each chapter has a section listing the Order's recollections of that magus. As legendary figures, the important facts are known by all, while the details of their lives may be recorded only in the dusty and forgotten histories of the Order.

When a player asks what his character knows about one of these legendary magi, make an Intelligence + Order of Hermes Lore simple roll and consult the following chart:

EASE FACTOR	CATEGORY
0	Known by All
6	Widely Known
12	Uncommon Knowledge
18	Lost Secrets

The character recalls all relevant facts and rumors about that magus up to and including the Ease Factor they achieve. Characters may also conduct research in an appropriate library (see *Covenants*, page 98 for additional research rules).

Note that some of the Order's recollections may be false; these magi have become figures of story and legend and as such can no longer influence how

they are presented. As well as distortions, there may be some blatant untruths that persist.

Certain groups of magi may remember more about a given magus due to specific reputations, or House Acclaim. Conciatta's early research, for instance, before she cloistered herself away, earned her the rank of Cannophori, providing Bonisagus characters with a +3 bonus to their rolls. Each chapter lists

any modifiers that apply.

Some knowledge may also be restricted to certain groups. Much of the work Hermanus achieved in his lifetime may be a closely guarded secret within House Tremere and unknown outside the House, or have simply been forgotten by the wider Order. Similarly, through the years, rumors may have turned into falsehoods. All such items are marked where appropriate.

Chapter Two

The Four Aspects of Conciatta

Lifetime: c. 885 AD – 1007 AD
(Final Twilight)

Overview: A brilliant researcher who advanced Bonisagus' theories, unifying the four Realms under Vim magic. It's said she left behind the secret of fueling Hermetic magic with Divine auras. But her spirit — fractured into four aspects — guards this secret and more.

Of all the Arts described by Bonisagus' unifying theory of magic, used by all those magi and descendants of magi gathered by Trianoma, there is one that has been overlooked more often than not: the Art of Vim. Vim is the tool through which raw supernatural power can be conjured, controlled, and shaped. But the modern Order of Hermes has a legendary maga to thank for the ease with which it uses Vim to see and touch the supernatural. Conciatta of Bonisagus was troubled both in life and in restless death, but because of this her contributions to the Order have not all been explored yet.

Shunned by her House, she worked tirelessly on new applications of Hermetic theory, but never published them. Rumors persist that she had found ways to overcome the deleterious effects that the Divine has on magic, but few believe them and Conciatta is fast becoming a footnote in Hermetic history. But her

research is still to be found, and those who find it and bring it to the Order will become almost as famous as the Founders themselves. But at what cost?

Legend

Raised in Barcelona as the daughter of a wealthy merchant, the young Dolorita was taken away by Baltasar of Bonisagus to study with him in Leon. Before her apprenticeship was up she had been fostered with magi as far afield as Al Andalus, Provence, and Lombardy. However, something in her apprenticeship under Baltasar had stirred a great interest in the unseen realms and a desire for Hermetic Theory to affect them without recourse to "other means."

Once free of her apprenticeship, Conciatta traveled Europe for several years visiting covenants within Iberia and beyond. She gave service as a laboratory assistant in exchange for room to conduct her own studies. It was on one such journey that she met Currito of Jerbiton. While his impetuous confidence reminded Conciatta of her parents, Currito found her reserved bookishness both amusing and appealing.

He had recently returned from the city of Zaragoza where he had found a

series of supernatural auras, only some of which seemed beneficial to his magic. He wanted to understand these auras and as Zaragoza had yet to be claimed by any other magus he wanted to found his own covenant in virgin territory. Within a year the magi had raised a tower inside a regio, founded their covenant, and sealed the pact with marriage.

Research

While Currito plied his artistic trade, Conciatta began her research. She corresponded with the most eminent Bonisagi of her day and learned that those with an interest in the realms were seeking to extend the theory by incorporating new Arts. Instinctively, she knew this was wrong and argued against it. Despite failures, the addition of new Arts to solve the problem was the prevailing wisdom and Conciatta was challenged to fall in line or to produce a working alternative.

In 930 she published her first notable work, *The Application of Vim to the Supernatural Humors* (tractatus on Magic Theory, quality 7). This major breakthrough showed how Magic Theory could adapt and differentiate the four identifiable auras. This was revolutionary in two ways. Firstly, it reduced auras into four categories that matched

Currito of Jerbiton

Currito of Jerbiton was an artist at heart. He was a man swept up in selfless tortured love, and for a while he channeled this into his painting. Much of his work was religious in nature, though he gained popularity for a time in the more wealthy covenants of the Order for a series of Hermetic triptychs. But his best days were far

behind him by the time the Order descended into Schism War, a time when the hope and glory of those early days seemed almost irrelevant.

He lived out his later days as an itinerant artist: trading on past glories, enjoying the hospitality of old friends, and moving on when his welcome wore thin.

directly with the accepted realms. Secondly, it demonstrated the use of Vim to directly affect those supernatural realms. The House was at first skeptical, but as each of her peers studied from her work and validated her results, so word of her achievement spread. Before long, the text was distributed to the Tribunals and Conciatta's place in Hermetic history was sealed.

And then Baltasar was marched. By his own admission, he had become Infernally corrupted. Some say he threw himself on the mercy of the Quaesitores in the hope for leniency. He received none. The details of his crime are now lost and the magus himself would be forgotten but for his filia. But this scandal hit Conciatta hard and her rivals now had new ammunition. They used this, her gender, her relative youth, indeed any excuse against her, and she was soon quietly ostracized from Bonisagus society. She sent her last set of unfinished notes to Durenmar and concentrated on new projects.

For the next forty years she worked tirelessly. She visited mysterious supernatural sites and recorded everything she could. Meanwhile, Currito kept her supplied with vis, bartered for the latest works, and scouted new areas on her behalf. He supported his wife to the detriment of his own studies and his own artistic aims. But all the while she kept her results secret from the Order.

The Growing Ailment

She even kept secret the changes to her Gift. Currito had noticed that her Gift had become more blatant but he did not realize that she was losing control of her spell-casting. Magic was starting to leak from her, to find and manipulate targets around her. It was unconscious, automatic, and near constant. Seasons of study were ruined and Twilight came

upon her more and more frequently.

Frustrated at being held at arm's length (Conciatta went a full year without setting eyes on him), and humiliated by his peers, Currito left Zaragoza. He did not leave empty handed. In his bitterness he took a number of her research notes in the hope that he could use them for profit. It is from these notes that rumors of Conciatta's later work have arisen. It is unclear where Currito settled but reports put him in the Levant before 1000.

Conciatta remained in Zaragoza for a further five years, alone in her tower. She had lost interest in the mundane world and ignored the servants who provided for her. Slowly the outside world forgot about her.

The Death of Conciatta

As the new millennium dawned, Conciatta finally abandoned her tower and retired to a convent near



What the Order Remembers of Conciatta

Members of House Bonisagus may remember more about Conciatta due to House Acclaim. Conciatta's early research, before she cloistered herself away, earned her the rank of Cannophori (*Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 21) and this provides Bonisagus characters with a +3 bonus when rolling to remember about her. See the Introduction: What the Order Remembers for rules.

KNOWN BY ALL

- She unified the understanding of the four realms under the single Art of Vim.
- Her famous work, *The Application of Vim to the Supernatural Humors*, is often studied by apprentices.

- She withdrew from Hermetic society in her later years.

WIDELY KNOWN

- She lived in Iberia and had links with both Christian and Muslim communities.
- Her parents were marched on charges of diabolic corruption.
- She was assisted in her work by her husband, a Jerbiton artist.

UNCOMMON KNOWLEDGE

- There were suggestions that she did not publish all of her research to the Order.

- She found a way to overcome the Dominion's effect on magic.*
- Conciatta disappeared into Twilight before the turn of the millennium.**

LOST SECRETS

- She paid a terrible price for the hubris of her research and lost control of her magic.
- She died in a convent near Toledo.
- Just before her death she was visited by four women, to each of whom she gave a magical treasure.

* A distortion based on Currito's later writings.

** This is what the Order at large believes.

Toledo that she had come to know through her research. She hoped that the strong Dominion would dampen her constant spell-casting and give her respite from her own magic. The convent took her in and cared for the weary and warped maga and she lived there for the next eleven years in relative peace. But her connection with the Dominion soon strengthened and the old ailment came back. Warping eventually caught up with her and she fell into Final Twilight.

But instead of fading into the realm of Magic, her lifelong studies dogged her even at the end. Her spirit fractured into four aspects, each matching one of the four supernatural realms and they fled the convent. While Conciatta herself is dead, distorted images of her remain to be found. And while the world at large doesn't know of Conciatta's greatest breakthroughs, the four aspects that survive her remember.

Legacy

Conciatta's legacy is a series of breakthroughs that she made while in seclusion. These are available through the research notes and laboratory texts that can be found in the various locations that were key to her research. But, uniquely, Conciatta has also left behind four supernatural aspects of herself who can provide insight into these breakthroughs.

New Virtues

The following virtues represent the ways Conciatta's unique research affected both her Gift and her understanding of the Hermetic theory. They can either be gained through original research, assisted by her own laboratory texts, or used as inspiration for integrating with Hermetic Theory as with researching ancient magic. As some of Conciatta's work has already

been integrated with Hermetic magic the following virtues represent new breakthroughs with effects currently unavailable to Hermetic magi.

CONFLUENCE OF THE REALMS

Minor, Hermetic

This Virtue allows the maga to benefit from her knowledge of the supernatural realms while undertaking laboratory work.

A maga using a laboratory text creates an exact copy of the spell or enchantment, with the Range, Duration, Target, and effect as described in the text. Many Vim spells are designed to affect a given realm, and that realm is a fixed part of the laboratory text. A maga cannot use a laboratory text for the Demon's Eternal Oblivion spell to re-create the same effect targeting creatures of the Magic Realm.

For magi with this virtue however, the realm specified as part of a laboratory text, whether a spell or device, can

be changed during any subsequent use of that lab text. Thus, the maga may use laboratory texts for realm-specific Vim spells to invent variants with the same Range, Duration, Target, and effect aligned to another realm. This can be applied to any spell that references a realm in some way, such as warding, or spells to investigate or affect auras.

This change cannot be effected in the field, through the use of Virtues such as Flexible Formulaic Magic, and is restricted to the laboratory.

This Virtue also provides the understanding needed to extract vis from any of the four realms. This uses the existing rules with the extraction total modified by the standard aura modifiers. The vis produced is typical of that found in the appropriate supernatural aura, including any side-effects that such vis typically has.

It takes 30 research points to integrate this Virtue.

INSIGHT OF THE REALMS

Minor, Hermetic

Characters with this Virtue draw upon their knowledge of the supernatural realms to support magic typically used outside of the laboratory. Magi with this Virtue may substitute the appropriate Realm Lore Ability for either Artes Liberales or Philosophiae in any ritual or ceremonial spell totals cast within or related to the matching realm.

This Virtue also allows the Dominion Lore, Faerie Lore, Infernal Lore, and Magic Lore Abilities to be used to detect and see through a target regio boundary, as described in *ArM5*, page 189. These abilities are used in place of Second Sight or Sense Holiness & Unholiness as appropriate to the aura. The use of the Realm Lore ability for this purpose is treated as aligned to the current aura, being a deep understanding provided by arcane knowledge, and so is modified as normal.

It takes 30 research points to integrate this Virtue.

TRUE UNDERSTANDING OF THE REALMS

Major, Hermetic

When the maga achieves true understanding of the realms, represented by this Virtue and through the four Realm Lore Abilities, she is able to manipulate and use auras to better serve her magic.

On entering a supernatural aura foreign to the maga, the effective level of that aura is reduced by the score in the appropriate Realm Lore Ability to a minimum of 0. This reduces both the penalty associated with that aura and the number of additional botch dice activities are subject to. Note that some auras provide a bonus to spells and powers. In such cases, the bonus is retained but the number of botch dice is reduced.

The Nature of Vim

Though it wasn't recognized at the time, Bonisagus' theory of magic, as taught to the Founders and early members of the Order was flawed. Vim originally concerned active magic such as spells and enchantments and the study of auras was beyond that early theory. The first advance was in using Vim to perceive and affect the existential realm of Magic. Being so different, the moral realms of the Dominion and the Infernal and the existential realm of Faerie could not be manipulated in this way by Hermetic magic. Instead, the ten Forms were used to affect supernatural entities: Herbam was used to ward against faeries of the wood, or Animal used to ward against an Infernal hound. That legacy is evident in some of the common uses for the Forms in the Order today.

This meant that early magi had great difficulty in perceiving, describing, and traversing supernatural auras and regiones, and more adventurous magi had to learn many similar spells across the ten Forms in order to affect creatures of the realms. Some House Bonisagus scholars attempted to extend the theory with further distinct Arts, each covering a separate supernatural realm, but these attempts died a natural death. It took a generation and the gauntlet of Conciatta before a new approach was explored; the application of Vim to the four supernatural realms.

CONCIATTA'S GLOSSARY

Many of the common words that magi use to talk about auras originated in Conciatta's early works.

Diffuse: An aura with no fixed sustaining source.

Tethered: An aura that is generated by or sustained by one or more sources.

Stable: An aura that is neither growing nor shrinking in magnitude.

Waning: An aura that is losing strength over time.

Waxing: An aura that is gaining strength over time.

Existential: The Faerie and Magic Realms.

Moral: The Divine and Infernal Realms.

Apparent: The strongest aura present at a given location.

Subsumed: An aura that is present but has been overpowered by a stronger aura covering the same area.

A foreign aura is one that imposes some penalty to the maga's supernatural powers or spell casting. The standard realm interaction table on *ArM5*, page 183, applies as normal.

The associated effects of any aura are also affected by the level of the appropriate Realm Lore ability. While the maga gains full magical benefit from a Magical aura aligned with aggressive emotions, she may use her knowledge of the Magic Realm to reduce the aura's effect (as per the table in *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 15). Similarly, the penalty to statistics imposed by Abyssal Infernal auras (*Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 16) is reduced.

This Virtue manifests as an integral part of the character's Gift, on the same level as the maga's own magical sigil. As with the sigil, it cannot be suspended and it influences all spells cast by the maga and all enchanted items created after the maga acquires this Virtue.

While not directly affecting the use

of enchanted devices, auras do affect their penetration. Just as a maga's sigil manifests in the effect, so does her understanding of the realms. On acquiring this Virtue, the maga's score in the Realm Lore abilities should be recorded when she creates a new enchanted device effect. When the device is used in a foreign aura, the effective level of that aura, for penetration purposes, is reduced by the maga's Realm Lore ability at the time the effect was instilled. This is a function of the maga's personal enchantment process and is not described by the Laboratory Text and can not be reproduced by another magus following the text.

The maga's talisman always uses her current Realm Lore when used by the maga regardless of when the effects were enchanted into it.

If either Confluence or Insight of the Realms have been integrated, it takes 30 points to integrate or research this virtue, otherwise it takes 45 points.

Exempli Gratia: The magus Zebulon has a Faerie Lore of 2 and an Infernal Lore of 4. On entering an Infernal Abyssal regio of level 3, his Infernal Lore reduces the effective level of the aura to 0 for all non-Infernal powers and spells. This reduces the realm interaction penalty and botch dice to 0 and negates the Abyssal aura's deleterious effects on his characteristics. Even after a day spent within the regio, the Intelligence stress roll has an Ease Factor of 0 as the effective level of the aura has been reduced to 0. See *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 16 for details on Abyssal regiones.

Later, he finds a Faerie aura of level 2. His understanding of the aura allows him to retain the +1 bonus as indicated by the realm interaction table but the number of additional botch dice for spell casting is reduced to 0.

New Flaws

The Flaw below represents the defects to Conciatta's Gift that she acquired through her research. Magi who find a way to Initiate Conciatta's Virtues must go through the ordeal of acquiring this Flaw, though it is not gained in research or integration.

THE CONSTANT EXPRESSION

Major, Hermetic

The maga forms the center of a magical maelstrom, perpetually casting non-fatiguing Spontaneous magic effects. The resulting effects are minor due to the nature of non-fatiguing Spontaneous magic but are likely to cause distraction and/or other problems. Though non-fatiguing, the effort of marshaling the magic into less dangerous forms is tiring and the maga is considered to have lost one long-term Fatigue level which cannot be regained through sleep.

The effects produced by the constant expression may target anything that the maga could normally target with spontaneous spell, including herself, though



are more likely to target things touched by or seen by the maga.

The maga may actively concentrate in order to suppress this automatic magic entirely, making an initial Stamina + Concentration simple roll against Ease Factor 3 + (Warping Score). On a failure, a further roll is allowed every two minutes after the maga has composed herself. If the magic has been suppressed, the maga may cast spontaneous and formulaic spells normally.

In order to cast ceremonial or ritual magic the maga must make a concentration roll as described above. One attempt can be made every 15 minutes, a successful attempt sufficient to cover the duration of the casting. But the maga suffers a number of additional botch dice equal to her Warping Score.

The constant expression of magic also makes laboratory work inherently risky. Any laboratory the maga works in is treated as having a free flaw providing a Safety penalty of -3 (see *Covenants*, page 111).

Penalties from foreign auras, or from effects such as Aegis of the Hearth, may dampen the constant expression. Where the penalty reduces the casting total to 0, no magic is expressed.

The player should decide, based on personality, sigil, and favored arts, how the constant expression most often manifests, though the storyguide may vary the actual effect scene-by-scene.

New Spells

The following are new spells affect auras of various kinds.

NEW INTELLEGO VIM SPELLS

To See What Binds this Magical Place

InVi 30

R: Personal, D: Diameter, T: Vision

This Heart of Darkness

InVi 20

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Room

New Spell Guidelines for Auras

The following new guidelines may be used by any maga who has studied from at least one of Conciatta's unpublished works on the breakthroughs described here, through a tractatus or a laboratory text for instance. No insight or additional research is required.

NEW INTELLEGO VIM GUIDELINES

Natural and Preternatural tethers are described in *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 10. Tethers are objects or circumstances of mystical significance that draw fluid vis to a location and both cause and sustain an aura. Storyguides should feel free to extend the metaphor to all of the four supernatural auras.

Level 1: Detect the presence and strength of a supernatural tether of level 5 or higher.

Level 2: Detect the presence and strength of a supernatural tether of level 4 or higher.

Detect the presence of a subsumed aura.

Level 3: Detect the presence and strength of a supernatural tether

of level 3 or higher.

Level 4: Detect the presence and strength of a natural or supernatural tether of level 2 or higher.

Level 5: Detect the presence and strength of any natural or supernatural tether.

NEW REGO VIM GUIDELINES

General: Suppress an aura of strength less than or equal to the spell's magnitude. The aura is not destroyed but its effects, including any casting bonuses/penalties, are suppressed for the spell's duration. The aura returns to full strength at the end of the spell's duration. The presence of the suppressed aura is detected by magic or abilities that can normally detect such auras. This Ritual cannot affect regio levels beyond the mundane level. As the target aura is still in place, merely locked away, events and actions that fuel the aura may raise the level beyond the power of this Ritual to contain it. If this happens, the Ritual's power is broken and the aura is made apparent again. (Ritual)

Cast within an Infernal aura, this spell reveals whether actions taken within this room were responsible for drawing in the Infernal. This could be through a personal evil or sin, or an Infernal ritual. Any event that induces a corruption roll (*Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 11) taints the location and is equivalent to a tether. This spell cannot provide information about the evil that took place, nor even how long ago it was committed.

(Base 5, +1 Touch, +2 Room)

NEW REGO VIM SPELL

Dominance Over the Infernal

ReVi General

R: Touch, D: Year, T: Boundary, Ritual

Causes the apparent Infernal aura of strength equal to (ritual magnitude – 9) to abate. The Infernal aura, though still present, is held at bay and its effects are not felt. Other auras present that may have been suppressed are now expressed.

(Base, +1 Touch, +4 Year, +4 Boundary)

Adventure: Four Corners of the World

Conciatta's spirit has been sundered and aspects of it reside within four auras or regiones across the Iberian peninsula, one for each realm. The aspects in each of the four realms have lost much from the original, but have retained key personality traits. Each aspect is protected

in some way, but the aim of the story is to seek Conciatta's treasures and to reunite her fractured spirit.

The adventure takes place in those four locations:

- The first location is Conciatta's sanctum, where the magi are confronted with a Conciatta devoted to and obsessed by study. In her the magi may see an exaggerated reflection of themselves.
- The second place is the convent where Conciatta spent her final living years. It is here that the characters are given the opportunity to show true qualities of the Divine: mercy and sacrifice.
- The story of the third location, a sunken faerie city, is riddled with loss. The city of Tartessos was lost a thousand years ago or more, and the magi themselves must participate in the story of loss when they discover that the spirit they are seeking has long since gone.
- The final spirit of Conciatta is buried deep within the Infernal where conflict, hardship, and pain rule supreme. This encounter is dangerous and deadly, like the Infernal itself.

The quest can be played out as a single storyline allowing the characters to collect all of the treasures before retiring to their laboratories. Episodes can also be played separately. Provision has been made for clues leading from one place to another, but storyguides who wish to take a more episodic approach may like to move the clues and allow the players to engage with the story over a longer period.

Précis

The adventure presented here has the following structure. Note that the story starts with two encounters with Conciatta and her history. Those en-

Integration vs. Research

There are two paths to acquiring Conciatta's lost knowledge. A magus may seek out sources of inspiration, enchanted devices, books, or teachers, that provide insight into her breakthroughs. The magus uses these sources of insight to conduct experiments, undertaking Hermetic laboratory projects, to re-create key discoveries.

Original research may take longer but allows the magus to progress even without sources of insight; the magus experiments and stretches his own understanding of magic to reach the eventual goal.

The rules for integrating Conciat-

ta's discoveries with Hermetic magic can be found in *Ancient Magic*, page 7, while the original research rules can be found in *House of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 26. The two approaches are compatible and research points are cumulative with points gained by studying artifacts and texts. An additional summary is provided in *Hedge Magic Revised Edition*, page 14.

This chapter suggests effects and artifacts that magi following Conciatta's trail may find. While not specified, storyguides may also want to provide laboratory texts for these effects to best suit their saga goals.

LIST OF ARTIFACTS

The following table lists the spells and devices that can be discovered through this story, the Virtue that they provide inspiration for, and the integration/breakthrough points that each provides.

ARTIFACT	VIRTUE	POINTS
Maintaining the Divine Conjunction	Confluence of the Realms	6
The Fourfold Lens	Confluence of the Realms	11
Subsume the Apparent Dominion	Confluence of the Realms	10
Clearing the Mind of the Caster	Insight of the Realms	6
The Insightful Stylus	Insight of the Realms	5
The Lodestone	Insight of the Realms	7
The Sands of Time	Insight of the Realms	4
Ward Against Woodland Spirits	True Understanding of the Realms	9

counters can be run in either order as suits the storyguide's plans.

- The first encounter is the discovery of Conciatta's history made manifest in the Magic Realm.
- The second encounter is the acquisition of Currito's journal, a book that provides the clues as to where Conciatta's four fractured spirits can be found.
- The troupe may then go searching for the four aspects of Conciatta in any order that they wish. Some approaches may be easier or more logical than others, but the troupe should have freedom to explore.
- Finally, the spirits of Conciatta can be reunited, allowing the magi to learn her last secrets and bring new breakthroughs to the Order.

Foreshadowing

Prior to introducing Conciatta's legacy and presenting the Four Corners story, it will be useful to plant certain seeds to make her discoveries more immediate and tempting. The storyguide should also use Conciatta's name in largely unrelated stories to raise her profile with the troupe.

DIFFICULTIES WITH AURAS

Conciatta's work is all related to the supernatural realms and auras. Stories with auras and regiones at their core pose interesting challenges for magi: the Dominion in particular limits the effectiveness of Magic, and Infernal auras have considerable deleterious effects even at low levels. Currently, Hermetic magic has no easy way to identify the phenomena that anchor auras of each realm so any story where this is important will start the troupe looking for solutions to this problem.

Casting tablets may provide useful

solutions to aura-related problems and the covenant may already hold one or two, written perhaps by Currito in his later years.

BOOKS AND SPELLS

When Conciatta's husband Currito left the covenant he took a number of useful texts and devices. It is possible that some of her work has made it to the troupe's covenant over the years. Such books or devices can be presented to the troupe as obscure items in their library or stores.

Also, works by others may contain Conciatta's own glossing, and these hint at her greater understanding of the realms, or individual correspondences may be found within other volumes. Any time a character studies the Art of Vim from a book there is an opportunity to include Conciatta's name in the experience.

THE ART OF CURRITO

Currito never fulfilled his potential but some of his artwork, particularly his frescoes, survives and could be found anywhere across the Order. These surviving works can be used to foreshadow story events, such as by showing the same subject or character as though influenced by the four realms.

Relocating the Story to Other Tribunals

This story is designed as a treasure hunt and requires the magi to leave their covenants and maybe even their Tribunals, allowing magi from across Mythic Europe to follow Conciatta's trail. However, the events and places described in this chapter can be moved with relative ease: Tartessos

could translate to Sybaris in the Roman Tribunal, Zaragoza may become Paris in the Tribunal of Normandy with the Ebro becoming the Seine, and Jerusalem might be used in place of Toledo. The action, by default, occurs in Iberia, but storyguides should not feel constrained by this.

History Unfolding

While engaged in a story involving the Magic Realm, the magi discover a series of tempora, static yet tangible vignettes, describing the life of Conciatta. They unfold the story of Conciatta's background and provide clues as to her discoveries, her fate, and the location of her sanctum.

Each tempus has an associated Personality Trait that may enhance the emotions of those within it, as described in *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 15. Characters with a supernatural ability derived from the Magic Realm are unaffected, otherwise characters gain the specified temporary Personality Trait of +3 while they remain within the tempus.

Although they are presented chronologically here, there is no order in which they must be presented. Storyguides should choose a tempus that most closely matches their needs and let the players explore from there. If using the Magical Travel rules in *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 23, each vestige has a level of 5, for an Ease Factor of 15 to travel to the next tempus.

None of the vestiges form a connection to the mundane world so they cannot be used to directly access the remains of Conciatta's sanctum.

THE VESTIGE OF STUDY (STUDIOUS)

This tempus shows Conciatta in her sanctum. She is with Currito and they

both appear relaxed, though frozen as though mid-conversation. Currito sits in a sizeable chair, his hands aloft as though shaping something invisible and his eyes wide and enthusiastic. Conciatta stands behind a work table, like those that fill hundreds of Hermetic laboratories across the Order. Her finger rests on an open book, marking the very line that drew Currito's reaction.

The pages of the book cannot be turned but the subject matter is clear. It appears to be a journal. The unnamed author was apparently a magus who suffered a magical accident. This accident sent him into a regio that inhibited his magic. He became trapped inside for what seemed like weeks until he expended all the vis he carried in an attempt to force the same magical accident and reverse its initial effect. The point that drew Conciatta's finger was the reveal that all of the vis the magus carried was of the Form of Vim.

A tractatus on the Art of Vim also lies open on the table. It appears to use an archaic form of Hermetic Latin. The open pages show that the author considered it impossible to affect the four supernatural realms with anything other than new Arts. Any magus reading this will immediately recognize this as outmoded and absurdly incorrect. The book harks back to the early days of the Order, and this should remind magi that it was Conciatta of Bonisagus who made the breakthrough that banished such outlandish ideas.

In life, this moment fueled Conciatta and provided yet more evidence that the Art of Vim could manifestly affect all of the supernatural realms, that the grand theory of magic needed no other Arts.

The walls of her sanctum are lined with laboratory texts, tractatus, scrolls, and devices. It is rich and colorful, vibrant and thriving. There is even a view from the windows, though it is peculiar and can only be seen as though from Conciatta's vantage point, as though a window-shaped image hung against

a white drape some feet beyond the window frame. The Moorish city of Saraqusta can be seen outside the tower, with the Noor Mosque rising above the low streets.

The door provides the means of traveling into or out of this vestige.

THE VESTIGE OF ACCLAIM (PROUD)

This tempus takes the form of a great lecture hall, recognizable to any Bonisagus as one of the halls of Durenmar. The tempus here behaves oddly as the images shift, jumping from one to the next as the observers walk the hall.

The hall has a central door at the rear, which serves as the point of entry for characters who find this tempus. Rows of benches, filled with magi of several Houses, face forward and are bisected by a central aisle. At the front of the hall, on a raised dais, Conciatta stands at a lectern.

On entering the hall, the tempus shows Conciatta as she begins her presentation. As the observer moves towards her, magi can be seen posing questions. Further still, and magi appear by turns dismissive and approving. Again further, and pockets of discussion can be seen breaking out among the assembled magi. Some quickly examine Conciatta's new ideas while others voice their anger. Eventually, the magi stand and applaud, while a few of the more senior magi storm from the hall.

The last image, seen only from Conciatta's perspective, gives a hint to the loss of magical control to come. Her gaze suddenly becomes surprised and she looks to a silver stylus on her lectern. The stylus has bent, curled in on itself, and floats just above the lectern's wooden surface.

But there is one constant with each change in image: Currito sits at the back of the hall. He looks on proudly, lovingly. So content is he that he

does not even stand when the other magi give Conciatta their applause; he knows her achievement and lets her soak in the acclaim.

Characters entering or leaving this vestige do so through the door at the rear of the hall.

THE VESTIGE OF SECLUSION (BITTER)

The characters enter this tempus at the bottom of the winding stair of Conciatta's tower. The steps behind them disappear into mists while Currito stands sorrowfully in front of them. His head is bowed and his shoulders sag. He is dressed as though for a journey and has a large bag slung over his shoulder. The tower here has no walls and the winding stair is alone in the eerie blank whiteness. Stepping off the stairs sends the character into the void.

The steps behind Currito stop at Conciatta's door. Characters may peer around Conciatta's door and will simply see the other side of it. But if they look through the keyhole they will see her darkened sanctum. Characters see Conciatta surrounded by items floating around her, held up by some unseen force. Conciatta herself stands at her work table, fists clenched and tears welling from her tightly closed eyes.

Characters leave this tempus by opening the door.

THE VESTIGE OF DEATH (FEARFUL)

Characters entering this tempus find themselves suddenly at the foot of a bed, as described below.

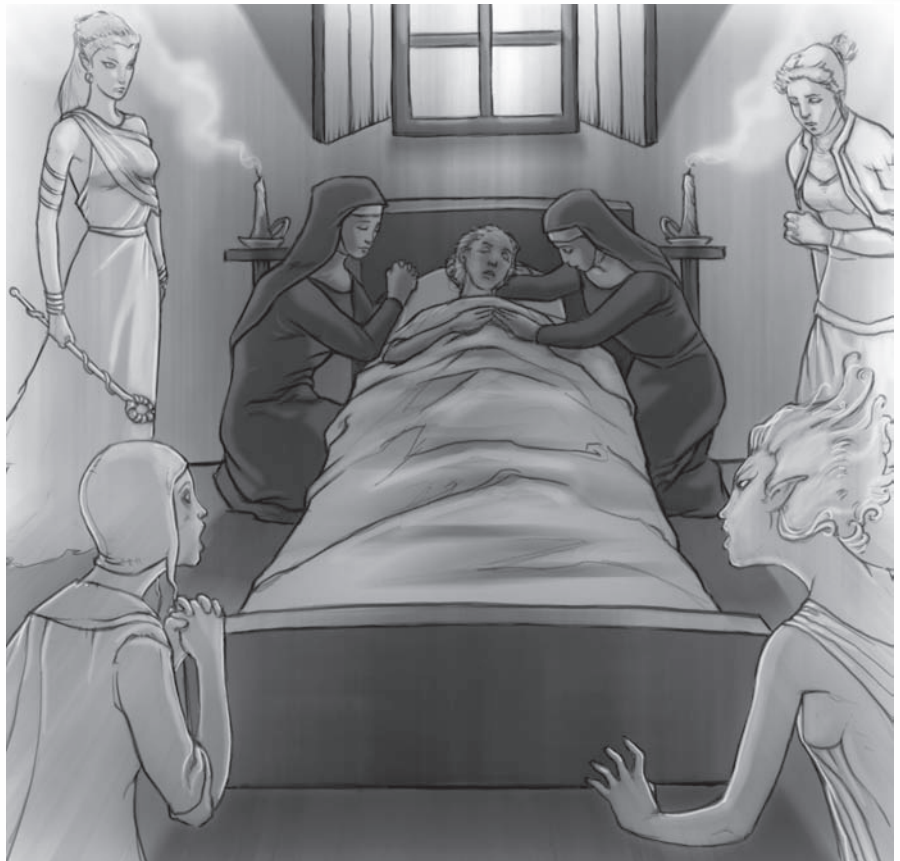
This is the moment of Conciatta's death at the convent near Toledo. At the center of the room, an aged Conciatta lies in bed. A nun by her bedside holds her hand and prays. Another by her other side, leans in close so as to

hear her last words. A third, more senior nun stands at the foot of the bed. The scene moves on and Conciatta takes her last few breaths. As Conciatta dies, the candles in the room extinguish and the room is plunged into a gloom. Characters may now see, in the four corners of the room, obscured by shadow, the four spirits of Conciatta. The images last long enough for the spirits to manifest...and then the scene replays from the beginning. This happens over and over: Conciatta's never-ending death.

As the image plays out, those present may notice the effects of Conciatta's uncontrolled magic. Small items are picked up by invisible forces, but the power appears tired and the items are soon dropped.

Characters listening to Conciatta's last words hear her ask for the spirits to be reunited, "My soul is broken and cannot rest. I am here, I am in fire and damnation, I am deep in the lost city, and I am home at last. Find me and make me whole."

A triptych in the room shows the appearance of the Virgin Mary to Ildefonso's mother during her pregnancy; just before her death; and her appearance to Ildefonso himself at the moment of his mother's death. The triptych exists in the mundane world and was a gift to the convent by Currito for their help with



Conciatta's studies. An Intelligence + Church Lore simple roll vs. 6 is enough to recognise the saint as Ildefonso.

But the triptych also seems to have other images, mystically coexisting with Currito's work. Characters looking closely see reflections of the other three tempora and may use the images to travel to each.

Currito's Journal

A Redcap brings sad tidings to one of the covenant's magi: his pater has died or drifted into Final Twilight. But the magi bring with them an heirloom: a tattered book in an unrecognized hand. The book comes with the old man's instructions to read it carefully.

The book was written by Currito in his old age (described in the nearby box) and from him it went through many uninterested hands until it has now landed in the character's possession.

But each delegate has designs upon the book. The Quaesitor suspects foul play and sees the book as a clue; the Bonisagus is intent on seeing the magic within made public; and the Redcap is acting on behalf of Zebulon, offering a small fortune in return for the book.

Storyguides should feel free to make the book available in any other way that suits the stories they are telling. The

Story Seed: The Invisible Enemy

A private messenger representing a magus of a foreign Tribunal arrives at the covenant asking for access to Currito's journal. The messenger claims that his master has an interest in the life of Currito of Jerbiton and is searching for clues concerning his earlier years. The magus understands that the book has made its way into the covenant's possession and is willing to pay handsomely for it. A note of suspicion may be raised when the mes-

senger insists that his master wishes to buy the volume outright and while he appreciates any offer to study it, it is the book itself he wants.

But the messenger is merely a Trojan horse unknowingly carrying a number of possessing spirits (as per the power described in *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 32) across the Aegis boundary. Once inside, these spirits search the covenant, looking for the book, and bring fear and mischief in their wake.

The Life of Currito

Bound between leather flaps and written in an uncertain and aged hand, this volume describes the long life of Currito of Jerbiton, especially his youth and middle age spent with Conciatta of Bonisagus.

Reading this book, something that can be done as a five-day distraction, reveals the following:

- The covenant Currito shared with Conciatta was hidden within a regio but still plagued by birds flying in from the mundane world.
- Conciatta remained in Zaragoza after the dissolution of La Torre no Vista.
- She studied the Dominion at a convent in Toledo, also the place where she spent her final days.
- They survived deadly challenges in an Infernal cave system at the town of Narixa.
- They left some of their notes and a map in the library of the al Narixa

mosque for safe keeping.

- Currito saw the extent of her ambition when she bargained for knowledge with the king of a lost city outside of Qadis, and it was this that began to turn Conciatta's feelings against him.

This last point is evidently a source of great bitterness for Currito and the nature of the bargain is not dwelt upon.

One of the features of this book is a large full-page illumination showing Conciatta standing beneath a wide arch. The pillars are supported on one side by an angel standing atop a demon, and on the other side by a dragon standing atop a winged man playing a lute. Behind Conciatta and all around the arch the wall is filled with Hermetic text. The wording is incomplete but it looks as though the text is taken from a casting tablet.

book may already be in the library, or it may be found in Currito's long-abandoned sanctum.

The Tower by the Water

The Magical spirit of Conciatta can be found at the site of her old covenant, La Torre no Vista. The covenant is mentioned by name both in written works and in the spoken tales that surround Conciatta. While the information that the covenant was housed in Zaragoza is easily available, finding the covenant itself is a matter of piecing together the clues and using perhaps a little magic.

Zaragoza

In Conciatta's time Zaragoza was the Arab city of Saraqusta, part of the Emirate of Cordoba in the northeast of Iberia. The city enjoyed relative peace and stability under Arab rule for over two hundred years, until rival Muslim dynasties began challenging for control. With the destruction of the Cordoban Caliphate in 1018, years after Conciatta

left, Zaragoza become one of the independent Taifa Kingdoms ruled first by the Banu Tujib and then the Banu Hud.

The Banu Hud negotiated an alliance with Castille against their Almoravid enemies sweeping north and the great El Cid served as commandant of the city's armies between 1081 and 1086. The city was able to resist the Almoravids until 1110 when Abd al-Malik Imad ad-Dawla, the last emir of Zaragoza, was driven from the city. Eight years later Alfonso I el Batallador, aided by the forces of Abd al-Malik, took the city from the Almoravids and it soon became the capital of the Kingdom of Aragon.

When Alfonso captured Zaragoza in 1118, many of the city's libraries were taken south by fleeing Muslims. The contents of the remaining libraries were sent north to Paris where they can still be found in the trust of the university. By this time, these libraries contained a number of Hermetic texts, Conciatta's among them.

THE CITY IN 1220

Zaragoza is a strong city in the heart of Aragon served by well-maintained roads. The principle routes are north by road to Jaca and southeast by river to Barcelona.

The walled city is situated in a shallow valley that slowly rises up into mountains. The valley presents a number of different landscapes, from the Los Monegros desert and deep woodland, to open plains and farmlands. But the most striking feature of the city is the mighty river Ebro that bounds Zaragoza to the

A Note on Languages

Each kingdom or region across Iberia has its own language. For simplicity, they can be treated as similar enough to be interchangeable while still being readily identifiable. In addition, Iberia

was for a long time dominated by the Moors of north Africa and Al Andalus, so Arabic is still commonly used by those of Moorish descent who still live in the Christian kingdoms.

north and its tributary, the Huerva, that bounds it to the east.

A number of bridges span both the Ebro and the Huerva and lead into a city where church spires and Islamic minarets fill the sky. They seem to concentrate and reach higher towards the middle of the city giving Zaragoza almost a domed appearance. The legacy of hundreds of years of Islamic architecture still remains. The narrow streets are filled with markets and Christian, Jew, and Muslim alike can be seen, and heard, bartering for goods. The only sounds that cut through are the regular church bells and the Islamic calls to prayer.

Zaragoza is surrounded by mountains and has a variable climate. The spring sees great rainfall, but the summer turns to scorching drought. Winter is a harsh time contested by two great wintry spirits. The first manifests as a cold fog that settles about the city while the second is a cold dry wind that blows down from the encircling mountains and attempts to overcome the fog.

The Ebro provides ample irrigation to support farming and wheat is a big export. Wine is produced further north along the Ebro and much of the wealth from that business accumulates in Zaragoza.

La Torre No Vista

Conciatta's sanctum occupied the upper levels of a tower near the banks of the river Ebro. The tower fills a regio that hangs high in the air with seemingly no way to reach it. As was revealed in Currito's book, he always had a trouble with the birds that seemed to find his sanctum windows.

At the covenant's founding, having acquire mundane title to the land, Currito used ritual magic to raise a tower hidden inside the already-present regio. At the same time, in the mundane world, he helped his agents build wharfs and a warehouse to both disguise the entrance and provide an important income.

Story Seed: The Books of Al-Mu'taman

Yusuf ibn Ahmad al-Mu'taman ibn Hud ruled Zaragoza between 1082 and 1085. Aside from his secular concerns he was an accomplished mathematician, writing extensively on geometry. However, those reading his works also discover references to magic.

Al-Mu'taman was a Learned Magician (*Hedge Magic: Revised Edition*, page 79) and his lineage schooled Conciatta in their ways of overcoming the deleterious effects of auras. Modern magi might also learn much from this line of magicians, if they can be found and bargained with.

FINDING THE COVENANT REMAINS

As the Magic aura that housed the covenant is now subsumed by the Dominion, finding the site requires a number of clues.

There are still references to La Torre no Vista in the records House Mercere retains at its domus magna of Harco. But this only places the covenant in the city of Saraqusta and records that the covenant dissolved in 990. The Mercer house in Barcelona, known as Yuval's (*Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 82), has more detail:

- It records Currito and Conciatta as members and that the tower was raised from within a regio on the southern bank of the Ebro.
- It provides a location in the eastern part of the city that Redcaps should attend and notes that this is separate from the sancta.
- It also has an oblique reference to the regio being to the north of the Noor Mosque.
- The final clue is that the mosque mentioned in the Mercere directions no longer exists. An Intelligence plus Zaragoza Lore roll against an Ease Factor of 9 reveals that the Aljafería palace now stands where the old Noor Mosque used to.

Alternatively, if characters are actively searching for unusual sights in the air, such as birds suddenly appearing or

disappearing, they may make a Perception + Awareness simple roll against Ease Factor 9. The search takes one week plus one additional week for every point by which the roll missed the Ease Factor.

Storyguides may wish to run a story connected with gathering these clues and identifying the correct warehouse along the Ebro river. In any case, the troupe finally discovers that the covenant site is now occupied by the merchant Reyes de Barbastro.

REYES DE BARBASTRO

The site of the old covenant is in the north west of the city, where the Ebro turns sharply back on itself. It is now occupied by buildings owned by Reyes de Barbastro. His property looks out over the Ebro and includes both his home and a large warehouse, beneath which is a cellar that bounds the subsumed Magic aura. He is unaware that his cellar has any significance. Reyes has a comfortable living and supports a fine household. His principle business is trading wine from the Logroño region, where he maintains another warehouse, but he will buy and sell most things.

Reyes has three daughters of or nearing marriageable age. The eldest is 17, the middle daughter is 16, and the youngest is 14. He has no sons to pass his growing business on to, so is keen to find suitable husbands for his daughters. But he needs to be sure that any pro-



THE CELLAR

The cellar beneath the warehouse is currently used as a storeroom and is filled with forgotten crates and barrels. The gloom and an uncomfortably low ceiling make for a claustrophobic space. There is a Magic aura of level 1 currently subsumed by a level 2 Dominion. In the middle of the cellar, opposite the stairs, are two pillars.

The cellar walls have been plastered over and, though whitewashed, are grubby with age. Here and there the plaster has flaked off, exposing an earlier fresco. A search of the cellar reveals some peculiarly Hermetic words. Reyes knows nothing of the design. It has been covered for as long as he has owned the property.

The concealed design is actually a casting tablet, in the form of a fresco painted by Currito, for one of Conciatta's rituals, *Subsume the Apparent Dominion*, ReVi 40 (Ritual). The Hermetic text is entwined with images of the city under Cordoban rule. But the casting tablet is both purposefully incomplete and also damaged.

spective husband will care both for his business and his daughter (admittedly in that order). Characters hoping to gain

access to Reyes' warehouse and the important cellar may want to appeal to this side of him.

Reyes de Barbastro

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

Size: 0

Age: 35 (35)

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Capo*; Clear Thinker, Famous, Vernacular Education*, Puissant Bargain, Gossip; Many Marriageable Daughters*; Weak Characteristics, Greedy, Weakness (Hedonism)

Personality Traits: Bombastic +2, Greedy +2, Tolerant of Fools -1

Reputations: Generous Host (merchants) 4, Gossip (Zaragoza) 1

Combat:

Dodge: Init -1, Attack N/A, Defense +0, Damage N/A

Fist: Init -1, Attack +1, Defense +0, Damage +0

Bludgeon: Init -2, Attack +4, Defense +1, Damage +2

Soak: 0

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

Abilities: Arabic 4 (Zaragoza), Area Lore: River Ebro 3 (geography), Area Lore: Zaragoza 4 (personalities), Artes Liberales 1 (arithmetic), Awareness 1 (alertness), Latin 3 (trade usage), Bargain 3+2 (wine), Brawl 1 (bludgeon), Carouse 3 (drinking songs), Aragonese 5 (Zara-

goza), Charm 3 (being witty), Etiquette 3 (mercantile dealings), Folk Ken 4 (strangers), Guile 4 (lying to strangers), Leadership 4 (workers), Profession: Merchant 4 (wine), Music 2 (flute), Ride 2 (distance), Reyes' Company Lore 2 (personalities), Teaching 1 (Profession: Merchant)

Equipment: Merchant clothing

Appearance: Reyes is a large man taken to eating and drinking to some excess. His face is round and ruddy and topped with thinning black hair. He dresses well and fully displays his wealth as is expected of a man of his standing.

* *City & Guild*, pages 108 and 109

The missing section of the casting tablet is provided by the illumination of Conciatta in Currito's journal. The characters now realize that the illumination shows Conciatta standing between the two pillars and that the Hermetic text that appears clearly written on the wall behind her was never added to the fresco. If it can be exposed, magi may use both the fresco and the book to complete the casting tablet and cast the spell.

An Intelligence + Magic Theory stress roll against an Ease Factor of 9 is required to read between the lines and fill in the gaps caused by damage. A bonus of +1 is granted for each magus beyond the first who collaborates on the effort. The effort takes one day, plus one day for each point by which the roll missed the Ease Factor. On a botch, the magus believes he has completed the casting tablet, but the casting roll is automatically treated as 0 and the magus must roll for a botch with six additional botch dice. Rules for using casting tablets can be found in *Covenants*, page 89.

Once the Dominion has been subsumed, the level one Magic aura becomes apparent and entering the higher regio much easier.

THE TOWER REVEALED

With the Magic aura revealed, the way is now clear to the level 6 regio that houses the covenant's tower. Spells or abilities that allow a character to see through the regio boundaries reveal the start of a staircase that winds around the outside of the cellar, up into unseen levels. Taking these stairs automatically pushes the character through the boundary.

The tower is several stories tall and each floor is large enough for a number of rooms including a Hermetic laboratory. What's clear is that the tower did not support a large staff. Magi may con-

clude that either Currito and Conciatta led very frugal lives or they also had other property nearby.

CURRITO'S SANCTUM

Midway up the tower is the former sanctum of Currito. The door is shut and warped with age. On forcing the door, a sudden flurry of feathers fills the air as three dozen birds, startled by the intrusion, launch themselves and scramble for the windows. Two wide shutters swing freely and open out onto a balcony overlooking Zaragoza, the Aljaferia palace visible though muted as though through a magical mist.

Every surface in this room is covered with guano, deposited over centuries. The smell is stifling and the guano has ruined everything that may once have been of use. Cabinets have been emptied and left open while such laboratory equipment as was left behind has been smashed through the years.

CONCIATTA'S SANCTUM

Towards the top of the tower is Conciatta's sanctum, the marker still clearly apparent upon the door. Characters making a Perception + Awareness roll against an Ease Factor of 6 hear the sound of movement within the chamber.

Traversing the Regiones

As per the rules in *ArM5*, page 189, it is possible for a character to see from an aura of one realm into a regio of different realm. To enter the level 6 Magic regio directly from within the level 2 Dominion requires a Perception + Second Sight simple roll against an Ease Factor of $5 + (2 \times (2 + 6)) = 21$. The Dominion aura also directly

penalizes any non-Divine power used to detect the boundary.

Once the ritual has been cast and the subsumed Magic aura has been made apparent, it is much easier to traverse the regiones, requiring a Perception + Second Sight simple roll against an Ease Factor of $5 + (2 \times (6 - 1)) = 15$.

Opening the unlocked door, the visitors see a maelstrom of books, bottles, boxes, and other items floating and rotating in the air. Here and there is a flash of light, or a momentary illusion of some distant view or a face from the past. And in the middle of this flow of magic, working at a large orderly table, is Conciatta. Flustered, the spirit of Conciatta looks up. As she does so doors fling open and items dart towards the visitors, before she pulls them up sharp. The strain on her face is obvious.

Conciatta is flustered and angry at the uninvited intrusion of others. With as much confidence and authority as she can manage, she commands the strangers to leave her sanctum at once, very nearly chasing them out. And then her mind races to sort through the implications. She waits for the strangers to make proper overtures in the proper manner, not simply intrude in her sanctum. In time, she will find a reason to conduct business with them calmly.

Conciatta understands that she is dead. She suspects that her condition is the result of an extended Twilight event, likely Final, that has somehow become permanent. She suspects that there may be others like her, aligned to the other realms.

She also recognizes that she is unable to learn anything new of any note, except perhaps what happens if her Final Twilight is allowed to complete.

The Magical Conciatta

Magic Might: 30

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

Size: 0

Age: Appears in her late thirties

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Spirit; Hermetic Magus; Major Magical Focus (Auras), True Understanding of the Realms; Affinity with Magic Theory, Confluence of the Realms, Famous, Great Intelligence, Insight of the Realms, Inventive Genius, Piusant Magic Theory, Student of Infernal, Well-Traveled; Blatant Gift, The Constant Expression, Driven (Extend Hermetic Theory); Deleterious Circumstances (when not within a supernatural aura), Judged Unfairly, Study Requirement

Qualities and Inferiorities: Focus Power (x3), Greater Power

Personality Traits: Driven +3, Introverted +2, Scholar +3 (Essential Trait)

Reputations: Bonisagus House Acclaim (Magi Bonisagi) 3

Soak: -1

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

Abilities: Animal Handling 2 (owls),

Arabic 4 (poetry), Area Lore: Qadis 2 (ghostly personalities), Area Lore: Zaragoza 3 (lacunae), Area Lore: Narixa 2 (regiones), Area Lore: Toledo 2 (the convent), Artes Liberales 3 (ceremonial magic), Awareness 2 (spell effects), Aragonese 4 (poetry), Charm 2 (first impressions), Code of Hermes 1 (Bonisagus obligations), Concentration 3 (lab work), Dominion Lore 5 (divine places), Etiquette 2 (faeries), Faerie Lore 5 (ancient faeries), Finesse 2 (precision), Folk Ken 2 (magi), Infernal Lore 5+2 (regiones), Intrigue 1 (House Bonisagus), Latin 5 (Hermetic usage), Leadership 1 (laboratory work), La Torre no Vista Lore 3 (history), Magic Lore 5 (regiones), Magic Theory 15+2 (Vim), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (history), Parma Magica 2 (Vim), Penetration 2 (Vim), Philosophiae 3 (ceremonial magic), Teaching 3 (Magic Theory)

Powers:

Crafter of Vim, variable points, Init 0 minus Might points spent, Vim: Conciatta can spontaneously produce the effect of a *Creo* or *Rego* Vim spell of level 25 or less at a cost of 1 Might point per magnitude. (Focus Power)

Eidolon, 0 points, Init 0, Imaginem:

Creates an illusionary form that can be both seen and heard. The body can be created and destroyed at will, though Conciatta always maintains this form. As the power in *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 102. (Focus Power)

Ghost Touch, variable points, Init 0 - Might points spent, Terram: Moves objects that are neither held by another or fastened down. For 1 Might point, up to 5 pounds can be moved, and every additional Might point doubles the weight. This power is in constant use and is largely outside Conciatta's control. Use of it often leaves her Might Pool drained. As the power in *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 102. (Greater Power)

Master of Vim, variable points, Init 0 minus might points spent, Vim: Conciatta can change or destroy weak sources of magic that she is able to perceive, spontaneously producing the effect of a *Muto* or *Perdo* Vim spell of level 25 or less at a cost of 1 Might point per magnitude. (Focus Power)

Appearance: Conciatta is two steps away from being presentable. Her long hair is tied up but struggling to be free. Her fingers are ink stained, as is her once-valuable gown.

CONCIATTA'S SPELLS, DEVICES, AND LABORATORY TEXTS

Though Conciatta's sanctum appears filled with books and devices, most are copies of the same book. Through the years, her misplaced studies have resulted in many books being scraped clean simply so she can overwrite them with what she thought was new work. Even devices have not escaped. Some have been broken down to be rebuilt or scavenged, their parts contributing to copies

of the same old device.

However, Conciatta's sanctum still contains a number of useful enchanted items and laboratory texts, each of which can provide a source of insight. Where noted, each laboratory text or device provides a bonus to the insight roll (as described in *Ancient Magic*, page 8) equal to the magnitude of the effect. Where a device is enchanted with more than one effect, only the highest level effect provides insight.

Subsume the Apparent Dominion

ReVi 50

R: Touch, D: Year, T: Room, Ritual

This spell allows a subsumed aura to manifest by temporarily suppressing an apparent Dominion aura of strength less than or equal to three. It has a Room Target and so produces a localized effect, ideal for mimicking a weak lacuna. If there are any other auras present, the strongest of these manifests.

Casting this ritual creates a preternatural tether of level one and provides a +1

yearly aura modifier, both as described in *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 10.

This laboratory text is for a level 50 ritual but the effect is general. By re-creating the spell from this laboratory text, the maga accumulates 10 points towards researching Confluence of the Realms (see earlier). To do this, Conciatta's own code must first be broken (*ArM5*, page 102), which requires at least a season working with the text to decode it. The only available casting tablet for this spell is the one written into the cellar fresco.

(Base 15, +1 Touch, +4 Year, +2 Room)

The Sands of Time

InVi 19

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Individual

This large three-chambered hourglass, standing one foot in height, indicates whether a Magic aura is waxing, waning, or is stable. If the aura is waning the sand flows through the hourglass into the lower chamber. If the aura is waxing the reverse is true and the sands run upwards. If the aura is essentially stable then the sands collect in the middle chamber.

The only example left in the sanctum is broken, its glass chambers smashed and the sand blown away. However, the wooden frame survives and the device can be reformed by a skilled Verditius.

(Base 2, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +2 complex effect; +1 for 2/day, +3 triggered at sunrise/set)

If the device were working it would provide a bonus of +3 to an insight roll. In its current state it provides no bonus but does provide 4 points towards integrating *Insight of the Realms*.

The Lodestone

InVi 33

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Individual

This small palm-sized silver device contains a pointer beneath a glass lens. When exposed to a Magic aura the

pointer aligns in the direction of the closest supernatural tether currently anchoring the aura. If the aura is diffuse and has no anchor the pointer moves with the casing and aligns to no particular direction.

(Base 5, +1 Touch, +2 Sun; +1 for 2/day, +3 triggered at sunrise/set)

Given the simplicity of its working, the lodestone provides no bonus to the insight roll. Recreating the effect grants 7 points towards integrating *Insight of the Realms*.

The Tome of Binro

Binro was an early follower of Bonisagus who took an interest in the realms and sought to extend Bonisagus' theory to include them. The early House saw Bonisagus' great theory as being a set of principles against which to invent and apply new Arts. But while the House's wisdom was that the three new Arts should be researched, one each for the Divine, Faerie, and Infernal realms, Binro saw Bonisagus' theory as flawed from the outset. His opinions on the theory led some of his Bonisagus colleagues to label him, only partly in jest, "heretic." This volume is a collection of 60 correspondences (*Covenants*, page 90), many in Binro's own hand, each contributing to a discussion on how Magic Theory could, or should, accommodate the supernatural realms.

The tome can be studied in two ways. Firstly, as a level 6 tractatus on Magic Theory. Doing so reveals that the text contains a casting tablet. The spell is clearly experimental, even by contemporary standards, and is a variation on the common *Ward Against Faeries of the Wood* spell.

Ward Against Woodland Spirits

ReHe(Vi) 41

R: Touch, D: Ring, T: Circle

This experimental spell is a ward against all creatures with a Herbam-

based Might Score, irrespective of their supernatural realm, of 10 or less. The casting tablet has a penetration score built in, but magi recreating this spell do so without this and at a level of 30.

Recreating this spell provides 9 points towards integrating *True Understanding of the Realms*.

(Base 10, +4 Vi representing each of the Realms; +11 for penetration)

Her Final Resting Place

A short distance from the city of Toledo sits a convent dedicated to Saint Ildefonso of Toledo. It was here that Conciatta came looking for the Divine when engaged in her studies so many years ago and it was here she returned when her magic overcame her. But the spirit that now dwells within the convent may not be what those who come looking for Conciatta expect.

Characters searching for Conciatta here face two distinct challenges. The first is to gain access to Conciatta, either persuading the protective abbess or by taking more direct actions. The second is facing up to what they find and deciding how best to deal with the spirit.

The City of Toledo

Toledo sits on a rocky promontory that is bounded on three sides by the river Tagus, leaving only the north accessible from the land. But the city, wary throughout its history of attack, is surrounded by strong, high city walls. While Toledo may look drab and brown from afar, up close it is a dazzling mix of slender, winding streets and impressive open squares. Given its position near the center of the peninsula, Toledo is filled with people from all across Iberia, making it a vibrant

Toledo and the Holy Orders

Given its importance in the ongoing reconquest of Iberia from the Islamic world, Toledo finds itself surrounded by castles owned by various military orders. The Order of Calatrava follows the Benedictine rule and is identified by the red cross fleurdisé on their white mantle. They have enjoyed mixed fortunes through their history and honor has only recently allowed them to return to their name of Calatrava, after losing the original castle at Calatrava to the Almohades.

Wearing the red cross of Saint James, a cross terminating in a sword, the Knights of Santiago follow the Augustinian rule. Their primary role

is to protect pilgrims as they journey through Iberia, a role that earns them great wealth. The order is unusual in that aside from the religious knights there are a number of secular knights and lay members of different professions. In some circles this has prompted accusations of corruption within the order, not helped by their growing wealth and influence, not least within Toledo.

There is a very public rivalry between these two orders within Toledo. On the one hand the openly devout Order of Calatrava suspects their counterparts of corruption, while the Knights of Santiago view their opposites as ineffectual and weak.

STORY SEED: THE GENEROUS KNIGHT OF SANTIAGO

Having become friendly with a knight of Santiago on the road, the characters are invited to his castle to celebrate the occasion of his birthday. His wife has arranged food, wine, and entertainment from all across Iberia to be brought for the feast. But the dour priest, a member of the knight's household and scornful of his excesses, may be right to refuse the celebrations. How long before the magi notice the debauched Infernal aura? Will they succumb to indulgence? And will they give the devil his victory or risk damaging the knight's reputation?

and often surprising place.

Toledo is the heart of the church in Iberia, a status it held even through the years of its Islamic occupation. The Dominion is particularly strong in Toledo as Christians, Jews, and Muslims are free to practice their faith. Jews especially find themselves treated better here than in many other Christian cities. Toledo enjoys a high Dominion aura of level 4 during the day.

Scholarly pursuits are also strong here and for the last hundred years a school of translation has been active in the city. This has brought texts from across the known world to Toledo. Magi and other scholars stand a chance of finding almost anything here.

Convento de San Ildefonso

The convent is a series of low whitewashed buildings bounded by a low dusty white wall. It sits off to the side of the road and is backed by a few

small, dust-filled fields. The relentless sun bleaches the color from everything; not even the almond trees that dot the landscape bring color to the wide, low horizon. Inside, the convent sinks down into the ground with a sunken courtyard surrounded by narrow cloisters topped with terracotta tiles. The convent enjoys a constant level 5 Divine aura.

Characters asking about the convent before they visit learn that it is poor and relies upon the charity of Toledo to survive. There are rumors that the convent is home to a young novice who receives divine visions. It is also rumored that the wealthy of Toledo and beyond sometimes consult this modern-day oracle for divine guidance.

The abbess, Prudencia, is seen as strict and aloof, though this last part is in truth more to do with the contempt with which she views the men who visit for their own secular gain. She knows little of magic and does not approve of magi coming to her convent. She does not admit men inside the boundary wall unless and until she fully trusts them, or

they are visibly very wealthy.

Those looking around the area find a small graveyard, clearly associated with the convent, some way off in the shade of a low hill. It is here that a gravestone with the name of Conciatta can be found.

CONCIATTA'S GRAVE

Conciatta has a small simple grave in the convent's cemetery, identifiable by a small headstone bearing her name. However, according to convent tradition, upon her death, the novice who last carried Conciatta's spirit is buried here. Conciatta's bones, like those of all subsequent hosts, have been moved to the ossuary. There is no record of which bones are hers.

THE SPIRIT AND THE VOW

Conciatta's spirit cannot be found at the convent in the same way that it can in the other three realms. Instead, Con-

ciatta persists in this place as a personality and as a series of ill-fitting memories. The spirit actually possesses one of the novices, Immaculada.

Immaculada is cared for by the holy sisters as she is unable to care for herself; the power of Conciatta's spirit that dwells within her is too strong. It overpowers her own personality and has left her unable to act on her own except for the apparently automatic writing and the speaking in tongues, either of which may attack at any time.

Since Conciatta's death, generations of novices have been possessed and carried the spirit of Conciatta within them. This has happened for so long that it is now seen as part of God's miracle and knowledge of its magical origins has been all but lost.

By the rules of the convent, no outsider is allowed to see the holy sister who carries the spirit. But those making a contribution to the convent may be permitted an audience with her so as to

hear what her visions might reveal for them (though this may not be what it first seems). A vow to protect the spirit has been passed from abbess to abbess for generations. It has become part of the duties of the convent and is a secret entrusted to the holy sisters.

GAINING THE ABBESS'S TRUST

Simple attempts at negotiation are unlikely to be enough to persuade the abbess to allow visitations. She has guarded her ward for many, many years and will not break her sacred vow lightly. But there are a number of things the characters can do to earn her trust. The easiest is for the storyguide to define some important task that the abbess needs doing and set this as a story for the troupe. The task need not necessarily be dangerous, or involve any overt conflict, but it should provide opportunities to show virtuous qualities.

The characters could also spend time to persuade the convent of their good intentions. To do this they would need to gain a good reputation in or around Toledo. Word of kindness, charity, or even shows of good judgment travel to the convent and the abbess. And of course as the convent is so poor that a show of generosity to the convent itself makes up for a shortfall of generosity elsewhere.

AN AUDIENCE WITH IMMACULADA

Money can convince Prudencia to allow an audience with Immaculada. She instructs the characters to return the following day so that she can prepare the girl. Upon their return, one character is shown into a chamber, which is divided by a curtain. The chamber is empty as far as the character can see, apart from a simple chair and candles to light the gloom. The curtain obscures the other

Abbess Prudencia

Magic Resistance: 10 (from her relic)
Characteristics: Int +2, Per +1, Pre 0, Com +1, Str -1, Sta +1, Dex 0, Qik -1
Size: 0
Age: 45 (45)
Warping Score: 0 (0)
Confidence: 1 (3)
Virtues and Flaws: Senior Clergy*; Clear Thinker, Educated, Puissant Leadership, Relic; Monastic Vows, Poor; Weak Characteristics
Personality Traits: Contempt for Men +2, Prickly +3, Compassionate +1
Reputations: Abbess of a convent in need of money (Toledo) 4, Aloof (Toledo) 2, Strict (convent) 3
Combat:
Dodge: Init -1, Attack N/A, Defense -1, Damage N/A
Fist: Init -1, Attack +0, Defense -1,

Damage: -1
Soak: +1
Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious
Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)
Abilities: Arabic 2 (markets), Toledo Lore 3 (people of the Church), Artes Liberales 2 (rhetoric), Awareness 3 (things being out of place), Castilian 5 (commerce), Chirurgy 3 (minor wounds), Church Lore 4 (Toledo), Concentration 1 (accounts), Etiquette 3 (wealthy visitors), Folk Ken 4 (men), Latin 4 (church ceremonies), Leadership 5 + 2 (novices), Medicine 3, Profession: Scribe 1 (copying), Teaching 3 (theology), Theology 4 (psalms)
Equipment: Cord belt containing a

relic with one Faith Point.

Appearance: Abbess Prudencia strides around her convent with supreme authority and a withering look. Her neck is always erect, her back always straight, her eyebrows always arched, her hands always clasped, and her eyes forever finding fault.

* *Realms of Power: The Divine*, page 93.

Abbess Prudencia gets bonus of +3 to resist lies, confusion, and subterfuge from her Clear Thinker Virtue and she has a Divine resistance of +10 from the relic of San Ildefonso she unknowingly wears (a cord from his robe wound into a belt passed from abbess to abbess). She is also attended by two novices who follow her and carry out her instructions.



side of the room, though there is clearly someone behind it.

The character is accompanied by Prudencia and one of her attendants and she prompts the character to put his questions, receive his answers, and leave.

The ritual is a sham. Immaculada is not behind the curtain. The other of Prudencia's constant attendants plays the part of Immaculada and attempts to tell the character what she thinks they want to hear. She claims to see a great journey and great revelations along the way. She tells of adversaries and their slights, which may be endured through God's grace. And lastly, she advises that actions must be both forceful and temperate in equal measure. These "visions" have served the convent well for years as their noble visitors usually interpret them any way they wish.

If the audience is revealed as the charade that it is, Prudencia is far from apologetic; she is protecting both a vulnerable girl and a Divine Miracle. But at this point she will, by way of dem-

Automatic Writing

This is a huge collection of scrolls, books, slates, and so on, and constitutes some of the writings of various hosts inspired by the knowledge of Conciatta within them. If a season is spent collating these sources, the apparently disconnected writings form a number of tractatus. The storyguide is free to create a number of volumes that can be studied for benefit on Magic Theory, Vim, and Dominion Lore.

The collection also includes a laboratory text describing a large summoning or casting circle enchanted with *Maintaining the Unstable Conjunction*, with elements of lore concerning each realm. Constructing the circle according to the plan provides a +1 laboratory specialization towards experimentation and adds +1 to laboratory Safety.

The laboratory text provides a +6 bonus to the roll to gain insight. Completing the laboratory project to finish the ring provides 6 points towards initiating *Confluence of the Realms*.

MAINTAINING THE UNSTABLE CONJUNCTION

ReVi 30

Pen +16, 3/day

R: Personal, D: Ring, T: Circle

This enchanted circle sustains a target spell of level 15 or less cast within the circle. Importantly, in support of Conciatta's research, this effect also works on the non-Hermetic magic of the Learned Magicians. The spell is canceled if the target of the spell

moves outside the circle or any other spell is cast within it.

The laboratory notes describing this effect suggest that this is one of four effects to be enchanted into this Greater Enchanted Device. While this effect is aligned to the Magic realm, the others not only targeted effects of the other three realms but also the non-Hermetic effects of supernatural spirits. Astute readers will realize the implication that Infernal spirits must, at some point, have contributed to Conciatta's research.

The ring itself is described as a large iron construction, made in pieces and riveted with brass rivets to the floor, opened with 20 pawns of vis.

(Base, +2 Ring, +1 Circle; +2 for 3/day, +8 Penetration)

Novice Immaculada

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

Size: 0

Age: 17 (17)

Warping Score: 1 (5)

Confidence: N/A

Virtues and Flaws: Peasant; Sense Holiness and Unholiness, Puissant Sense Holiness and Unholiness; Enfeebled*, Plagued by Supernatural Entity (Spirit of Conciatta), Monastic Vows; Visions*

Personality Traits: Fearful of being alone +3, Confident -2, Strong-Willed -1

Combat:

Dodge: Init +0, Attack N/A, Defense +0, Damage N/A

Fist: Init +0, Attack +2, Defense +0, Damage +0

Soak: 0

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

Abilities: Artes Liberales 1 (music), Music 1 (sing), Church Lore 1 (the convent), Profession: Scribe 1 (copying), Chirurgy 2 (minor wounds), Castilian 5 (poetry), Charm 2 (first impressions), Concentration 2 (prayers), Farmer 2 (almonds), Folk Ken 2 (clergy), Sense Holiness and Unholiness 4+2 (the unseen), Latin 4 (church ceremonies), Swim 1 (short distances), Theology 3 (biblical knowledge)

Appearance: Immaculada is a small girl of 17 years old. Her skin is

washed out and tear-streaked, her eyes red through crying. Her hair has been shorn and her habit replaced with a grubby white smock and cap. Her fingernails are picked and bitten raw.

* Imposed by the spirit of Conciatta

Immaculada is only the latest in a long line of novices that Conciatta has inhabited, but she is faring the worst. With the exception of the flaws imposed on her by Conciatta, the game statistics here represent Immaculada as she should be. In her possessed and enfeebled state she rarely sleeps, so is constantly at a -3 Fatigue penalty. Her Warping Score is Divine in origin.

The Divine Conciatta

Divine Might: 30 (Mentem)

Personality Traits: Fearful +2, Confused +1, Distracted +1

Qualities and Inferiorities: Focus Power, Ritual Power x3

Additional Powers:

Possession, 30 points, Init 0, Mentem: Conciatta has used this power to possess novices through the years. By spending all her Might, Conciatta inhabits her target and her personality traits overlay and add to her host's. (Focus Power)

Grant (Visions), 0 points, Init 0, Vim: This power, used automatically when Conciatta possesses a target, grants the Visions Minor Story Flaw (ArM5, page 60) to the target. It is also through this power that Conciatta's memories of her Hermetic work surface in the host. (Ritual Power)

Grant (Enfeebled), 0 points, Init 0, Vim: This power, used automatically when Conciatta possesses a target, imposes the Enfeebled Major Flaw

(ArM5, page 53) on the target. (Ritual Power x2)

Beyond simply overlaying her host's personality, Conciatta's knowledges also operates just below the surface of the mind, beyond conscious control. A character choosing to carry the spirit of Conciatta within her does not have conscious access to that knowledge, but does suffer the effects of her Personality Traits. She also gains the protection of Conciatta's Divine might.

onstratation and because she thinks this is enough to get the strangers to leave, take them to Immaculada.

The girl is in a room with no windows and only candles to illuminate it. Her fingers, face, and clothes are covered in the chalk she uses to write her visions down with. Her room is sparse and untidy with slates, parchment, and bedding strewn across the floor.

As the characters enter, the nonsense train of words begins to take shape. Here and there, sentences that make sense seem to form themselves: "I had many brothers and sisters but now I have but three and yet they leave me alone and hide themselves from my view though I know where they are even if they think I do not, for I remember where I went and I remember why I went and I remember

who I was, but I do not now know who I am, but Seiffeddin knows as he will remember me, do you know Seiffeddin? He is an actor, in Qadis. And he is still there they say, though I do not know who they might be who say such things for if he is still there he must be very old, but old as he is he knows where I went and perhaps he knows where I am. I should like to see my sisters again, I think that would be

fitting, do you not think so?" And so her racing words go on. She pauses now and then to write another word or two, first searching for the right slate or parchment to scribble upon.

FREEING CONCIATTA

Leaving Conciatta's spirit within Immaculada is good for neither of them, and if Prudencia can be persuaded of this she allows the magi to try to separate the two; the abbess will not allow suffering to continue if there is a way to end it. It is Immaculada's fear of being alone that binds Conciatta to her. If this can be abated, the spirit can freely move into another host. It is left to individual troupes to decide how this can be achieved.

The new host suffers both the Enfeebled and Visions Flaws while possessed by Conciatta, though the storyguide is free to use the Visions to provide further information and/or direction in later stages of Conciatta's story. These visions could include seeing Conciatta as a queen, or wreathed in serpents, or sitting in the heart of a great fire. They may also include visions of a great shining city sinking beneath a mighty river.

The Lost City

Another of Conciatta's fractured spirits can be found deep within a faerie realm of faded glories and forgotten sto-

ries; the lost city of Tartessos. Tartessos can be found under the marshes that surround the Guadalquivir river delta. But to find this, the magi must first visit Qadis.

The City of Qadis

The mouth of the Guadalquivir lies a day's ride north of Qadis, a city still in Moorish hands. It is an ancient place with a history already thousands of years old, and some of that history does not rest easy.

Qadis is built on a sand spit jutting out into the Atlantic ocean a little way to the north-west of the Pillars of Hercules. Its loose foundations do not support many tall buildings so the skyline is much lower than cities like Zaragoza

Seiffeddin the Actor

Magic Might: 10 (Mentem)

Season: Autumn

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

Size: 0

Age: Appears to be in his late fifties

Confidence: 0

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Spirit; Gossip, Inspirational, Puissant Profession: Actor; Baneful Circumstances (exposed to sunlight), Noncombattant, Soft-Hearted

Qualities and Inferiorities: Focus Power (x3)

Personality Traits: Artistic +3, Brave -1, Paternal +2

Reputations: Gossip (Ghosts of Qadis) 1, Actor (Ghosts of Qadis) 3

Combat:

Dodge: Init +0, Attack N/A, Defense +0, Damage N/A

Soak: +0

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

Abilities: Arabic 5 (storytelling), Artes Liberales 3 (rhetoric), Awareness 2 (audience), Carouse 4 (with his audience), Charm 2 (being witty), Concentration 3 (recitals), Disguise 4 (masks), Dominion Lore 1 (Divine creatures), Etiquette 3 (Qadis ghosts), Faerie Lore 2 (places), Folk Ken 2 (the living), Greek 5 (storytelling), Guile 3 (subtle deceit), Infernal Lore 1 (undead), Intrigue 3 (the ghosts of Qadis), Latin 5 (ancient works), Magic Lore 4 (ghosts), Profession: Actor 5+2 (plays of many parts), Qadis Lore 5 (history), Teaching 4 (Profession: Actor)

Powers:

Crafter of Illusion, variable points, Init 0 minus Might points spent, Imaginem: Seiffeddin can create illusory props and sounds as the needs of his play dictate, spontaneously producing the effect of a *Creo* or *Rego Imaginem* spell of level 10 or less at a cost of one Might point per magnitude. His illusions are never

truly lifelike, designed instead to convey an idea or an emotion. (Focus Power)

Eidolon, 0 points, Init 0, Imaginem: Creates an illusionary form that can be both seen and heard. The body can be created and destroyed at will. As the power in *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 102. (Focus Power)

Master of Illusion, variable points, Init 0 minus might points spent, Imaginem: Seiffeddin can alter the appearance of anything he touches, spontaneously producing the effect of a *Muto* or *Perdo Imaginem* spell of level 10 or less at a cost of 1 Might point per magnitude. The effects are never lifelike and always appear as mundane props, scenery, or costumes would within a play. (Focus Power)

Equipment: A long white toga and various ephemeral props and masks.

Vis: Seiffeddin contains no vis.

Appearance: Seiffeddin manifests as an aging man with the mobile features of a trained and experienced

and Toledo, but it is a busy port and the view across into the sea is filled with masts and sails from all corners of the world. Qadis has a relatively low Dominion aura, averaging at level 2, dropping to level 1 at night. The city is also filled with lacunae, not only Magic but also Faerie and Infernal.

As the sun sets on Qadis, the city exchanges one population for another; the living give over their city to the dead. Ghosts from all through Qadis's history wake and go about their business. Most are invisible to all but their own kind and many still haunt the places they knew while alive. The ghosts know and understand their existence, but having found that they persist, they face the fact and get on with the business of living, such as it is. There are perhaps a thousand

or more ghosts that haunt the streets of Qadis. These divide into factions based on their origin in life, including their nation, their former roles, and even the times that they lived in.

Troupes may wish to play out stories against this otherworldly backdrop to support the gathering of information about the location of Tartessos. In any case, the presence of magi, especially foreigners, attracts the interest of the ghosts of Qadis.

After several days in the city, the characters may begin to notice things at the edge of their vision. Second Sight rolls or suitable magic reveal ghosts watching them. These are likely to be loosely-formed specters with little intelligence or will of their own sent to spy on the strangers by more powerful masters.

Most flee if challenged. Once these first ghosts have been seen, the characters start to see other ghosts abroad at night.

Storyguides may want to introduce a ghost at this point to act as a guide and ally in the strange nighttime world of Qadis. The ally can arrange introductions to other spirits and even point out places of power within the city. But any ally also has expectations of his new friends.

THE ROMAN THEATER

If they have visited the convent outside Toledo, the characters may have learned the name Seiffeddin and that he is an actor. There is an old Roman theater in the city and the Qadis living know of this but do not recognize the

Seiffeddin the Actor (cont'd)

actor. His white hair and pale skin contrast with his dark and dazzling eyes. His movements are measured and purposeful. His hands, like his expressions, are rarely still, constantly ... marking every ... phrase.

Seiffeddin uses his powers to raise illusions that populate the theater with a backcloth, scenery, props, and sometimes even other actors. But the exertion, or rather the expenditure of his Might, leaves him drained at the end of each performance.

SEIFFEDDIN'S SECRET KNOWLEDGE

Conciatta and Currito did study under Seiffeddin, and other Qadis spirits, Magic and Faerie, to learn both Magic and Faerie Lore. The stones that Seiffeddin refers to are props for use in ceremonial casting as described in *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, page 59. A season of studying Magic Lore under Seiffeddin can be used as a source of insight for

integrating *Insight of the Realms*. This provides a bonus of +10 to the initial roll. The maga must then enchant a group of props, laced with magical symbols drawn from arcane lore. They are medium sized and, on completion, provide a +3 ceremonial casting bonus. The effect is to eliminate all distractions and focus the attention of the caster. The props do this by dulling species not associated with the Magic realm.

Note: Props used in Hermetic casting do not in themselves need to be magical, and indeed most are not, but these props are an extension of Conciatta's research and an important stepping stone to her new discoveries.

CLEARING THE MIND OF THE CASTER

Pelm (Vi) 30

Pen +0, 1/day

R: Touch, D: Ring, T: Circle

The magic in this set of fifteen slate tablets, laced together with leather cords and each carved with a magi-

cal symbol, is activated when they are arranged in a circle around the caster. The alignment of the tablets is important, so laying out the stones takes three rounds.

All sights, sounds, and other sensations crossing into the circle are dulled unless they are created by a Magic-aligned source. The effect is to allow the caster within the circle to better ignore distractions arising from sources not aligned with the Magic realm. Sensations are not destroyed completely and the caster may attune herself to them simply by concentrating.

The magic on its own provides a +1 bonus to Concentration rolls to activities that are entirely contained within the circle. When used as props in ceremonial casting the circle of stones provides a +3 ceremonial casting bonus.

Recreating this effect gives six points towards integrating *Insight of the Realms*.

(Base 10, +1 Touch, +2 Ring, +1 requisite)

name Seiffeddin. The Qadis dead know of both.

The theater itself is a sunken semi-circular pit lined with chipped and broken marble steps. None of the other accoutrements of a theater remain and it

has clearly been disused for centuries. It is probably only because of the stories of its haunting that it has not been built over.

Seiffeddin is the only ghost who haunts the theater, though the other

Qadis dead visit often to watch performances, less out of enjoyment of his art and more through the constraints of their unearthly roles. The actor is nervous of strangers, having been killed by one in life, but is welcoming once reas-

Habib al-Hadi

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

Size: 0

Age: 45 (45)

Warping Score: 0 (0)

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: 'Alim*, Educated, Arcane Lore; Poor

Personality Traits: Inquisitive +2, Humble +1, Persistent +1

Combat:

Dodge: Init: -1, Attack N/A, Defense -1, Damage N/A

Fist: Init: -1, Attack -1, Defense -1, Damage -2

Bludgeon: Init: -2, Attack +1, Defense -1, 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), Dead (21+)

Abilities: Arabic 5 (Qadis), Art of Memory 2 (academic texts), Artes Liberales 5 (astronomy), Awareness 2 (searching), Cadis Lore 3 (geography), Concentration 3 (reading), Dominion Lore 1 (auras), Faerie Lore 2 (auras), Folk Ken 2 (townsfolk), Greek 3 (ancient texts), Infernal Lore 2 (auras), Islamic Law 4 (Ijma'), Latin 3 (academic usage), Magic Lore 2 (auras), Philosophiae 5 (metaphysics), Scribe 3 (copying), Teaching 4 (Artes Liberales), Theology: Islam 4 (Sunni)

Equipment: The Fourfold Lens (see later), slates and chalk, quill, ink, and parchment.

Appearance: A small wiry man with gray hair and beard. He has a large nose and a brow furrowed by both concentration and worry. He has a disheveled appearance and his clothes are noticeably worn and threadbare, a result of spending what little money he does have on his studies.

* *Realms of Power: The Divine*, page 114

Habib is a scholar, cleric, astronomer, translator, and teacher. In fact, given his perpetually poor finances, he takes on any job that is asked of him so that he can maintain a roof over his head, food in his belly, and parchment for his studies – but not always in that order. He has an inquisitive mind and is fascinated by the sights he has recently seen. He may be tempted to part with the magical device in his custody, but only if his study of supernatural Qadis can be supported in other ways.

THE FOURFOLD LENS

The Fourfold Lens is an iron stand of adjustable height with four hand-sized lenses, each on an armature that allows it to swing free or into alignment with the other three. Each of the four lenses detects a separate aura and each has been enchanted separately. Where a lens fails to detect its dedicated aura it remains transparent and simply displays the mundane world.

This device goes further than simply detecting the apparent or dominant aura. It detects all auras present,

even those that have been subsumed. For example, where the lens is used in a Dominion aura of level 3 it also detects the subsumed level 2 Infernal aura that hides beneath the Dominion.

Conciatta created this device rather than simply formulate a spell so that her custos and Currito could take it with them to investigate and record rumored auras. It was on such a journey that the device was lost.

UNVEIL THE SUBSUMED (REALM)

InVi 54

Constant Effect

R: Personal, D: Sun, T: Vision

Each lens can be used to see through the apparent aura into the subsumed aura of the appropriate type, if such an aura is present. The image seen by looking through the lens shows the world as it would look if that aura were dominant. So a subsumed Infernal aura shows the potential for unnerving shadows, while a Magic aura may appear somewhat cleaner or more regular.

Although subsumed auras of any level can be detected, the enchantment is only strong enough to penetrate a level 3 apparent aura. Only the lowest level of each subsumed aura type is detected, so regiones cannot be directly perceived using this device.

(Base 20, +2 Sun, +4 Vision; +1 for two uses per day, +3 triggered at sunrise and sunset)

Recreating this device provides 11 points towards integrating *Confluence of the Realms*.

sured. He remembers Conciatta and her quest for Tartessos. He describes how he spent time teaching Conciatta some of the signs of portents of things both Faerie and Magic, an offer he makes to the visiting magi. He claims that Conciatta and Currito visited him over the course of a year and that under his instruction they created a set of stones that added great power to their magic.

The actor can describe how to get to Tartessos but warns that it can only be accessed on one night of the year; the anniversary of the city's loss. Depending on what stories the storyguide would like to tell in Qadis, the important night can be relatively sooner or later. Seiffeddin instructs the characters to seek out Bruja, a crone who lives out on the marsh, as she knows the way into the city.

HABIB AL-HADI THE ASTROLOGER

One of Conciatta's devices is in the hands of a Qadis scholar. He recently found it and, thinking it a device for searching the heavens, he began to use it at night. The Fourfold Lens (described in the nearby insert) instead showed him auras of all different realms and the ghostly inhabitants of the city. He began to think that the lenses instead showed the distillation of the four elements, part of the essential cosmology of the world. He has categorized many of the sights he has seen into the four elements, which he has related, with some uncertainty, to the four supernatural auras.

Habib can be encountered at night, using the device to search the city for strange supernatural things. As a scholar he is keen to share his knowledge and discuss with knowledgeable people but he is reticent to lend or sell his device. But he may be persuaded if his growing knowledge of the supernatural can be fed. He invites these new friends to his observatory, his living quarters on the top floor of a tenement in a poor and noisy district.

Story Seed: The Ghosts of Qadis

The ghosts have a hierarchy within themselves based on their recollection of their mortal life. This matches the list of ghostly types from *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 115. Apparitions in Qadis are at the top of the hierarchy. They are generally not so concerned with being laid to rest as they are with protecting their interests, their descendants, and their city. At the other end of the scale, specters with little will of their own are used as tools by the lucid apparitions.

There is also a new phenomenon; faeries. Those who die in the city now are usually accorded proper burial rites, which prevents their ghosts from dwelling on Earth. But faeries have been attracted to the city for the last several hundred years and they have taken on the roles of the more

recently dead. The faeries are completely immersed in their new roles and see themselves simply as ghosts, indistinguishable in all ways except the nature of their Might. They feed their need for vitality by making their presence known to the living and subtly influencing their lives.

Demons too take on the forms of the dead, though their aims are usually to corrupt the living. As much as they can, the Magic and Faerie ghosts protect the city from their demonic counterparts, but the fight is hard.

From time to time workers of spirit magic come to Qadis eager to find powerful new servants. Those who are allowed to leave do so disappointed. The ghosts do not tolerate attempts to control them and unite against those who try.

Tartessos

Tartessos was once a powerful trading city of the ancient world. It supplied Greece with silver to fund defenses against the Persians, traded with the Tin Islands to the far north, and with the Phoenicians in the east. And through this time, Arganthonios was its absolute king. But a great calamity befell it and the city was lost, sinking beneath the sea in a single day.

The city can now only be found in the Faerie Realm, accessible from the marshlands at the mouth of the Guadalquivir river.

FINDING TARTESSOS

The area of the marsh where the city once stood has a low Faerie aura of 2, but some sections of the old city walls manifest themselves within Faerie regiones. *Realms of Power: Faerie*, page 16, has

more information on Faerie regiones. One particular regio (of level 5) contains what's left of the city gates; two broken-down pillars and great shards of rotted wood rising out of the marsh. This is the way into the city. But the characters may need a guide, first to find this regio and second to help them cross the Threshold into the Faerie Realm.

Assuming the characters spoke to Seiffeddin and were told to look for Bruja, they should be looking for her torch out in the marsh. Storyguides may wish to consider that there are other faeries in the marsh that lure the unwary to their doom (*Realms of Power: Faerie*, page 92).

On finding Bruja, combing the marsh for frogs and other slimy things, she is willing to help on condition that she is given a creature or a herb that cannot be found in her marsh. If this is given, she takes the characters to the city gates. If using *Realms of Power: Faerie*, a Threshold Total (page 20) should be calculated. The Threshold Strength here is 24. Assuming that the charac-

ters have come out on the night of the sinking of Tartessos, they already have a Threshold Total of 15 (6 for the city gates + 9 for the anniversary). Bruja will prompt the characters to show their willingness to visit Tartessos. This is essentially the moment when the other factors, such as personal Thresholds, artistic endeavors, and Arcadian Mysteries are taken into account. If the Threshold Total is still not enough, Bruja will brew a particularly unpleasant potion (likely in the form of a live frog that must be swallowed whole) that will impart her *Spirit Away* power. Bruja does not have a store of potions as such and must expend her Might to brew a new dose. But the action of "brewing" can be anything that best fits the scene, such as taking the character back to her shack to use her cauldron, or having the characters help her to find a particular ingredient.

If the *Realms of Power: Faerie* supplement is not being used, it is safe to assume that

Bruja has enough power to guide the characters through into the Faerie Realm, though frogs are still involved.

With the Threshold drawn to the characters, the road to the city becomes clear through the gates. Bruja also serves as the guardian of the road in this story and so must offer the character the choice between kingdoms of silver and gold or a kingdom of loss and despair. In this case, Tartessos is the kingdom of loss and so is the right choice. If the characters choose otherwise, the road ahead disappears and Bruja directs the characters back to Qadis.

Bruja will not accompany the characters on their journey into Tartessos, but will meet with them again when they are ready to leave.

The sky above the city is filled with flashes of lightning that trail rolling thunder behind them. Ruins lie all about and the weeping and pleading of an unseen dying populace can be heard all around. The city is in a state of per-

petual desolation. For every brick that falls, there is another yet to fall. This is the city's role: that of the lost city. And in the center of the ruins stands the shell of a once-great palace.

A EUDOKIAN STORY

On entering Tartessos, the characters continue the quest of reuniting Conciatta's spirits, but the Faerie Realm makes that story manifest around them. The theme of the story is reunification and a number of choices based upon this theme are presented to the characters. Passing each challenge takes the characters closer to the palace where they face their last challenge, but failure takes them closer to the mundane world. A few brief examples are given that storyguides might like to expand upon.

- A mother stumbles through the ruined city calling for her lost daughter. If the characters help the woman search, they find the girl and pass the test. The mother then directs them towards the palace.
- Two brothers quarrel over a last loaf of bread. Each throws insults at the other as they scuffle and tug at the loaf. If the characters reconcile the brothers such that each is satisfied, they are shown the next part of the path towards the palace.
- A stone statue of a young naked warrior stands high on a pedestal. His shield rests easily in his hand, but his spear is missing from his outstretched hand. On the ground, a finely crafted spear (treat this as an Excellent quality long spear with a +2 bonus to both attack and defense) untouched by age or wear crosses the characters' path. If the characters return the spear to the statue, they see the warrior pointing the way to the palace. If they take the spear, they may face robbers that lurk amid the ruined streets.



Bruja, the Marsh Witch

Faerie Might: 15 (Corpus)
Characteristics: Int +1, Per +1, Pre -3, Com 0, Str +1, Sta +2, Dex +3, Qik +1

Size: 0

Virtues and Flaws: Focus Power x2, Greater Power, Faerie Sight, Faerie Speech, Lesser Power, Humanoid Form, Incognizant

Personality Traits: Irascible +3, Stubborn +2

Combat:

Claws: Init +6, Attack +7, Defense +7, Damage +3

Soak: +2

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

Pretenses: Awareness 3 (gifts), Bargain 6 (riches), Brawl 1 (claws), Brew Potion 4 (healing), Chirurgy 4 (treating poisons), Faerie Speech 5 (threats), Folk Ken 5 (seeing the evil of men), Marsh Lore 3 (geography)

Powers:

Spirit Away: variable points, Init (magnitude/2), Vim: By brewing a potion, Bruja can add Threshold Points to a character's Threshold Total at the cost of 1 Might Point per Threshold Point. The character must already have a Threshold Total and the Crone cannot contribute all the points needed

to send the character into Faerie. The potion can take any form as described below. (Greater Power)

The Malicious Brew: variable points (magnitude), Init -8, Corpus: Bruja uses this power to brew any Perdo Corpus effect with an Individual target up to 9th magnitude into a potion. The effects of the poison, whatever they may be, are not immediate but increase towards a significant moment (such as sunset, or the full moon, or as the cock crows), giving the target or his friends time to find a cure. While the effect is supernatural, an Intelligence + Medicine simple roll against an Ease Factor of 9 identifies how long the target has. Bruja regains the Might spent on this power at the end of the effect's duration. (Focus Power)

The Merciful Brew: variable points (magnitude), Init -9, Corpus: Bruja uses this power to brew a healing potion. The effect is as the standard *Purification of the Festering Wounds* spell but with a duration of "Season" rather than Moon. This allows the potion to benefit those recovering from heavy wounds. Bruja regains the Might spent on this power at the end of the effect's duration. This potion is also able to instantly relieve the effects of a

Malicious Brew, as described nearby. (Lesser Power)

Vis: 3 pawns Aquam in her legs.

Appearance: Bruja is hunched with craggy wrinkled features. She wears a large-sleeved cloak of green that drags behind her and has plants growing within its threadbare warp and weft. She carries a satchel into which she drops the things she finds. But while Bruja looks human at first sight, her oversized lower legs are like those of a wading bird. These legs help her move effortlessly through the marsh.

Bruja apparently roams the marshes looking for herbs, roots, and small creatures that she can use to ferment her noxious potions. Her powers are transmitted through these potions, poultices, possets, bandages, or any other shape or material that seems fitting at the time. Bruja's healing potions frequently take the form of marsh leeches or unpleasant concoctions of animal parts and marsh water. While her Might is expended at the time of brewing, the potion can be carried away and is not activated until applied to the target in the appropriate manner. Her potions are usually brewed with a given person in mind, whether present or not, and so do not cause Warping.

- An old man is trying to draw water from a well but the rope has come unwound and the bucket has dropped down the well shaft. If offered water, the old man gratefully takes it. But if the characters fetch the bucket and fix the well the old man leads them to the palace.

If the troupe successfully completes two or more of these tasks, they find the palace of the Silver King. But if they fail in

three of these tasks, the palace they find is a facade, the doors of which lead back to the mundane world. For each success, the characters are awarded a Fable Point (*Realms of Power: Faerie*, page 21).

THE SILVER KING

The palace is a skeleton of pillars and broken arches from which dust and rubble occasionally tumble. The steps

lead up into the grand throne room and there, upon a raised dais, is the despondent form of Arganthonios, the Silver King, ruler of Tartessos. Seated beside him, her hand comforting his, is Conciatta.

Arganthonios is a bearded and crowned man formed from fluid silver. His features are classical and his body muscular, like some great oversized Greek statue. Conciatta appears human and as she was in her younger days,

though dressed in classical garments and arrayed with silver and jewels.

While the silver giant sits detached and brooding, Conciatta angrily demands explanation for their presence in her husband's kingdom and commands them to show deference to her king.

Any mention of Conciatta's earthly life, her studies, or the spirits the characters now seek elicits scorn from her. That world, she explains, is lost to her and means less than the dust upon her sandals to her. The concerns of magi and the Order have been taken away from her.

But soon enough Arganthonios breaks his malaise and speaks. His voice low and smooth, filled with calm authority, he explains that the woman next to him is not truly Conciatta. The spirit the characters seek faded a century ago, turned instead to glamour; a true inhabitant of the Faerie Realm.

He further explains that she returned to him centuries ago to fulfill her side of a bargain: to rule at his side in exchange for knowledge of the Faerie realm. But her heart pined away for what she had lost and soon she died a second death. The faerie Conciatta does not react in

any way to this, as though she did not hear or did not understand his meaning.

But Arganthonios bears a great sorrow. The bargain he made with Conciatta, to teach her and help her learn the secrets of Faerie places, was at the cost of renouncing her love for Currito. And though it would mean that he would suffer yet further loss himself, he offers the characters a choice of their own. If they reunite this remnant of Conciatta with Currito's love, then he will release her from his service and return her to the world of men.

If it is clear to the storyguide that

Arganthonios

Faerie Might: 35 (Mentem)

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

Size: +2

Age: N/A

Virtues and Flaws: External Vis (Major), Huge, Ritual Power (x2); Faerie Speech, Humanoid Faerie, Improved Soak (x2); Sovereign Ward (cannot leave Tartessos); Depressed, Incognizant, Role Requires Suffering

Personality Traits: Resigned +3, Commanding +2, Depressed +2

Reputations: King of a Lost City 3 (Iberia)

Combat:

Grappling: Init -2, Attack +6, Defense +4, Damage +4

Long spear: Init +1, Attack +9, Defense +5, Damage +11

Soak: +5

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-7), -3 (8-14), -5 (15-21), Incapacitated (22-28), Dead (29+)

Pretences: Athletics 4 (running), Awareness 3 (searching), Bargain 3 (foreigners), Brawl 5 (grappling), Etiquette 3 (messengers), Faerie Lore 3 (Iberian faeries), Folk Ken 4 (peasants), Great Weapon 5 (long

spear), Intrigue 4 (spies), Leadership 5 (intimidation), Penetration 5 (Mentem), Tartessos Lore 5 (past glories)

Powers:

Binding Oath, 10 points, Init -22, Vim:

This power enforces the power of a solemnly-sworn oath or contract between two or more parties. All parties must agree to the oath of their own free will, and the power must penetrate the Magic Resistance of all parties to take effect. If one participant attempts to act in direct contravention to the oath, the other participants are immediately aware of this. Humans who attempt to break their oaths are given a warning in the form of seeing Arganthonios in every reflective surface they chance upon. If the character disregards this warning, he is struck blind (as per the Flaw). The blindness can be removed by powers that destroy mystical effects. The character may also end the Flaw by fulfilling the conditions of the oath, swearing a new oath with the wronged faerie, or destroying all of the oath's other participants. Faeries cannot break

their oaths, although some roles allow them to seek loopholes and alternative interpretations. Special, No Hermetic equivalent (R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Group, Ritual)

Equipment: Silver crown of laurel leaves, too large for a mortal head. The crown is the manifestation of his External Vis virtue and bestows both the Puissant Leadership virtue and the Reclusive flaw upon its wearer. A great spear with a silver shaft, an ivory head, and binding strung with peacock feathers.

Vis: 7 pawns (Mentem) in the crown he wears.

Appearance: A huge muscular man over eight feet tall whose body and beard seem to made of shining fluid silver. His brow is heavy and furrowed beneath the silver crown he wears.

Arganthonios is alone with the exception of his loyal queen. But it is his nature to endure loss and so he willingly frees her from any obligation to stay. Note that Arganthonios is Incognizant in that despite his understanding of and connection with the Faerie Realm, he cannot seek to change or improve his role.

The Faerie Conciatta

Faerie Might: 5

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

Size: 0

Age: Appears in her late thirties

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Humanoid Faerie; Ritual Power (x2); Sovereign Ward (cannot leave Tartessos); Incognizant

Qualities and Inferiorities: Focus Power (x3), Greater Power

Personality Traits: Protective of Arganthonios +3, Regretful +2, Sorrowful +2

Reputations: Bonisagus House Acclaim (Magi Bonisagi) 3

Soak: -1

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

Pretenses: Animal Handling 2 (owls), Arabic 4 (poetry), Area Lore: Qadis 2 (ghostly personalities), Area Lore: Zaragoza 3 (lacunae), Area Lore: Narixa 2 (regiones), Area

Lore: Toledo 2 (the convent), Artes Liberales 3 (ceremonial magic), Awareness 2 (spell effects), Aragonese 4 (poetry), Charm 2 (first impressions), Code of Hermes 1 (Bonisagus obligations), Concentration 3 (lab work), Dominion Lore 5 (divine places), Etiquette 2 (faeries), Faerie Lore 5 (ancient faeries), Finesse 2 (precision), Folk Ken 2 (magi), Infernal Lore 5+2 (regiones), Intrigue 1 (House Bonisagus), Latin 5 (Hermetic usage), Leadership 1 (laboratory work), La Torre no Vista Lore 3 (history), Magic Lore 5 (regiones), Magic Theory 15+2 (Vim), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (history), Parma Magica 2 (Vim), Penetration 2 (Vim), Philosophiae 3 (ceremonial magic), Teaching 3 (Magic Theory)

Powers:

Grant (*Insight of the Realms*): 5 points, Init -10, Vim: This power temporarily blesses the target with the *Insight of the Realms* Virtue. Conciatta only recovers Might Points spent on this power when its effects are withdrawn, which

she may do at any time simply by choosing to. Until the Might Points are returned to Conciatta, she effectively does not exist and is only able to interact with the world through withdrawing her gift from its bearer. Special, No Hermetic equivalent (R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind, Ritual)

Appearance: Regally dressed in a tunic and a cloak that drapes down from her left shoulder.

This faerie believes herself to be Conciatta and believes that she has deep knowledge of Hermetic Theory, hence the *Abilities* that Conciatta's other spirits have are instead *Pretenses* for this faerie. But she also believes that she has sworn away her magic and she cannot now be made to use her former powers. She cannot accept the truth of her condition as she does not possess the cognizance to break this part of her role.

Her Sovereign Ward against leaving Tartessos is imposed by Arganthonios. It is lifted when his bargain is accepted and fulfilled.

the players are not able to meet this challenge on this visit (perhaps they have an idea but need to prepare, or simply need to return to the mundane world to plan), then Arganthonios will grant them leave to return. At this, Bruja appears and the King commands her to grant them safe passage when next they seek the lost city.

However, if the characters can remind Conciatta of the love she and Currito shared, the King's hold over her is broken and she is released. Though still faerie in nature, she now understands that her role is to be reunited with her sisters.

LEAVING FAERIE

With agreements in place, the faerie Conciatta is ready to leave for the mundane world. After an emotional yet dignified farewell to her King, she begins the long walk back to the Threshold. The group meets Bruja again and she gives the magi a book with a warning not to open it until on the other side.

Bruja summons the Threshold and in an instant the Faerie Realm becomes a memory. And Conciatta has vanished. In fact, her essence is now within the book, a quality 7 tractatus on Faerie Lore written in somewhat archaic Hermetic Latin.

The Descent

The last of the four fractured spirits can be found deep within a cave system surrounding the Mediterranean town of Narixa on the Al Andalus coast. Narixa is surrounded by a low mountain range, parts of which house an Infernal hive of corrupted beasts, jinn, and demons. The caves stretch out beneath the mountains and up into many interconnected Infernal regiones making it a certainty that the unprepared will become lost forever.

Narixa

The small town of Narixa sits on the Mediterranean coast, with white sands on its shores and low mountains at its back that sweep down into impressive cliffs. It is a quiet place, with neither the scale of Zaragoza nor the grandeur of Toledo, but it is famous across the Muslim world for the fine silks that it produces.

Like Qadis, Narixa is an Islamic city. But unlike Qadis, it benefits from a Dominion aura of 3 over most of its lands. Though small, the town is wealthy with a devout and generous population. Perhaps thanks to that Dominion, Narixa has little knowledge of the evil dwelling within the nearby mountains.

THE SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

A small fleet of fishing boats launch daily from the white beaches, while teams of fishermen cast their nets from the shores. Moving inland, the markets are full with fresh fish, livestock grazed on the hillsides, and fruits, grains, and other foodstuffs brought in from neighboring towns. In the mercantile quarter,

all manner of merchants can be found trading Narixa silks, oriental spices, and goods from across Europe. The sounds of commerce mingle with street players and the periodic chants of the *mu'adhdhins* calling the faithful to prayer.

This far into Al Andalus, there are few *dhimmis* (non-Muslims living under Muslim rule) but peoples from across the Islamic world are represented here. And the skyline is filled with the minarets of the many mosques that serve the town.

ATTITUDES TO FOREIGNERS

The poorer areas of the city are more suspicious of foreigners, but the wealthier quarters are occupied by merchants used to dealing with strangers from all corners of the world. Still, men who look as though they are expecting trouble invariably find it.

THE AL NARIXA MOSQUE

Conciatta and Currito visited Narixa several times and made studies not only of the caves themselves but of local lore concerning the caves. Many of their

notes were left in the care of the Al Narixa Mosque after their last visit well over two hundred years ago. But even that far back, the mosque had a well-tended library so Conciatta's work can still be found there today.

The imams of the mosque are unlikely to have any particular interest in helping foreigners look for old scrolls, but if persuaded they refer the characters to Hamid ibn Harun.

Hamid has been an imam at the mosque for all his adult life, but his duties have usually been restricted to the library. He also suffers from visions; warnings sent by Allah, he assumes. The visions invariably concern tunnels, caves, and hungry yellow eyes peering from the dark. If the caves are discussed with or around him in Arabic, he sees another vision of a seductive queen clothed in smoke and fire.

The Caves

The caves are ancient and contain deep fissures and domed chambers all interconnected by mundane tunnels and a network of regiones. Most regiones are linear in that they emanate from a single

Imam Hamid ibn Harun

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

Size: 0

Age: 55 (55)

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: 'Alim*; Intuition, Sharp Ears; Palsied Hands, Visions, Weak Characteristics

Personality Traits: Good-natured +2, Knowing +2

Reputations: Librarian (imams) 3

Combat:

Fist: Init -2, Attack +0, Defense +0, Damage -1

Soak: 0

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

Abilities: Arabic 5 (religious use), Artes Liberales 5 (logic), Awareness 2 (searching), Brawl 1 (Fist), Charm 5 (invoking *baraka*), Concentration 4 (reading), Dominion Lore 2 (holy forebearers), Folk Ken 5 (nobles), Guile 2 (lying to authority), Infernal Lore 2 (auras), Intrigue 3 (alliances), Islamic Law 4 (Narixa customs)*, Leadership 2 (within the mosque),

Profession: Librarian 5 (forgotten scrolls), Music 3 (calling to prayer), Narixa Lore 4 (legends), Philosophiae 4 (metaphysics), Teaching 4 (theology, Islamic), Theology: Islam 6 (prophets)*

Equipment: imam robes

Appearance: Hamid is a small, aging man with a gray beard, eyes narrowed through squinting, and a toothless smile. His turban and robes seem to attract the dust, something his library has plenty of.

* *Realms of Power: The Divine*

Conciatta's Scrolls

Once collated, this collection of scrolls forms a map of a cave system two miles east of the small town of Narixa, including how to find and enter the caves. The journal provides a bonus of +1 to any rolls used to navigate both the caves and the regiones that overlay them. The work makes it clear that the Narixa caves are a confusing array of tunnels and chambers and that the unwary can actually slip between regio levels without noticing. The scrolls urge caution and preparation before attempting the caves.

THE INSIGHTFUL STYLUS

Amid the dusty scrolls is a small sealed leather scroll case bearing the inscription "Conciatta ex Bonisagus." On opening the lid, a slender silver stylus slides out onto the table. It is traced through with Hermetic and occult symbols (concerning the Infernal).

The case also contains a small scrap of parchment describing the following effects. The first detects the presence and rough shape of an infernal regio boundary while the second animates the stylus against a wax tablet to trace out the line of that bound-

ary in miniature. When in use, the stylus moves at the same relative pace as a magus drawing a casting circle in the ground.

The stylus has been opened with 12 pawns of vis.

Sense the Line

InVi 14

Pen +0, Constant Effect

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Individual

This enchantment detects the line of the Infernal regio boundary. The information it collects is available to the *Inscribe the Line* effect described below.

(Base 3, +1 Touch, +2 Sun; +1 for 2/day, +3 triggered by sunrise/set)

Inscribe the Line

ReTe 14

Pen +0, Constant Effect

R: Personal, D: Sun, T: Individual

While the stylus is touched to a wax tablet, the stylus is held perpendicular to its surface. When this effect receives information about a regio boundary, the stylus moves and inscribes the line of the regio boundary into the wax tablet.

(Base 2, +2 Sun, +2 affect metal; +1 for 2/day, +3 triggered by sunrise/set)

Note These Landmarks

ReTe 14

Pen +0, Unlimited Use

R: Personal, D: Momentary, T: Individual

At the wielder's verbal command, the stylus scribes markings onto the wax tablet that describe distances and landmarks sufficient to make the map of the regio boundary navigable. The stylus understands a set of Latin words, primarily numbers and distances, such as "twenty paces" or "thirteen feet", and landscape features, such as "tree" or "door" and is able to form symbols to match. This effect can be used while the stylus is inscribing a regio boundary without damaging the map.

(Base 2, +2 affect metal; +10 for unlimited use)

The stylus must be successfully investigated in the laboratory, which then provides a source of insight. Recreating the stylus grants 5 points towards integrating *Insight of the Realms*.

point and tend to localize on that point while growing in strength. The Narixa regiones, however, bleed into each other just as cave tunnels do.

The caves are home to swarms of mice, scorpions, and snakes, as well as packs of hyena whose laughter can be heard echoing off the walls from somewhere deep inside. Here and there, human bones jut painfully from the walls, victims caught between a regio and the mundane world. The caves are covered by a level 3 Malevolent Infernal aura and filled with Tartaran regiones (*Realms of Power: The Infernal*, pages 15 and 16).

NAVIGATING THE CAVES

All terrain in the cave system is treated as hazardous and adds an extra botch die to any physical actions taken. Space is confined and large weapons suffer a -2 penalty to attack and defense. All the while, the floors and walls crawl with scurrying or skittering things.

The storyguide should introduce three key events to tell the story of the characters finding their way through the caves to the throne room; these should test the physical and magical skills of

the characters. Storyguides may want to use the following examples:

- A sheer face that needs to be climbed, either up or down. Magic can overcome this obstacle or a lead player character can take the physical option. If he can make three progressively more difficult climb rolls (6, 9, 12, for instance), he makes it down the face and can secure ropes allowing others to follow. Failing a roll means the character starts to fall with an initiative of 6, which magi may attempt to fast



cast against in order to save him. A botch in these caves may be lethal.

He either falls to his death, is spectacularly rescued by player actions,

or is sucked into a regio. If the later, the characters may be able to find him by making an Area Lore: Narixa Caves stress roll against Ease Factor 12.

- The second is a rock fall within the caves. As the rock fall starts, have the players roll for initiative. Those beating 6 may react before the collapse. This is also the target for fast-cast spells. Characters caught in the collapse count as being inside a collapsing stone building, as per ArM5, page 181.
- The third involves a combat against a group of hyena. They attempt an ambush (Perception + Awareness simple roll against the Hyena stealth roll) and pull one of the party into a nearby regio. If they manage to grapple a character they start to drag him away. The group splits with two hyena grappling and dragging and three defending the group, preventing the party from reaching their comrade. If after four combat rounds the party have not regained their comrade

Hyena

Infernal Might: 10

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

Size: -1

Virtues and Flaws: Ferocity (against livestock), Improved Characteristics (x2), Long-Winded, Sharp Ears, Compulsion (killing), Infamous

Natural Qualities: Pack Animal, Thick Fur

Qualities and Inferiorities: Improved Powers (x2), Lesser Power

Personality Traits: Brave When in a Pack +3, Cowardly When Alone +3, Hyena +5

Reputations: Bloodthirsty (Local) 4

Combat:

Bite: Init +2, Attack +11, Defense +9,

Damage +0

Soak: +4

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-4), -3 (5-8), -5 (9-12), Incapacitated (13-16), Dead (21+)

Abilities: Arabic 5 (taunts), Athletics 5 (distance running), Awareness 3 (smell), Brawl 5 (Bite), Hunt 4 (track by smell), Narixa Caves Lore 3 (regiones), Survival 3 (Narixa caves)

Powers:

Piercing the Infernal Veil, 0 points, Init +1, Vim: Allows the Hyena to see through the boundaries between regio levels. The Improved Powers quality has been used to reduce the

points cost to zero and to increase the initiative.

Appearance: Powerful shoulders with a sloping back and shorter rear legs give the hyena a cowardly appearance. But on the hunt, the Narixa hyenas are far from cowardly. They relish the fear of their prey, as can be seen from their smile. Their eyes gleam yellow in the darkness.

The Narixa hyenas roam the cave system and are able to see through the regio levels. They leave the caves to hunt, being more like wolves in this respect than natural hyena. Their pack animal nature allows them to fight as a trained group; treat their Hyena personality trait as a score in Leadership.

The Infernal Conciatta

Infernal Might: 30

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

Size: 0

Age: Appears in her late thirties

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Spirit; Hermetic Magus; Major Magical Focus (Auras), True Understanding of the Realms; Affinity with Magic Theory, Confluence of the Realms, Famous, Great Intelligence, Insight of the Realms, Inventive Genius, Piusant Magic Theory, Student of Infernal, Well-Traveled; Blatant Gift, The Constant Expression, Driven (Extend Hermetic Theory); Delerious Circumstances (when not within a supernatural aura), Judged Unfairly, Study Requirement

Qualities and Inferiorities: Focus Power, Greater Power

Personality Traits: Corrupted +2, Hateful +2, Scholar +3

Reputations: Bonisagus House Acclaim (Magi Bonisagi) 3

Soak: -1

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

Abilities: Animal Handling 2 (owls), Arabic 4 (poetry), Area Lore: Qadis 2 (ghostly personalities), Area Lore: Zaragoza 3 (lacunae), Area Lore: Narixa 2 (regiones), Area Lore: Toledo 2 (the convent), Artes Liberales 3 (ceremonial magic),

Awareness 2 (spell effects), Aragonese 4 (poetry), Charm 2 (first impressions), Code of Hermes 1 (Bonisagus obligations), Concentration 3 (lab work), Dominion Lore 5 (divine places), Etiquette 2 (faeries), Faerie Lore 5 (ancient faeries), Finesse 2 (precision), Folk Ken 2 (magi), Infernal Lore 5+2 (regiones), Intrigue 1 (House Bonisagus), Latin 5 (Hermetic usage), Leadership 1 (laboratory work), La Torre no Vista Lore 3 (history), Magic Lore 5 (regiones), Magic Theory 15+2 (Vim), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (history), Parma Magica 2 (Vim), Penetration 2 (Vim), Philosophiae 3 (ceremonial magic), Teaching 3 (Magic Theory)

Powers:

Crafter of Vim, variable points, Init 0 minus Might points spent, Vim: Conciatta can spontaneously produce the effect of a Creo or Rego Vim spell of level 25 or less at a cost of 1 Might point per magnitude. (Focus Power)

Eidolon, 0 points, Init 0, Imaginem: Creates an illusionary form that can be both seen and heard. The body can be created and destroyed at will, though Conciatta always maintains this form. As the power in *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 102. (Focus Power)

Ghost Touch, variable points, Init 0 - Might points spent, Terram: Moves objects that are neither held by another or fastened down. For 1 Might point, up to 5 pounds can

be moved, and every additional Might point doubles the weight. This power is in constant use and is largely outside Conciatta's control. Use of it often leaves her Might Pool drained. As the power in *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 102. (Greater Power)

Master of Vim, variable points, Init 0 minus might points spent, Vim: Conciatta can change or destroy weak sources of magic that she is able to perceive, spontaneously producing the effect of a Muto or Perdo Vim spell of level 25 or less at a cost of 1 Might point per magnitude. (Focus Power)

Additional Powers:

Hell's Onslaught, 0 points, Init +1, Ig-nem: As the Hermetic Spell *Pilum of Fire*, this power does +15 damage to the target. Excess levels have been used to reduce the Might cost, increase the initiative, and master the power allowing Conciatta to loose two bolts of fire together. (Greater Power)

Master of Stone, variable points, Init 0 minus might points spent, Terram: Conciatta can spontaneously produce the effect of a Muto or Perdo Terram spell of level 25 or less at a cost of 1 Might point per magnitude. (Focus Power)

Appearance: Her skin is luminescent, as though a raging fire boils just inside, and her hair is smoke that strays this way and that. Yet, for all that, she is alluring and beautiful, accentuated by her near-nakedness.

he is taken into the regio and from there deeper into the network. If the character is a grog, he is dead. Any other character must have a chance to survive. If he can fight off the two hyenas, he can flee the regio and rejoin his party.

Conciatta's Army

Once through the labyrinth the characters find the throne room. This huge domed chamber sits within a level 5 Tarran regio. The uneven floor is streaked with cracks and chasms and swarms of

scorpions and packs of hyena move to surround the characters. The walls run with flame and the heat is unbearable. At the far end of the chamber, atop a set of craggy stone steps that sweep up and out over a wide fiery chasm, sits Conciatta on a throne of writhing serpents.

Scorpion Swarm

Characteristics: Cun -1, Per -2, Pre -5, Com -6, Str +2, Sta 0, Dex +2, Qik +4

Size: +1

Virtues and Flaws: Lightning Reflexes; Infamous

Natural Qualities: Venomous

Personality Traits: Scorpion +5

Reputations: Deadly (Local) 4

Combat:

Sting: Init +8, Attack +9, Defense +3, Damage +3

Soak: +0

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-6), -3 (7-12), -5 (13-18), Incapacitated (19-24), Dead (21+)

Abilities: Area Lore: Narixa Caves 4 (regiones), Athletics (running) 5, Awareness 2 (prey), Brawl 4 (sting),

Hunt 4 (rodents), Stealth 4 (stalking prey), Survival 3 (caves)

Appearance: This great shifting sand of black chitinous noise swarms across the ground covering everything in its path.

The scorpion's venomous quality (*House of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 43) is treated as the same level as an Asp's bite (*ArM5*, page 180).

OPTIONAL RULE: SWARMS

A swarm is a mass of creatures of Size -3 or smaller with a combined Size of +1 or more. Given the fluid makeup of a swarm, it is almost impossible to stop one in its tracks. Shield grogs are used to holding off single or even group enemies, but a

swarm of creatures has the power to overwhelm defenders. Apply the following rules:

- Swarms ignore defenders and can always reach their intended target.
- Swarms may attack a number of targets equal to the swarm's size each round.
- At the storyguide's discretion, Swarms may have an immunity or resistance to regular weapons; a blade passes harmlessly through a swarm of locusts, for instance.
- Being made up of many smaller individuals, a swarm is hard to destroy. Unless a swarm is destroyed outright, it can disengage and return at full strength after a number of rounds equal to its single highest wound penalty.

Conciatta, cruel and hate-filled, mockingly congratulates the strangers for finding her. But she warns them that she is beyond the petty rules and laws of the Order now. If the host carrying the divine aspect of Conciatta is present, the witch offers a simple bargain: one life to be given to her, and the others allowed to leave. She will not keep her word; she is merely offering temptation.

Soon enough she tires of the intrusion and motions her army to attack.

FIGHTING THE INFERNAL

The fight here should be both challenging and deadly, so storyguides should use their discretion in terms of the number and organization of the infernal beasts. But they have a single aim: to kill the intruders.

The hyena packs attempt to tackle the intruders to the ground and drag

them into one of the chasms. If a hyena pack maintains a positive grapple strength against an enemy in two successive rounds, they succeed in dragging their enemy to the chasm.

If this happens, the character may attempt a Dexterity + (Athletics or Climb) stress roll against Ease Factor 9. If he succeeds, he clings to the edge of the chasm. If he fails, another character who has yet to act this turn may either attempt a fast-cast spell to save him or leap to grab him. This is a Quickness + Athletics stress roll against Ease Factor 9. If this character succeeds he is prone but he has caught hold of his comrade. Both characters are considered prone until their next turn to act and both will need to regain their weapons as a standard action. Characters over the edge of the chasm may attempt a Dexterity + Climb stress roll against Ease Factor 9.

If the character is unable to stop himself, his colleagues cannot reach him, or

he botches a climb roll, he falls hundreds of feet into the seething lava below.

Agitated by the scent of magic on the air, the scorpion swarms will attempt to overcome the magi, surging past any defenders to get to their targets.

Conciatta herself knows the power of warding magic and watches for any circles hastily drawn and empowered. She uses her *Master of Stone* power to break any such circles and destroy the wards. She is not confident in her penetration against the Parma Magica.

BINDING CONCIATTA

Conciatta will not willingly surrender and is prepared to fight to the death. Her high Might Score means that binding her through wards is a difficult prospect. There is no easy answer to capturing and binding Conciatta and troupes are encouraged to be creative. But there are some options:

- Holy relics affect Conciatta as she is a demon.
- Reducing her Might through Perdo Vim magic will allow her to be bound more easily.
- As a being of fire and heat, intense cold will cause her harm and may force her to submit.

The Return

Assuming none of the four spirits have been destroyed in the journey (in which case all perish at the same moment), the final chapter in Conciatta's story is the reuniting of the four aspects.

On returning to the tower, the player characters should have the scholarly Conciatta waiting for them, her Divine spirit subsumed within a host, her Infernal aspect bound or captive in some form, and her Faerie self in the form of a book.

The Infernal Conciatta is resentful and hateful towards the magi and her other selves. She curses them with every other word and struggles to be free. This shocks the Magical spirit, unaware she had such feelings within her.

The Ritual

There is no defined ritual or method for recombining Conciatta's spirits. It is left to the troupe to decide on a fitting process. But when the moment of reunion comes, the Faerie Conciatta walks from the pages of the book and the Divine Conciatta appears as an angelic presence rising from her host. They both combine with their opposites: Divine with Infernal and Faerie with Magic, and then these two last spirits combine into one burning white shard.

The shard of light races upwards and downwards, piercing floors and ceilings. And then it flashes outwards rushing through any onlookers. And in that

moment, the way to the Magic Realm is open and scenes from Conciatta's life are scattered across the walls. And then, in a beat of darkness, the Magic Realm closes and Conciatta is gone.

The ritual leaves 12pawns of Vim vis in the form of crystal shards broken from Conciatta's final form.

Effects on the Aura

The magic unleashed in reuniting the four aspects of Conciatta creates a new preternatural tether of Strength 1. It also aligns the aura to the art of Vim. But with the dissolution of Conciatta into Final Twilight, the regio has lost the powerful magical entity that helped tether the aura. Unless the tower returns to active magical use the aura will now weaken over time.

In addition, on each anniversary of Conciatta's recombination, 4 pawns of Vim vis manifest within the tower.

Rewards

Storyguides who wish to add linking stories into the larger quest should set the rewards as appropriate. But it is suggested that 5 experience points are awarded for the events surrounding each of the four spirits of Conciatta, for a total of 20 across the story.

Sections set within the Magic and Faerie Realms also carry their own rewards. Experience earned in the Magic Realm manifests as vis (see *Realms of Power: Magic*, pages 20 and 26), which can be used to transform the character, allowing them to gain or exchange Virtues. Similarly, characters leaving the Faerie Realm may also acquire new Virtues. In this case, the character given the book gains one of Conciatta's breakthroughs as a charm (see *Realms of Power: Faerie*, pages 39 and 104). The Virtue can be used while the character carries the book, so long as he keeps the charm secret.

Aftermath

Despite years of study, Conciatta failed to take her research to its logical conclusion. While a magus may invent spells to affect the four realms, he still needs separate effects for each realm. But Hermetic magic theory may support a further breakthrough.

Conciatta's aim was to remove the distinction between the realms. Her later studies went some way to achieving this, culminating with the *True Understanding of the Realms*. But the next stage is to allow Vim spells to affect each realm without re-invention.

As it fundamentally changes the nature of Hermetic magic, this is an Hermetic Breakthrough. But possession of Conciatta's Virtues lays the groundwork and, with troupe approval, reduces this level of integration to a Major Breakthrough.

In addition, with a further Major Breakthrough, each of Conciatta's breakthroughs can be fully integrated with Hermetic Magic Theory, allowing all magi studying from the appropriate sources to leverage their Realm Lore to empower their magic.

The magus who brings Conciatta's secrets back to the Order will see his name forever linked with Conciatta's, but a magus who can take those breakthroughs further will be famous on his own account.

Bonisagus House Acclaim

As per *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 21, rediscovering Conciatta's Minor Virtues awards 15 acclaim points each, while the *True Understanding of the Realms* Virtue is worth 30.

Chapter Three

Fortunata's Island of Bound Spirits

Lifetime: 986 AD – 1123 AD
(Final Twilight)

Overview: A master of ancient magics, who created a Mystery Cult of her own. Her hidden island is still the domain of spirit servitors that are bound into and power magic devices.

Fortunata of Jerbiton is famous as a skilled writer, historian and translator of ancient texts from many lost languages. She is also famous (or to some, infamous) for having acquired power as a supernaturally-gifted necromancer. She forced powerful beings to her will, as servants, or as power for enchanted de-

vices; her familiar (some say lover) was a magical spirit. Her detractors claimed she gained power by dealing with the devil, but in truth she mastered the art of Self-Initiation to turn quests into power, without obedience to any organized Mystery Cult.



Legend

Fortunata was a daughter of a prince of Milan until, around 996, the magus Apollo of Jerbiton recognized her Gentle Gift and took her as his apprentice. He found her to be intelligent, charismatic, and a quick learner. Her childhood name is not recorded, but on her Gauntlet she adopted the Hermetic name of Fortunata. She made her parents proud as she became known as a fine scholar of House Jerbiton, but privately she was wracked with envy of the potent, specialized magics of other magi, and came to desire those far more than the mundane art and learning of her House and parents.

As a young maga in the Rome Tribunal, she traveled the Mediterranean regions, meeting other magi and visiting the inspirational ruins of the ancient Romans and Greeks. On one of these journeys, she came upon a spirit which

had been trapped by a witch, bound to a cleft stone as punishment for some slight. Fortunata rescued the spirit, Lucida, and they became friends and traveling companions, and eventually joined as maga and familiar.

Spurning the ideals of Jerbiton, she sought and mastered ancient rites and rituals of power: Initiation Scripts for the Virtues of lost cults, and their Cult Lores. She created a system for herself, effectively a solo Mystery Cult, whose lore she named Principles Lore, then adapted Initiations for her own use, taking that power for herself. The sudden acquisition of power, without obvious explanation, led rivals to accuse her of dealing with demons. Though false, the rumors and accusations dogged the remainder of her career — her secrecy did little to dispel them. So much so that, in later years, she quit her covenant and retired to a hidden island in the Mediterranean, communicating with the Redcaps via a house in Venice. House Mercere may remember the generous hospitality she offered there.

She devised spells to summon, interrogate and command spirits and ghosts of ancients, keeping them as servants in preference to mundane beings, and sending them as distant agents of her will. When others encountered her, they reported shimmering clouds of spirits coming and going about her — some said acting as her spies, in violation of the Code, though she was always wary of the Quaesitores and careful not to use her spirits so.

Her Jerbiton heritage and scholarship not wholly forgotten, Fortunata translated dead languages by commanding ancient ghosts read the texts aloud while she used Mentem magics to understand their words, which she then transcribed in Latin. Many of those texts came into circulation around the Mediterranean and into the rest of the Order of Hermes. Hints and comments in the margins may leave the reader wishing he could find the rest of Fortunata's books.

Of Spirits, and Mystery Virtues

Much of Fortunata's power was obtained by Initiation of Virtues through Mysteries. Readers may find *The Mysteries: Revised Edition* helpful, as it gives full details of the process of Initiation, and the design of Initiation Scripts. Several of the Virtues gained by Fortunata are described in outline

here, and more fully in *The Mysteries: Revised Edition*, and *House of Hermes: Mystery Cults*.

There are a number of Magical spirits, for which *Realms of Power: Magic* provides more detailed descriptions of the Powers, Qualities, and Inferiorities of magical beings.

Principles Lore

Principles Lore is a Mystery Cult Lore of Fortunata's own devising (see this chapter, Cult Lore: Fortunata's "Principles Lore"), which forms the basis of Initiations and Initiation Scripts devised by Fortunata. She copied and

distributed texts on Principles Lore, hoping that others might follow her teachings, but they are largely forgotten by 1220. The actual Initiation Scripts she kept mostly to herself: they form part of the treasure in the library.

Ancient Lores or Hermetic Delusion?

Fortunata repeatedly writes that she found texts of the ancients, and used them to Initiate Virtues, although many of these are Hermetic Virtues. Since there was no system of Hermetic magic before Bonisagus, this cannot

be so. Was Fortunata was deluded as to the nature of the texts she found? Or did she lie in her writings? Perhaps she had a knack for creating Initiation Scripts for Hermetic Virtues that closely paralleled ancient Virtues?

Her eventual fate is not recorded — the last known encounter was in 1123 — but it seems likely she died or entered Final Twilight not long after, leaving her island covenant and library as treasure to be opened and studied.

this chapter, Fortunata's Villa. The island itself, with its spirits and vis sources is a further treasure — see this chapter, Fortunata's Island.

Copies of some of her writings were sent out in her lifetime, and are sometimes found across Mythic Europe. Whereas most of the treasures in *Legends of Hermes* are found at the end of quests or adventures, parts of Fortunata's treasures are to be stumbled upon, then used to create those adventures. The quests contained in the scripts become a treasure for the saga itself, drawing other characters to far corners of Mythic Europe accompanying the questing magus.

Legacy

The library where Fortunata's books are preserved makes a treasure in itself, with details of Principles Lore and its Initiation Scripts, spells and lab texts, magical devices and bound spirits — see

What the Order Remembers of Fortunata

See the Introduction for details on revealing the legend of Fortunata. A few details are only known by a few: some Redcaps or Jerbiton magi.

Note that some legends may be false; Fortunata has become a fable. As well as certain distortions, there are some blatant untruths that persist, some of which arose from jealousy and resentment at her success.

KNOWN BY ALL

- Fortunata was a spirit master and maga of House Jerbiton.
- She was active in the Rome Tribunal, but left to live in a private retreat.
- She defeated many non-Hermetic enemies in Southern Europe and North Africa.
- She gained power from ancient lore, and translated texts of the ancients.
- She stole the power of many

Mysteries.

- It is said her books include the secrets of how to gain the same powers she did.
- Powerful Hermetic enemies forced her into exile.
- She disappeared into Twilight around 1123.

WIDELY KNOWN

- She had no familiar, but was accompanied by a spirit companion.
- She walked surrounded by a cloud of airy spirits which rushed to obey her every command.
- She was an extremely gifted scholar, but let the House down in jealous desire for magical power. [Jerbiton magi only.]
- She was not a member of any known Mystery Cult, but wrote about many.

- Her house in Venice offered a rich welcome for Redcaps. [Redcaps only.]

UNCOMMON KNOWLEDGE

- She disproved charges of infernalism and magical spying and walked free, but still chose to retire.
- She owned and ran a house in Venice, which was used as a rendezvous by Redcaps for many years.
- Her hidden retreat was on one of the myriad small islands in the Ionian Sea (or other region of the Mediterranean, as appropriate to the Saga).
- She impressed many with her scholarship, but disappointed her parents.
- She used magic to translate unreadable scrolls, exceeding Hermetic limits on translation.

Fortunata's Initiations

Fortunata's perfectionist nature and scholarship, and her vow to resurrect the ancient lores, led her to write out and preserve the details of the Initiations she performed for herself. These scripts may be discovered scattered around Mythic Europe, or gathered together in her lost library. A complete set of her works would allow the reader to follow her path of self-Initiation for personal power, or to found their own Mystery Cult based on her ideas.

Each of the Initiation Scripts includes one or more Quests which the Initiate must perform. The Initiate must play the largest part in a Quest, but may be accompanied or even aided by others, unless the Quest specifies otherwise. Indeed, some of the Quests may be almost impossible without some outside aid — though they leave it to the Initiate to recognize this.

The Quests are only given in outline, like a story seed, leaving most details for the saga to refine. A magus may set out on a Quest and other players take the supporting roles; for a particularly arduous Quest, players might instead take on *opposing* roles.

Cult Lore: Fortunata's "Principles Lore"

Fortunata did not think of herself as founding a Mystery Cult, but as studying and resurrecting the forgotten lore of the ancients. As she uncovered rites and observations, and devised more herself, she gathered and named them as her "Principles", being the guide she used to organize her entire life. Knowledge of this constitutes an "Organization Lore" in game terms, and acts as the "Cult Lore"

for a set of Initiations with no actual cult.

The full set of texts includes the ancient original texts, with translations and adaptations by Fortunata, and tractatus by Fortunata. In her later years she also wrote a long summa gathering all her thoughts together. She seems to have become somewhat obsessed by the Principles, spending entire seasons dedicating herself to them as a way of life (in game terms, as Practice in Principles Lore).

Magi reading these texts study a new Organization Lore Ability, Principles Lore. A minimal study of the Principles is required before any use of the Initiation Scripts, but if magi are already members of a Mystery Cult, the Scripts and Lore texts can be adapted to other cults. (See the nearby insert.)

Unlike many other Mystery Cults, Fortunata's "Cult" imposes no ranks, hierarchy or sequence of Initiations. Fortunata's earlier scripts provide a higher

Script Bonus, from when she had a limited Cult Lore score; her later scripts assume the Initiate has mastered the Principles, and provide lower Script Bonuses (and hence reduced requirements and sacrifice). A partial order exists for certain scripts, where those immediately after a specific Ordeal take advantage of the "previous Ordeal" reduction of subsequent Initiation Totals:

INITIATION OF SPIRIT FAMILIAR

INITIATION OF MINOR MAGICAL FOCUS

Commanding spirits, includes Ordeal

INITIATION OF MAJOR MAGICAL FOCUS

Spirit magic, first after Ordeal

INITIATION OF SPELL BINDING

Second after Ordeal

INITIATION OF HERMETIC EMPOWERMENT

Third after Ordeal

There was once another script, to Initiate the Mystery Virtue Hermetic Synthemata (as detailed in *The Mysteries: Revised Edition*, page 87), but this is no longer in Fortunata's library. Troupes wishing to include this should consult *The Mysteries: Revised Edition*, and create an Initiation Script in the style of the others.

Self-Initiation of Mystery Virtues

There are a number of points worth noting for the magus with no Mystery Cult to guide them through an ordained path of Initiation.

HOW TO USE A SCRIPT WITH NO CULT

It is normal to be introduced to the Mysteries through the organized teachings of a Mystagogue in a formal Cult. However, none of this is truly needed—it just makes things easier. A magus can Initiate himself as easily as he can Initiate another into a Virtue he, as Mystagogue, lacks.

A system of rites and rituals is still needed, though it need not describe an actual Cult. Each (Mystery Cult) Lore is an instance of (Organization) Lore (*ArM5*, page 66; *The Mysteries: Revised Edition*, page 11). Organization Lore provides knowledge that includes the rites, secrets and symbolism of the cult.

Fortunata's Principles Lore is an Orga-

Borrowing Cult Lore and Initiation Scripts

A Mystagogue may spend a season dedicated to research, fasting and meditation practicing their Cult Lore. The Practice Source Quality for this is normally 4.

A SEASON DEDICATED
TO PRACTICE CULT LORE =
Quality 4

However, most Mystery Cults derive, or claim to derive, from ancient lore. To reflect this, a Mystagogue who has obtained a text on the Cult Lore of another Cult may use this in their research if, in the judgment of the troupe, the other Cult's ideas are compatible with the Mystagogue's Cult Lore, and invent new rites and rituals inspired by the ancient cults. The Practice Source Quality for this is generally 5.

A SEASON OF PRACTICE CULT LORE
INSPIRED BY ANCIENT LORE =
Practice Source Quality 5

Fortunata appears to have based her Principles Lore on some Roman

and Greek Cults of the Dead, combined with any other bits of Lore she could lay her hands on.

Note that some Cult elders may resent the introduction of new and "heretical" outside ideas — indeed some discourage study by Practice and insist that Cult Lore be studied from "proper" texts.

ADAPTING SCRIPTS

Devising a new Initiation Script by Experimentation (see *The Mysteries: Revised Edition*, page 18) is difficult for the Mystagogue and hazardous for the Initiate, so a working Initiation Script is a treasure, but less so if written for some other Cult than that which the maga follows. Not all Cults mix well together; troupe approval is needed to judge whether a text is compatible.

A maga may study the text for a while — a week, rather than a whole Season — and may then adapt the script if she understands it. To see if the

maga understands another cult's script make a roll of Intelligence + (other Cult) Lore against an Ease Factor of 9. Failure means she must study again; a botch means a misunderstanding and a false script. (Note that to make the roll at all, using (other Cult) Lore, requires a score of zero or more in that Lore — some study is required. Practicing one's own Cult Lore drawing inspiration from another Cult's Lore provides enough familiarity.)

Once understood, the maga may modify the Initiation Script as if changing a component (see *The Mysteries: Revised Edition*, page 17), with a roll of Intelligence + (own Cult) Lore against an Ease Factor of 12.

TO UNDERSTAND ANOTHER
CULT'S SCRIPT:
Intelligence + (other Cult) Lore vs. 9

TO MODIFY THE SCRIPT,
CHANGE A SCRIPT COMPONENT:
Intelligence + (own Cult) Lore vs. 12

Initiation Mechanics

The Initiation process is fully defined in *The Mysteries: Revised Edition* Chapter 2, but a very brief summary is included here.

Initiation involves a mystical process where a teacher (Mystagogue) guides a pupil (Initiate) through acts of ritual significance (defined in an Initiation Script). The Mystagogue adds their Presence and score in their (Mystery Cult) Lore and a bonus from the Initiation Script. If this meets or exceeds the Target Level of the Initiation, the ceremony succeeds (there is no die roll).

INITIATION TOTAL:
Presence + (Mystery Cult) Lore
+ Script Bonus

TO INITIATE A MINOR VIRTUE
KNOWN BY THE MYSTAGOGUE:
Target Level is 15

TO INITIATE A MAJOR VIRTUE
KNOWN BY THE MYSTAGOGUE:
Target Level is 21

TO INITIATE A MINOR VIRTUE
NOT KNOWN BY THE MYSTAGOGUE:
Target Level is 18

TO INITIATE A MAJOR VIRTUE
NOT KNOWN BY THE MYSTAGOGUE:
Target Level is 30

If an Initiation involves an Ordeal (inflicting a Minor or Major Flaw, or increasing a Minor Flaw to Major Flaw (a Medium Ordeal)), the next 3 Initiations benefit from a reduced Target Level. Only the single best factor applies.

**TARGET LEVEL FOR
FIRST INITIATION AFTER AN ORDEAL:**
-3 (Minor), -6 (Medium),
-9 (Major)

**TARGET LEVEL FOR
SECOND INITIATION AFTER AN ORDEAL:**
-2 (Minor), -4 (Medium),
-6 (Major)

**TARGET LEVEL FOR
THIRD INITIATION AFTER AN ORDEAL:**
-1 (Minor), -2 (Medium),
-3 (Major)

In Self-Initiation, the maga acts as her own Mystagogue, and uses her own Presence and (Cult) Lore, but faces the increased Target Levels for a Virtue not known by the Mystagogue.

gogue must succeed in a test of Intelligence + (Mystery Cult) Lore against an Ease Factor of 9 (see *The Mysteries: Revised Edition*, page 17).

KEEPING TRACK OF ORDEALS & THE PREVIOUS-ORDEAL BONUS

Even if not following an ordained sequence of Initiations, it is important to record the Ordeals suffered by the Initiate. These not only provide a Script Bonus to the Initiation specifying the Ordeal, but also reduce the Initiation Total required for the next three Initiations, no matter what they are.

This in turn reduces the needed Script Bonus, which makes experimental scripts and similar activities easier, so some scripts are designed to follow previous Ordeals. This is shown in Fortunata's use of two separate Scripts to obtain the Virtue Major Magical Focus, Initiating the Minor version as preparation.

MULTIPLE OR OVERLAPPING SCRIPTS

With the tendency for scripts to be varied, it is not uncommon to come across scripts with considerable overlap: some of Fortunata's own scripts have been modified by some successor to Initiate a different but similar Virtue. Such a script is often not usable by a self-Initiate, as they have already performed ("used") the Quests or suffered the Ordeals which form both scripts. In an established Mystery Cult, the Cult may already have some other script with different Quests and Ordeals, which the Initiate may use — but the self-Initiate may have no alternative available.

The magus must change the new script and either modify the subject of the Quest or Ordeal, or replace it by a different Quest. Modifying a script requires a roll of Intelligence + Cult Lore against an Ease Factor of 12; replacing a

nization Lore invented by her, solely for the purpose of organizing and cataloging the Initiations she devised. A magus who studies Principles Lore may use it to initiate himself, or another, using Initiation Scripts based on Principles Lore.

Much as a Mystagogue may use Practice to expand his cult Lore, or to found a new Cult, Fortunata shows how to build a set of rules, rites and interpretations that fulfill the same role. The Self-Initiate uses his own Presence, and whichever Organization Lore he has found to be appropriate. Troupe approval is needed to adapt a pre-existing organization to take on Mysteries, and should not be given unless the organiza-

tion had some sort of mystical style — you should instead devise a new Ability that begins anew with a mystical bent.

THE NEED TO VARY A SCRIPT TO INCREASE THE BONUS

Scripts created by a "first generation" Mystagogue will often reflect the Presence and Ability scores of that magus, and a new maga seeking to follow in their footsteps may find the Script does not provide enough Initiation Points. In this case, the script may be extended. To add a further Quest (+3 Script Bonus) to an existing Initiation Script, the Mista-

script element by a different one has an Ease factor of 15.

Modifying the subject of a Quest is most appropriate when adapting a novel script to fit a character's circumstances, rather than modifying a too-similar script to allow re-use. The troupe should decide whether a proposed "modification" is enough to validate the script, or whether a greater change is needed to justify the Initiation. An Ordeal is rarely repeatable, as the magus will normally still have the earlier Ordeal Flaw.

Sacrifices are more easily repeated — the sacrifice of wealth or time is "generic," while the greater sacrifices such as destruction of one's talisman are made different by the task of obtaining or preparing new and different sacrificial item.

Initiation of Puissant Principles Lore

The last Initiation Fortunata described was a personal dedication to resurrect the ancient lores. There is no evidence that Fortunata ever used this script; rather, it seems that she left it as a gift for those who followed her, to encourage them onto her path and to compensate for the low Presence of a typical

magus. Indeed, she made several copies of the Script with explanatory notes, and sent them to acquaintances, who seem to have filed them in their covenant libraries with little further thought — until perhaps a junior magus stumbles across a copy.

The script requires the Initiate to demonstrate his dedication to gathering her Principles. He must perform a Quest to discover or rescue texts on Principles Lore before writing a new text on Principles Lore. He must also make a Vow to resurrect the Principles and fulfill a second Quest by persuading three other magi to study his text, then each to write a tractatus on Principles Lore in return.

The dedication ceremony should be performed at dawn on the midwinter solstice, on a high peak in a remote magical place — Fortunata suggests the peak of Mount Olympus in Greece or the top of the Great Pyramid at Giza in Egypt. During the dedication ceremony, the Initiate must burn incense and sacrifice 5 pawns of raw vis, dedicating the released vis to the spirits of magic.

If the ceremony is correct and acceptable to the spirits, then the magus gains the Virtue Puissant Principles Lore, and a +2 bonus to his score when using Principles Lore.

[Initiation Total 18, Script Bonus 16:

Ordeal (3) + Quest (3) + Quest (3) + Place and Time (3) + Initiate's Time (1) + Sacrifice of Vis (1) + Sympathy bonus (2).]

The script requires that the Self-Initiate have a Presence + Principles Lore of 2. Note that the Vow, as an Ordeal (Minor Flaw), means that the next three Initiation Totals will be reduced by -3, -2, and -1 in turn.

Initiation of Spirit Familiar

The first Initiation Fortunata performed for herself was to gain the Virtue Spirit Familiar so that she could cement her bond to Lucida. This, like many of Fortunata's other scripts, was not an original invention, according to the Experimentation rules (*The Mysteries: Revised Edition*, page 18), but an adaptation of an Ancient Greek ceremony of union with spirits.

In Fortunata's script, the Initiate performs a Quest to find and rescue the proposed Familiar Spirit, completes a Quest to defeat and imprison the enemy of her spirit, and discovers a place and time of deep significance to the pair, where the ceremony should take place. At the end of the ceremony, the magus gains the in-



Virtue: Spirit Familiar

The Virtue Spirit Familiar is described in detail in *The Mysteries: Revised Edition*, page 66. Finding and binding a spirit familiar is very similar to finding and binding an animal familiar—the Technique and Form of the enchantment should match the spirit's own magic, and usually match the magus's best Arts. An insubstantial spirit has no Size, so the bonding level ignores Size:

SPIRIT FAMILIAR BONDING LEVEL:
Spirit's Might + 25

The three cords are renamed, and have slightly different powers:

The Hermes Cord acts like the Gold Cord, but also adds to all rolls involving Enigmatic Wisdom, even if the magus lacks Enigmatic Wisdom.

The Isis Cord acts like the Silver Cord, but also adds to Lab Totals and the Casting Score of spells involving spirits.

The Hekate Cord acts like the Bronze Cord but, in addition,

the magus may apply the Hekate cord score to any Stamina roll (including Fatigue rolls) for each point of Might expended by the familiar (up to 5 Might expended on any one roll); or grant temporary Might points to the familiar equal to the Hekate bond score by spending 1 Fatigue level.

The spirit uses the better of its Might-based Magic Resistance or the magus's Form resistance, but neither stacks with Parma Magica. The magus may use the spirit's Magic Resistance instead of his Form resistance, but again this does not stack with Parma Magica. Virtues and Flaws relating to specific Forms or to Parma Magica do not apply if Might-based Magic Resistance is used.

The Mysteries: Revised Edition, page 69, has suggestions for generating the spirit as a character, but much more detail can be found in *Realms of Power: Magic*, Chapter 7: Magic Spirits.

tain, as Fortunata variously refers to him as human or serpent. Monocaudus had earlier tormented Lucida, and perhaps participated in the imprisoning ritual.

Fortunata is not specific about the place where she performed the Initiation ceremony, other than that it was not the place where she rescued Lucida, and was of great significance to herself. The Initiate's player and the rest of the troupe should discuss what constitutes an appropriate place. Perhaps subsequent discovery of the secret place by rivals or enemies would threaten the new Initiate?

[Initiation Total 18, Script Bonus 12: Quest (3) + Quest (3) + Place and Time (3) + Sympathy bonus (3).]

Initiation of Minor Magical Focus (commanding spirits)

A Roman cult of the dead provided this script and the Major Virtue Initiation that follows; Fortunata adapted the script to follow her own Principles. This script requires only that the maga expose herself to the torments of free spirits and command them loudly, while making vows according to the rites of the Principles. This is an Ordeal, and inflicts the Major Flaw: Necessary Condition (speak the names of spirits).

sight to bind a spirit as their Familiar.

Note that Fortunata had already found and rescued Lucida, as player magi may also have found a candidate spirit (one matching their Arts), before finding a personal need for Spirit Familiar. This might normally preclude the quest for discovery as an Initiation Quest, but by building on the intimate significance of the relationship between magus and familiar, tuning the Initiation Script and completing additional Quests she was able to complete the process. A player magus may follow a similar path, or further modify the Script, as described in *The Mysteries: Revised Edition*, page 17.

The summa *De Disciplinæ Fortunatae* ("Fortunata's Principles") tells the story of how Fortunata discovered Lucida, bound

in a magical prison, and how she rescued and befriended Lucida. Together they hunted and bound a monster she calls "Monocaudus" — the reading is uncer-

Speaking the Names of Spirits

The primary effect of this condition is that the magus may not cast spells silently, but must always cast spells aloud (though they may still speak quietly), and that those hearing the spell-casting may recognize the invocations.

Fortunata intended "invoking the names of the pagan Greek and Roman deities" — which can cause problems

in public — but many magi are more comfortable using saints' names. Magi can Vary the Initiation Script to modify this Ordeal detail (requires an Intelligence + Principles Lore roll against an Ease Factor of 12 (See *The Mysteries: Revised Edition*, page 17)). Alternately, the troupe may feel that the names of saints count as "names of spirits" for magical purposes.

At the end of the ceremony, the successful Initiate gains the Virtue Minor Magical Focus (commanding spirits), which covers those Rego (Form) spells and effects which command insubstantial spirits, ghosts, elementals and the like. Only spells which give commands or instructions are included in the Focus, and no Technique requisites are permitted, but spirits of any Form are included.

[Initiation Total 18, Script Bonus 12: Major Ordeal (9) + Sympathy bonus (3).]

Initiation of Major Magical Focus (spirit magic)

A Roman cult of the dead provided this script and the Minor Magical Focus Initiation that precedes this — Fortunata adapted the script to follow her own Principles. This script requires that the maga already have and replace a Minor Magical Focus Virtue. The script indicates "Focus in commanding spirits", but actually any Minor Magical Focus may be sacrificed. It also relies on the reduction from the Ordeal prescribed by the Initiation of Minor Magical Focus script.

Splitting Major Virtue Initiations

The texts that Fortunata used to gain power over spirits prescribed a two-stage approach, in which the Initiate undergoes an Ordeal in a preliminary Initiation (for a Minor Magical Focus), then a second Initiation sacrificing the Minor Virtue to gain the Major Magical Focus.

The bonus from the "previous Ordeal" reduces the Initiation Total needed for the Major Virtue, rather than increasing the Script Bonus, so makes the second script both easier to invent and vary. Such pairing is quite common for Virtues with both Major and Minor forms.

The Initiate must seek out and defeat a strong spirit (Might 20+), and then use this spirit as an instrument to defeat a second equally powerful spirit. The Initiation ceremony is performed at midnight on All Hallow's Eve, at the site of the defeat of the second spirit, where the maga must release the first spirit, and offer it a Rook of Vis in compensation.

At the end of the ceremony, the successful Initiate gains the Virtue Major Magical Focus (spirit magic), which covers all spells and effects which affect insubstantial spirits, ghosts, elementals and the like, using Rego (Form). Requisites are allowed, as are spells of other Techniques designed with a Rego requisite, so long as they affect insubstantial spirits of any Form.

[Initiation Total 21 (30 – 9 for previous Ordeal), Script Bonus 13: Required Virtue (3) + Place and Time (3) + Quest (3) + Quest (3) + Sacrifice treasure (1). The script requires a Presence + Principles Lore total of 8.]

Initiation of Spell Binding

Fortunata's notes state that the Greek text she found for this Initiation was itself a translation of a much older script, and that the script teaches how to force a spirit to sustain a spell so the magic of the spell continues indefinitely. Fortunata obtained a perfect, natural,

Virtue: Spell Binding

Spell binding allows access to a unique Ritual magic spell guideline, which allows a second spell and a spirit to be combined in a physical container so as to maintain the second spell indefinitely. The Ritual spell is cast on the object, then while the Ritual spell lasts, the second spell is cast. Even Momentary duration is long enough to cover the next round. The second spell must have a duration greater than Momentary, and cannot itself be a Ritual spell. The second spell functions normally, but if a spirit is forced into the container while the spell lasts, it must sustain the effect, and the spell lasts

while the spirit remains bound. The binding ends if dispelled or if the container is broken.

The spirit must have something in common with the spell to be sustained, e.g. an elemental can sustain any spell of its element; and the spirit's Might must at least equal the sustained spell's level.

SUSTAIN A SPELL OF (FORM)

ReVi Gen
R: Touch, D: Special, T: Ind, Ritual
Req: Form or Forms of the spell to be sustained.

Allows another spell to be entwined with this spell and bound to a physical container. The base level of this spell must equal or exceed the level of the spell to be sustained. Casting of the sustained spell must begin while this spell lasts, or the next round for Momentary duration, after which the two spells are entwined and only end after both durations expire. If a spirit of Might at least equal to the sustained spell is forced into a container while the spell is still active, then the spell is sustained indefinitely while the spirit is bound.

(Guideline level)

Temporary Laboratories

Creating a Basic Laboratory (ArM5, page 94) takes 1 season and 500 square feet of walled, roofed space, and imposes a -3 penalty to all Lab Totals. *Covenants*, chapter 9, provides more details on Laboratories, and how a magus might make a cheap laboratory for one task, perhaps in a confined space or with limited walls.

bubble of glass, so fine it could be barely seen. She completed her Initiation on the night of the first new moon after midwinter's night, in a deep cave system in the Alps, where she crawled through passages without light or magic to the heart of the caves. There she forced a spirit — still without using magic — to enter the ball and sustain a spell of light, the one spell she was allowed to cast.

According to one tale, Fortunata had previously met and defeated the spirit, freeing it on the condition that it later perform for her; in another tale she simply bribed a ghost to help her; in a third she out-witted and tricked an elemental mountain spirit.

Completion of the ceremony grants the Virtue Spell Binding, found in *The Mysteries: Revised Edition*, page 27.

[Initiation Total 12 (18 – 6 for previous Ordeal), Script Bonus 6: Place and Time (3) + Quest (3). The script requires a Presence + Principles Lore total of 6, assuming it is the second Initiation after the Ordeal (Necessary Condition).]

Initiation of Hermetic Empowerment

The Greeks who translated the ancient script expanded the method of binding spirits to spells, to bind spirits to enchantments. Fortunata claims to have

adapted this to her Principles, binding spirits to Hermetic Ritual Effects in magical devices. This may be poetic license, and she may have use Hermetic Research to discover the binding, but attributed the method to "the ancients".

The script calls for the magus to enchant a magical device in a graveyard, using the essence (Vis) of ghosts for the enchantment. This requires that the magus find an abandoned graveyard, or else remain hidden in an occupied graveyard while he builds a laboratory and uses it. A graveyard typically has a Divine Aura of 4, fading over time once abandoned — but some ancient graveyards still exist and may be haunted by pagan spirits.

Christian graveyards are themselves a poor source of ghosts, as church rites prevent a ghost from returning or being summoned, but those unfortunates or criminals denied a church burial, buried in unconsecrated ground (perhaps even just outside the graveyard) may be hunted by the magus.

Each Pawn of Vis enchanted into the device (at least 5 Pawns) must be provided by the destruction of a different ghost: one Pawn of the raw Vis left in the ghost's remains is used in the enchantment and the rest offered as a sacrifice to the spirits in general. The device must be completed for the Initiation ceremony, but can be a Lesser Enchanted Device,

Virtue: Hermetic Empowerment

The Virtue enables a magus to enchant Ritual effects into a device, linked to a bound spirit that is drained to provide the vis equivalent to power the Ritual magic. Each use of the Ritual effect drains points equal to the effect's magnitude from the spirit's permanent Might Score. The Effect Level cannot exceed twice the spirit's Might Score, so the spirit cannot be completely drained.

The magus must enchant a binding Effect into the device as well as one or more Ritual Effects to be powered by the binding.

EMPOWERING PRISON OF THE DECLINING SPIRIT

Re(Mu)Vi(Forms), Gen, Mystery enchantment

Pen +0, uses per day as enchanted

R: Per, D: Mom, T: Ind

The enchantment has requisites of all Forms of all Ritual Effects to be powered by the *Empowering Prison*. Effects with other Forms cannot be powered by this *Prison*. The base level of the enchantment must equal or exceed twice the Might of the spirit that

will be bound; uses per day limits the number of Ritual Effects which can be powered each day. An enchanted device may have more than one *Empowering Prison*, to bind more spirit Might, or for to cover additional Forms.

Once a spirit is commanded to enter the device and so bound to an *Empowering Prison*, it is trapped so long as the enchantment remains, even if its Might falls below a useful level. The spirit is freed if the *Prison* is disenchanting or the device is shattered.

While bound to the *Empowering Prison*, the spirit cannot use its Might for any purpose other than resisting spells cast on it, and cannot leave the prison. It can use powers with no Might cost, so many spirits can perceive the world and converse with those nearby.

Draining Might Score from a spirit is agonizing, and many spirits are driven insane by the process. Since they cannot be fully drained by this process, breaking the device is likely to release a furious, maddened spirit, not caring that the breaker is their kind liberator.

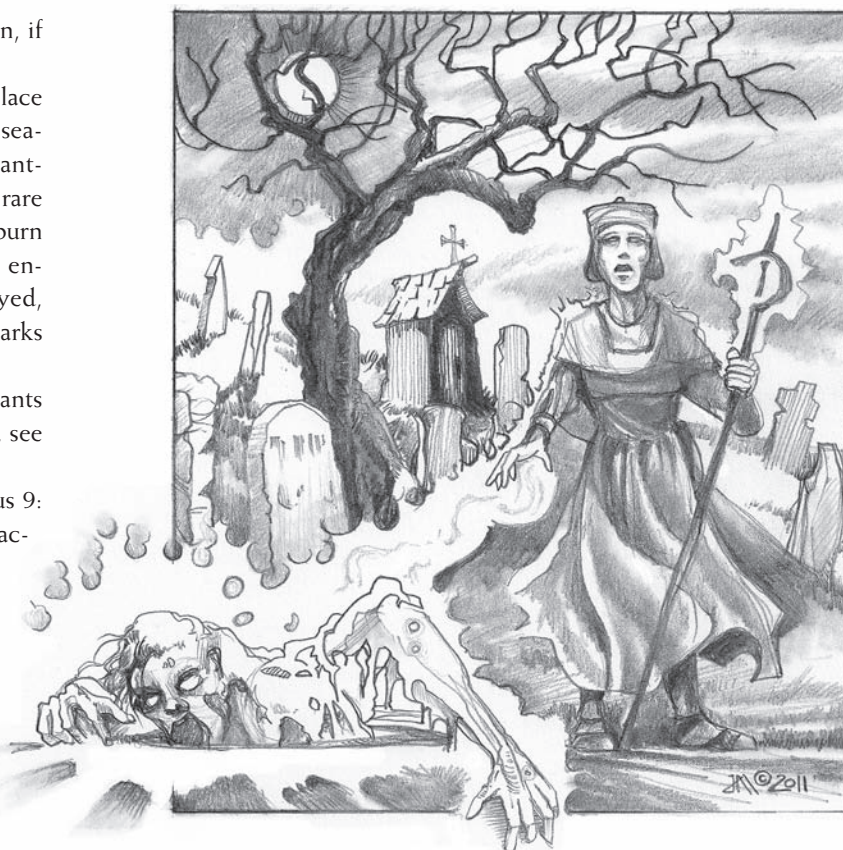
(Guideline level)

opened and enchanted in one season, if the magus is capable of this.

The Initiation ceremony takes place on any quarter-day (the changes of season), in the graveyard used for enchantment. The magus builds a pyre of rare woods and incense, which must burn from dawn until dusk, in which the enchanted device is burnt and destroyed, and the visible smoke of the fire marks the success of the ceremony.

Completion of the Initiation grants the Virtue Hermetic Empowerment, see *The Mysteries: Revised Edition*, page 64.

[Initiation Total 18, Script Bonus 9: Place and Time (3) + Quest (3) + Sacrifice of value (1) + Sympathy (2). If performed as the third Initiation after the Ordeal (Necessary Condition), the Initiation Total is reduced to 15.]



Adventure: Finding Fortune

A saga may introduce Fortunata gradually, using one or more of her texts, perhaps found overlooked on a back shelf, or in some treasure chest. A text on Principles Lore and an Initiation Script may be the teaser that draws others into actively seeking more.

Précis

The adventure takes a loose form, to be played out over a number of sessions rather than in linear form:

- The player magi discover something of Fortunata, and begin a search. A number of story starters are provided: some provide direct evidence (such as texts or witness accounts), others are more indirect (an adventure crosses paths with Fortunata's history).

- The magi seek Fortunata's island, which is both hidden and largely forgotten. A direct search is likely to be fruitless, but story starters suggest ways that others may provide leads, sometimes inadvertently.
- Approaching the island, the group are struck by a magical storm driven by a powerful guardian spirit, their vessel is broken and they are scattered and cast up onto the shore of the island.
- On the island they are beset by a number of strange spirits. Magi are protected by their Parma Magica from direct assault (though many spirits have indirect attacks), while grogs separated from their magi may be driven mad by the confusion wrought by multiple assaults.
- Finally some reach Fortunata's mansion, which appears abandoned and in poor condition. Only those who search carefully will find Fortunata's library and laboratory, and the treasure stored within.

Story Starter: In a Locked Box

The characters come across a locked, metal box. They may have just completed some adventure, and found it among the expected "treasure", or maybe lurking in a corner of the library of a long-established covenant, or offered by a traveling merchant who bought it in hopes of opening it and now wishes to sell it on.

The box bears signs of salt-water corrosion, but is tightly sealed. Closer inspection reveals that the "lock" is cosmetic, and there is no way short of magic to open the box.

If the box is opened, it contains a number of books:

Principles for a Better Life (tractatus on Principles Lore, Quality 11, Latin)

Heroes of Greece (tractatus on Area Lore: Ancient Greece, Quality 6, Ancient Greek)

Where is Fortunata's Island?

There are many small islands in the eastern Mediterranean: in the Tyrrhenian Sea west of Italy, the Adriatic Sea between Italy and Dalmatia, the Ionian sea between Italy and Greece, and the Aegean Sea between Greece and Turkey, or even among the Balearic Isles of the western Mediterranean.

This book leaves the exact loca-

tion (and governing Tribunal) open for saga flexibility. To avoid re-stating this throughout the text, the Ionian Sea is singled out, which would place the island along the western coast of Greece, on the threshold between the Roman and Theban Tribunals.

Where the text says "Ionian Lore", it means "use the Area Lore of the saga's chosen island-location."

Accumulating Geographic Evidence

The storyguide may wish to have the player characters gradually accumulate knowledge of the island through study of Fortunata's Principles Lore, hint by hint, rather than simply "finding a map in a chest." However, her writings cover her way of life rather than her life history, so they are not particularly good for geography.

After any season's study of Fortunata's personal writings make a test of Intelligence + Mediterranean Lore against

an Ease Factor of 18, or Intelligence + Ionian Islands Lore against an Ease Factor of 15. If successful, a hunch suggests where the characters might search to find the legendary library and treasures. On a Botch, a wild goose chase is suggested, but a visit to the location clears up the confusion, and later study may suggest the correct location.

(Note that the actual location is saga dependent, among the many small Mediterranean islands.)

Heroes of Greece – revised (tractatus on Area Lore: Ancient Greece, Quality 8, Latin, with additional notes)

The Myth of Andros and the Tree (Initiation Script requiring a forgotten cult Lore, Script Bonus 12, Ancient Greek)

Andros And the Tree (a Principles Lore Initiation Script for Spirit Familiar, Script Bonus 12, Latin)

Andros and the Tree begins innocently enough as a myth in which an un-named hero defeats a monster and frees a maiden trapped in a tree. There are notes and an appendix which appear to be instructions for playing out the myth "for real." An Intelligence + Magic Lore roll against an Ease Factor of 12, or Intelligence + any Mystery Cult Lore against an Ease factor of 6, reveals that this is an Initiation Script for some Mystery Cult. (See this

chapter, Initiation of Spirit Familiar.)

Principles for a Better Life includes a set of "principles" by which one might live a better life, purifying oneself by regular observances such as rising with the sun and washing in cold water, but are actually an Organization Lore for a Mystery Cult (though there is no physical organization, just the Lore). Common phrasing and style suggest that the author of the principles and the translator of the Greek myth are one and the same.

Heroes of Greece relates tales and events from long ago. Some might consider it Magic Lore (or even Faerie Lore) but the style of writing is mainly descriptive of landscape and people.

The author and translator was the maga Fortunata, famous for her extensive knowledge of spirits and their binding. The revised *Heroes of Greece* mentions that

the author made her home among the Greek islands; someone searching for that might find clues among these notes.

Story Starter: A House In Venice

One of the player characters, or a close contact, purchases a house in Venice. Forgotten by many, this was once owned by Fortunata, and was a house used for contact with Redcaps. Any magus will know of the existence of "a house in Venice" on a successful roll of Intelligence + Order of Hermes Lore against an Ease Factor of 6, or Intelligence + Mercere Lore against an Ease Factor of 3. A Redcap will realize that this is that particular house if his roll succeeds against an Ease Factor of 9.

The house has been empty for a while, and been sold cheaply. It is haunted by the ghost of Lucio, an elderly servant of Fortunata who remained dedicated long after her disappearance, until he died of a gruesome plague around 1130. Lucio is not hostile, but has inadvertently frightened off previous owners. Lucio speaks an old dialect of Venetian, and will converse with any who can see him and not flee. He talks about the life and times of old Venice, Fortunata when she visited and worked on her books and letters, and his gruesome illness and death.

He knows that Fortunata used to hide papers behind a wall panels and under floorboards. Searchers may find a number of personal papers and letters by or to Fortunata of Jerbiton. Among the papers is a partial catalog of texts in her library, and a collection of correspondence with contacts on a number of small islands regarding small purchases or personal favors — the astute reader may surmise that these islands lie close together and probably close to Fortunata's island. (Roll Intelligence + Mediterranean Lore against an Ease Factor of 9.)

Story Starter: Chrétien the Roamer

Chrétien is a disreputable-looking monk, tall and perpetually tousle-haired. He has traveled extensively across much of Europe, particularly the southern Mediterranean coasts, and also across much of England. He is a great storyteller, and apparently has lived through a great many disasters (and yet is here to tell the tale — *thank you for the ale, sir!*), and seen a great many fantastical sights.

Among the disasters he has lived through, he was caught in a tempest while sailing from Venice. The ship was wrecked and he was the sole survivor cast upon the sandy shore of a small island. According to Chrétien, there were many strange sounds and sights upon the island, and many airy spirits or ghosts. He lived on crabs and drank from streams, until he gathered enough driftwood to make a raft and escape.

He may be able to recall enough of the storm-wracked race of the ship to assist interested magi to locate Fortunata's Island. The precise part of the Mediterranean where he sailed should be adjusted according to this saga's location for the island.

Chrétien has extensive knowledge of Church Lore, Dominion Lore, Magic Lore, and Area Lore of England and the Mediterranean, and can answer questions on these as the storyguide sees fit — his knowledge should act to further the story rather than as an all-round guide to these areas.

Foreshadowing

The story of Cupressa, now long dead, overlaps that of Fortunata in ways that may draw in the players, whether they are already seeking Fortunata, or learn of her through these stories.

Cupressa was a witch from Algiers whose dark practices caused her to be

banished from that city. She left, pregnant with her beast-son Monocaudus (see this chapter, Monocaudus), cursing the city with seven years' failed harvests. Cupressa then used black arts to bind the fair spirit Lucida and claim an island in the Mediterranean where she raised her son. She died of old age, but the immortal Monocaudus lived on. Fortunata later came to the island, freed Lucida and mastered the foul beast Monocaudus, and took the island for herself.

Cupressa was not alone, but part of a tradition of witches similar to the Witches of Thessaly (see *Realms of power: Infernal*, page 140), and the witches of that tradition still revere the great Cupressa.

Story starters related to Cupressa form further links to Fortunata.

Story Starter: The Witches' Quests

The heirs to Cupressa's tradition may still be found in Algiers and the lands around. They believe that the treasures of Fortunata are treasures stolen from Cupressa, and so rightfully theirs. They seek Fortunata's island still, and have gradually spread into southern Europe gathering information.

The witches have encountered Hermetic magi before and are very wary of them, with their Parma Magica and powerful spells, so work indirectly through mundane agents who remain ignorant of their true purpose or origin.

Player companions or grogs may be approached to sell information they have, or to seek information for an agent.

Alternately, they may be fed information letting them to search for and find the island themselves and be first to breach its defenses, allowing the witches to follow and attack while they are weakened.

In another scenario, the witches may be protective of their search, and feed disinformation to others, so that they are sent on false quests.

Story Starter: Fortunata the Thessalian?

The elderly Federo of Bonisagus has studied the life of Fortunata and amassed a great deal of information about her — much of it sadly distorted.

He has convinced himself that Fortunata was herself a witch of Thessaly: sodalis, rival and ultimately victor over the witch Cupressa of Algiers.

He offers to reward a junior magus who will follow up his leads and confirm his beliefs. He has plans for expeditions to Algiers, to Thessaly, and to various Mediterranean islands where he believes she resided.

Unfortunately, Federo has been fed false information by the Witches, and his quests are misguided, though they may reveal actual truths as they are followed.

Story Starter: Viea's Legacy

As told in *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 6, Trianoma and her sister Viea were sorceresses from Thessaly who woke a dragon that guided them to the cave where they found Bonisagus the Founder. Viea later quarreled with her sister and fled, some time before the founding of the Order of Hermes. Viea does not figure large in the subsequent history of the Order, though a few speculate as to her fate.

Pullatus of Flambeau is obsessed with both Viea and dragons, and believes that Viea founded a lineage of her own, outside the Order, using knowledge stolen from the Founder, and that Trianoma and Viea dealt with dragons.

He has learned that Cupressa spawned a son, who he believes to be half-dragon, and Pullatus now speculates that Cupressa and Viea were one and the same, and if so, the legendary Hermetic maga Fortunata must have occupied an island once home to a near-Founder of the Order. He

Alternative Versions of Omaion

According to the saga, it may be more appropriate to use an alternative version of Omaion. Legends tell contradictory tales, and a saga may choose another to be the true version:

OMAION THE INFERNAL

A demon taking the form of a jet-skinned handsome man who resides in a fortified mansion at the heart of the old quarter in Algiers, surrounded by beautiful servants and apparently abundant wealth. Monocaudus's beast-

form is then the interaction of Infernal and Magical blood in fleshly form.

OMAION THE SORCERER

This is one of the darker fae of Greece, who broods in dark forest glades. He has the head and tail of a dragon, the chest of a lion, the arms of a man and the nether parts of a goat, as though he were drawn from a mixture of old myths of Greek monsters. Any who imply such about his origin risk his immediate wrath.

wishes to track down the island and learn as much as he can about Viea-or-Cupressa and her son Monocaudus.

His own research into reproducing the ideas and magics of Viea keep him tied to his laboratory, so he seeks fellow magi to join him on his quest. He can offer spells for dealing with dragons, texts on Magic Lore (Dragons), and a book of Mediterranean Lore specializing in the area to be searched.

Story Starter: A Vengeful Father

Long ago, the Witch Cupressa gave birth to a magical half-beast son. Legend tells of the mother, and the son, and the maga who defeated them, but not of the father. That father was a being called Omaion The Serpent, a great magical snake some 30 feet long, with penetrat-

ing venom, leathery skin that turns any weapon, and the ability to walk as a beautiful man, seductive and lithe. He makes his home in a cave in a remote waste in Turkey, though in man-form he may wander far afield.

He has had little (if any) contact with Hermetic magi in the past. Those who investigate Cupressa or Fortunata may find their paths cross with his: he is likely to be neutral at first, curious if offered information about Cupressa, then furious when he discovers what befell her and his son.

If careless, the player characters may become the immediate focus of his wrath, but more likely he will fly off to pursue Fortunata. When he learns that Fortunata is no longer available as the target of his wrath, but was representative and typical of an Order of magi, he will blame the Order of Hermes as a whole, and begin a war against magi. The players must then face the wrath of their sodales at Tribunal regarding the clause in the Hermetic Oath: "I will not endanger the Order through my actions ..."

Tempestas: a Spirit of Storms

Magic Might: 35 (Auram)

Season: Summer

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

Size: 0

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Spirit, Improved Characteristics (x2), Keen Vision, Fury

Magical Qualities and Inferiorities: Greater Power (Raise the Tempest), Focus Power (Crafter of Weather), Improved Might (x15), Improved Powers (reduce Might cost); Slow Power (x2)

Personality Traits: Stormy +3

Abilities: Awareness 5 (searching), Concentration 5 (maintain pow-

ers), Mediterranean Lore 3 (waters)

Powers:

Crafter of Weather, 1-5 points, Init -3, Auram: by spending Might points equal to the equivalent spell magnitude, Tempestas can create any weather related (non-Ritual) effect up to level 25. This is a Slow Power, taking an extra round to prepare.

Raise the Tempest, 0 points, Init -6, Auram R: Sight, D: Conc, T: Group Calls up a storm, 10 miles across, of hurricane intensity, similar to the spell *Wrath of Whirling Winds and Water*. The storm builds up over several minutes, and dissipates shortly after the Power duration ends.

CrAu 50 (Base 5, +3 Sight, +1

Conc, +2 Group, +3 Size): Greater Power (50 levels, -5 Might from Improved Powers).

Vis: 4 Auram, in storm spume.

Appearance: Mundanely appearing as a great storm, but those with Second Sight or equivalent may see a huge disembodied blue head with bulging cheeks, blowing continuously. (Size applies to his head, which is the size of a man, not to the size of the storm.)

Note that many weather effects are indirect (like capsizing boats), but Tempestas has a high enough Penetration (35) for Tempest that direct effects like lighting or rain may even affect magi.



Fortunata's Island

The island is hidden by obscurity rather than specific disguise or magic — there are a great many small islands scatter around the Ionian Sea, and on into the Mediterranean itself. Should the unwary stumble across the island, they may find it hazardous — but the prepared visitor can seek Fortunata's Library. The exact location should be adjusted to suit the players' saga.

Although some of the scattered writings of Fortunata provide clues to its location, or even encourage others to strive to find it, she overlooked mentioning any of the guardians, so they may come as something of a surprise to the unwary.

Bound Spirits

A number of spirits around the island are bound by command spells. The command spells themselves are made permanent by means of Spell Binding. (See this chapter, Initiation of Spell Binding.)

For example, Fortunata bound Tempestas, spirit of the storm, with a *Coerce a Spirit of Auram* spell (ReAu 15, R: Touch,

D: Diam, T: Ind (Base 5 +1 Touch, +1 Diam)), sustained by a *Sustain A Spell of Auram* (ReVi(Au) 20 R: Touch, D: Special, T: Ind, Ritual (Base effect (target spell level)) and a Might 20 Auram spirit.

Fortunata would have cast the *Coerce* spell while in the summoned presence of Tempestas — subsequently returned to the skies, but still bound by the *Coerce* spell — and also commanded a lesser spirit to enter a container object. If the container object is broken, the *Sustain* spell will break, the *Coerce* spell end, and Tempestas may fly free.

The Spell Binding command takes much less Vis and time to prepare than a Constant Effect *Coerce a Spirit of Auram* device effect, especially as the device effect must include extra levels for Penetration to overcome the target's Might. This way Fortunata used her own cast-spell penetration, and a mere four pawns of Vis for the Spell Binding Ritual.

Those spirits bound to serve and obey are all tied in this manner, and the spell containers are gathered in the Library. The *Coerce* spells used are such that possession of the container grants command of the servant; however, if the container is broken, the *Sustain* spell is broken, the *Coerce* spell ends, and both spirits are released.

In general, if an enchantment or

spell of command is already active, ruling a being, then a countermanding spell must exceed the level of the original, and also penetrate the Magic Resistance of the spirit. In the example above, this applies both to the spirit Tempestas (bound by a level 15 *Coerce*, Might 35) and the anonymous Airy Spirit tied into the *Sustain* ritual (bound by a level 20 *Sustain* Ritual, Might 15). It is often easiest to end a binding by locating the container object and breaking that.

A Tempestuous Approach

The island is not obviously distinguished, at a distance, from any of the other myriad small islands that clutter the coastal regions of the Mediterranean; it is so small and undistinguished that if it has a mundane name, only local fisher folk know it, and avoid it as an area with bad weather.

The approach to this island is protected by Tempestas, a powerful spirit of storms. If a ship or swimmer approaches the island, Tempestas raises a storm sufficient to drive away or wreck any vessel not protected by powerful magic. It is likely that those who come sailing up ex-

Vis Sources

The island supported a powerful maga, and provided her with vis, though she also harvested vis elsewhere. If the magi are interested in Fortunata's resources, and spend the time to study and investigate the island, there are sources for about 20 pawns of vis per year: Rego, Muto, Aquam, Auram, Imaginem, Mentem, Vim.

pecting a quiet anchorage will find themselves cast upon the shore with minimal equipment, separated from each other.

Tempesta is bound to serve as guardian by a Spell Binding in a carved agate head in Fortunata's library.

Geography of the Island

The island is small — a mile or two across, edged by sandy beaches where the wind sweeps in, dunes, and dune grass. Driftwood often appears on the beaches, blown in by the many storms. The island lies low, rising to some 100 to 200 feet high at the center, where gorse, thorn bushes and olive trees displace the dune grass. Several springs rise in the interior and give rise to freshwater streams which run down to the beaches through gullies cutting through the dunes. Freshwater mussels and small fish may be found in the streams; there are also crabs which hide in creeks, and sea fish for those who risk the storms.

Those cast upon the shore may freely wander the beaches, though most

find them featureless, and one can easily become uncertain of the distance covered, and whether tracks are one's own or those of another. Imagines, spirits of illusion, wander the island playing tricks with sight and sound, while the ghosts of drowned sailors sometimes march along the beaches.

The most significant single feature on the wind-swept barrens is a house built in the manner of a Roman villa: not a case of antiquity preserved, but a reconstruction by the maga Fortunata, modeled on the Jerbiton villas of Valnastium. The villa (or rather an image of the villa) appears from some vantage points, but with the low lie of the land, soon falls behind the dunes. Magi attempting to cast Sight-range spells will soon discover that they see an image rather than the real villa.

Lucida, an Airy Spirit

Lucida is the chief spirit of the island, commanding the other spirits against the day when Fortunata might return.

When Fortunata and Lucida first met, Lucida had been trapped in a cleft in a huge boulder by the witch Cupressa and her monstrous get Monocaudus. Fortunata freed and befriended Lucida, and later returned, defeated and bound the monster Monocaudus in revenge. Their relationship was as close and intimate as human and spirit can be, and since the loss of Fortunata, Lucida remains grieving the lost maga — self-bound to her memory.

Magic Might: 25 (Mentem)

Season: Summer

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

Size: 0

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Spirit, Second Sight; Dutybound (Fortunata's memory)

Magical Qualities and Inferiorities:

Focus Power (Ghost Touch), Focus Power (Crafter of Illusion), Greater Power (Control Human), Greater Power (Greater Eidolon), Greater Power (Command Spirit), Personal Power (x2) (Travel), Improved Abilities (x4), Improved Characteristics (x4)

Personality Traits: Airy +3, Brave +2, Grieving +2

Abilities: Awareness 3 (alertness), Bargain 3 (favors), Concentration 4 (maintain powers), Faerie Lore 1 (glamor), Folk Ken 1 (spirits), Greek 3 (old dialects), Guile 2 (lie to authority), Intrigue 2 (scheming), Island Lore 4 (inhabitants), Italian 3 (old dialects), Latin 5 (hermetic use), Leadership 1 (grogs), Magic Lore 3 (spirits), Magic Theory 4 (help in lab), Mediterranean Lore 1 (geography), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (past magi), Second Sight 4 (spirits)

Powers:

Command Spirit, 0 points, Init 0 Mentem
R: Voice, D: Moon, T: Ind

If this power penetrates, Lucida

exerts direct command over the target disembodied spirit, which must carry out commands to the best of its ability. The target may try to break free whenever asked to do something complex, dangerous or against their nature. (Make an Intelligence + any appropriate Personality Trait against an Ease Factor of 14 (9 + Magnitude of Might).
ReMe 30 (Base 5, +2 Voice, +3 Moon), Greater Power (30 levels, -3 Might cost)

Control Human, 1 point, Init -1, Mentem
R: Voice, D: Conc, T: Ind

If this power penetrates, the spirit exerts direct command over the target, who carries out commands to the best of his or her ability. The target may try to break free whenever asked to do something complex, dangerous or against his nature. (Make an Intelligence + any appropriate Personality Trait against an Ease Factor of 14 (9 + Magnitude of Might).
ReMe 35 (Base 20, +2 Voice, +1

To enter the interior of the island and try to reach the villa is to become surrounded by the sights and sounds of the island, and perhaps to encounter the guardians.

The island as a whole has a Magic aura of 4, and Fortunata's villa has a Magic aura of 6.

Fortunata's Villa

Fortunata designed her home to be her idea of a large Roman villa, although it included a Hermetic Laboratory and other innovations.

The villa has a central range (about 120 feet or 40 paces long) with two stories and two longer side ranges of store- and work-rooms, running 150 feet south; it is

shaded to keep out the hot summer sun, with fireplaces inside to heat rooms during winter's chill or clear starry nights.

Inside it has been poorly maintained and cleaned, and the straw strewn around is old and stale, despite Fortunata's binding on Monocaudus that he clean and maintain the place — he slacks from his work whenever he can. Only a few rooms are used — the rest are shuttered and damp, as Monocaudus no longer bothers to build fires to warm them. Despite this neglect, candle flames burn all through the building, wherever Fax (see this chapter, Fax) touches.

The candles are reflected in the many mirrors that hang on the walls; rooms are still furnished but the contents are covered by protective drapes which Monocaudus has allowed to be-

come moldy, and spider webs cover everything undisturbed.

The high Magic aura (6) has warped many of the contents — the mirrors do not reflect truly, and shadows move of their own accord. The spiders are warped too, and many are alarmingly large — legs nearly a hand-span, and bodies larger than a man's thumb.

THE VILLA INHABITANTS

The Imagines, spirits of Illusion that haunt the island, such as Error and Cantus (see this chapter, Cantus) often congregate in the villa, enjoying the aura and teasing the mirrors; strangers draw attention as play-things.

Lucida wanders the villa, passing

Lucida, an Airy Spirit (cont'd)

Conc), Greater Power (35 levels, -3 Might cost)

Crafter of Illusion, 1-5 points, Init -2, Imaginem: Lucida can duplicate any Creo or Rego Imaginem spell up to level 25 by spending 1 Might per Magnitude of equivalent spell. (Focus Power).

Greater Eidolon, 0 points, Init +1, Imaginem R: Sight, D: Conc, T: Ind

Lucida can create an illusory form that is visible and audible to others, anywhere Lucida can see. The form is that of an apparent youth in loose robes, with short white hair, and a high clear voice. The image moves and speaks as directed (even out of sight, or if Lucida *Travels* elsewhere), and permits Lucida to see and hear what takes place around the image; it lasts until Lucida has no further use for it.

Within the villa, Lucida often makes the image appear inside one of the many mirrors.

Cr(In)Im 30 (Base 2, +3 Sight, +1 Conc, +2 move at command, +1

intricacy, +1 Intellego requisite) Greater Power (30 levels, -3 Might, +1 Init)

Ghost Touch, 1-5 points, Init -2, Teram: Move objects that are not held by another or fastened down. For 1 Might point, a maximum of 5 pounds can be moved; each additional Might point doubles this weight limit. Lucida cannot use or throw objects as weapons. The power lasts until the object is released by Lucida. (Focus Power)

Travel, 1 points, Init +0, Mentem.

R: Special, D: Mom, T: Ind This power lets Lucida "summon" her spirit to any place she can see, is familiar with, or has an Arcane Connection to, in a manner similar to a maga's ReCo travel spells.

ReMe 35 (Base 15, +4 Special (equivalent to Arcane)), Personal Power (x2) (35 levels, -3 Might)

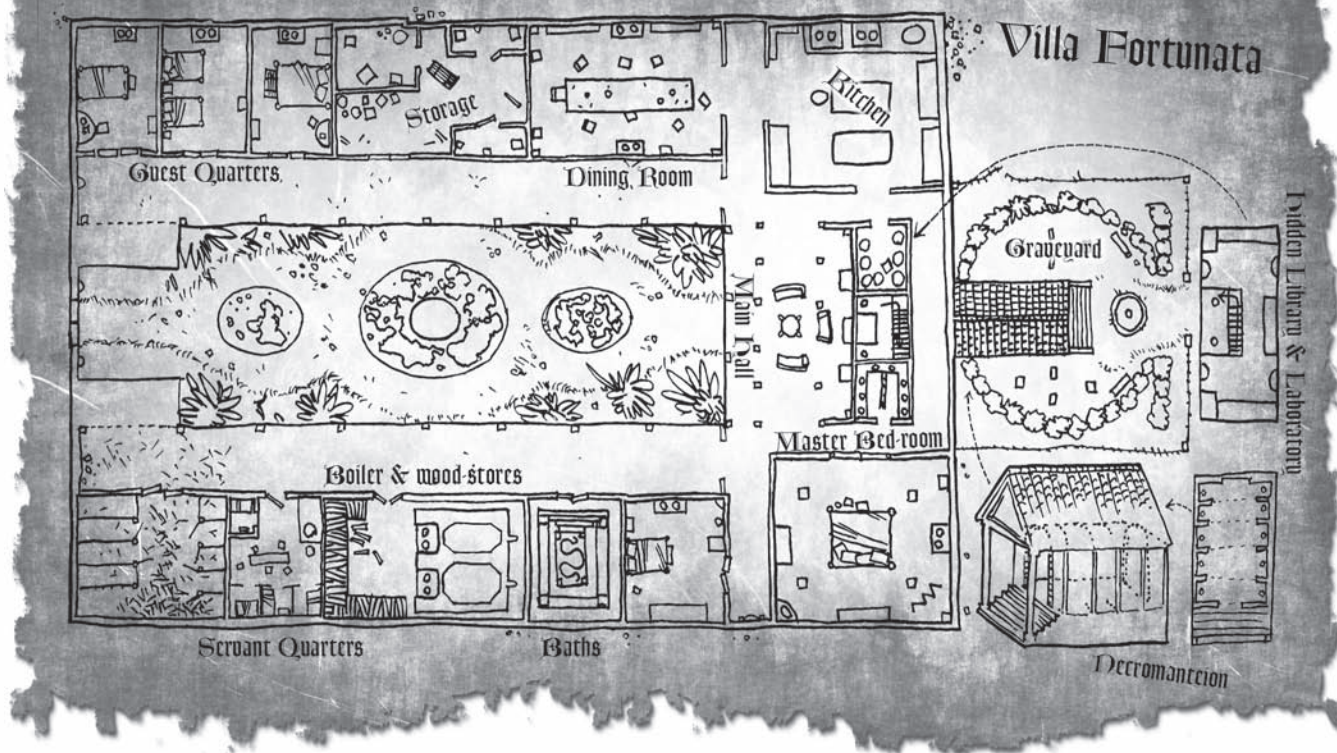
Vis: 5 Mentem, in reflections.

Appearance: Lucida has no mortal form, and is rarely in any one place but spreads attention across the

island. One with Second Sight or similar, who came into the actual presence of the spirit, would see a figure similar to the *Eidolon* image. Lucida's gender is unclear — Lucida discourages speculation about what is under the robes, but does use a name with feminine form in Latin, so perhaps "she" applies.

Lucida prefers the description "Airy Spirit", but scholars of Magic Lore would disagree — Lucida is much too powerful to be one of those minor spirits. Theorists might speculate that Lucida is really a ghost, or even a Faerie who has migrated into the Magic Realm; Lucida may know the truth but not be telling, or Lucida may truly have forgotten.

Note that when a magus dies, a normal (mortal) animal familiar dies too, but immortal beings such as spirits, or certain special animals, do not die; instead they are released, with the loss of Bond powers.



through the library, laboratory, and Fortunata's bedroom, and chastising Monocaudus wherever he can be found.

Monocaudus lurks in the kitchen by the fire, or resentfully makes fires or token gestures of cleaning; he spends much of the day wandering outdoors on the pretext of gathering firewood or food.

THE VILLA GRAVEYARD

There is a small graveyard alongside the villa, where the remains of the dead are held in stone urns. Many of these are pagan burials from elsewhere, though, which have been re-interred here so that their ghosts may be conveniently summoned.

Next to these there is a spring and a pool with cypress trees, and a false doorway into the north wall of the villa. This necromanteion is sheltered by an arch and an iron gate; on the inside are

mosaics depicting Hades. The structure was once used in ceremonies to contact the dead.

THE VILLA ROOMS

Most rooms stand open — entrance hall, kitchen, and stores, and the many store-, function- and bed-rooms, including Fortunata's own. A corridor snakes through the building, interrupted by some of the rooms; many rooms have connecting doors. External doorways and those of larger rooms are decorated with pillars molded with Hermetic motifs.

The finest rooms, such as Fortunata's bedchamber and dining room, have mosaic floors and painted plaster walls, according to designs from classical Rome recounted by summoned ghosts. Sadly, many of these have been damaged by time and careless treatment.

FORTUNATA'S LABORATORY AND LIBRARY

Her laboratory is hidden in the core of the building, surrounded by other rooms, with neither door nor window — magic is needed to enter. The layout of the other rooms is such that the hidden chamber is not obvious, though careful study or mapping will reveal the missing space. Monocaudus is no help, never having entered; only Lucida knows the secret.

The laboratory also contains her library, and is surprisingly sparse — much of her work took place outdoors among spirits. If cleaned up, and perishable stocks replaced, it could be used as a standard laboratory.

FORTUNATA'S BOOKS

The library holds the full set of texts written by Fortunata on her Prin-

Monocaudus, a Magical Servant

Fortunata defeated the ancient serpent Monocaudus, enemy of Lucida, and bound him as a slave, commanding him to perform the most menial tasks. He still lurks around the old villa, and makes token observance of his duties (such as collecting firewood), as he fears that Fortunata may yet return and punish him for his idleness. He resents his general condition and his binding, and curses Fortunata and Lucida to any who will listen — chiefly the minor spirits of the island, though they understand little of what he says.

He is often chastised and brow-beaten by Lucida, but to little effect. Lucida can only remind Monocaudus of the ancient binding words, and of the future punishments which Fortunata will surely inflict, but has no magical power to force him to obey. Such haranguing only fuels his resentment.

Magic Might: 25 (Animal)

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

Characteristics (Serpent): Int 0, Per +1, Pre -1, Com +1, Str +6, Sta +3, Dex +2, Qik 0

Size: +1 (Man), +2 (Serpent)

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Magical Animal, Size +2 (free) or Large (free); Animal Ken, Improved Characteristics (x3), Improved Soak (x2), Puissant Brawl, Sharp Ears, Tough, Wilderness Sense, Magical Monster, Monstrous Appearance, Plagued by Supernatural Entity (Lucida); Disfigured (Tattooed all over)

Magical Qualities and Inferiorities: Gift of Speech, Personal Power (Human Form), Improved Abilities (x4), Improved Attack (x2), Improved Damage (x2), Improved Defense, Improved Might (x5), Personal Power (Human Form),

Slow Power (Human Form)

Personality Traits: Monstrous +3, Resentful +3, Bitter +2

Combat:

Dodge (Man): Init: +2, Attack —, Defense +9, Damage —

Fist (Man):* Init: +2, Attack +14, Defense +12, Damage +8

Bite (Man):* Init: +2, Attack +9, Defense +9, Damage +2

Dodge (Serpent): Init: +0, Attack —, Defense +7, Damage —

Fist (Serpent): Init: +0, Attack +14, Defense +10, Damage +12

Bite (Serpent): Init: +0, Attack +9, Defense +7, Damage +6

*Constrict (Serpent):*** Init: +0, Attack +12, Defense +7, Damage —

* Monocaudus' "Man Form" is an active magical power, and so his attacks must penetrate Magic Resistance. In his natural serpent form, he does not need to penetrate, which may surprise the unwary magus, thinking it an assumed form.

** Constriction is based on the grappling rules (ArM5 page 174). If he wraps his tail around a victim and maintains the constriction, the victim suffers Deprivation from lack of air, while Monocaudus is free to strike or bite the victim or another.

Soak: +10

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

Wound Penalties (Man): -1 (1-6), -3 (7-12), -5 (13-18), Incapacitated (19-14)

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

Abilities: Animal Ken 4 (serpents), Awareness 1 (alertness), Athletics 4 (run), Brawl 5 (fist), Carouse 3 (drunken stories), Chirurgy 3 (crude tools), Concentration 2 (when scolded), Greek 4 (curses), Guile 5 (elaborate lies), Intrigue 2

(malicious schemes), Island Lore 4 (history), Italian 2 (sailors), Latin 4 (orders), Magic Lore 1 (creatures), Mediterranean Lore 1 (nearby islands), Wilderness Sense 4 (islands)

Powers:

Human Form, 1 point, Init -2, Corpus: Monocaudus may (and is generally forced to) assume human form, which lasts for Sun duration or until he wills it to end. His human form loses the Serpent's Size +2 (and the Str +4, Qik -2 that brings), but has the Large Virtue (Size +1, but no characteristic modifier).

Vis: 5 Animal, in his tattoos.

Appearance: Monocaudus' true form is that of a great serpent with the arms, chest and head of a man. His skin is not scaled like a snake, but rather covered in tattoos. He is bound by sustained magical command to serve Fortunata and to assume human form, the better to perform as a household slave.

In the long absence of Fortunata, her memory faded and Monocaudus may attempt to temporarily ignore her commands, either rebelling or assuming his natural form. To do this he must roll Stamina + appropriate Personality Trait against an Ease Factor of 12.

The curious consequence of his magically enforced human form is that attacks by his human form must penetrate Magic Resistance, but in his natural, monstrous form he does not need to penetrate. The unwary magus may be surprised by this. Lulled by their success at ignoring his fists, they witness his magical transformation and assume they can still resist his blows.

[Monocaudus is designed using the design rules for "Dragons As Characters", see *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 74, including the free base Size +2, and the constriction attack.]

Monocaudus' Binding

Monocaudus is bound more firmly than other spirits on the island. There is a tiny topaz, enchanted specifically to control him, and embedded in his chest, where it can renew its effect if ever suppressed temporarily. This was created to compel him forever, as a Quest for Initiation.

MONOCAUDUS' BINDING

ReMe 55

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

Pen +32, constant use

While under this enchantment, Monocaudus must obey Fortunata, or her continuing commands, or any

deputized agent of Fortunata.

(Base 20, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, Modifications +4 levels constant, +16 levels Penetration)

Note that Monocaudus is guileful and very hard to persuade as to the genuine agency of any new command — even from Lucida; he also sometimes talks himself out of the duties he has been ordered to, such as maintaining the villa, or at the very least he shirks his duty. Even while Fortunata was here, she had to remind and chastise him for slacking. It may be possible, if difficult, to masquerade as Fortunata well enough to claim rulership of Monocaudus.

principles Lore: four tractatus and her grand summa, and nine Initiation Scripts (described elsewhere in this chapter) based on Principles Lore:

Principles for a Better Life (tractatus on Principles Lore, Quality 11)

Principles of Life as a Magus (tractatus on Principles Lore, Quality 11)

Principles of Power (tractatus on Principles Lore, Quality 11)

Principles of the Spirit (tractatus on Principles Lore, Quality 11)

De Disciplinae Fortunatae ("Fortunata's Principles") (summa on Principles Lore, level 4, Quality 11)

The Mastery of Principles (Initiation of Piusant Principles Lore)

The Myth of Andros and the Tree (Initiation of Spirit Familiar)

Plutonic Beginnings (Initiation of Minor Magical Focus (commanding spirits))

The Myth of Aerius and Pluto (Initiation of Major Magical Focus (spirit magic))

The Myth of Heiro and the Cave (Initiation of Spell Binding)

The Myth of Heiro and the Haunted Graveyard (Initiation of Hermetic Empowerment)

On A Pilgrimage To Jerusalem (Initiation of Sense Holiness & Unholiness)

The Myth of Aquila's Eyes (Initiation of Improved Characteristics (Perception))

She translated a number of ancient texts, so originals and translations are found here, plus books by Fortunata:

Heroes of Olympos (tractatus on Magic Lore, Quality 7, Latin by Julius of

Nicomedia)

Heroes and Gods (tractatus on Magic Lore, Quality 8, Greek, by Polymos)

Necronomicus (tractatus on Necronomicus Lore — a forgotten cult, Quality 8, Latin, anonymous)

Piraeon (tractatus on Piraeon Lore — a forgotten cult, Quality 9, Greek, anonymous, plus Latin translation by Fortunata of Jerbiton)

Cult of the Wanderer: revised edition, (tractatus on Cult of the Wanderer Lore — a forgotten cult, Quality 9, (lost Greek original, anonymous), Latin translation by Fortunata of Jerbiton)

Heroes of Rome (tractatus on Magic Lore, Quality 8, and tractatus on Mediterranean Lore (history), Quality 8, Latin, by Caius of Mediolanum)

Ionian Isles (tractatus on Mediterranean Lore, Quality 11, by Fortunata of Jerbiton)

The Names of Ghosts (tractatus on Magic Lore, Quality 11, by Fortunata of Jerbiton). This book includes lists of the names of ghosts Fortunata summoned, and the abilities they had which she found useful (such as the language they spoke and read).

There are also conventional Hermetic texts, including both summae and tractatus on Magic Theory and the

Story Seed: Monocaudus's Incitements

Monocaudus loathes and detests Lucida, and he has twisted his stories so that Lucida is now the cause of his torments, and the usurper of "his" island. His stories often contradict each other, but circle round a few themes. He will make false claims, such as that Lucida has imprisoned the other spirits of the island, and uses the mistress's books to evil ends. Another favorite tales is that of his dam, Cupressa, and how she raised and nurtured him, and how the cruel Mistress Fortunata fought with and slew the kindly Cupressa.

Note that since Monocaudus does not know the nature of the enchantment that binds him to service, he spuriously attributes his servitude to the commands of Lucida, rather than Fortunata's device. He will go so far as to try to recruit visitors to support his "righteous cause", asking them to act against Lucida and to free him.

Lucida's treatment of Monocaudus may appear to support this story, though in truth he deserves much of what he receives, and exaggerates overmuch.

Forms of Imaginem, Ignem, Terram, Mentem, Vim, and all five Techniques.

Her books also include Lab Texts for a number of common spells, in particular:

Coerce the Spirit of (Form), Re(Form) 20, R: Voice, D: Diam, T: Ind. Make a disembodied spirit of (Form) obey the caster so long as she can coerce it with threats. The library has Lab Texts to *Coerce the Spirit of Earth* (Te), *Fire* (Ig), *Illusion* (Im), and to *Coerce Ghosts* (Me). (Base 5, +2 Voice, +1 Diam)

Incantation of Summoning the Dead (ArM5, p.152) ReMe 40, R: Arcane, D: Conc, T: Ind, Ritual. Calls up a person's ghost, You must be on the spot where they died or have the corpse. You can summon any ghost which is actively haunting the area you are in, if you know its full name — but a non-Ritual summoning spell can also summon such a spirit. (Base 15, +4 Arcane, +1 Conc)

Summon the Spirit of (Form), Re(Form) 40, R: Arcane, D: Conc, T: Ind. Calls a disembodied (Form) spirit if the magus has an Arcane Connection or knows the non-magical name of the spirit. Elemental material of the type associated with the spirit serves as an Arcane Connection to any (Form) spirit which resides in the area. The library has Lab Texts to *Summon the Spirit Of Earth* (Te), *Fire* (Ig), *Illusion* (Im), and to *Summon the Spirit of Man* (Me). *Summon the Spirit of Man* is a lesser, non-ritual version of *Incantation of Summoning the Dead* (ArM5, p.152), which can only affect a ghost which is actively haunting something, so many dead spirits remain unaffected by this call. It can affect any ghost that the caster has previously summoned by magic. (Base 15, +4 Arcane, +1 Conc)

Thoughts Within Babble, InMe 30, R: Per, D: Sun, T: Hearing. The magus understands the speech of those he can hear. Fortunata's version is extended to Sun Duration, so she need not concentrate on the spell while study-

ing from texts read out loud to her. (Base 5, +2 Sun, +3 Hearing)

And the following Mystery spells (requiring and enabled by specific Virtues):

Sustain a Spell of (Form), ReVi(Form) Gen, R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind, Ritual, Mystery (Spell Binding). Cast on a container, the ritual spell binds to another spell (of the requisite Form) cast in the next round, allowing a (Form) spirit to be forced into the container where it must sustain the second spell indefinitely. The library has Lab Texts to sustain spells for Terram, Ignem, Imaginem and Mentem, at levels 20, 30, and 40. (See this chapter, Initiation of Spell Binding) (Base effect)

Empowering Prison of the Declining Spirit, Re(Mu)Vi(Form), Gen, enchantment, Mystery (Hermetic Empowerment). R: Per, D: Mom, T: Ind, Pen +0, 1 use per day. This enchantment binds a spirit into the device, draining its Might Score to power Ritual Magic effects in the device. The library has Lab Texts for *Empowering Prisons* for Terram, Ignem, Imaginem and Mentem, at levels 20, 34, and 50. (See this chapter, Initiation of Hermetic Empowerment) (Base effect)

FORTUNATA'S TREASURES

The laboratory hides the Spell Binding containers (see this chapter, Bound Spirits) which maintain the *Coerce Spirit* spells which command the guardians of the Island, including Tempestas, Lapidus, and Fax. The commands given when the *Coerce Spirit* spells were cast mean that a possessor of the Spell Binding object can claim to be the lawful ruler of that spirit.

The containers are sealed into the solid stone of the floor, by use of Rego Terram to re-shape the stone around them (Intellego Vim magics reveal their presence.)

Spells to Summon and Command Spirits

The following Guidelines appeared in *The Mysteries: Revised Edition*, page 28:

Level 5: Control a disembodied spirit of (Form).

Level 15: Summon a disembodied spirit of (Form).

CALLING THE DEAD

ReMe 60

Pen +20, 24/day

R: Arc, D: Conc, T: Ind

Calls up a ghost which has a regular haunt if you are at that place, or if you have previously summoned the ghost by magic, and you have an Arcane Connection such as the ghost's full name. This effect is particularly applicable to spirits originally called by Ritual summoning.

Once summoned, the Staff maintains concentration on the summoning, until the ghost is dismissed.

(Base 15, +4 Arc, +1 Conc, +10 levels for penetration, +5 levels 24/day, +5 maintain concentration)

MAINTAIN THE CASTER'S SPELL

ReVi 45

Pen +0, 24/day

R: Touch, D: Diam, T: Ind

Applied to a spell which you have already cast and are concentrating to maintain, the device sustains the spell for a diameter while you perform other actions. You can still concentrate on the spell to alter its effects. The device affects spells up to level 40.

(Base 30, +1 Touch, +1 Diam, +5 levels 24/day)

Island Inhabitants and Guardians

The island has many spirits, chief

among them being Lucida, one-time familiar to Fortunata. With the timeless nature of spirits, few can tell whether Fortunata came to the island because it was rich with spirits, or whether she, as mistress of spirits, commanded them to come here.

There are many Imagines — mi-

nor spirits of sensation — who fill the place with sounds, and strange sights. As one walks around voices or strains of music may be heard; and one may see many things: people (strangers, or even familiar — the spirits are notorious for duplicating people) or buildings (perhaps even a village in the dis-



Fax, a Firebrand Spirit

Fax is a spirit of the firebrand, bound by Fortunata to protect the island. She spends her days racing around the island, skipping from the tip of one bush to another, not stopping even to consume the wood; at night she sometimes settles for a while, flames as might a torch, then moves on again. Those wandering the interior of the island, or the villa itself, may find some of her *Continual Flame* torch-fires burning without fuel — she creates these whenever she gets bored, and they last long enough that there are many burning at any time.

If commanded by Lucida or such, or if she should remember her charge, then Fax uses her powers to harass and harm intruders. She is bound by a Spell Binding contained in a large ruby, hid-

den in Fortunata's library.

Magic Might: 10 (Ignem)

Season: Spring

Characteristics: Int -3, Per 0, Pre +2, Com -2, Str -10, Sta +1, Dex +3, Qik +8

Size: -5

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Spirit; Tough; Proud (Minor)

Magical Qualities and Inferiorities: Focus Power (Crafter of Ignem), Greater Power (x2) (Arc of Fiery Ribbons, Continual Flame, Donning the Corporeal Veil, Hurl Flame), Improved Abilities, Improved Defense (x3), Improved Soak (x2), Personal Power (Flight of the Hummingbird); Miniature (x2)

Personality Traits: Fiery +3, Proud +3

Combat:

Dodge: Init +8, Attach -, Defense +14, Damage -

Fist of Flame: * Init +8, Attack +3, Defense +8, Damage +5 (fire)

* Fax's touch burns on contact, rather than hurting by impact.

Soak: +8

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

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

Abilities: Athletics 3 (run), Awareness 3 (alertness), Brawl 4 (fist), Concentration 1 (maintain powers), Finesse 1 (Ignem), Island Lore 2 (places), Latin 3 (fire), Magic Lore 1 (spirits)

Powers: -1 (1), -3 (2), -5 (3), Incapacitated (4)

tance). It is easy to pursue phantoms that lead you on until a stumble or turn takes them briefly out of sight — never to return.

Upon realizing that there are intruders, Lucida will command the full power of the Imagines and other spirits to drive the intruders mad, or at least

to drive them away. There are also dangerous spirits bound here by Fortunata to protect her villa and keep intruders out — elemental spirits of both earth and fire.

The spirits may not have the Might to penetrate even a shared Parma Magica, but they can work indirect magic

against a magus, and are a considerable danger to those companions separated from their magus during the tempestuous storm and cast upon the shore. They are also part of the “treasure” of the island, if one can locate and take their binding items.

Cantus, a Spirit of Song

Cantus is an example of one of the many Imagines that haunt the island. It wanders freely, not bound by Fortunata — it may be one of the native “sounds which fill the island” which Fortunata mentions in her writings.

Magic Might: 5 (Imaginem)

Season: Spring

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

Size: —

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Spirit.

Magical Qualities and Inferiorities: Greater Power (Music of the Spheres).

Personality Traits: Guileful +3

Abilities: Awareness 3 (alertness), Finesse 3 (illusion), Music 3 (illusion), Island Lore 2 (inhabitants), Magic Lore 2 (spirits)

Powers:

Music of the Spheres, 0 points, Init +1, Imaginem

R: Voice, D: Conc, T: Group

Cantus can create music (or less complex sounds), from one to ten

voices. It is fond of bell chimes, and plaintive melodies.

Crlm 25 (Base 1, +2 Voice, +1 Conc, +2 Group, +2 move at command, +1 intricacy), Greater Power (25 levels, -3 Might, +2 Init)

Vis: 1 Imaginem, in a chime which falls to the ground.

Appearance: To those with Second Sight or similar abilities, Cantus appears as a set of chime bells or as some specific instrument it is sounding. It always sounds sweet and comely.

Fax, a Firebrand Spirit (cont'd)

Arc of Fiery Ribbons, 1 point, Init +5, Ignem.

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Ind

As the spell of the same name, Fax can throw out ribbons of fire doing +10 damage to all in a 60-degree arc as far as her voice carries.

Crlg 25 (Base 5, +2 Voice, +2 Group) Greater Power (25 levels, -2 Might cost)

Continual Flame, 1 point, Init +6, Ignem

R: Touch, D: Moon, T: Ind

Fax can touch anything and leave behind a flame (anywhere from candle-sized to torch sized) which will burn without fuel for a month.

Crlg 15 (Base 3, +1 Touch, +3 Moon) Greater Power (15 levels, -1 Might cost)

Crafter of Ignem, 1-3 points, Init +6,

Ignem.

Fax can duplicate any non-ritual Creo or Rego Ignem spell up to level 15, at a cost of 1 Might per spell magnitude. Focus Power (15 levels, +1 add 5 to max. level, +1 Init)

Donning the Corporeal Veil, 2 points, Init +5, Ignem

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

Fax may produce and animate a body of elemental fire, which lasts until the duration expires or she dissolves it; if slain in material form she is killed, leaving behind 2 small rubies containing vis — but if injured she can dissolve her body to prevent death.

Cr(Re)lg 25 (Base 5, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +1 requisite): Greater Power

(25 levels, -1 Might cost)

Flight of the Hummingbird, 0 points, Init +7, Ignem

R: Per, D: Conc, T: Ind

Fax can fly through the air in any direction simply by concentrating; if concentration is lost she stops but does not fall.

Relg 10 (Base 4, +2 Sun): Personal Power (10 levels, -1 Might cost).

Hurl Flame, 0 points, Init +7, Ignem

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Ind

Fax can hurl a torch-sized flame from her tiny hands, doing +5 damage where it strikes.

Crlg 10 (Base 4, +2 Voice) Greater Power (10 levels, -1 Might cost)

Vis: 2 Ignem, in her ruby eyes.

Appearance: Fax appears as a tiny naked woman made of flame.

Mnemos, an Ancient Ghost

Mnemos lived and died a long time ago, before the time of Christ, for certain. He remembers little of life, except a bright, hot sun, and much sand. He speaks a language only spoken then, and forgotten since — but he was literate in life, and can read even now. Fortunata used to summon him and command him to examine ancient scrolls, and to read aloud to her if he could. She then used *Thoughts Within Babble* to understand his speech.

She would sometimes transcribe what he read out, and sometimes just listen, studying from his words as if she were reading the text herself.

Magic Might: 5 (Mentem)
Season: Spring
Characteristics: Int +2, Per 0, Pre +1, Com +2, Str 0, Sta +1, Dex 0, Qik -1
Size: 0
Virtues and Flaws: Magic Spirit (spectre)
Personality Traits: Lost +3
Abilities: Artes Liberales 3 (grammar), Concentration 1 (reading), Dead Language (Sumerian) 5 (scholarship)
Vis: none
Appearance: A dark-skinned man, with

a shaven head and a long, waxed chin-beard. He wears a skirt of linen, and the ghost of a gold collar.

Mnemos is an example of one of the ghosts named and described in a list in Fortunata's library; her notes for Mnemos annotate him as "Sumerian:". Fortunata's methods meant that she never bothered to learn ancient languages, just summoned spirits until she found one who could read a text for her.

In his unchanging ghost-life, he does not remember Fortunata. He has faded though, to the extent that he does not remember why he remains on earth.

Error, a Spirit of Recollection

Error (or "Delusion") is another of the Imagines. It wanders freely, not bound to specific service; it creates (recalls) figures which talk and jest among themselves. Error is these images (or their spirit); it must conjures its own imaginings most of the time, but cares not whether there is any audience. The memories of others make an interesting change, so it will gleefully pursue and confuse any visitors it encounters.

If anyone comes across Error playing out some scene for itself, it will try to draw them into the scene, adjusting the scene to pull them in further. If Error detects suitable victims when not already engrossed in its own story, it will create figures from the memories of the new victims — these may be very plausible, such as fellow travelers cast onto the island, and so especially confusing to encounter.

Magic Might: 5 (Imaginem)
Season: Spring
Characteristics: Int +1, Per +3, Pre -3, Com +2, Str -2, Sta +2, Dex 0,

Qik +2
Size: 0
Virtues and Flaws: Magic Spirit, Second Sight, Meddler
Magical Qualities and Inferiorities: Greater Power (Image of the Beloved), Focus Power (Warper of Imaginem); Slow Power (Image of the Beloved).
Personality Traits: Meddler +3, Guileful +3
Abilities: Awareness 2 (alertness), Finesse 3 (illusion), Folk Ken 1 (common folk), Guile 3 (illusion), Island Lore 1 (inhabitants), Magic Lore 1 (spirits), Second Sight 3 (illusion)
Powers:
Warper of Imaginem, 1 point, Init +1. Error can duplicate any Muto or Rego Imaginem spell up to level 5 at a cost of 1 Might. (Focus Power).
Image of the Beloved, 1 points, Init -2, Imaginem
R: Voice, D: Conc, T: Group
Error can create a believable figure or figures, which interact with a victim and their associates. The

spirit attempts to second-guess (using magic) what the figures should say or do, and may easily be caught out. (Compare its roll of Perception + Finesse against a victim's roll — usually Perception + Awareness, but other Abilities may apply, considering familiarity with the image portrayed.) Error's power must penetrate for it to pluck something familiar from a victim. This is a slow power, as Error must concentrate for a round to grasp what would best deceive the victim.

Cr(In)Im(Me) 35 (Base 2, +2 Voice, +1 Conc, +2 Group, +2 move at command, +1 intricacy, +1 Intellego requisite, Mentem requisite adds no further ability and so is free), Greater Power (35 levels, -3 Might cost)

Vis: 1 Imaginem, in a shard of glass.
Appearance: Error has no fixed appearance, just that which it creates — Second Sight shows it as whatever figures it currently portrays.

Lapidusus, a Spirit of Stony Ground

Lapidusus is a spirit of stony ground, bound by Fortunata to guard the island against intruders. Any who walk unwarily over open ground (not solid rock) may be noticed and attacked. As an insubstantial spirit it can move freely through solid matter — but by choice Lapidusus always remains in soil, especially stony soil.

He is bound by a Spell Binding contained in a leaden plumb-weight hidden in Fortunata's library.

Magic Might: 10 (Terram)

Season: Spring

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

Size: 0

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Spirit.

Magical Qualities and Inferiorities:

Greater Power (Sense the Feet That Tread The Earth), Greater Power (The Crystal Dart, The Earth's Carbuncle, Hands of the Grasping Earth, Pit of the Gaping Earth), Great Strength, Great Stamina, Improved Powers (x2) (reduced Might cost)

Personality Traits: Stony +3

Abilities: Awareness 4 (searching), Finesse 4 (Terram), Island Lore 2 (geography), Magic Lore 1 (spirits)

Powers:

The Crystal Dart, 0 points, Init +1, Terram. As the spell of the same name, Mu(Re)Te 10. Greater Power (10 levels, -1 Might from Improved Powers, +1 Init from Improved Powers)

The Earth's Carbuncle, 0 points, Init 0, Terram. As the spell of the same name, Re(Mu)Te 15. Greater Power (15 levels, -2 Might from Improved Powers, +1 Init from Improved Powers)

Hands of the Grasping Earth, 0 points, Init 0, Terram. As the spell of the same name, Re(Mu)Te 15. Greater Power (15 levels, -2 Might from Improved Powers, +1 Init from Improved Powers)

Pit of the Gaping Earth, 0 points, Init +1, Terram. As the spell of the same name, reduced to R: Touch, PeTe 10. Greater Power (10 levels, -1 Might from Improved Powers, +1 Init from Improved Powers)

Sense the Feet That Tread the Earth, 0 points, Init +0, Terram

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Part

Merely by thinking about the question, Lapidusus can feel what is moving along the ground within a mile, which covers the whole of Fortunata's island. He can tell the direction, distance, weight, number, and manner of movement of moving things.

InTe 25 (Base 4, +1 Touch, +1 Part, +3 Size), Greater Power (25 levels, -3 Might cost, +2 Init)

Vis: 2 Terram, in sharp flints.

Appearance: Lapidusus is insubstantial, but appears as a very ugly, wrinkled, distorted man with a huge head and hands, and almost no body. His skin appears like old brown leather, but close up is like the earth itself.

Time on the island has been so quiet, with so few intruders, that Lapidusus has become slack in his searches, so intruders may be able to move around for some while before he recalls the task he has been set.

Chapter Four

The Magical Garden of Hérissou

Lifetime: c. 857 AD – 1002 AD

Overview: An advocate of peace slain on the eve of the Schism War, whose pacifist teachings changed the philosophy of House Bjornaer. His magical garden hosts a war of its own even today, as well as the secret of growing vis.

One of the legends of House Bjornaer was the magus Hérissou. Quite apart from his political importance to his followers, Hérissou was a theorist and experimenter who discovered a method for growing and multiplying vis. When the player characters stumble across the results of his experimentation, they can

follow a trail of clues to his garden, a magical paradise filled with remarkable magical plants and the means to recreate his method of Hermetic vis production.

Legend

The tenth century was a turbulent time for the Order of Hermes. Punctuated in the middle by the Corruption of Tytalus, anarchy and paranoia became rife and Wizard's War commonplace. It was into this environment that Hérissou's pacifistic writings began to circulate. This Bjornaer follower finished his apprenticeship in 881 in the Normandy Tribunal, and he became an unremarkable magus interested in Herbmagic and magical agriculture.

At this time the prevailing attitude among House Bjornaer was that mankind was killing Magic. In the heartland of Mythic Europe, campaigns of deforestation were ordered by monarchs to make room for the rapidly expanding population. House Bjornaer believed it was their sacred duty, as given them by their Founder, to protect the wildernesses and to keep them in their pristine, magical state. They feared the wide-scale loss of vis sources and Magic auras, and some Bjornaer magi even mooted a



cull of the human population. Hérissou, a member of Clan Arelie, was at odds with his Primus and many of his House, for he believed that Magic was infinite rather than limited, and he set out to prove it. He was largely ignored by the Order, and he devoted himself to pursuing original research into the nature of vis in a backwater region of his tribunal.

On several occasions he tried to communicate his findings to other members of the Order, but it was not the right political climate for peaceful research, and his House members did not want to know. As the tension rose within the Order towards the first millennium, Hérissou tried to work towards peace. He offered copies of his research to House Bonisagus and explained his theories to convocations of House Diedne. Although some interest was roused over his claim to be able to grow vis, few believed him and other concerns soon got in the way as the Order prepared for war. His House had grown sick of his haranguing and were suspicious of his dealings with other Houses, and eventually Gypaetus of Bjornaer accused him of betraying cultic secrets to magi hostile to the Order, and declared Wizard's War. Hérissou was hopelessly outmatched; although over a hundred years old, his life had been dedicated to Magic Theory and original research, whereas Gypaetus was a veteran hunter of Marched magi. Hérissou was slain not two days beyond the full moon.

A scant few years after his death the Schism War commenced, and House Bjornaer retreated into its domus magna and did not emerge for fifteen years. During their isolation, the leader of Clan Arelie had been studying Hérissou's political writings, and had discussed their implications with her clanmates. Other members of the House professed an interest in the peaceable philosophy, and by the time the House emerged in 1019, there was a burgeoning political movement within House Bjornaer called the *Concordiarii*, and half of the House's clans had officially declared a

See the Introduction for details on revealing the legend of Hérissou. Bjornaer followers may remember more about Hérissou and receive a +1 bonus to their roll; members of Clan Arelie, who are the memory of their House (see *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, House Bjornaer) receive a +3 bonus instead.

KNOWN BY ALL

- Hérissou of Bjornaer was a magus in the ninth and tenth centuries
- Hérissou built a magical Garden overflowing with vis, the location of which has never been found.

WIDELY KNOWN

- Hérissou was the founder (in name at least) of the Harmonist movement within House Bjornaer.
- Hérissou's heartbeast was a hedgehog.
- Hérissou claimed to be able

desire to attempt to live in harmony with mundane populations rather than resent and restrict their growth.

The legend of Hérissou's Garden has entered into the mythology of the Order; supposedly this is where the magus conducted his research into the production of vis. His most devoted followers have searched for the garden ever since his death, but it has never been found. Some claim he referred to the garden as a metaphor, a mental image invoking the primal peace of Eden. Others insist it is a real place, although they have yet to prove such an assertion.

A DESCENDANT OF MYANAR?

Some of the stories around Hérissou suggest that he possessed Mystery

to grow practically unlimited amounts of vis, but he was never taken seriously in these claims.

- Hérissou was killed in a Wizard's War by a member of his own house.

UNCOMMON KNOWLEDGE

- Hérissou was slain by Gypaetus of Bjornaer
- Hérissou argued with his House and his Primus, and was accused of revealing House secrets to House Diedne.

LOST SECRETS

- Hérissou may have been a descendant of Myanar.
- Some believe his spirit still lives in his garden.
- Hérissou sent a copy of some of his research to the Great Library at Durenmar.

Virtues typical of those found in House Merinita, specifically the Nature Mysteries. Certainly, those magi who find his garden will encounter sentient plants, such as those created by the Awakening Nature Mystery Virtue (*Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 104). It may be that Hérissou was descended from one of the followers of Myanar who fled House Merinita for House Bjornaer when Quendalon became Primus. Magi who discover this, and are aware of the Nature Mysteries, might wonder whether he actually escaped death entirely through the Guardian of Nature Mystery, whereby a magus transforms himself into a *genius loci*. His death at the hands of Gypaetus could have been a carefully constructed deceit to absent the magus from the Order and allow him to dwell in peace. If this hypothesis

is true, then he may haunt the location of his garden as its guardian spirit. Furthermore, if Hérissou was a member of an esoteric Mystery Cult within House Bjornaer, then his descendants may well continue that tradition in secret.

THE SEPT OF HÉRISOU

Hérissou's Hermetic descendants of Clan Arelie still name their sept after their notable founder, despite having a more recent common ancestor. The eldest member and Mystagogue of the sept is Tasso Agricola, a master of Teram magic. His filia Erica is a prominent figure in Hermetic politics, preaching the necessity of co-existence with mundanes and the church. The other members of the sept are equally committed to the Harmonist stance.

Legacy

Hérissou's passion was for a process he called "Hermetic Viresculture": literally, the cultivation of vis. At the time of his death he had completed a Major Breakthrough in Hermetic theory, allowing him to create vis through growing it. This discovery was supplemented by a Minor Breakthrough allowing him to create Lesser Enchantment Vis (see *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 119) through Viresculture. He failed to achieve his ultimate goal, which was to generalize his

technique to cover any type of vis. As it stands, Hérissou's technique can only imbue generative properties to pawns of vis that have a shape which naturally grows, such as a living plant, animal, or even a fire. However, anyone who comprehends Hérissou's discovery can develop new cultivars (see later) that could incorporate other types of vis into the process. When he died, Hérissou was working on including vis resident in gemstones and metals which grow beneath the earth.

Viresculture

Vis is normally a static thing, such as that found in the corpses of magical creatures or in the parts of a plant. Even if the seed of a plant is the receptacle of its vis, that seed is often sterile and dead. Hérissou's discovery was a way to give the vis resident in a magical creature or plant the property of self-generation. The nomenclature of his laboratory notes makes a distinction between Grana (singular Granum), which is ordinary, static vis; and Stirpes (singular Stirps), which is self-replicating vis. The latter is a magical creature or plant that contains vis having all the properties of ordinary vis, but if its magical power is not consumed in spellcasting or laboratory activity, it can instead be used to generate more vis. Each Stirps created by Hérissou's theory is the founder of a Cultivar of vis, all members of which share the same properties. The practice of Hermetic Viresculture first requires Vitaliza-

tion of a living source of vis to create the Stirps in the first place, and then Invigoration to allow the Stirps to produce offspring that themselves contain vis. Vitalization has another use: while it costs Vim vis to perform, it mobilizes the vis inherent in a magical creature or plant and allows it to be transferred out without killing the donor.

The Stirps

The foundation of any vis-growing enterprise using Hermetic Viresculture is the Stirps. This is the first individual that both contains usable vis and is capable of reproduction, and is the founder of a given cultivar. The Stirps is usually a living being, but Hérissou successfully created a Stirps from a tiny fire elemental, since fire is an element that naturally spreads. The Story portion of this chapter culminates in the characters discovering several Stirpes created by Hérissou, but anyone who develops a score in Hermetic Viresculture can make her own.

VITALIZING VIS

Creating a Stirps is a laboratory activity called Vitalization, which is akin to creating an invested device. Essential to the enterprise is the raw material, which must have a Magic Might of 0 or more, and have the inherent capacity for self-replication. Dead animals or parts of plants cannot form the basis of a cultivar. The offspring produced by these 'raw materials' need not themselves be magical: the youngsters born to an Animal of Virtue are often not Animals of Virtue themselves, and most seeds of magical plants grow up into normal plants of their kind.

The target Level for Vitalization is equal to the Magic Might of the base creature, plant, or object. The magus accumulates in a season a number of points

New Supernatural Ability: Hermetic Viresculture

The character can produce varieties of self-reproducing vis, and cultivate vis as a form of magical agriculture. Note that, because it fully incorporates Hermetic magic, Hermetic Viresculture can be taught to other

magi without needing to subtract one's Art Scores from the Source Quality (*Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 29). Only those opened to the Hermetic Arts can make use of this Ability since it relies on Hermetic magic.

towards the successful completion of the Stirps equal to the amount by which his Vitalization Total exceeds the Level. This is a Creo Vim Lab Total that uses Hermetic Viresculture Ability instead of Magic Theory. Once a number of points equal to the Level of Effect have been accumulated, the Stirps is complete. Vitalization costs one pawns of Vim vis per ten points of the Level of Effect (or fraction thereof); this vis is usually fed to an animal or transferred into the water used to grow it.

VITALIZATION TOTAL:

Intelligence + Creo + Vim + Hermetic Viresculture + Aura Modifier

LEVEL OF EFFECT: Magic Might

A Vitalized Stirps has the potential to reliably produce offspring that contain vis, but must first be Invigorated (see later). Before it is Invigorated, the offspring of a Stirps are no different from how they would be if the parent had not been Vitalized. Many things with a Magic Might are immortal, but if a Stirps is not, before it dies of old age, an uninvigorated Stirps will produce one offspring that is also an uninvigorated Stirps. Vitalization has another immediate consequence; the vis that is normally available in the being's body once it is dead can be transferred (ArM5, page 94) into another receptacle without harm, although it ceases to be a Stirps. For example, a magus could Vitalize a Raven of Virtue (*Realms of Power: Magic*, page 62); and at the cost of a pawn of Vim vis, could extract the two pawns of Intellego it contains without harm. If the Raven was killed later, its corpse would contain no vis.

STIRPES FROM LESSER ENCHANTMENT VIS

Hérissou's second breakthrough was to integrate inherently magical types of

New Cultivars

Hérissou by no means exhausted the possibilities for Stirpes in his research. For example, some gemstones of Mythic Europe come in both male and female forms, and given sufficient time they will reproduce. A Stone of Virtue might therefore serve as suitable raw material for a Stirps. Elementals have the unusual property of being an animated substance composed

of vis, and form suitable raw material for a Stirps for the elemental Forms.

It may be possible for Magic Humans (*Realms of Power: Magic*, page 83) to found a cultivar, but the slow reproductive cycle makes it a non-starter without magical intervention. Furthermore, they would probably object to being used as breeding stock, and for their children to form a magus's vis supply.

Lesser Enchantment Vis and Spell-Like Vis

These two types of vis were first introduced in *Realms of Power: Magic* (pages 119–122). Vis of either type can be used in all the usual ways that vis can usually be used, but they also have a magical power. Lesser Enchantment Vis emulates a Lesser Enchantment, usually of level 30 or less. As long as the vis is not used in a magical

activity, a character can benefit from the effects of the enchantment. Spell-Like Vis has a single use only, mimicking the effects of a spell of up to 60th level; this spell can be a ritual, and if so it requires no additional expenditure of vis or time. Once the spell is triggered, its effects take place and the vis itself is expended.

vis into his virescultural theory. Lesser Enchantment Vis (see Insert) that is found in a living form capable of self-reproduction can be made into a Stirps, even if it does not have a Magic Might. The Lesser Enchantment Vis is Vitalized as described earlier, except that instead of Magic Might, use the level of the effect possessed by the vis. If the vis is transferred out of a Stirps of this type its magical power is lost.

Hermetic Viresculture is currently incapable of creating Lesser Enchantment Vis, it is only capable of allowing it to self-propagate; thus it is necessary for a magus to first find an example of this rare type of vis. Hérissou was working on a breakthrough to create Lesser Enchantment Vis when he died, and had assembled a large collection of Spell-Like Vis and Enriched Things of Virtue (see *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 124) as part of his research.

INVIGORATING A STIRPS

Before the Stirps can be used to grow vis, it must be Invigorated. This infuses it with the ability to produce many copies of itself. Invigoration requires a single season of laboratory work, during which time the magus generates an Invigoration Total. The Form used in the Invigoration Total must match that of the Might of the Stirps, or the Form of the Lesser Enchantment, but bears a Vim requisite. For every ten points (or fraction) of the Invigoration Total, the Stirps has one breeding season that will yield vis. Each litter or crop produced from a Stirps contains a number of pawns of vis equal to one fifth (or fraction) of its Magic Might or Level of Effect (for Lesser Enchantment vis). This vis is of the same Form as that within its parent.



INVIGORATION TOTAL:

Intelligence + Creo + Form (Vim Requisite) + Hermetic Viresculture + Aura Modifier

BREEDING SEASONS:

Invigoration Total / 10, rounded up

NUMBER OF PAWNS OF VIS PRODUCED:

(Magic Might/5) or (Level of Effect/5), rounded up

The Stirps produces a normal number of offspring of its kind, and the pawns of vis are distributed evenly among offspring. Each pawn of vis produced in this manner has a one in ten chance of being an uninigorated Stirps. If the cultivar is of a kind that usually reproduces once and then dies (like many plants), an additional one of its offspring is the Invigorated Stirps reborn. Once it has had its allotted number of breeding seasons, the Stirps is no longer Invigorated, but can be re-Invigorated with another season of laboratory work.

Exempli Gratia: A Rooster of Virtue with a Magic Might of 10 is made into a Stirps. It produces hundreds of eggs with a flock of chickens every year, but only two of them in any given year are vis. Each egg containing vis has a one in ten chance of being an uninigorated Stirps

Exempli Gratia: A stalk of wheat is Lesser Enchantment Vis containing a 25th level effect. As a Stirps, each year it produces up to 20 grains of wheat, and five of them contain a pawn of vis each. Each of these pawns has a one in ten chance of being an uninigorated Stirps. One additional seed is always a Stirps which is the Invigorated wheat reborn.

Exempli Gratia: A magical horse with a Magic Might of 15 becomes a Stirps. Every two years she can produce a foal containing three pawns of vis. If any of these pawns of vis are Stirpes (each has a one in ten chance) then the mare has multiple births that year, with each Stirps being in a different foal.

Magic can be used to cause the animal or plant to reproduce out of season; however this does not increase the

amount of vis produced, just the speed at which it can be obtained. At maximum a Stirps can reproduce once per season, and can have two breeding seasons per year. Without magical help it has just one. The vis can be transferred (ArM5, page 94) from the body of a living animal or plant without harming it, regardless of the being's other powers. However, this unmakes a Stirps, and destroys the power of any Lesser Enchantment Vis.

Growing and Harvesting Vis

Once a magus has an Invigorated Stirps, he can harvest pawns of vis from it every time it breeds; the fruit of an Invigorated Stirps every breeding season is a mixture of normal vis and Stirpes. All Stirpes born to a Stirps are naturally Vitalized but uninigorated. If the parent was Lesser Enchantment Vis, then so are any Stirps offspring. A pawn of Stirps vis can be distinguished from normal vis through an Intellego Vim spell that is powerful enough to determine the Art of a pawn of vis; Stirpes appear as particularly intense examples of their kind.

CARING FOR VIS

The Invigorated Stirps must be cared for like a normal example of its kind until it reaches its usual reproductive season. It is essential that the Invigorated Stirps is kept in a magical Aura: either rooted in one (if a plant) or housed in one (if an animal). An Invigorated animal develops a mighty appetite even if it is normally immune to hunger, and that food must be produced in a magical Aura as well. Furthermore, an animal Stirps requires a mate of the same species that has been reared on the same food, although the mate can be a wholly mundane animal otherwise.

Raising plants or animals through Hermetic Viresculture requires the attention of a magus with that Ability for its breeding season (generally the spring for animals and the autumn for plants), although the magus can also perform a normal seasonal activity during this time since he can generally oversee a team of agricultural laborers and/or stockmen to perform the majority of the tasks. A magus can only oversee the growth of a number of Stirpes (of any cultivar) equal to his Hermetic Viresculture Score. Stirpes in excess of this number fail to produce viable young because the magus's attention is stretched too thinly.

A magus who neglects his magical crops will suffer decreased yields: for every month that a magus does not spend at least one day overseeing his crops or herds and making small adjust-

ments to their management, the final yield of vis for that season is reduced by one pawn. Input from farmers and stockmen can be represented through Labor Points (see Insert).

Labor Points

Labor Points are a means by which the day-to-day work of a craftsman, professional, or laborer can be measured. The system was first introduced in *City & Guild* (pages 38–40). In the seasons in which a character is not studying — that is, the seasons that he earns Exposure experience points — he accumulates a number of Labor Points equal to three times his Communication + Profession Ability, or his Dexterity +

Craft Ability. An individual must accumulate 36 Labor Points in a year to maintain his business or grow his crops. Wealthy and Poor characters accumulate Labor Points at different rates (see *City & Guild* for more information).

Labor Points may be accumulated from several individuals under the guidance of a foreman, who can coordinate a number of workers equal to his Leadership Score.

It costs 12 Labor Points to care for each Stirps and its associated plants or animals. Thus a crop that contains four Stirpes requires 48 Labor Points over the course of the year, generated from an appropriate Profession Ability such as Agricultural Laborer or Stockman. If less labor than this is available, reduce the overall yield by one pawn for every six Labor Points (or fraction) that are lacking.

MAXIMUM NUMBER OF STIRPES
FERTILE IN A GENERATION:
Hermetic Viresculture

PROPORTION OF YIELD THAT IS A STIRPS:
one tenth (minimum one pawn)

LABOR POINTS REQUIRED: 12 per Stirps

REDUCED YIELD FOR INSUFFICIENT HELP:
–1 per 6 Labor Points
(or fraction) lacking

REDUCED YIELD FOR INATTENTION:
–1 pawn per neglected month
or fraction

WEAKENING AN AURA THROUGH HERMETIC VIRES CULTURE

Harvesting vis from a magical aura can potentially reduce the strength of that aura (*Realms of Power: Magic*, page

Example of Hermetic Viresculture

Elaine Thymel comes across a number of Roosters of Virtue, each with a Magic Might 10 (aligned to Animal), and manages to bring two of them back to her laboratory. Her Vitalization Total is 41; she can convert both roosters into Stirpes in a season (sing the rules for Multiple Laboratory Activities, *ArM5*, 102), and this costs her a total of two pawns of Vim vis. She spends another season Invigorating the two roosters, sharing her Animal (Vim) Invigoration Total of 43 between them; each Rooster will have three breeding seasons (since she has an Invigoration Total of 22 for each rooster).

In the first breeding season, each Rooster fathers two eggs that contain a pawn of Creo vis a piece. In the first year Elaine nets four pawns of vis. Elaine has two servants dedicated to caring for her precious fowl during the year. One of these servants has a Leadership of 1, so he can oversee the

other. They each have a Communication + Profession: Poultry Farmer of 5, so each accumulates 15 Labor Points per season. This means that between them they must apply two seasons to care for the chickens to accumulate the 24 Labor Points needed.

As luck would have it, one of the pawns in the first year turned out to a Stirps, and Elaine spends one season Invigorating the chick. In the second year Elaine now has three Roosters; one with five breeding seasons, and two with two seasons left. She expects to gain 6 pawns of Creo vis this year, except that she only has 30 Labor Points and needs 36, so she only gains 5 pawns. Nevertheless, for these two years she has spent three seasons and two pawns of Vim vis, and has gained nine pawns of Creo vis in return. In the following year, for no additional input, she expects another five pawns of Creo vis, and perhaps six if she can find another poultry farmer.

Story Seeds: Hermetic Viresculture

Cultivating one's own vis is a source of stories in its own right.

A DANGEROUS TITHE

The church is entitled to a tenth of whatever God gives increase, in order to support the clergy and perform charitable works, and in theory this includes vis. If the local priest becomes aware that the covenant is engaged in agricultural pursuits — and why wouldn't he, since it is so labor-intensive? — he will demand his due. The priest employs a reeve to ensure that the characters do not try to cheat him by skimming off the choicest grains first — after all, they are known to be unworthy of trust. This puts the PCs in an awkward position: not only are they

being asked to give up their vis, that vis itself has magical properties that they may not want anyone (let alone the church) to get their hands upon.

LIKE NOTHING I'VE EVER TASTED

A peasant steals food from a field cultivating Lesser Enchantment Vis, or poaches livestock containing the same. Upon consuming the food, the culprit benefits (perhaps permanently) from whatever effect the vis produced, at the cost of suffering Warping from the continued mystical effect. The PCs need to track down the thief, before he tells others of the remarkable food and they all come looking to eat the valuable Stirpes.

- The clues lead to the covenant of Caerfloron, where their assailant reveals himself finally. The residents of Caerfloron show the characters into the Garden.
- The Garden has been in turmoil since the death of Hérissou; the characters must end the feud between three tribes of magical plants before the Garden's bounty can be reaped.
- The Garden contains sufficient insight to allow the reconstruction of Hermetic Viresculture.

Foreshadowing

Prior to beginning the search for Hérissou's garden and the secret of Hermetic Viresculture, the storyguide should set the scene by having the characters come across a few magical plants, in the form of occasional pawns of vis (perhaps Spell-Like Vis or Lesser Enchantment Vis). Some of these might be incidental to stories, others might be the focus of them; some example stories are given in this section. All these stories should occur within the same region, as they are all escapees from Hérissou's research before he established his garden. These stories should be mixed in with other stories completely unrelated to magical plant life; but when the characters first hear of Hérissou's research, they should be able to think back and realize that they have been encountering clues all along. Hérissou's sigil was spines and thorns, and vis that is a product of his magic should bear such features; he was fond of working with brambles, thistles, teasels, and the like, and his magical versions of these plants are even more spiky than normal.

A WREATH OF PALE FLOWERS

The daughter of an important noble has fallen ill, and the best physicians in the area have failed to even diagnose the

10), and Hermetic Viresculture is no different. If you are using the rules for Aura Variation, then subtract one fifth (rounded up) of the total number of pawns produced by Hermetic Viresculture in that aura from the Yearly Aura Modifier.

YEARLY AURA MODIFIER FOR VIRESCULTURE: $-(\text{total pawns} / 5)$

Adventure: In Search of Eden

Hérissou conducted most of his research into Hermetic Viresculture in a fabulous garden-laboratory. Once the characters discover the potential of his theories to produce limitless vis, they will be driven to discover the location

of this garden, which contains the fruits of his labor. Here they can reconstruct his theory through a series of Insights, a much quicker and safer manner in which to conduct Original Research. Hérissou's garden in itself is a fabulous resource even without the secrets it contains; a source of vis, wonders, study, and a superlative laboratory.

Précis

The adventure presented here has the following structure:

- Foreshadowing of magical plants in the area of the covenant
- Discovery of a copy of Hérissou's will at a vis source. The characters investigate Hérissou's descendants and those of his slayer to track down the location of his Garden. They are dogged by a mysterious assailant intent on learning what they know of Hérissou.

illness. The player characters may hear of the girl's plight and be moved to help; or else if they are famed as scholars or healers, may be approached directly. The only comfort she gains is from the fragrance of a beautiful rose with gray and pink petals, apparently unique to her gardens, and her servants bring a blossom in fresh every day. The 'Basilisk Rose' was one of Hérissou's escaped creations. One of the few destructive cultivars he created, the roots of the rose are poisoning the girl's personal water supply causing her illness. However, since the blossoms alleviate the symptoms of the poison, uprooting the plant will assuredly kill her. Once the characters discover that the Basilisk Rose contains *Perdo vis*, they may well take a keen interest in it.

A further twist is that the girl's father is the cause of his daughter's illness; he planted the rose himself in a local town a few years ago to rid himself of some troublesome opponents by causing a 'plague'. Once the plant had done its job he had it felled, but was unaware that one seed had managed to make its way into his daughter's garden. So far, no-one has linked the mysterious plague to the Basilisk Rose. The character's must contend with the noble's back-fired attempt to poison his enemies; plus there is the issue of the mysterious stranger who gave him the plant in the first place. Was it a demon wanting to tempt the noble to murder? Was it a magus, who had his own rivalry with the townsfolk? Or was it a faerie intending to gain vitality from being the girl's gallant rescuer?

A GRUIT LOCAL CUSTOM

Every year there is a contest between two households in a local village for the maker of the best beer. This village should be one that the character's covenant has regular commerce with, perhaps as a source of income. The Marianne Sisters brew a delicately-fla-

vored ale best loved by the womenfolk. Lorris Taverner makes a heavy beer with acorns and bog-myrtle that is the favorite of the men. The two drinks are famed throughout the region, but the rivalry between the two brewers raises strong passions. Both keep their recipes a secret, which will intrigue the characters when they realize that both beers have a faint taint of magic. The elder of the Marianne sisters has the Touched by Magic Virtue (*City & Guild*, page 71) and uses hyssop grown in a Magic aura as gruit (herbs used to give ale flavor). Lorris has no innate magical ability, but he has a magical oak tree — one of Hérissou's creations. The acorns that flavor his beer contain at least one pawn of *Imaginem vis* (more in a good year), and can be distinguished from the others by the spines on the acorn's cup.

The characters are asked to judge the contest between the ale and the beer, and the whole village waits with bated breath for their verdict. This is more than some local tradition; it is a matter of pride for the village, and affects their productivity. If the characters decide in favor of the ale, they will earn the hostility of the menfolk, while improving the output of the cottage industries run by the women. If Lorris's beer is judged the better, raw production of crops will receive a small boost for that year, but the women will be sullen and shrewish, and liable to bad-mouth the characters. Interfering with either ale-making process gains the enmity of the whole village.

Hérissou's Treasure

The adventure opens proper with the characters discovering a chest buried in a field. The field itself is a *vis* source, and acquiring it might be the outcome of another story, or it may be a *vis* source that the covenant has had for some time and never noticed its unusual nature.

The *vis* source takes the form of a group of plants. They are unusual in that

these plants are not native to the area, and appear to have been planted in neat rows. If the saga is set in Northern Europe, then these could be rice plants or orange trees. In Southern Europe it might instead be pot-herbs (root vegetables) such as carrots or turnips. These plants usually produce just one offspring each that contains *vis*, which without the intervention of the characters, gives rise to the next generation. However, occasionally one of the plants will produce two offspring, and one can be taken as *vis* while the other is used to grow another plant. Magical investigation reveals a qualitative difference between these two pawns of *vis* (one glows more intensely under *Sense the Nature of Vis*, for example), and only the more intense one can be used to grow more plants. There are sixteen plants in the grove, and in a typical year they might produce two surplus pawns; a moderate but steady output.

The *vis* source has no reason why it might be here except for a weak Magic aura — no ancient ruins, or local legends; nothing to suggest that this is a place of mythic import where *vis* normally grows. Investigating further the characters turn up tiny copper statues of urchins (hedgehogs) stamped with Hermetic sigils. Also buried in the field is a chest (perhaps uncovered if the field is plowed, or investigated with magic); the chest contains a will penned by Hérissou of Bjornaer bequeathing the results of his research to Gypaetus of Bjornaer "in the hope that the secret of Hermetic creation of *vis* will compensate him for the inconvenience of having to slay its discoverer". The research notes themselves are not present. An expert on Hermetic history (such as a Redcap, or the guardian of the tribunal's records) can reveal that the *vis* source was once claimed by Hérissou of Bjornaer, and a copper urchin was his voting sigil. The same source will reveal varying amounts of his story, including his claims that he could produce *vis*, and the nature of his death.

Tasso Agricola Areleins of House Bjornaer

Age: 64 (46)

Personality Traits: Badger +4, Cheerful +2, Just +1, Suspicious -1

Tasso's black hair has a white stripe rising from each temple, and it is not difficult to see the badger that he holds within. He usually wears a simple peasant smock, and a woven hat if he is working in the fields. He has the Gentle Gift and a peasant's accent. He lives in a covenant in a rural area which has little interaction in the politics of the Order, although this covenant need not be close to

the characters' covenant for the purpose of this story. He shares this covenant with one other member of his sept, and his filia Erica (who has a mole heartbeast) is at nearby covenant.

Tasso is dedicated to farming magics and practices which will increase crop yields, thus saving more forests from being cleared to make way for fields. Manual toil is an unusual occupation for a magus, but Tasso has the Study Bonus Virtue, and receives tangible benefit from his labors with soil and crops.

With their interest (hopefully) piqued with the prospect of limitless vis, the characters have two routes of investigation — Hérissou's Hermetic descendants, and those of his slayer.

HÉRISOU'S DESCENDANTS

Tasso Agricola is the eldest member of the Sept of Hérissou, and is three generations removed from his ancestor. Tasso is a friendly magus who is often found working in the fields around his covenant. He'll be happy to discuss his illustrious ancestor, and recount the rest of his legend as well as his legacy to House Bjornaer in the form of the Harmonist movement. He is aware of Hérissou's research, and has a few volumes of

Variña, an Owl of Virtue

Magic Might: 35 (Auram)

Season: Summer

Characteristics: Cun 0, Per +3, Pre -1, Com -2, Str +4, Sta +2, Dex +5, Qik 0

Size: +2

Confidence: 2 (6)

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Animal, Magical Monster; Ways of the Mountain; Improved Characteristics, Large, Puissant Stealth; Proud

Magical Qualities and Inferiorities: Focus Power (Winter's Queen), Gigantic x2; Improved Attack, Improved Defense, Improved Initiative, Improved Powers, Improved Soak x3, Minor Virtue (Great Dexterity) x2, Minor Virtue (Improved Characteristics), Minor Virtue (Tough)

Mundane Qualities: Accomplished Flyer, Aggressive, Ambush Predator, Large Claws, Sharp Ears, Thick Feathers

Personality Traits: Owl* +5, Vain* +4, Territorial +3

Combat:

Large Claws: Init +6*, Attack +21*, Defense +13*, Damage +9

* Includes Ways of the Mountain Virtue.

Soak: +12

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-8), -3 (9-16), -5 (17-24), Incapacitated (25-32), Dead (33+)

Abilities: Awareness 4 (prey), Athletics 5 (flying), Brawl 5 (claws), Hunt 4 (prey), Stealth 5+2 (from sky), Survival 3 (mountains)

Powers:

Winter's Queen, 1-6 points, Init -1 Might cost, variable form: Variña can duplicate any spell involving snow, ice, or cold with a level less than or equal to 30. this costs her 1 Might point per magnitude of the spell. Focus Power (5 mastery points to increase maximum level)

Vis: 7 pawns of Auram vis, in feathers
Appearance: An immense white owl with black speckles and amazing

emerald-colored eyes.

Variña had a Heartbeast Ability of 7 when she entered Final Twilight, leaving her Inner Heartbeast with a Magic Might of 35. She can have up to 15 more points of Magical Qualities (see *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 36), which have been left for the storyguide to develop. It is exceptionally unlikely that Variña would consent to becoming a familiar, given her background in House Bjornaer. She need not be considered to be a monster that must be killed, but she must be bypassed to gain entrance into her tower.

When she attacks, the owl will often do so from ambush; if she is not spotted and wins Initiative she gains a +3 bonus to her first Attack total. Furthermore, if she is first in the Initiative order even after her first attack, she can fly out of reach of melee weapons after making her attack. Should she wish to circle around and attack again, make new Initiative rolls for the combat.

his laboratory texts, although they are non-sequential and encoded. Tasso himself has never been able to make sense of them, but is willing to allow the characters to make a copy. His only stipulation is that the characters share with him anything they discover about his ancestor, since it is a matter of status within his House to record such information. The characters might instead approach Erica, Tasso's filia. She is likely to refer them to Tasso; as the sept-leader he is the heir to their ancestor's texts.

Richard Strabo (see later) has cultured Tasso as a friend with gifts of agricultural spells and enchantments, and the guileless

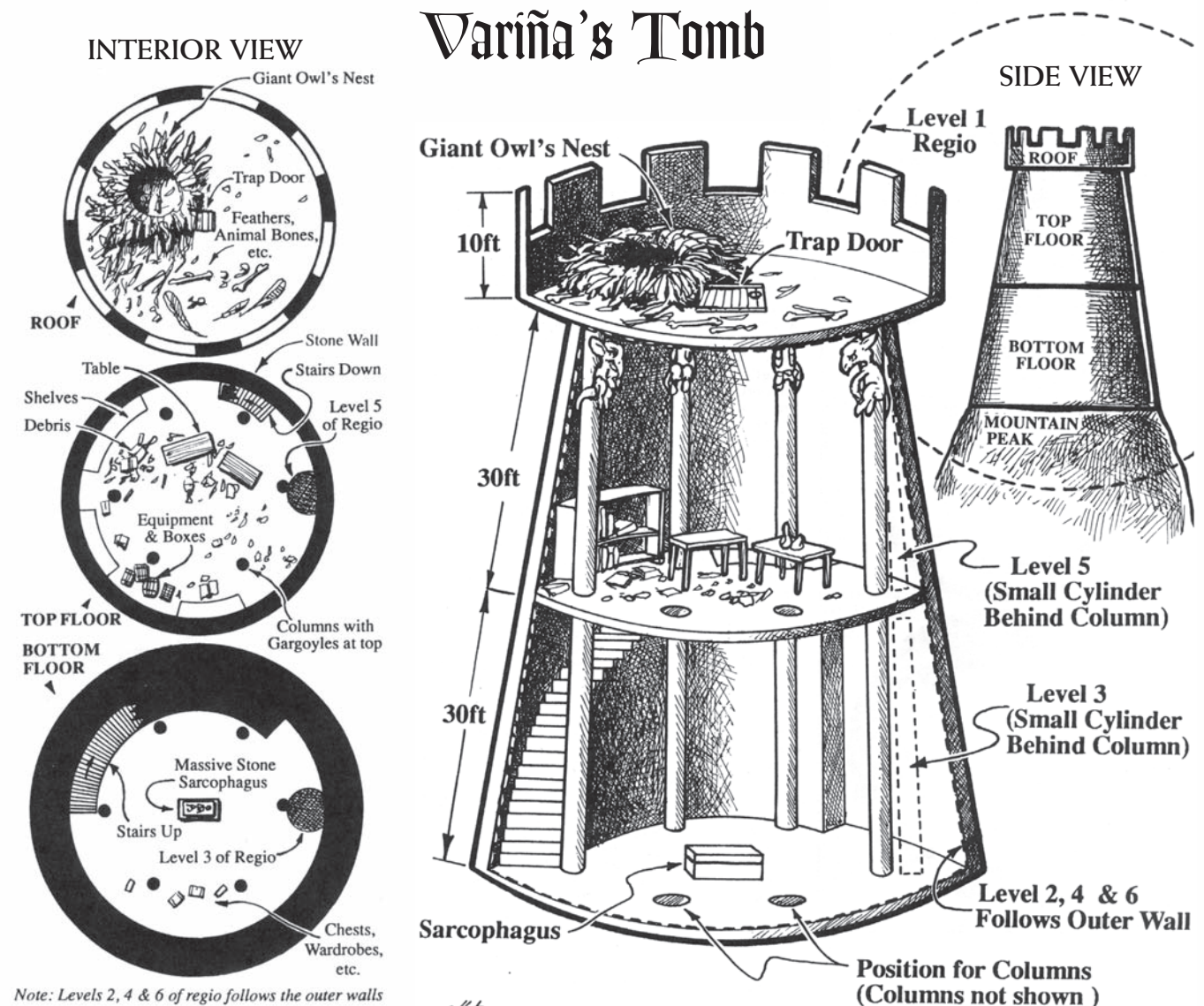
Tasso has never questioned his friendship. It will not be long before Richard discovers the character's interest in Hérissou.

VARIÑA'S TOMB

Research will reveal that Gypaeus died in 1035, leaving just one filia, Variña. She built a sanctum high in the Pyrenees (or another suitable mountain range), a lone tower perched precariously on a mountainside. Variña trained no apprentice herself, and Gypaeus's line was extirpated when she entered Final Twilight. If the characters can discover

the location of Variña's tower they might decide to investigate it to see if it contains any of Hérissou's notes. Locating Variña's tower could be a story in its own right, or it else the Redcaps could simply have records of it. The tower itself is placed in a complex series of regiones, cunningly built to exploit the layers of reality and place each story of the tower in a different regio layer. The tower is haunted by Variña herself, now a Snowy Owl of Virtue of substantial power, who has nested on the tower roof.

The first layer of the regio (Magic aura 1) encompasses the ground floor of the simple tower, following its exte-



rior wall exactly. The tower is deserted, containing only trash. The second layer of the regio (Magic aura 2) is only a few feet across, extending from floor to ceiling between one of the columns on the ground floor and the tower's exterior wall. Without finding this tiny regio, there is no way into the third layer of the regio (Magic aura 3) which follows the perimeter of the tower walls, both the lower and upper story. This layer has Variña's sepulcher, an immense stone edifice bearing an effigy of her body crafted from enchanted ice and covered by a perpetual illusion of the beautiful woman she was in life. The sepulcher may contain a num-

ber of magical items relating to air magics, which were her specialty. The fourth layer (Magic aura 4) is another cylindrical micro-regio, this time in an innocuous location on the upper story. The final layer (Magic Aura 5) consists of just the upper story of the tower, and contains her laboratory and library.

Unfortunately, the Great Beast that was once Variña has used parchment from the tower to line her nest, and many of Variña's texts have been destroyed. The remaining library can be as sparse or rich as the storyguide desires, but should be concentrated in the Art of Auram. That which can be rescued from

the nest must be sorted and restored, but what remains of Hérissou's notes contain no information that can benefit research into Viuresculture. However, the notes do refer to Hérissou's sanctum, a fabulous garden that he compares to Paradise. According to the diary entries, the garden is to serve as his new laboratory once he has arranged for the transport of all his laboratory equipment.

THE GARDEN'S LOCATION

The notes found in Variña's tower are quite explicit about the location of

Richard Strabo of House Bonisagus

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

Size: 0

Age: 58 (40)

Decrepitude: 0

Warping Score: 4 (18)

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: The Gift; Hermetic Magus; Flexible Formulaic Magic; Adept Laboratory Student, Affinity with Herbam, Social Contacts, Gild Trained, Inventive Genius, Minor Magical Focus (vines), Piusant Magic Theory*, Skilled Parents; Dark Secret, Driven, Waster of Vis; Reclusive

Personality Traits: Ambitious +5, Ruthless +3, Reclusive +2

Reputations: House Acclaim 2 (Hermetic)

Combat:

Evasion: Init 0, Attack n/a, Defense 0, Damage n/a

Soak: +2

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

Abilities: Artes Liberales 3 (rhetoric), Concentration 2 (Herbam), Faerie Lore 2 (wood faeries), Finesse 4 (Herbam), German 5 (Swabian), Guile 2 (disguise), Latin 5 (Hermetic), Living Language 4 (appropriate dialect), Magic Lore 2 (magical plants), Magic Theory 8+2 (original research), Medicine 5 (theriacs), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (Herbam specialists), Parma Magica 4 (Ignem), Penetration 3 (Herbam), Philosophiae 2 (exotic plants), Profession: Apothecary 4 (poisonous plants), Profession: Scribe 2 (summae), Stealth 2 (woodland), Teaching 2 (5) (Herbam)

Arts: Cr 10, In 7, Mu 12, Pe 5, Re 8, An 5, Aq 5, Au 6, Co 12, He 14, Ig 5, Im 5, Me 5, Te 6, Vi 10

Twilight Scars: His arms look like twisted roots, fruit does not spoil in his presence, he becomes bald in the winter

Sigil: Smell of damp earth

Equipment: Talisman; a twisted and gnarled staff of ivy. It is decorated with leaves carved from six types of woods. Attunements: +3 affect living wood (wood), +3 Creo

Herbam (almond)

The Nimble Vine, Cr(Re)He 35; Penetration 20, unlimited uses per day. Creates a strong, pliable vine which has the flexibility and strength of a human arm, but which is 8 inches in diameter and can be 500 paces long. It can act according to the wielder's instructions, and can grip, retrieve, strangle, or even wield a weapon (using the wielder's Finesse instead of any Ability required), although it cannot be controlled if the wielder cannot see the hand. It can extend as fast as a walking man. (Base 1, +1 Touch, +1 Conc, +2 size, +1 requisite, +5 maintains concentration, +10 unlimited uses, +10 Penetration 20)

The Thrusting Root, Cr(Re)He 28; Penetration 20, 6/day. Creates a thick spear-like battering ram which shoots from the staff to anyone within 15 paces. If it is used to hit a target it inflicts +10 damage, and impales the target if a Medium or more serious wound is caused. While the target is impaled he cannot move, but can attack the root. It can also

Hérisson's garden, although this fact has been omitted in this story to give maximum flexibility to the storyguide. If you intend that the garden becomes a regular part of the saga — perhaps even the residence of one of its magi — then it should be located conveniently close to the character's covenant. However, if you want it to be abandoned by the characters once they have got the most they can from it, then it can be located virtually anywhere in Mythic Europe.

The minimum requirements for the setting are a relatively untamed wilderness in a wet temperate tribunal, al-

though the garden can be reframed with little effort as a lush oasis in the midst of a sun-blasted landscape if your saga is set in one of the southern tribunals.

An Intelligence + Area Lore or Order of Hermes Lore roll can tell the characters a little bit about the location, most specifically that the covenant of Caerfloron is very close to where they are going. The Ease Factor of this roll is dependent on the distance of the garden from the character's covenant; a 9 is all that is required if it is in the same tribunal, but an 18 might be necessary if it is on the other side of Mythic Europe.

RICHARD STRABO OF BONISAGUS

Richard Strabo had some early successes as a researcher in House Bonisagus, and enjoyed the Acclaim he earned. The pressure of having to capitalize on that success to maintain his reputation has made him bitter and reclusive, especially seeing as he has failed to produce anything considered worthy by the House for over twenty years. He has been hinting to his colleagues that he has been working on a secret research project that will have a major impact on Hermetic magic, but every avenue he has pursued has resulted in a dead

Richard Strabo of House Bonisagus (cont'd)

be used to batter down doors and walls, forcing a Stress Check (*City & Guild*, page 77) (Base 1, +2 Voice, +1 Conc, +1 size, +1 requisite; +5 maintains concentration, +3 6/day, +10 Penetration 20)

Spells Known:

Disguise of the New Visage, MuCo 10/+26 (Personal variant)

Shape of the Creeping Ivy, MuCo(He) 35/+38* (like *Stance of the Patient Tree*, but ivy)

Conjure the Sturdy Vine, CrHe 5/+39*T
The Giant's Beanstalk, CrHe 15/+39*T; a variant of *Conjure the Study Vine* with two Size modifiers — the vine has a stalk as wide as a small tree, and reaches 40' into the air. It is very easy to climb.

The Chokeweed Incantation, CrHe 15/+39*T; creates a thread of ivy which winds its way up to the target's throat and throttles them. Make a deprivation roll every 5 combat rounds due to lack of air. It requires a Strength roll of 12+ each round to break the grip of the ivy. (Base 1, +2 Voice, +2 Sun, +2 force)

Trap of the Entwining Vines, CrHe 15/+39*T

Wall of Thorns, CrHe 20/+29T
The Envenomed Thorns, CrHe 25/+29T; coats a wooden weapon with a venom that inflicts +10 damage (Base 10, +1 Touch, +2 Sun)

Intuition of the Forest, InHe 10/+23
Piercing Shaft of Wood, Mu(Re)He 10/+26; Mastery 2, Multicast, Penetration

Transformation of the Thorny Staff, MuHe 10/+30; Mastery 2, Fast-Cast, Multicast

Coils of the Entangling Plants, ReHe 20/+24

Free the Crawling Vine, ReHe 20/+32*; like *Free the Striding Tree*, but R: Personal, D: Sun, and with only one Size modifier. This allows Strabo to move freely when he has converted to plant form using *Shape of the Creeping Ivy*. (Base 5, +2 Sun, +1 size)

Lord of the Trees, ReHe 25/+27T
The Treacherous Spear, ReHe 25/+24
Free the Striding Tree, ReHe 30/+27T

* Includes Minor Magical Focus

T Includes talisman attunement bonus

Appearance: A middle-aged man with dark hair and a sun-weathered face. His eyes have a manic, obsessive

glint to them that many find disturbing. He usually wears a green cloak and a wide-brimmed hat, and is never without his staff. He took his second name from a famous gardening monk, and occasionally uses the alias 'Walahfrid' after that worthy's first name.

Strabo is presented as a magus from the Rhine Tribunal, but can be substituted for any suitable character of the storyguide's devising. He should not be a prominent member of the same tribunal as the characters, to prevent his hand being recognized too readily. Richard Caespuus from Durenmar (*Guardians of the Forests*, page 58) would fill the role admirably, although be aware that at the end of this story, the character in this role is likely to face a Wizard's March.

As presented here, Strabo should present a challenge to young magi, but storyguides may wish to make him older for more experienced troupes. His skills lie less in direct confrontation than in espionage (disguised as a plant) and harassment (both political and otherwise).

end. When he came across Hérissou's notes in a forgotten archive of Durenmar's library, he made the decision to find the rest of the research and pass it off as his own. Richard has staked his reputation on these stolen fragments, and is poised to become a victim of his own arrogance and boastfulness. This is not simple plagiarism, or building on the work of another, this is whole scale theft of another magus's research, and a magus of House Bonisagus might never recover from the shame should his secret be discovered. He knows he needs to find Hérissou's garden to find the rest of the Bjornaer magus's research, but so far has missed the clue to visit the tomb of his slayer's filia.

Strabo maintains contact with several magi across Mythic Europe through correspondence, using a number of aliases. Most are experts in the Art of Herbam, and he hopes to gain ideas from such correspondence with his unsuspecting 'friends'. Paranoid about the possibil-

ity of discovery, Richard has cultured Tasso as a friend so that he should hear if anyone starts asking questions about Hérissou's research. Now that has happened, and Strabo's one chance to prove himself to his House is threatened. He is prepared to break the Code if it means his secret is secure; he is sufficiently mentally unhinged to be neither rational nor sensible about the steps he will take to preserve his secret.

By the time the characters have returned from Variña's tower, he has identified the magi and their home covenant. Guessing that they have discovered something, he will have them set upon on the way home by a group of local ruffians. He does not want the characters killed; he simply wants whatever they have obtained from the tower. The heavies are ordered to steal what they can then rendezvous at a distant tavern for their payment. To ensure that they will not speak, he poisons them all after retrieving what they have stolen. Of

course, if the characters do not set off immediately for Variña's tower, Richard might have them attacked before they have actually discovered anything, and he might have to take an alternate route to discovering what they know.

A possible tactic of Richard's is to assail the covenant by a veritable invasion of swiftly-growing ivy while the magus himself takes the form of a single strand that goes questing through the possessions of the magi to uncover the location of Hérissou's garden. Depending on how successful the characters are at foiling his plans, Richard might have to set up several schemes to try to find out what he needs. At the very least he can follow them when they leave, and once he realizes where they are heading (he is aware of the covenant of Caerfloron and its magi) he will rush on ahead to reach there first.

CAERFLORON

Caerfloron is the covenant closest to the site of Hérissou's Garden, and this is no coincidence. The covenant was founded by Caerfloron magus Ex Miscellanea, who still lives there with his four filii: Radix, Surculus, Folium, and Fructus. All five magi share a common passion for the Art of Herbam. The covenant of Caerfloron is a *hortus conclusus* (a walled garden) with each of the magi occupying a separate hut joined to the high walls. They have kept themselves isolated from the Order and its politics, preferring to simply live under its protection and use their right to secrecy to its fullest. They live in a Magic Aura of 3, and have a weak *Aegis of the Hearth* of level 20.

When the characters arrive here they receive a hostile reception. Richard Strabo has beaten them here (although they are probably still unaware that he is their enemy), and he has poisoned the minds of Caerfloron's magi towards the characters by claiming that they are



coming to execute a Wizard's War. If Strabo hasn't yet read Variña's notes, he doesn't know that the Garden is here, but simply uses Caerfloron to rid himself of magi who are close to revealing his secret. Caerfloron knows enough about the Order of Hermes and its traditions to be aware of Wizard's War, but not enough to know that the proper formalities have not been followed (if Richard finds out about the character's destination sufficiently far in advance then he will make a false declaration of Wizard's War in the name of one of the characters, to add realism. He employs *Disguise of the New Visage* to appear to be a local Redcap). Consequently, the characters will arrive at Caerfloron to meet with utmost hostility, possibly even an unprovoked assault. Once again, Herbam magics will be the main order of the day; and the characters may think that these are the magi who have been attacking them all along. Caerfloron himself is nearly 150 years old, but he is close to Final Twilight and will not risk his most powerful spells. Nevertheless, the five magi have access to some powerful magic, and should pose a threat to the characters.

Caerfloron's tactics revolve around trapping then neutralizing their opponents, so hopefully Richard's deception can be revealed without too much bloodshed. Since Caerfloron don't know why they have been singled out, and the characters don't know why Caerfloron has been so aggressive, there is an opportunity for parlay that both sides would be interested in. Strabo will do his utmost to flee once it is clear his plan has been foiled. He has clearly violated the Hermetic Oath by attempting to slay another magus, and has forfeited the protection of the Code.

Once the misunderstanding has been cleared up, Caerfloron's magi will agree to assist the characters in recompense for their hasty actions. They know exactly where the entrance to the regio containing Hérissou's Garden is, and Caerfloron

has enchanted a gate that permits passage through the regio layer and into the Garden. The magi of Caerfloron are bound by a vow to never enter the Garden more than once, although they don't say why (see Caerfloron's Magical Tradition).

Caerfloron and his filii have no objection to others using the Garden, on the condition that their apprentices are permitted to enter the regio at the beginning of their training. Caerfloron refuses to explain why this is necessary, but only after securing such a promise will the magi show the characters how to enter the regio.

Hérissou's Garden

The regio layer in which Hérissou planted his garden has a Magic aura of 6, aligned to Herbam (the aura modifier counts double when using the Art of Herbam, and all creatures with a Might associated with Herbam spend one less Might point to activate powers; see *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 16). This vast area — almost two miles in diameter — is horticulturally concentric. The outly-

ing parkland surrounds flowery meads, and within them the herb, flower, and vegetable gardens. Within the parkland is a wooded pleasaunce (pleasure garden). In the very center there is a stew (a fish-pond), which has four streams leading into and out of it like the spokes of a wheel. These streams form a circular moat that strays into several sections of the garden, and is crossed by several small stone bridges. Two of these bridges are Hermetic enchantments; one to keep the water moving, and the other to keep it clean. From a high vantage point these streams, along with various hedgerows, form the shape of a Hermetic sanctum mark. The divisions of the landscape are not immediately obvious, since the terrain is gently undulating, forming hillocks and dells throughout the regio. The weather here is similar to that in the mundane world, except that calm weather is intensified and violent weather is stilled, so there are more sunny days and fewer wet ones.

Unsurprisingly, the garden is teeming with plant life, and has numerous examples of exotic plants collected by Hérissou during a lifetime's research into the Art of Herbam, including several uninvigorated but immortal cultivars of Stirps. Many of these plants are magical, either as sources of vis or bearing other magical properties. Those that are a product of

The Role of the Garden in Mythic Europe

Ever since his expulsion from Eden, man has created gardens in imitation of paradise (a word from Persian *pairideza*, meaning 'walled garden'). Monasteries culture gardens to supply herbs for the infirmary, dyes and ink for the scriptorium, rushes and herbs for the refectory floor, as well as vegetables, pot-herbs, and fruit for the kitchen. The garden offers manual labor for those living under a monastic rule; indeed the Carthusians, sometimes called the 'gardener monks', each had a small garden attached to their cells, which they rarely left. The towns and

cities of Mythic Europe often enclose allotments of land that are used by the townsfolk to supplement their diet. Furthermore, 'pleasaunces', or pleasure-gardens, are common in some towns, which employ gardeners (*hortulani*) to provide townsfolk with a place to enjoy rest and quiet among the flowers and fruit trees. Pleasaunces are also popular among the nobility, who often culture 'love gardens', in which arbors — grassy mounds covered in sweet-smelling herbs — provide places for ladies to sit and enjoy the tamed wonders of the natural world.

his magic — as Stirpes or enchantments — bear the spines and thorns of his casting sigil. There are no animals in the garden at all, which makes walking through the greenery in silence a little eerie.

The Three Tribes

When the characters reach Hérissou's garden, they find it in a state of unrest. The strong magical aura granted

many of the plants warped Personality Flaws, and when they were Awakened through Hérissou's Mystery Virtue, they showed these personalities in full. When Hérissou was alive he was able to keep the rivalries in check, but since his death the plants have polarized into three camps. The leader of each tribe is a magical plant which has the power to temporarily grant motion to its subjects (see The Leaders of the Three Tribes).

Malus the Crab Apple rules the Curtilagium ('kitchen garden') tribe. This tribe is composed of all plants created to provide nutrition for man or beast, and also those that provide medicines. They are generally distrustful of humans, who they see as predators, and have a shaky alliance with the Venenarium. The Curtilagium tribe consists of trees such as plum, medlar, apricot, apple, and orange, and herbs such as leeks, carrot, vervain, rosemary, fennel, alexanders, and angelica.

Linum, a Flax Plant

Magic Might: 15 (Herbam)

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

Size: -2

Season: Spring

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Thing; Magical Champion; Entrancement; Arcane Lore, Gossip, Voice of the Garden; Compassionate; Anchored to the Garden, Fragile Constitution, Motion Sickness, Noncombatant

Magic Qualities and Inferiorities: Greater Power (*Rally the Wooden Troops*), Ritual Power x 2 (*Healing*); Improved Might x 5; Limited Movement, Reduced Fatigue x 2, Reduced Soak

Personality Traits: Caring +6, Peaceful +3, Flax* +2

Combat:

Dodge: Init +3, Attack N/A, Defense +7, Damage N/A

Soak: -1

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-3), -3 (4-6), -5 (7-9), Incapacitated (10-12), Dead (13+)

Abilities: Brawl 3 (dodge), Charm 1 (obsequious), Entrancement 4 (keeping peace), Leadership 1 (herbs), Mastery of Rally the Wooden Troops 3 (flowers), Penetration 4 (Entrancement)

Powers:

Rally the Wooden Troops, 2 points, Init -1, Herbam: see earlier; can only affect the Hortulus tribe.

Healing, 2 points, Init -7, Corpus: The worst of the target's wounds in-

stantly improves by one level. The Might cost for this power comes from Flax's Might Score, not Might pool. See *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 39 for more details. Ritual Power x2

Vis: 2 pawns of Herbam, in seeds

Appearance: A mass of thin stems about four feet tall, with small linear leaves and bright blue, five-petaled flowers.

Linum is the leader of the Hortulus tribe and venerated for its compassion and wisdom. However, it is deeply rooted into the soil, and has only a limited capacity for movement unaided. It also detests being moved, and becomes quite nauseated and unable to use any of its powers.

Mandragora, a Mandrake

Insert text here **Magic Might:** 10 (Herbam)

Characteristics: Int +1, Per 0, Pre -3, Com 0, Str -10, Sta +3, Dex 0, Qik +6

Size: -6

Season: Spring

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Thing; Magical Champion; Hex; Arcane Lore, Puissant Penetration, Voice of the Garden; Hatred; Anchored to the Garden, Infamous, Tainted with Evil, Weak Characteristics

Magic Qualities and Inferiorities: Greater Power (*Deadly Scream*), Greater Power (*Rally the Wooden Troops*), Greater Power (*Unwholesome Lust*); Improved Abilities x 2, Improved Powers; Limited Gestures, Reduced Powers

Personality Traits: Spiteful* +6, Mandrake* +3, Reclusive +3

Reputation: Deadly 4 (Local)

Combat:

Dodge: Init +6, Attack N/A, Defense +10, Damage N/A

Soak: +2

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1), -3 (2), -5

(3), Incapacitated (4), Dead (5+)

Abilities: Brawl 3 (dodging), Hex 4 (5) (illness), Leadership 3 (poisonous plants), Magic Lore 1 (5) (poisonous plants), Mastery of Rally the Wooden Troops 4 (toadstools), Penetration 4+2 (scream), Profession: Apothecary 4 (poisons)

Powers:

Deadly Scream, 3 points, Init +6, Corpus or Animal: The mandrake root's scream is deadly to all who hear it (deafness is an effective defense). Unlike a Mandrake of Virtue, this Magical mandrake can use this power at any time. PeCo(An) 50 (Base 30, +3 Sound, +1 Animal Requisite): Greater Power (50 levels), Improved Powers (5 mastery points, +3 Initiative, -2 Might cost)

Rally the Wooden Troops, 2 points, Init +2, Herbam: see earlier; can only affect the Venenarium tribe.

Unwholesome Lust, 1 point, Init +4, Mentem: The target of this power becomes inflamed with lust for a target chosen by the plant at the time of activating the power. She can do nothing except pursue the object

of her unnatural attraction until the duration ends. CrMe 20 (Base 4, +2 Voice, +2 Sun): Greater Power (20 levels, -5 for Reduced Powers, -1 Might cost)

Vis: 2 pawns of Corpus, in root.

Appearance: The above-ground part of a mandrake plant looks like a cluster of oblong, tapered leaves growing close to the earth. The root is about six inches long, fleshy, and has five lobes. It vaguely resembles a human figure with head, arms, and legs. Wrinkles and lumps on the uppermost lobe suggest a human face. The mandrake's flabby 'arms' have no fingers, and it is unable to grasp or manipulate objects with any skill.

Mandrake is the evil genius of the Venenarium tribe, and is consumed with hatred for all things breathing. It prefers to work behind the scenes through intermediaries and patsies, and avoids revealing itself to be the source of the character's trouble. Note that this is a more powerful, animate version of the Mandrake of Virtue found in *Realms of Power: Magic*.

The Venenarium ('poison garden') tribe consists of those herbs created by God to punish man for original sin. Most are poisonous, such as yew, henbane, foxglove, hellebore, dodder, aconite, and a whole host of toadstools, but this tribe also includes the thistles, brambles, holly, and hawthorn. They are lead by the spitefully malicious Mandragora.

The Hortulus ('little garden') tribe are initially the character's only allies in the garden. These are all the plants that provide tools or raw materials for people's needs, such as wood and fiber, or provide aesthetic pleasure. They have a servile attitude to mankind, and are likely to greet the characters with

obsequious enthusiasm. They are lead by Linum, a magical flax plant who has many of the flowers under its thumb. The trees of the Hortulus include oak, ash, hazel, and pine, and the herbs include rue, hemp, lily, loosestrife, buttercup, and mistletoe.

THE LEADERS OF THE THREE TRIBES

The tribes are populated by magical and mundane plants, although the latter can only partake in activities when permitted to do so by their leader's power to animate them. Animated plants have

Cunning rather than Intelligence. The three leaders are intelligent but incapable of human speech, requiring *Converse with Plant and Tree* (InHe 25, ArM5 page 136) or similar to communicate with them. A spell such as *Intuition of the Forest* (InHe 10, ArM5 page 136) would allow the characters to get emotional impressions from the intelligent plants.

Don't forget that within the garden, the Penetration and Magic Resistance of these plants is increased by the Magic aura, including the effects of the alignment if applicable. Furthermore, because of the alignment all their powers cost one point of Might less. Their role in this story is as obstacles and/or allies

rather than antagonists, but the story-guide can make them more of a challenge by making them Summer characters (providing 240 more experience points) and/or increasing their Magic Might by 5 to 10 points, with a similar increase in Magical Qualities.

THE BATTLE OF THE TREES

It is not possible to explore Hérissou's Garden properly without first settling the conflict between the three tribes of magical plants. The plants essential for recreating his research — both as sources of Insight and Laboratory Texts (see later) — belong to all three tribes, and the characters need help from all three leaders. The arrival of the characters in the garden stirs the

Curtilagium and Hortulus into direct conflict, with the Curtilagium resenting the presence of predatory humans in the garden, and the Hortulus keen to make friends with them. Both sides covertly observe the characters for a while, looking for evidence of their intentions. This observation will probably go unnoticed, although characters with Magic Sensitivity may spot the presence of creatures with a Magic Might among the general magic of the garden as a whole. Be careful not to present the tribes merely as monsters to be killed, although some of them may take that role. They may initially prove a nuisance, but magi can probably deal with them easily. Settling the internecine battle between the tribes is essential for the characters to exploit the Garden's secrets and the leaders of the tribe are each guard the knowledge

of where to find a third of its lore. Finding the Mistletoe of Herbam Vis (see later) early helps the character get a feel for the plants and the tension between the tribes.

It is natural for characters to feast on the unseasonal bounty of the garden, helping themselves to fruit as they wander its bounds. Furthermore, as the characters discover vis, the reaction of most magi is to gather it. This rouses the hostility of the Curtilagium. Should the characters set up camp and start a fire, they provoke an attack from Malus, who directs several hardwood trees into the camp to trample the fire and characters alike. During the night, Mandragora has assisted the Curtilagium by surrounding the campsite in a thick hedge of brambles and hawthorn (treat as a *Wall of Thorns* spell, *ArM5* page 135). From then on,

Malus, a Crab Apple

Magic Might: 10 (Herbam)

Characteristics: Int 0, Per 0, Pre 0, Com 0, Str +7, Sta +3, Dex 0, Qik -1

Size: +3

Season: Spring

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Thing; Magical Champion; Greater Immunity to Edged Weapons; Improved Characteristics, Tough, Voice of the Garden; Overconfident; Anchored to the Garden, Baneful Circumstances (fire), Clumsy, Weak-Willed

Magic Qualities and Inferiorities: Greater Power (*Creeping Chasm*), Greater Power (*Rally the Wooden Troops*); Improved Damage, Improved Soak x 3

Personality Traits: Reckless +6, Crab Apple* +3, Paranoid +3, Brave -1

Combat:

Branch: Init +9, Attack +9, Defense +6, Damage +12

Soak: +12

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-8), -3 (9-16), -5 (17-24), Incapacitated (25-32), Dead (33+)

Abilities: Brawl 4 (branch), Intrigue 1 (woodland politics), Leadership 2 (trees), Mastery of Rally the Wooden Troops 4 (fruit trees)

Powers:

Rally the Wooden Troops, 2 points, Init -5, Herbam: Animates trees and plants in the immediate vicinity allowing them to walk. In the peculiar aura of Hérissou's garden, they are also granted a Cunning score of 0. Up to 10 Groups of Herbam can be affected, which is equal to 10,000 herbs (Size -6), 100 bushes (Size 0), 10 small trees (Size +3), or one 25' tall tree (Size +6). This power can be triggered multiple times in a single round, equal to the plant's Mastery Ability. The Might cost must be paid each time. Malus can only af-

fect the Curtilagium plants with this power. *ReHe* 35 (Base 5, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +2 Group, +1 Size): Greater Power (35 levels, -2 Might cost, Multicast mastery power)

Creeping Chasm, 4 points, Init -2, Teram: By thrusting its roots deep into the earth, Crab Apple can duplicate the effects of the spell of the same name. *ReTe* 35: Greater Power (35 levels, +3 Init)

Vis: 2 pawns of Herbam, in apples

Appearance: A small tree about 12' tall, but very gnarled and spiny, with dark green foliage and almost black bark. Its bright red apples are slightly elongated.

The Crab Apple is the leader of the Curtilagium because of its extreme self-confidence in its immunity to axes and other edged weapons. However, it has a secret in that its powers fail it in the presence of fire, and it always avoids any sources of flame.

sharp-eyed characters may notice toadstools lining the paths they make, and thronging in the grass whenever they stop for a rest. There is a distinct feeling of being watched, and the silence of the garden — since there are no birds or insects — becomes oppressive.

On the second day in the garden, Linum sends a delegation to bring the characters to him. After resting, they notice a path of creeping buttercup, shining yellow against the green grass, which definitely was not present when they sat down. The yellow path winds its way through the garden to a flowery meadow where Linum is planted. Linum is clearly an animated plant, but magic is needed to actually understand it. If the characters are otherwise incapable of speaking to plants, Linum directs them to a Daisy of Intellego vis (see later). It wishes to welcome the characters to the garden, and apologizes for the actions of the Curtilagium. It explains their actions as being born of fear, and gives a brief description of the Curtilagium and its own tribe of the Hortulus. However, Linum does not mention the Venenarium tribe at all, as they are repugnant to it. Linum informs them that if Malus and the Curtilagium can be convinced of their peaceful intentions, then attacks such as those from the previous night will cease.

Getting into a situation where they might speak to Malus is difficult, however. Linum can direct them to the orchard where it normally resides, but Mandragora has convinced it that the characters are here to destroy the garden, and the apple tree will not simply allow them to approach. Mandragora sends a crowd of animated Stinking Hellebore of Corpus Vis (see later) against the characters, and while they are paralyzed, Malus causes Honeysuckle of Mentem Vis (again, see later) to grow around them along with ivy, binding them fast (this operates like *Trap of the Entwining Vines*, ArM5, page 135). If this fails to stop the characters, Malus causes the under-



growth to become almost impassable to protect itself from attacks. Its paranoia is almost all-consuming under the spiteful influence of Mandragora. All the while that Malus is under its influence, peace is impossible between the characters and the Curtilagium, and the garden cannot be safely used or studied since random attacks from both tribes will continue.

Mandragora saves its most potent weapons for any direct attacks against itself, should the characters discover its involvement. It has a small amount of control over Dodder (see later), and uses this plant as an assassin against the most potent of its enemies. Its own *Deadly Scream* power is unveiled only once the Venenarium leader is in direct peril, while potent against opponents with no Magic Resistance, it can be easily countered. A particularly evil tactic is to slay a grog in secret then have Dodder animate the corpse so it can get close to its victims.

Contents of the Garden

Hérissou's garden contains a number of magical plants, some of which are of his own manufacture and some of which he collected from far-flung places of the earth. Some examples of these are found in the following sections, and storyguides are encouraged to develop some more of their own devising. Furthermore, multiple examples of each plant may be present in far-flung parts of the garden. There are five categories of plants to be found here: enchantments created as part of Hérissou's research; Stirpes which were the products of his discovery; examples of Lesser Enchantment Vis he had collected; Enriched Herbs of Virtue (see *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 124); and magical plants. The game characteristics of some of the enchantments do not follow the standard rules for Hermetic inventions, employing nonstandard Ranges, Durations, or Targets that are normally restricted to those

Warped Plants

Plant-life suffers the same warping effects as do people (*ArM5*, page 197) and animals (*Realms of Power: Magic*, page 78). Annual and biennial plants escape such effects by virtue of their short lifespans, but perennial plants that are five years or older possess a Minor Flaw from warping, and most of the trees are over 75 years old and thus possess two Minor Flaws and a Minor Virtue. The most common Flaw possessed by the plants in Hérissou's garden is (Form)

Monstrosity*, although some possess Offensive to Animals, Warped Senses*, or any Personality Flaw (for Flaws marked with an *, see *Realms of Power: Magic*, pages 47–51). Examples: cinnamon trees might have Ignem Monstrosity, causing them to burst into flames in response to loud noises; brambles with Wrathful might especially hurt anyone caught up in them; a rose with Lesser Malediction might drain of all color when in shadow.

who possess certain Mystery Virtues. This is to represent the fact that these are the products of successful discoveries, and therefore stretch the parameters of standard Hermetic magic.

MAGICAL ENCHANTMENTS

Hérissou turned numerous living plants into magical items once he discovered the trick of preparing a living plant for the enchantment process. He discovered that this process stopped the plant from aging, and all his early examples were sterile also, until he stabilized the discovery that was the cornerstone of his research — the Traveling Thistle (see later).

All these plants have spikes or thorns, a product of Hérissou's sigil.

Bloodthorn

Creo Corpus 15
Pen 0, charged item
R: Touch, D: Moon, T: Ind

Each sloe (that is, fruit) of this blackthorn bush provides a +6 to Wound Recovery Rolls for Duration Moon. This is a Charged Item with an unusual method of delivery, and 4 charges remain on the plant.

(Base 3, +1 Touch, +3 Moon)

Fruitful Medlar

Creo Herbam 9
Pen 0, constant
R: Per, D: Sun, T: Part

This small tree produces ten times as much fruit as a normal example of its kind, in the proper season. It was created as a Lesser Enchantment.

(Base 1, +2 Sun, +1 Part, +1 size; +1 2/day, +3 environmental trigger)

False Mandrake

This Invested Item is a white bryony plant that was Prepared for Enchantment with 4 pawns of vis (a small wooden object), and invested with this effect:

Perdo Corpus 25
Pen 0, 3/day
R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Group

Anyone touching the False Mandrake causes it to issue an ear-splitting scream that deafens those who hear it. This damage heals as a Light Wound.

(Base 5, +2 Voice, +2 Group; +2 3/day)

Traveling Thistle

Creo Vim 14
Pen 0, constant
R: Per, D: Mom, T: Ind

This thistle has a faint taint of magic, and the plants that grow from its seed

have the same property as the parent (although they themselves do not pass the taint to their offspring). This is an apparently minor effect, but is the key to Hérissou's self-replicating vis.

(Base 3, +2 Sun, +1 to allow property to be inherited; +1 2/day, +3 environmental trigger)

Creeping Buttercup

Rego Vim 20
Pen 0, 1/day
R: Per, D: Mom, T: Part

A yellow-flowered plant that grows close to the ground. This plant contains a single pawn of Herbam vis, and once in its life it can be triggered to transfer this pawn into one of its seeds. The plant that grows from the seed likewise inherits the same power.

(Base 10, +1 Part, +1 special effect)

Everlasting Orpine

This tall plant — an orpine, or 'live-long' — has a red stem and a crown of pinkish-red flowers, and has been Prepared for Enchantment with 6 pawns of Vim vis (a Medium wooden object). It is still living, but since it was infused with vis it stopped growing and became sterile. This plant offers an Insight worth 2 Breakthrough points (see later).

Ever-Flowering Bramble

Creo Herbam 33
Pen 0, 1/day
R: Per, D: Sun, T: Ind

This blackberry seed grows into a plant, flowers, produces fruit, sets seed and dies back over the course of a day. In the following day, the seed set by the previous day's plant repeats the cycle. The fruit produced (about a handful) is pleasant to eat and nutritious, but unless at least one is left on the bush, the regeneration cannot continue.

(Base 15, +2 Sun, +1 special effect; +3 environmental trigger)

Hazel of Many Tools

Rego Herbam 5

Pen 0, charged item

R: Per, D: Mom, T: Ind

The straight branches growing from this hazel stump are suggestive of all sorts of wooden and metal tools. A character who names a tool next to the plant causes one of the twigs to form itself into the exact shape of that tool, which can then be broken off and used. The character must succeed in an Intelligence + Finesse simple roll of 9 or more to make a tool of standard quality. This is a Charged Item employing craft magic that has an unusual method of delivery, and 10 charges remain on the plant.

(Base 5 — see Covenants, page 51)

STIRPES

Numerous examples of Hérisson's successes in Hermetic Viresculture grow in his garden. All are Stirpes with an exhausted invigoration, meaning that they only produce a single magical offspring each generation, and it too is a Stirps.

All these plants have spikes or thorns, a product of Hérisson's sigil.

Adder's Tongue: The curled leaf at the center of this wavy-leaved fern contains a pawn of Perdo vis.

Alexanders: The fleshy stems of this tall, pungent herb contains a pawn of Herbam vis.

Ever-Burning Fire: Flames blossoming within the Fennel of Herbam Vis (see Lesser Enchantment Vis, later) contain a pawn of Ignem vis. This Stirps derives from a fire elemental.

Harebell: The delicate flower has downy blue fur reminiscent of a hare's, and has a pawn of Animal vis.

Pasternack (carrot): A common garden vegetable, the sweet purple roots of this plant contain a pawn of Aquam vis (orange varieties of carrots are rare in Mythic Europe).

Selfheal: This tiny plant with minute

violet flowers contains a pawn of Creo vis.

Silverweed: This creeping buttercup-like plant has leaves made of real silver, which contain a pawn of Terram vis.

LESSER ENCHANTMENT VIS

All these types of Lesser Enchantment Vis were made into Stirpes by Hérisson's Hermetic Viresculture. However, they have exhausted their invigoration, and now only produce a single Stirpes each generation. Characters must duplicate Hérisson's Minor Breakthrough before they can be Invigorated again.

Daisy of Intellego Vis

Intellego Herbam 40

Pen 16, 3/day

R: Touch, D: Conc, T: Ind

Anyone touching a plant with this large white and yellow flower can converse with plants as per *Converse with Plant and Tree* (InHe 25, ArM5 page 136). It must Penetrate any Magic Resistance of the target plant to have its effect.

(Base 15, +1 Touch, +1 Conc; +5 maintains concentration, +2 3/day, +8 Penetration 16)

Mistletoe Sprig of Herbam Vis

See *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 121.

Stinking Hellebore of Rego Vis

Rego Corpus 25

Pen 0, unlimited uses /day

R: Touch, D: Diam, T: Ind

Anyone who touches the fleshy green flowers of this stinking hellebore is paralyzed, and unable to move for two minutes.

(Base 5, +1 Touch, +1 Diam; +10 unlimited uses)

Honeysuckle of Mentem Vis

Rego Mentem 24

Pen 0, constant effect

R: Per, D: Sun, T: Scent

A vine covered in hooked yellow flowers with a strong scent. This plant's fragrance affects everyone who smells it with an effect identical to *Confusion of the Numbed Will*. The perfume extends about 6 paces from the blossoms of the vine.

(Base 4, +2 Sun, +2 Scent; +1 2/day, +3 environmental trigger)

Fennel of Herbam Vis

Rego (Creo) Ignem (Herbam) 24

Pen 0, constant effect

R: Per, D: Sun, T: Ind

A tall spike rising from a fleshy bulb, bearing a cloud of tiny yellow flowers. This plant is protected from being burnt, providing +5 Soak against fire-related damage. Any damage done by fire is immediately repaired. It is host to the Ever-Burning Fire (see Stirpes, earlier).

(Base 4, +2 Sun, +2 requisites; +1 2/day, +3 environmental trigger)

ENRICHED HERBS OF VIRTUE

See *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 124 for more details on Enriching Objects of Virtue. Hérisson preserved each plant prior to Enrichment, and they do not begin to expire until used. Three examples of these herbs are given below.

Henbane of Virtue

A tall herb with sticky hairy leaves and a fetid odor, Henbane is extremely poisonous, and contains a pawn of Perdo vis. It is Enriched by taking a single seed capsule and seeping it in the venom of a scorpion and the crushed skulls of three owls, exposing the mixture to the night sky whenever Saturn is in ascendance. After a season, the seedpod must be swallowed. This grants the Lesser Immunity to Poison Virtue, but also strikes a random sense organ or limb completely numb, inflicting one of the following Flaws (roll a simple die): (1–2)

Wrestling in the Herb Garden

The Wild Teasel and the Valerian are enemies. They grow in profusion on opposite sides of a sward, with a thin line of grass between them. Anyone touching one of the patches will become infused with fighting spirit and want to wrestle with anyone who explores the other patch. The magic of the area means that one person will be picked for each team. Teasel encourages dirty fighting, and those

affected by its power tend to inflict damage as often as they can, even if it is lots of small wounds. Valerian prefers to overcome its opponents with patience, and its champions tend to grapple and immobilise. If the Teasel's opponent wins, then he is given a draft of Enriched Teasel Milk. If the Valerian's opponent is victorious, he receives a sip of Enriched Valerian Juice.

Afflicted Tongue; (3–4) Poor Eyesight; (5–6) Poor Hearing; (7–8) Missing Hand; (9–10) Lamé. The effects of the Virtue and Flaw wear off after a year. Three Enriched capsules can be found nestled next to the stem of a Henbane of Virtue.

Wild Teasel of Virtue

The wild teasel has a tall stem with a distinctive burr the size of an egg.

The sticky juice of this plant contains two pawns of Corpus vis, but if it is instead fed to a pregnant dog, and the milk-teeth of her litter are ground up and added to wine, the drinker becomes especially war-like; gaining the Puissant Brawl, Tough, and Berserk Virtues, but also the Minor Personality Flaw of Wrathful. These Virtues and Flaw last for one year, or until the affected character tastes the juice of the valerian plant.

Valerian of Virtue

A low-growing herb with paired lance-head shaped leaves and clusters of pale pink flowers on a stem. The greenish juice extracted from the root is a powerful medicine, and in the Valerian of Virtue the root has two pawns of Creovis. The root can be Enriched by being sliced with a silver knife on a night when Venus is in the sky, bathed in horse urine every Friday, then ground between two pieces of amber. Enriched Valerian Juice grants Rapid Convalescence, Enduring Constitution, and Reserves of Strength Virtues, but also the Code of Honor Flaw. These Virtues and Flaw last for one year, or until the affected character tastes the milk of the teasel.

MAGICAL PLANTS

There are a number of magical plants in the garden that do not fall into one of the above categories. Some of these, such as the chiefs of the three tribes, and Dodder (see nearby insert), are animate plants with Intelligence and a Might

Dodder

Magic Might: 25 (Herbam)

Season: Summer

Characteristics: Int +1, Per 0, Pre 0, Com -3, Str +7, Sta +4, Dex +2, Qik +2

Size: 0

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Thing, Magical Monster; Great Strength x2, Great Stamina, Tough; Infamous, Poor Hearing

Magical Qualities and Inferiorities: Greater Power (*Strangle the Life*), Greater Power (*Wear Corpse*), Improved Strength x2; Improved Might x5, Improved Soak x2, Lesser Power (*Sprout Limbs*), Minor Virtue (Improved Characteristics)

x2, Minor Virtue (Puissant Brawl); Monstrous Appearance

Personality Traits: Murderous +4, Brave +3, Dodder* +3

Reputations: Assassin 4 (Local)

Combat:

Grapple: Init +2, Attack +13*, Defense +13*, Damage +7

* By using its *Sprout Limbs* power, Dodder can act as a trained group and receive a bonus to either Attack or Defense of +12

Soak: +13

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1–5), -3 (6–10), -5 (11–15), Incapacitated (16–20), Dead (21+)

Abilities: Athletics 5 (chase), Brawl 8+2 (grapple), Leadership 3 (own limbs), Stealth 5 (undergrowth)

Powers:

Sprout Limbs, 0 points, Init -1, Herbam: Dodder can weave up to eight limbs from the mass of tendrils which make up its body. It can therefore continue to attack and defend even when faced by multiple opponents, and should be treated as a trained group of four. Every two limbs used to strangle reduces the size of the group by one. Cr(Re)He 10 (Base 1, +2 Sun, +2 Group, +1 requisite): Lesser Power (10 levels, -2 Might cost, +1 Init)

Strangle the Life, 0 points, Init +2, Cor-

score, which are generally a product of Warping. The storyguide should populate the garden with other examples of sentient plants as she sees fit, using the rules in *Realms of Power: Magic* to give them appropriate powers.

The garden also contains wonders from Hérissou's travels, unique examples of plants that cannot be found anywhere within the bounds of Mythic Europe, but instead are from exotic far-off lands. An example of this is the Vegetable Lamb, a strange hybrid between plant and animal. It stands about four feet high, and has long dark green leaves. The most remarkable feature are on the tips of the stems, the head, forequarters, and body of a minuscule lamb complete with fluffy wool. The weight of these lambs cause the plant to bend down, and the sheep graze on the grass in proximity to each plant. When all the grass has been grazed out, the lambs stop moving and lose their distinctive heads and limbs, getting lighter in the process. All that remains is a fluffy ball of wool that can be processed like any other.

A grove of cinnamon trees can be

found in the garden, which let off a pungent aroma and are prone to spontaneous ignition. There is a child of the Drudenbaum of Harberg (*Guardians of the Forests*, page 89), although the version in Hérissou's garden does not produce vis for some reason. There may even be some of the totem trees from the mythical island of Soqotra (see *Rival Magic*, The Soqotrans) such as cinnabar, olibanum, myrrh, and aloe, each of which have their own magical properties.

Aftermath

These are just a few suggestions for ways to use Hérissou's Garden in your own saga.

THE GARDEN AS A SOURCE OF BREAKTHROUGH

The garden's principal use is as the raw source material to recreate Hérissou's research into Hermetic Viresculture.

Hérissou had taken the route of Original Research (*Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 26) to develop both a Major Breakthrough and a Minor Breakthrough in Hermetic magic. These required 45 and 30 Breakthrough points respectively, which were gained through experimentation when inventing spells and enchantments. However, a magus (or group of magi) recreating his work need not pursue Original Research himself, since Hérissou's inventions still exist in his garden. Instead, these inventions may be studied as a source of Insight (*Ancient Magic*, page 8, or *Hedge Magic*, page 14) and then used to recreate the enchantment, earning Breakthrough points equal to the magnitude of the effect created.

Because Hérissou's breakthrough was fully integrated into Hermetic Theory, it is easier to comprehend his discoveries than to gain insights from non-Hermetic magic. When studying from one of Hérissou's living Enchantments, a magus can simply investigate the source of Insight in a laboratory (see **ArM5**, page 100)

Dodder (cont'd)

pus: The wiry fingers of Dodder wrap around the throat of its victim and begin to drain its life. Every round the victim must make a Deprivation roll, and the Ease Factor is equal to the result of a Strength roll made by Dodder. Dodder can strangle up to eight people simultaneously, one with each limb. Victims can struggle to escape, by beating Dodder's Grapple Attack with their own Grapple Attack. PeCo 30 (Base 10, +1 Touch, +1 Conc, +2 Group): Greater Power (30 levels, -2 Might Cost, +2 Init)
Wear Corpse, 1 point, Init -2, Corpus: Dodder can insinuate itself into a

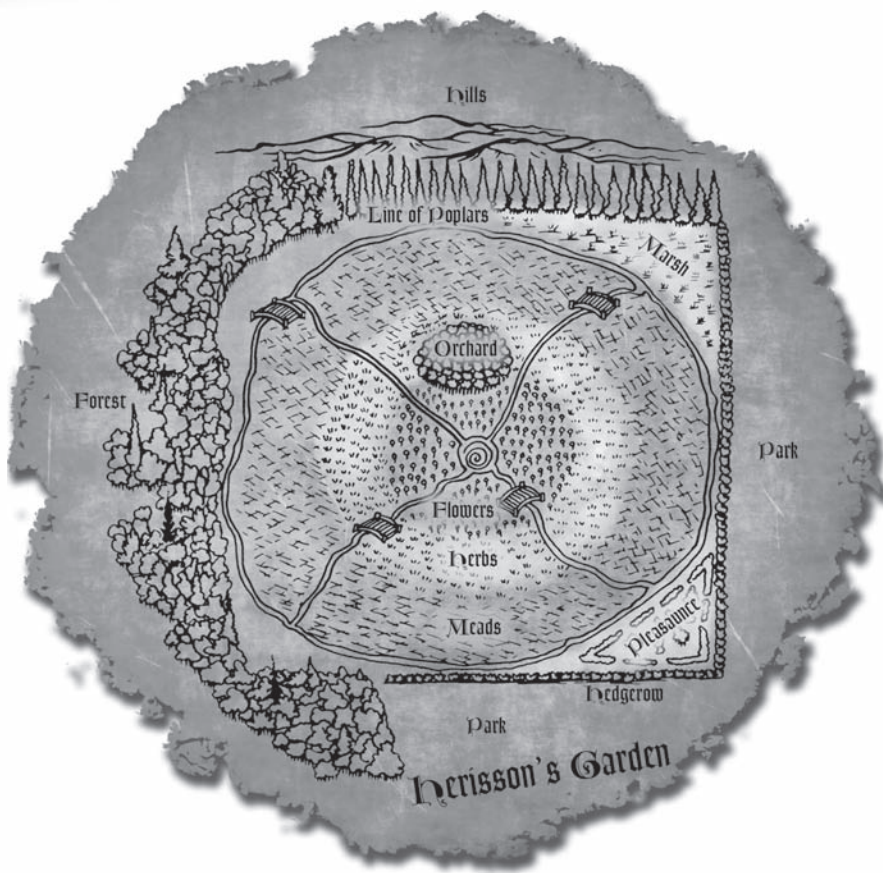
human corpse of Size -1 to Size +1 and animate it. This power also preserves the corpse from decay. It can use its other powers while within this skin, but cannot heal any damage inflicted on the corpse. It cannot maintain a convincing pretense at being human for very long. Re(Cr)Co 35 (Base 10, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +1 constant, +1 requisite): Greater Power (35 levels, -3 Might Cost)

Vis: 5 pawns of Perdo, in tendrils

Appearance: In its natural state, a tangle of yellow and red tendrils lying in the grass and twined around plants. It has occasional clusters of pale pink, bell-like flowers. How-

ever, it can form into a horrid mass of writhing tendrils somewhat man-shaped, and weave many-fingered limbs from its body.

Dodder is a parasitic plant that grows over and strangles other plants, and this magical Dodder attacks more than just other plants. It often lies in wait for its victims, which it engulfs with its swiftly-moving strands and then sucks the life out of them. Dodder is incapable of speech, and does not respond to any form of communication, yet its tactics when hunting suggests that it has a baleful intellect driving it.



instead of attempting an Intelligence + Magic Theory roll (*Ancient Magic*, page 8). Once the effect has been determined the Insight can be used to duplicate its effect, which, once complete, grants Breakthrough points equal to the magnitude of the effect duplicated.

Investigating one of Hérisson's Stirpes also uses the Hermetic Investigation rules in lieu of a Magic Theory roll. Each Stirpe should be considered to be an enchantment of Level 15, and the Insight gained is a version of *Gather the Essence of the Beast* (ArM5, page 162). The first time this Insight is gained it grants three Breakthrough points as usual. If another Stirpe is investigated for an Insight, another version of the spell can be invented, but the second and subsequent versions yield just a single Breakthrough point each.

If any of the other magical plants of Hérisson's garden are used for a source of Insight (the Lesser Enchantment Vis, the Magical Plants, or the Enriched Herbs of

Virtue) then the process described in *Ancient Magic* must be used instead. Furthermore, those wishing to recreate Hérisson's Minor Breakthrough of breeding Lesser Enchantment Vis must gain their Insights from these sources rather than Hérisson's own creations, and they must have already rediscovered Hermetic Viresculture.

THE GARDEN AS A SOURCE OF STUDY

Containing as it does over fifty superlative and/or unique plant species, the garden can be used as a collection of realia (*Covenants*, page 102) for the Art of Herbam. By studying the plants for a season, a magus generates a Source Quality of 6, and can study from the garden six times in total.

A magus who has recreated Hérisson's research can use the examples of Stirpes found within as realia of Hermetic Viresculture, with a Quality of 4, and can study them four times in total.

THE GARDEN AS AN HERMETIC LABORATORY

Hérisson's Garden is a fully-functioning Hermetic laboratory, albeit an unusual one. Unsurprisingly, the laboratory is highly specialized in the Art of Herbam, and gets an additional bonus to this Art due to the Herbam-aligned Magic aura of 6. To use the laboratory it must be adapted to the character's own style of working (see *Taking Over a Laboratory*, *Covenants*, page 118). Hérisson did not provide any living quarters or furniture for himself, preferring to live in his laboratory in heartbeast

Laboratory Texts from the Garden

At the option of the storyguide, Laboratory Texts for Hérisson's own Original Research can be found in the garden. Each of his Hermetic creations provides Breakthrough Points equal to the magnitude of the effect once it has been studied by recreating the experiment (see *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 29 for the full process).

However, it is unlikely that these Laboratory Texts are simple tomes of

parchment and wood. It could be that one such text is a small tree, each leaf inscribed with a single page of text, and deciphering Hérisson's code consists of determining the proper order of the leaves. Another text might take the form of a fruit, with the words of the text written on the seeds found within it. How many pages will be eaten by the grogs before their real worth is discovered?

form, but any character moving in will probably find the need to build a hut in which to live. The Safety Characteristic of the laboratory has suffered since Hérissou's day, and this will probably need improving.

Laboratory equipment is provided by the garden itself: the gourds that grow on vines make ready-made flasks and alembics; bowls can be found in the cup-shaped fungi; tables, desks, and chairs are provided in the twisted branches of the trees over rocks; the Ever-Burning Tree is a source of fire, and the brook a source of water; and birch-bark paper can be simply unrolled from the trees. All manner of rods, pens, knives, and other simple tools can be quickly manufactured from the reeds, razor-sharp grasses, and countless branches and stems. A notable feature is the spring, which as source and destination of all the garden's water serves as a Lesser Feature that assists in the extraction of vis. Naturally, all manner of herbal ingredients can be found, but there is also a good supply of animal and mineral components born by the stranger plants in the garden and among its wildlife. The more one looks for components, the more one finds objects that can be used in the laboratory. However, the eclectic placement and large size of the laboratory leaves the components chaotically arranged and somewhat disorganized.

Story Seed: A Burning Desire

A phoenix near the end of its life comes to the garden seeking a cinnamon tree. As is its custom, the bird will build a nest of cinnamon boughs, which are then immolated along with the bird when the rising sun ignites the nest, and a phoenix chick is reborn in the ashes. A magus desiring an exotic familiar could bargain

with the dying bird for its child, but the phoenix demands the death of a distant king who craves the flesh of exotic birds. The magus might be tempted to ignore the deal once the parent bird is dead, or at least delay its execution. This invokes the death-curse of the phoenix.

Story Seed: The Kidnapped Totems

It has taken them many centuries, but the Soqotran sorcerers (*Rival Magic*, Chapter 3) have finally discovered who stole their totem plants and where he took them. Their theft by Hérissou was tantamount to kidnapping a beloved family member, and has denied generations of potential sorcerers their power. A delegation of

Soqotran sorcerers — one from each tribe — force their way into the garden with the intent to recover their trees and to punish the thief. They will assume that Hermetic magi in the garden are descendants of Hérissou, since they use the same magic, and they will vent their anger on them before leaving.

The constant growth of equipment and ingredients is confusing until one adapts to the natural rhythm of the garden, and the seasonal availability of certain components often dictates what activities can be performed. When planning a season's activity, roll a simple die. If it is under the Laboratory's Warping Characteristic, then the equipment and ingredients for that ac-

tivity are available and the season can progress as planned; else the character must pick a different activity instead. Add two to this roll in winter, when the garden is partially dormant.

Virtues: Natural Environment (Major, Structure); Lesser Feature (Minor, Structure), Specimens* x 3 (Minor, Outfitting), Spacious (Minor, Structure), Superior Decorations* (Minor, Outfitting), Vis Source (Minor, Supernatural); Idyllic Surroundings (Free, Structure), Inexhaustible Supplies (Free, Supernatural), Regio (Free, Supernatural)

* These Virtues do not increase Upkeep as they derive from living plants.

If the characters have successfully negotiated a truce with the garden plants, they also benefit from the Lesser

Further Reading

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Legends of Hermes

Horde Supernatural Virtue (+1 General Quality, +1 Safety, +1 Aesthetics, +1 specialization in either Perdo for the Venenarium tribe, Creo for the Curtilagium tribe, or Rego for the Hortulus tribe). This Virtue does not incur the usual Upkeep cost. If they made an enemy of one of the tribes, this imposes the Gremlins Supernatural Flaw (−3 Safety, +1 Warping, −1 Aesthetics, +1 Experimentation, +1 Perdo, Creo, or Rego,

depending on the tribe).

Flaws: Outdoors (Major, Structure); Chaotic (Minor, Supernatural), Living (Minor, Supernatural); Disorganized (Free, Structure)

Characteristics: Size +10 (+5), Refinement 0, General Quality −1, Upkeep −1, Safety −5, Warping +6, Health 0, Aesthetics +6

Specializations: Vis Extraction +3, Experimentation +2, Herbam +10, Imaginem +1, Muto +2

Personality Traits: Growing +3, Curious +2, Exotic +1

Chapter Five

The Sunken Laboratory of Hermanus

Lifetime: c. 940 AD – 1098 AD
(Final Twilight)

Overview: A master strategist and obsessive constructor of magical defenses charged with protecting Coeris, who disappeared along with part of the covenant itself.

Each of the domus magnae covenants of the Order of Hermes is exceedingly impressive in its own way. Many have extraordinary defenses: House Ex Miscellanea's Cad Gadu lies in a regio that cannot easily be accessed; House Tytulus' Fudarus is defended by three mighty spirits; House Flambeau's Castra Solis is protected by a legendary turb of grogs, a formidable collection of enchanted devices, and the Horn of Champions; and House Guernicus' Magvillus has a mighty *Aegis of the Hearth* and unparalleled physical defenses.

The covenant of Coeris was originally created in the time of Tremere as a place of refuge, where damaged warriors could take the waters of forgetfulness and be healed of their psychological injuries. However, over time House Tremere has made Coeris into something else. Coeris is the stronghold for the House, where much of its treasury, including vis and enchanted devices, rests in as secure a location as any place in Mythic Europe.

The magus most responsible for these defenses is Hermanus of Tremere.

Hermanus acquired a legendary reputation not because of great discoveries or conquests but because, for more than eight decades, through persuasion, stubbornness, and canny use of his House's structure, he focused his resources and the resources that he gained through the structure of his House into fulfilling a single vision.

Legend

Nothing at all is recorded regarding the life Hermanus prior to his apprenticeship, and while no apprenticeship in the order of Hermes could be described as typical, there are no events that are particularly noteworthy in the story of



Hermanus prior to the Schism War.

At the onset of the Schism War Hermanus was a magus thirty-nine years out of his apprenticeship. During the Schism War he was utilized by his House as a master of auxiliaries, a magus who trained and led mundane soldiers. Hermanus and his troops saw battle on two occasions. On an early campaign Hermanus' unit was attacked by a pair of Diedne magi who were accompanied by several magical beasts. Defensive spells that Hermanus had cast on his troops and on the building where they were staying previous to the attack allowed Hermanus to hold out against the supe-

rior attacking force until his allies arrived and the Diedne were obliged to flee.

Later, Hermanus tracked down and slew the maga Nuala of Diedne, a maga fifteen years his elder. He did this by successfully anticipating her actions and preparing countermeasures for them ahead of time.

The more senior members of House Tremere noted two specific facts regarding Hermanus' performance. First, in both actions his troops acted with discipline and loyalty despite the fact that Hermanus was not himself particularly persuasive and did not possess the Gentle Gift. Second, in both actions Hermanus

had successfully anticipated how he was going to be attacked and had prepared countermeasures beforehand. Because the House saw skill in leadership and an aptitude for anticipating the attacks of his enemies, Hermanus was selected by the primus of House Tremere to lead the Adamant Rook Vexillation.

The Adamant Rook Vexillation

At the conclusion of the Schism War, House Tremere hoped to trans-

What the Order Remembers of Hermanus

KNOWN BY ALL

- Hermanus' Final Twilight removed an entire portion of the covenant of Coeris.
- Hermanus was a Schism War veteran who oversaw the creation of defenses to protect the resources of House Tremere.
- Hermanus is famous for his ability to marshal such a great proportion of the resources of House Tremere to support this goal for decades.
- Hermanus discovered evidence of a group of Diedne sympathizers within House Tremere. This cabal was responsible for his demise and the disappearance of his laboratory.*

WIDELY KNOWN

- At the end of his life Hermanus enchanted his laboratory with the ability to move, thereby allowing him to explore the world without leaving the safety of his heavily-warded laboratory, and then he left Coeris and House Tremere behind forever.*

- Hermanus continued his efforts to bolster the defenses of Coeris for an additional twenty-eight years after the vexillation of the Adamant Rook was disbanded. During this time he clashed more and more often with the primus and other senior magi of the House. He endeavored to become primus in order to further his goals regarding the defense of Coeris.

UNCOMMON KNOWLEDGE

- A vexillation was formed by the Tremere to search for Hermanus and his laboratory. After four years this vexillation concluded that neither could be located by any method known to the Tremere.
- Hermanus became a great expert in Intellego by the end of his life, but the primary reason that he was selected to lead the push to protect the House's treasures was because of his leadership ability. Most of the greatest creations of the Adamant Rook Vexillation were created by groups of magi working together.

- As Hermanus aged he became more and more cautious and fearful. He saw ways for House Tremere to be attacked in every event and action. At the end of his life Hermanus took to sending out an enchanted human-sized doll to search for vis without exposing himself to the dangers that he felt lurked outside of his well-defended laboratory.
- Hermanus met his end trying to acquire vis from a town in the Provençal Tribunal that had been besieged by giant bats. All written records of this town aside have been destroyed by someone or something that wants to keep it secret.*

LOST SECRETS

- Amarantha of Tremere was one of the magi who searched for evidence of Hermanus after his passing. She continued her investigation after the vexillation had submitted its conclusions and dissolved. Amarantha disappeared in 1110 and no trace of her was ever found.

* False information

form Coeris into the ultimate stronghold for the House. The greatest fear of House Tremere was the theft of their storehouse of vis and enchanted devices by powerful magi or spirits, who would then employ the House's own resources against it. The Adamant Rook Vexillation took the responsibility of altering the covenant of Coeris to be to be the secure storehouse that House Tremere believed they needed.

House Tremere could not be assured that they could man the defenses of their domus magna with magi of superior caliber to the enemies they feared that they might face, nor could the House rely on magics unique and unknown to their enemies. Hermanus set about his task of crafting defenses using the greatest advantage that the Tremere had: the organizational cohesion of the House. Hermanus capably employed as great a proportion of House Tremere's magi and resources as he could obtain to assist in the creation of Coeris' defenses.

The strategy implemented by the vexillation was not only to make the Coeris stores themselves untouchable, but also to create a network of enchanted devices throughout the covenant that would detect and neutralize any entity that was acting against the Tremere. These devices were created to work in conjunction with the magi and other defenders of Coeris, but would not be useless without them.

Hermanus threw himself into his work with a determination and dedication that continued unabated for the rest of his life. Yet the longer he worked and the more formidable the covenant's defenses became, the less satisfied Hermanus was. Once he had set his mind to imagining ways that Coeris could be compromised he was unable to stop. Gradually, over the course of decades, Hermanus' mind twisted itself to see nothing but weakness and vulnerability.

For decades Hermanus was able to convey his concerns about the vulnerability of Coeris to his sodales in a suf-

ficiently convincing way as to garner a wealth of support for his vexillation, but as years went by this task became more and more challenging for him. In 1070 the primus of House Tremere proclaimed that the preparations at Coeris were "embarrassingly fulsome". The Adamant Rook Vexillation was dissolved. Others within the House were, by this time, wondering aloud if the cost in vis and time of creating the defenses had been well spent. The exarch of the Roman Tribunal was heard to say that it would have been less costly to have allowed the stores to be looted then to have paid the cost of constructing the defenses. Hermanus disagreed with this judgment and attempts to alter the opinion of the primus or become primus himself in order to further fund expanded defenses continued intermittently for the final twenty-eight years of his life. Hermanus did not abandon his (by this time personal) mission to strengthen the defenses of Coeris and spent most of his time studying arts, researching spells and crafting items to make the domus magna more secure.

Hermanus' Passing and the Growth of his Legend

In the autumn of 1098 Hermanus had one final argument with the Tremere primus regarding the importance of additional defenses in Coeris. After the heated discussion, Hermanus returned to his laboratory. Three hours later, the top floor of the wing of Coeris that contained Hermanus' laboratory disappeared. The walls, ceiling, and floor of the building along with all of the contents of these rooms, including an impressive number of defensive enchanted devices vanished. No trace of Hermanus or his laboratory was ever seen again. The most commonly held theory is that Hermanus succumbed to Final Twilight, taking the wing of Coeris containing his

laboratory with him.

The disappearance of Hermanus and his laboratory was of great concern to the House. In addition to a search by the Abyssal Bearer Vexillation (*Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 122), a vexillation was convened specifically to recover Hermanus and the missing structure. This vexillation, the Unbarred Gateway Vexillation, searched for five years before concluding their investigation and dissolving in early 1104.

At the time when Hermanus disappeared he was well known within House Tremere, but not particularly renowned outside of it. News regarding the manner of his disappearance spread throughout the order and gave him a bit of a posthumous reputation. Hermanus became much better known in 1115 when the Archmage Velius of Tremere was challenged for the first time. When Hermanus disappeared, Velius, a magus who relocated to Coeris from the Rhine Tribunal, shouldered the responsibility for mitigating the danger that having an absent section of building and its accompanying enchanted devices represented to the covenant. After his work shoring up the defenses, Velius took responsibility for keeping the defenses of the covenant working and adjusted.

Velius became an archmage in 1104. Velius' first challenge came from his former apprentice in 1115. The challenge that Velius set for his former student was to retrieve for him a token that he had placed in a Coeris vault within one year. Velius' filia did not succeed in retrieving the token within the year allotted. After hearing about the nature of Velius' archmage challenge, the maga Elonora of Tytalus challenged Velius, believing that Velius would not be so brazen as to invite someone from outside his House to attempt to break into the vaults and thus Velius would secure his token in some less well-protected place. Velius was, however, so confident of the defenses at Coeris that he again placed his marker in the domus magna. Elonora

Trojan Clothes Horse

The characters discover an item that was once owned by a Tremere magus, perhaps a set of Tremere robes. House Tremere would like the character who discovered the item to travel to Coeris with it and give a complete description of the circumstances under which the item was discovered. The House is willing to make the trip (at least barely) worthwhile for the player characters.

Unknown to the characters, the discovered item is enchanted with a *Waiting Spell*, perhaps protected by *Masking the Odor of Magic*, that activates when the item is brought within the covenant of Coeris. When the waiting spell activates it summons a powerful spirit or creature of might whose goal is to do as much damage to the covenant of Coeris as possible. With the sudden appearance of the creature from the player characters' group

it is likely that the player characters will not immediately be recognized as innocent bystanders. The stage is set for the player characters, the creature and the defenders of Coeris to rampage through the sentinels and justiciars of the covenant avoiding and getting affected by different effects as they chase one another in a three-way game of cat and mouse.

When running games within Coeris it should be clear that sentinels and justiciars, outside of the vaults which contain the House's valuables, are designed not only to delay and capture intruders but also (perhaps primarily) to sound the alarm and warn the defenders of Coeris of the intrusion. There are several items within Coeris that specifically detect and locate any triggering of sentinel items so that the Tremere can direct their defenses.

made three failed attempts to breach the defenses of Coeris within the next year. She then passed on information regarding the nature of the defenses as she remembered them. She also spread stories about the weakness of Velius for relying on the work of Hermanus rather than his own accomplishments to create his archmage challenge. The primus of House Tremere was furious with Velius for his overconfidence and it is thought unlikely that Velius would have been able to use the challenge a third time without serious repercussions. Velius succumbed to Final Twilight in 1120 before he was challenged a third time.

The legend of Hermanus, builder of the unbreachable defenses of Coeris, has spread throughout the Order. From the stories of Elonora, magi tried to determine how much vis and how many seasons of effort went into creation of the defenses at Coeris. The circum-

stances of Hermanus' disappearance added to the speculation, as did additional stories spread by Tremere, which wanted to impress upon their sodales the futility of any attempt to loot the domus magna.

Legacy

Hermanus, his laboratory, and several rooms surrounding his laboratory disappeared over one hundred years ago when Hermanus experienced his Final Twilight. The laboratory and the surrounding section of building still exist within the Twilight Void and they are filled with a wealth of enchanted devices, vis, and laboratory notes, all of which can be secured by those who can bring them back to the mundane world and master their defenses.

The End of Hermanus

On the fall evening in 1098 when Hermanus' laboratory disappeared from Coeris, its disappearance was, despite rumors to the contrary, the result of Hermanus' Final Twilight. By 1091, Hermanus had realized that there was little hope he would ever get the support in vis and assistance that he desired to continue his life's work from his House. Hermanus had reached the conclusion that he would need to find large sources of vis himself in order to create the additional defenses that his plans required. While he was an exceedingly powerful magus at this point of his life,

Using the Creations of Hermanus in a Game

The enchanted devices present in the laboratory of Hermanus are many of the same devices that are used to defend Coeris. House Tremere used Laboratory Texts to create several sentinels and justiciars of every type available to them. These devices may see use in your saga in other ways.

While every book or movie about a bank heist ever made may seem to offer good inspiration for your play-

ers to break into the vaults of Coeris, the formidability of the defenses, the nearly limitless effort that House Tremere is willing to exert to protect their treasures, and the civil nature of the Order all work against the possibility of the characters having sufficient motive to risk the job. Here are few story hooks to utilize the creations of Hermanus without getting your campaign's magi marched by the entire Transylvanian Tribunal.

his practice of constantly dwelling on ways that he and his House could be attacked had developed within him a great fear of the world outside of Coeris and even many places within Coeris. The location where Hermanus felt closest to being secure was his own laboratory. Hermanus spent most of his time locked within his circular laboratory protected by no fewer than eight wards active upon rings that followed the lab's circumference, and several enchanted devices designed to protect him from aggressors and accidents.

Rather than go out into the possibly dangerous world unprotected or spend years developing protections that would allow him to travel in safety comparable to his laboratory, Hermanus enchanted one of the wooden mannequins which he and his sodales had created to defend Coeris to travel under his control and search out vis sources without Hermanus ever leaving his laboratory.

That fall evening in 1098, Hermanus' mannequin was on the sea floor off the south coast of Crete, looking through the debris where a great naval battle was fought between the forces of the Macedonian king Demetrios the Poliorketes and Ptolemy the first of Egypt in 306 BC. Hermanus attempted to transfer a quantity of vis from this location to his laboratory by means of a Rego spell that was inscribed on a casting tablet. The casting went horribly wrong. Hermanus, his familiar, his laboratory, and the surrounding building disappeared in a Twilight episode. Hermanus and his familiar were lost to Final Twilight but the laboratory and surrounding building still exist within the Terram province of the Twilight Void. They are tethered to the mannequin and the vis that were the subject of Hermanus' final spell. Anyone who finds these items on the sea floor off the coast of Crete and disturbs them, disrupting the connection, will bring the structure that houses Hermanus' laboratory back to the mundane world.

Unexpected Copies

A magus has discovered a Vestige of a structure that almost exactly resembles Coeris in the Magical Realm, and has recorded a rough description of how he traveled there. If

the player characters can repeat the journey of the magus they can explore this Coeris-like place and see if it perhaps holds similar riches or similar inhabitants.

Dispatched

House Tremere may well choose to equip groups of its magi with some of the enchanted devices if they feel that the items are needed. Characters might possibly encounter these items wielded by magi outside the covenant of Coeris.

A Tremere maga, along with a number of mundane assistants and protectors, has undertaken an effort to explore and possibly procure vis from a regio that, while not close to the player characters' covenant, is less distant from the players' covenant than it is from any other covenant. In the process of exploration

the maga has roused the ire of the regio's inhabitants (elemental spirits of fire, demons, giant intelligent spiders or whatever fits your game). While defending her companions the maga entered into a Twilight episode. The maga's familiar escaped from the regio and traveled to the players' covenant to ask for assistance in rescuing the party now trapped within the regio. The player characters who come to the aid of the trapped group must deal not only with the inhabitants of the regio but also with a maze of sentinels and justiciars erected by the group to protect themselves.

Adventure: Search for the Sunken Laboratory

The characters' search for Hermanus' laboratory will be a dangerous journey.

Précis

The adventure presented here has the following structure:

- The player characters come across the notes collected by Amarantha of

Tremere detailing her search for the Laboratory of Hermanus.

- After perhaps pursuing some other possibilities for the structure's location, the characters travel to the sea floor off the coast of Crete where the mannequin is located.
- The players deal with the undersea environment, a genius loci who wishes to protect the area containing the mannequin, and the violent ghosts of sailors lost in an ancient battle.
- The characters then bring the laboratory structure back to the mundane world. The characters explore the laboratory structure and outwit the defenses to acquire the treasure within.
- Finally, the characters bargain with House Tremere for the return of the enchanted devices and the protection of the House's secrets.

Foreshadowing

As an introduction to the story of Hermanus, the story guide should have the characters encounter the remains of Amarantha of Tremere in a location that is both somewhat remote and could at least possibly be suspected to have a source of vis. Any regio, any wilderness location that might house a vis site, or any location that could have been believed to be the lair of a creature of might in the time of Hermanus would serve. With work this can be integrated into another adventure in the saga.

One item with the remains is conspicuous in that it shows no evidence of decay whatsoever. This item is a large leather satchel which Amarantha created as a lesser enchanted device to keep the notes and books that she carried on her travels safe from decay. The satchel is enchanted with *Enchantment of Incorruptible Vellum*.

Within this satchel is a bit of magi-

cally preserved food (an apple, cheese, and some bread) and Amarantha's collected notes on the matter of Hermanus and his laboratory.

Constant exposure to the preserving magic of the satchel has, over time, warped both the satchel and its contents. The food can no longer be digested by any creature and will make anyone who tries to eat it somewhat nauseated. The satchel and the writings are slightly toxic to the touch and will cause a mild rash to anyone touching them with their bare skin.

Enchantment of Incorruptible Vellum

CrAn(He) 24

Constant effect

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Group

The satchel and all of its animal- and plant-derived contents are protected from experiencing any natural

decay, including rot, mildew, and desiccation.

(Effect: Base 2 as CrCo, +1 Touch, +2 sun, +2 group, +1 requisite; Modifications, +1 level 2 uses per day, +3 levels environmental trigger)

The notes take approximately a day to read thoroughly. They contain the following information:

- Who Amarantha was and what she was doing (see next section).
- A summation of relevant information of Hermanus' life and behavior.
- The fact that Hermanus was, at the time of his disappearance, collecting vis by sending a wooden mannequin (to which he had a fixed arcane connection) throughout the world and controlling it with spells cast through *Opening the Intangible Tunnel*.
- The information that Hermanus' lab certainly contained a considerable quantity of vis.
- The information that House Tremere was very interested in the recovery of the texts and enchanted devices in the laboratory and surrounding structure because they contained information regarding the defenses of Coeris.
- A partially checked off list of sites where Amarantha believed that Hermanus' mannequin could be.

The list of locations remaining unexplored locations is large, but the intervening century of activity by the Order of Hermes has eliminated most of the locations that Amarantha had thought to be possibilities. The characters can check the lists of covenant locations and claimed vis sources maintained by House Mercere and reduce the possibilities for the location of the mannequin to a very short list, and, depending upon



where the storyguide may wish for the characters to go, perhaps to only the actual location.

The Story of Amarantha of Tremere

In early 1104 the Unbarred Gateway Vexillation ceased searching for Hermanus and his laboratory and dissolved their association. The vexillation saw no way for the missing structure or the missing magus to be recovered either by House Tremere or by one of their enemies.

One member of the vexillation, Amarantha of Tremere, perhaps because of personal ego, perhaps because she was not fully convinced that the task was hopeless, continued with the search. She interviewed those who spoke with Hermanus or his familiar in the years prior to their disappearance, studied the texts Hermanus had read in his final years, and examined the written correspondence with other magi that Hermanus and his familiar engaged in near the end of their lives. By 1110 Amarantha had constructed a large list of locations to which Hermanus was likely to have sent his mannequin. She undertook the task of visiting all of these locations by herself in hopes of locating the mannequin and using it to recover the laboratory and surrounding building. Her notes contain some ideas about researching a spell to accomplish this but it is clear that she did not yet have a firm plan. Amarantha did not inform any of her sodales of her destinations or the purpose of her travels. She did not wish to be seen as unsure of her previous conclusions in the matter or as a fool on a quixotic quest; furthermore, the implication that the conclusions of the Unbarred Gate Vexillation could be suspect would reflect poorly on her fellow magi in the vexillation, some of whom were magi of influence in the

House who would not approve of her actions. Late in 1110, Amarantha met her end far from any assistance and in a location unknown to the magi of the Abyssal Bearer Vexillation, the vexillation charged with the recovery of the bodies of all Tremere magi.

The Aquatic Valley and Mannequin

Hermanus' mannequin lies in a shallow sub-aquatic valley of barnacle-encrusted rocks and gently sloping sand amidst the broken wreckage of ancient ships sunk in the battle of 309 BC. Moving among the wreckages are dozens of ghosts of the ancient battle, each mindlessly continuing the battle over 1500 years after its conclusion. Apart from the specters pursuing violence without thought or comprehension, the sea floor in this area is an extraordinarily beautiful place. During the sunlight hours,

shafts of illumination strike down from the surface and play along the sea floor. The submarine valley has a Magical aura of 2.

A genius loci inhabits the area (see later). The genius loci is constantly aware of the entire valley, and desires to have the natural beauty of the submerged valley lie undisturbed for eternity. The genius loci has, over the last fifteen centuries, absorbed the sunken ships as part of itself. It no longer sees these ships as something foreign that has entered the valley but as an integral part of the valley. In addition, the personality of this spirit has become altered by the unending struggle of the valley's ghosts. The genius loci does not hope for a better existence; it only struggles to endure with a desperate ferocity, despite the fact that the spirit is not in any danger. While the genius loci is largely indifferent to the presence of the mannequin, any attempt to disturb the ancient ships or to permanently destroy the warring ghosts will rouse the spirit and be treated as an

Setting the Story in a Different Location

The location of this story can be moved to accommodate the needs of a particular saga. Ancient naval battles that could serve as the setting for the adventure, more or less as written, are common throughout the Mediterranean Sea. Some other possible Mediterranean sites are the battle of Actium of 31 BC in the Ionian Sea, and the Battle of Alalia, off the coast of Corsica, in 540 BC. Moving the location out of the Mediterranean reduces the number of historical locations that provide a good match for the story as written. One possible northern location is Carlingford Loch on the northeastern coast of Ireland where, in 852, the Norse and Danes fought a naval battle that lasted three days.

The storyguide should not feel

obligated to tie the adventure to the location of any historical battle at all. The ancient history of Mythic Europe certainly has enough unrecorded history that a battle could be inserted most anywhere if it were placed far enough back in time.

With some adjustment, the storyguide could skip the underwater aspect of this adventure entirely. The remains of the mannequin could be placed in any location where Hermanus could have reasonably been hunting for vis, such as a regio full of gargantuan ice caves, an oasis in the Sahara desert, or at the most important vis source belonging to the player characters' covenant, provided that the vis source was claimed at some time after 1098.

attack upon the genius loci itself. The genius loci will try to negotiate with characters if it hears of plans to harm the valley or its contents, but it does so without significant hope of success. This may or may not make dealing with the genius loci especially challenging. The spirit's depression predisposes it interpret

the characters' offers and motives in the most pessimistic way possible.

The Ghosts

The ghosts of the ancient sailors are pale reflections of their ancient selves.

The ghosts mindlessly continue their struggle, reenacting their fatal battle every day as they have for 1500 years. The ghosts perceive all new phenomena in terms of their struggle. All creatures that they see are categorized by them as ally or enemy. Frequently this categorization changes unexpectedly, as living things

Typical Ghost of an Ancient Sailor

This creature is a spirit, and both the spirit and its equipment are insubstantial. While combat statistics for the sailor have been computed, these numbers only apply if the ghost is made corporeal or when the ghost uses its strike power. In combat the ghosts can form trained groups of 4 individuals. These groups have a group bonus of +12.

Magic Might: 10 (Mentem)

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

Size: 0

Age: Appears to be between 16 and 35 years old.

Decrepitude: n/a

Confidence: 0

Virtues and Flaws: Veteran, Delusion
Personality Traits: Obsessed with the Battle +3

Reputations: None

Combat:

Sword: Init +0, Attack +7, Defense +5, Damage +6

Javelin: Init -1, Attack +4, Defense +5, Damage +7

Soak: +4

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

Abilities: Athletics 2 (climbing), Carouse 2 (drinking songs), Dead Language (ancient Greek or Egyptian) 5 (nautical terms),

Leadership 3 (sailors), Profession Fisherman 4 (net repair), Profession Sailor 3 (warships), Single Weapon 3 (short sword), Thrown Weapon 3 (javelin)

Powers:

Eidolon, 0 points, Init -1, Imaginem:

The spirit creates an illusory image of its former self. This image moves and speaks as directed by the spirit. The spirit does not have the awareness to refrain from creating this form. Rather the form is created anew every morning and exists until the spirit meets a temporary demise in battle with the other ghosts or until it is recreated the following morning. (See *Realms of Power: Magic* page 102 for more information.)

Ghost Touch, variable cost, Init -1 minus Might points spent, Terram: This power moves objects that are not held by another person or fastened down. For 1 Might point a maximum of five pounds can be moved. Every additional Might point doubles this weight limit. If the item is hurled with force, the sailor uses his Thrown Weapon Ability and inflicts +5 damage per Might point spent. The spirit can enter combat with an object when using this power and uses its characteristics to calculate combat totals as normal. The sailor does typically not use this power to attack, instead it uses the Strike

power and it employs Ghost Touch only to manipulate objects. (See *Realms of Power: Magic* page 102 for more information.)

Strike, 1 point, Init -5, Terram: For one diameter the spirit makes attacks using its sword as if the sword were a material object. This attack is magical and must penetrate Magic Resistance. (Lesser Power, no direct Hermetic equivalent, but treated as level 15, 2 Mastery Points used to reduce cost)

Equipment: Leather scale armor, short sword, javelins, and other accoutrements of a sailor.

Encumbrance: 4 (2)

Vis: The spirit contains no vis in and of itself. However when it is destroyed — actually destroyed, as opposed to the phantasmal death the spirit experiences quite often — a single pawn of Mentem vis appears in the wreck of the spirit's former ship. When this happens the ship alters itself to more closely resemble the condition it was in before it was sunk. The wood becomes less rotted, barnacles fall of the ship, and the structure becomes more solid.

Appearance: The ghostly sailor appears as a pale, slightly transparent man dressed in 4th-century-BC armor. The sailor is consumed by desperation and fear as he struggles against his nearly identical opponents.

Genius Loci of the Aquatic Valley

Magic Might: 20 (Aquam)

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

Season: Summer

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Spirit, Ways of the Sea

Magical Qualities and Inferiorities:

Personality Traits: Grim+3, Sensitive to Insult +1, Hopeful -3

Abilities: Area Lore 5 (nearby undersea environs), Awareness 5 (submerged humans), Bargain 5 (sahirs), Folk Ken 3 (sailors) Guile 2 (pretending to be mightier than it is), Intrigue 2 (assessing threats), Living Language: Greek 5 (Cypriot)

Powers:

Crafter of Water, variable points, Init -4, Aquam: The genius can duplicate any non-ritual Creo or Rego Aquam spell at a cost of one Might point per magnitude of the effect. The level of the spell can not be greater than 20. Within the valley the genius is present everywhere, and this allows it to create most effects with a Range of Personal or Touch.

Emissary of Foam and Sand 3 points Init -3 Aquam and Terram, The spirit

constructs within itself a human-shaped form of sand and water that can interact with people by use of speech and the clumsy and slow manipulation of objects. While the shape is made of inanimate material and can not be damaged in the same manner as a creature, it is not particularly stable and can be dispersed by a strong current or being hit with a large object. This form can leave the location of the spirit, but the spirit can not perceive and control the form more than a small distance from its borders. (Base 5 +1 Concentration, +1 Part, +1 Rego requisite, Terram requisite is free, Lesser Power, 1 Mastery Point spent to lower Might, cost: 20)

Master of Water, variable points, Init -4, Aquam: The genius can duplicate any non-ritual Muto or Perdo Aquam spell at a cost of one Might point per magnitude of the effect. The level of the spell can not be greater than 20. Within the valley the genius is present everywhere, and this allows it to create most effects with a Range of Personal or Touch.

Presence 0 points, Constant, Imaginem: The genius loci is aware of every-

thing that goes on within the valley, and the genius is present at every location within the valley (see *Realms of Power: Magic* pages 103 and 106 for a more in-depth description).

Vis: 2 pawns of Aquam vis are manifested annually as stones buried within the grotto, if not harvested this vis will not accumulate.

Appearance: The genius loci occasionally manifests a human-shaped conglomeration of sand and water to communicate. This shape is only a marionette controlled by the spirit. The genius loci itself is the aquatic valley.

A genius loci is a spirit of a place. The spirit inhabits the entire area — in this case the underwater valley — as if the area were a body for the spirit. A genius loci can not move from its location.

The genius loci of the grotto has been, over centuries, altered by the ghosts of the warring sailors. The spirit has a grim, dutiful mindset. For the genius, existence is something to be endured stoically rather than enjoyed. The spirit protects its locus with determination but has no hope of making it a better place, only of persevering.

fail to act in ways understandable to the single-minded spirits. A shout of agreement and a salute might mark a character as a friend; a failure to engage a specter's opponents or to respond to a question asked in an ancient language may be enough to incur the ghost's enmity.

The Return of the Laboratory

Located near the center of the valley is the wreckage of one of the an-

cient ships. This wreckage is devoid of ghosts. Standing upon this wreckage and holding the mast is a human-sized and -shaped wooden mannequin. The mast itself is suspiciously well preserved; it is waterlogged enough to sink yet it is completely free of rot and decay. The mast contains 8 pawns of Mentem vis.

This is Hermanus' mannequin. It and the mast are held in their positions by the power of Hermanus' final, tragically miscast spell. Both the mannequin and the mast resist being moved by nearly any physical force. However, if either of the objects is targeted by a

spell, such as a spell to move them, an Intellego spell to investigate them, or a Rego Vim spell to transfer the vis from the mast, the results of Hermanus' final spell are undone and the structure containing Hermanus' laboratory returns to the mundane world.

When the magic holding the mast and mannequin is broken, all of the water within thirteen paces of the broken spell is pushed out by the return of the warded laboratory structure, taking the much of the sand, debris and, presumably, characters with it. Swimming characters are pushed at least 20 paces



if they take no steps to counter the rush of water. If the player characters are not submerged — such as characters protected by the ring of aquatic freedom, described later — the storyguide is encouraged to have the laboratory structure materialize in a way that will not crush the characters. The stirred-up sediment in the water blocks all vision for a few minutes until it settles. When the water clears the characters see the laboratory structure that has been in the Twilight Void since 1098.

A LESS CONSPICUOUSLY CONVENIENT RETURN

As presented, once the player characters find the mannequin, the laboratory structure will, more or less directly, fall into their laps.

This may disappoint some players who may feel deprived of a challenge or feel that this course of events makes the characters acted upon rather than acting themselves. The alternative is to create a story in which the characters travel to the Twilight Void to recover the laboratory themselves. Arcane connections do not, however, work between the mundane realm and the Twilight Void, so even if the man-

nequin is treated as a permanent arcane connection to the laboratory, the characters must still find a way to enter the Magic Realm. Chapter Three of *Realms of Power: Magic* gives more information and ideas for such stories.

Journeying Underwater

Breathing, moving, and seeing underwater all present difficulties to characters attempting to acquire the laboratory of Hermanus. Characters who know how to swim will travel by swimming at half the speed that a typical person walks. Only weapons that attack by thrusting or with which speed is not an issue, function well underwater. Other weapons suffer severe penalties to attack, defense and damage, if they are functional at all. Groups that are trained to fight together on the surface do not function as trained groups underwater due to the three dimensional nature of movement. Likewise, groups that are trained to fight together underwater do not function as trained groups when on land. Vision underwater is quite blurred, making detail difficult to pick out at any range and making anything other than very large objects indiscernible beyond 20 paces. Unless aided by magical

means, no words and only subtle gestures may be used to cast spells while submerged, accruing normal casting penalties. Note that the sound has a difficult time leaving the water, and Voice range spells cast while submerged can only affect targets in, or touching, the surface of the water. The great weight of the ocean can crush unsuspecting magi. After each 10 paces of descent, a character loses one-tenth of his current depth minus soak (extra soak from armor does not apply), in fatigue levels. Hermanus' laboratory complex lies at a depth of 14 paces. Light may also be a problem for underwater characters. Light from the surface rapidly decreases with depth. The submarine grotto where Hermanus' laboratory lies is unnaturally well lit as a function of its magical aura.

Throughout the history of the Order of Hermes, magi have needed to travel underwater, and there are several spells and enchanted devices that have been developed to facilitate underwater activities, including *Lungs of the Fish* described in *ArM5* on page 122, and many of the creations of Maris of Tytalus described in *Magi of Hermes* pages 70-78. Some additional spells and devices are detailed here. These devices or laboratory notes detailing their construction exist within the Order and a motivated magus might

be able to make a deal to procure or borrow them for an appropriate price.

(Base 20 +1 Touch, +2 Sun, requisite free)

(Base 20, +2 Sun, +1 size alteration, requisite free)

CLOAK OF FINS AND SCALES

MuCo(An) 35

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

The caster hangs a small cape of fish scales on the back of the target and the target transforms into a naturally occurring fish of the same approximate size as the original target. The target may choose to change back to human form at any time, but doing so ends the spell. Fish and other naturally aquatic creatures do not suffer any penalties due to pressure.

FORM OF THE AQUATIC PREDATOR

MuCo(An) 35

R: Per, D: Sun, T: Ind

The caster hangs a small cape of Shark scales on his back and transforms into a large shark of size +2 as described in the accompanying sidebar. The caster may choose to change back to human form at any time but doing so ends the spell. Fish and other naturally aquatic creatures do not suffer any penalties due to pressure.

SHAPE OF THE SIREN

MuCo(An) 40

R: Per, D: Sun, T: Part

The caster's body from the hips down is transformed into the tail of a large fish, keeping the same approximate size. The caster also develops gills on his throat allowing him to breathe water but inhibiting his ability to speak, imposing a -3 modifier on all rolls to communicate verbally and a -5 to spell casting totals, as if the character were speaking quietly.

Being a Fish

The included spells offer the possibility of transforming characters into fish. The mechanical descriptions of a human-sized fish and a large shark are provided for use with these spells.

A LARGE FISH

Characteristics: Cun -3, Per -2, Pre -5, Com -6, Str 0, Sta +4, Dex 0, Qik -2

Size: 0

Confidence: 0

Qualities: Aquatic, Hardy, Herd Animal, Slippery, Thick scales

Personality Traits: Phlegmatic +2

Combat:

Teeth: Init -2, Attack +5, Defense +1 (+4 vs. grapple), Damage +3

Dodge: Init -2, Attack n/a, Defense +2 (+5 vs. grapple), Damage n/a

Soak: +5

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

Abilities: Awareness 2 (food), Brawl

2 (dodge), Survival 3 (home territory), Swim 5 (home territory)

Encumbrance: 0

Appearance: These statistics are meant to describe a fish of approximately human size, between 80 and 250 pounds.

If a group of large fish is attacked, the members of the group receive the Ferocity Virtue. The Ferocity Virtue grants the large fish a Confidence Score of 1 and 3 Confidence Points to spend. Large fish attacked while alone do not gain this benefit.

A LARGE SHARK

Characteristics: Cun -3, Per -2, Pre -5, Com -6, Str +4, Sta +4, Dex +1, Qik -3

Size: +2

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Ferocity (attacking prey)*, Improved Characteristics, Greedy (major), Wrathful (major)

Qualities: Aggressive, Aquatic, Large teeth, Pursuit predator, Slippery,

Tough hide

Personality Traits: Greedy +3, Wrathful +3, Phlegmatic +2

Combat:

Large Teeth: Init -3, Attack +11, Defense +8, Damage +7

Dodge: Init -3, Attack n/a, Defense +2, Damage n/a

Soak: +6

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-7), -3 (8-14), -5 (15-21), Incapacitated (22-28), Dead (29+)

Abilities: Awareness 2 (food), Brawl 5 (teeth), Hunt 4 (prey), Survival 3 (home territory), Swim 5 (home territory)

Appearance: This set of statistics is intended to describe a shark of +2 size.

* Ferocity is a Virtue that allows the shark to use Confidence Points to alter its rolls, but only when the shark is attacking prey. The creature is not able to use Confidence in other circumstances (see *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults* page 40).

While in this form, the caster can move at full speed underwater and does not suffer any penalties due to pressure.

(Base 20, +2 Sun, +1 Part, +1 complexity, requisite free)

BREEZE FROM WITHIN

CrAu 20

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

A very minor breeze is generated in the nose of the target, allowing him access to all of the air that he requires for breathing. While underwater, the target of this spell exhales a constant stream of bubbles that cannot be stopped by the target for more than a second by holding their mouth and nose closed. The breeze cannot be halted without the spell being dispelled or expiring. The breeze makes the manipulation of especially small and light objects by the target difficult.

(Base 1, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +4 magnitudes, wholly divorced from natural context)

EYES OF THE FISH

MuCo 5

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

The target gains the eyes of a fish, which allow him or her to see clearly while underwater but only blurrily while out of the water.

(Base 2, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, requisite free)

RING OF AQUATIC FREEDOM

The Ring of Aquatic Freedom is a lesser enchanted device with the following power instilled in it:

Beyond Reach of the Sea

ReAq 34

Constant effect

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Part

Water is prevented from coming within 6 paces of the ring. This not only prevents the wearer from drowning; the wearer cannot drink water and his sweat is thrown from his body. On muddy ground, a circle of moisture is thrown up at 6 paces from the wearer.

(Effect: Base 10, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +1 part; Modifications, +1 level 2 uses per day, +3 levels environmental trigger)

The Laboratory of Hermanus

Hermanus' laboratory complex is contained within a single-story structure ripped from the top floor of the covenant of Coeris by the botched spell that led to Hermanus' Final Twilight. Although this botch took place over 100 years ago the objects within the laboratory complex have been held in the Twilight Void, where nothing ages, for the

entire duration.

From the outside the structure appears to be a disk-shaped building approximately 35 paces in diameter and three and a half paces tall. The structure has stone walls and a wooden roof. There are closed wooden shuttered windows on all sides of the building; a partially open door faces the characters. The structure is resting on the level sea floor. Surrounding the building is the scattered wreckage of the ship that the mannequin was standing on. There are also scattered remains of some sections of the floors beneath Hermanus' laboratory that were wrested from the world by Hermanus' spell along with the top floor that remains intact (these pieces do not contain anything of value). The ward against water that is inscribed on the walls of the three outer rooms of the structure—the hallway, scriptorium and storage room—creates a volume of space free of water not only within the laboratory complex but also as a sphere that extends above and below the laboratory.

The former section of covenant containing Hermanus' laboratory consists of seven rooms, each detailed here. Within each of the rooms Hermanus has placed enchanted devices to protect both him and the covenant. Many of these devices can be divided into two categories: sentinels, which detect intruders; and justiciars, which incapacitate the intruders that have been detected by the sentinel items.

Sentinels are devices enchanted with one or more Intellego spells and the *Herald of Imperative* enchantment, which activates all of the justiciar items in the room.

In the plans of Hermanus, a sentinel item's Intellego spell would detect an intruder and the item would activate the *Herald of Imperative* enchantment. The *Herald of Imperative* enchantment would in turn activate one or more justiciar items in the room and trap the intruder. Because the sentinels and

Herald of Imperative

ReVi 29

50/day

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Room

This effect simulates a single specific triggering action on all objects in the target room. Because this effect is designed to be triggered by a thoughtless enchanted device rather

than a person, the specific triggering action must be selected at the time of enchantment. All of the justiciar-enchanted devices in Coeris use the same triggering action (described later).

(Effect: Base 5, +1 Touch, +2 Room; Modifications +6 levels 50 uses per day, +3 levels linked trigger)

justiciars were designed to be used in the covenant itself, where people lived and worked, rather than to defend the vaults, they are mostly non-lethal and serve only to imprison their targets. Within Coeris there are several devices that detect the triggering of sentinel and justiciar devices, so even if a justiciar does not have sufficient Penetration to affect a target, it still serves a purpose by alerting the defenders of the covenant.

Hallway

This hallway once was bedecked with documents and trophies extolling the accomplishments of the Adamant Rook Vexillation. After the vexillation dissolved, Hermanus and the other former members removed items that were of importance to them. The hallway is now nearly barren. A thin woven rug lies down the center of the hall and a

chandelier, bearing many partially burnt candles, hangs from the wooden ceiling. A small table sits along the interior wall of the room opposite the door to the exterior, and sitting on this table is a locked wooden chest. There are four doors in this room. When the structure is under water—which could quite possibly be the entire time that the characters are investigating it—a few inches of sea water collect along intersections of the ceiling and the floor with the

outer walls of the three outer rooms: the hallway, the scriptorium, and the store room. Along both the ceiling and the floor, there is space where the flat walls of the structure extend beyond the spherically-shaped protection provided by the ward against water.

Inscribed along the outer wall of this room and the two connecting rooms (the scriptorium and the storage room) are bands of steel that have had the following spells cast upon them:

Rego Vim Guidelines

Level 5: Activate an enchanted device with a simple trigger (i.e., not a linked trigger or an environmental trigger, see *ArM5* page 99). The caster must know the triggering action for the target device either because he invested the enchantment himself, because he

investigated the enchantment in the laboratory or because he has learned it in some other manner such as being shown the action by someone else who already knows it. The target item is activated directly by the Rego Vim spell; the normal trigger is not reproduced.

Justiciar Triggering Action

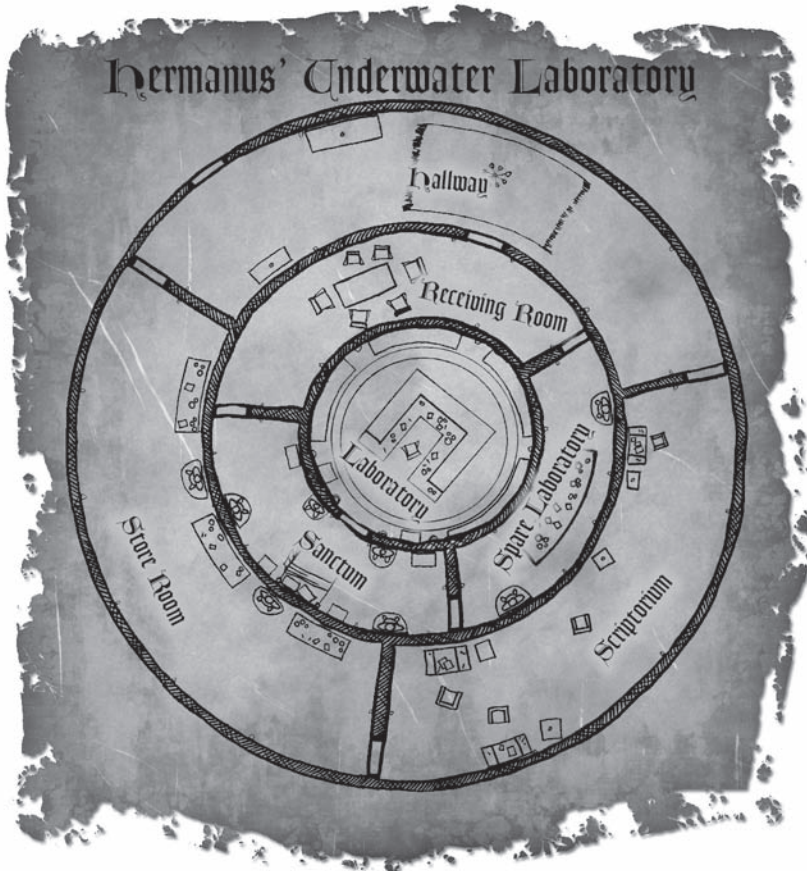
All of the justiciar devices in the laboratory structure have a single triggering action. This uniformity allows the *Herald of Imperative* enchantment on any of the sentinels to activate any of the justiciars in the structure. This uniformity would also theoretically allow someone who knew the action to activate any of the justiciars in the without the aid of a sentinel. The triggering action of the justiciars is a long and complex process that involves delicate manipulation of the enchanted item and a long and precise intonation of words. Manually activating one of the justiciars would require three rounds, if it were ever to be done. Learning to perform the justiciar triggering action would take days of intense study. Training to perform the triggering action is not necessary to instill the triggering

action in a device, as written descriptions of the triggering action exist in Laboratory Texts for *Herald of Imperative*. A written description can also be compiled from a successful laboratory investigation of either an item enchanted with *Herald of Imperative* or one of the justiciars. The triggering action for the justiciars in the laboratory structure is the same triggering action that is used for the devices defending Coeris.

While sentinels and justiciars were only one part of the defenses that the Vexillation constructed at Coeris, knowledge of the triggering action by someone outside of the House does constitute a significant weakening of the covenant's defenses. The action is kept secret by House Tremere—all of the Laboratory Texts that contain the triggering action are kept within the Coeris vaults, with

the exception of the Lab Texts that are locked in Hermanus' laboratory.

Hermanus and the Adamant Rook argued among themselves about the wisdom of using one triggering action rather than many. While a single action was easier for enemies of the House to learn and left the covenant more vulnerable to a thief who knew the action, it also offered House Tremere the greatest flexibility in adjusting its defenses. Furthermore, the single triggering action could more easily be monitored with other devices within the covenant that raised an alarm when an item requiring the triggering action was activated. Intellego magics used by the House for vetting magi who constructed and maintained the defenses also provided some protection against betrayal.



Ward Against Water

Circular Ward Against Demons (level 40 cast with 37 Penetration)

Circular Ward Against Faerie Spirits (level 40 cast with 35 Penetration)

CIRCULAR WARD AGAINST DEMONS

See ArM5 page 162 or the similar spell *Circular Ward Against Faerie Spirits*, later.

WARD AGAINST WATER

ReAq 20

R: Touch, D: Ring, T: Circle

No water may enter or leave the protected circle. Characters who are wearing wet clothing or perspiring are slowed when entering or leaving a protected area as the excess liquid is stripped from their bodies and possessions. Hermanus cast this ward using forceless casting (*Houses of Hermes: True Lineages* page 72), so the ward surrounding his laboratory complex has a Penetration of zero, allowing liquids carried by magi and creatures with Magic Resistance to pass through unimpeded.

(Base 5, +1 Touch, +2 Ring)

CIRCULAR WARD AGAINST FAERIE SPIRITS

ReVi Gen

R Touch, D Ring, T Circle

All creatures with Faerie Might equal to or less than the level of the spell are unable to enter the circle or harm those within it. Note that, since the spell on the laboratory was cast with a Penetration of 35, only faeries with a Might of 34 or lower are actually stopped, even though it is level 40, as the ward fails to penetrate the Magic Resistance of more powerful fae.

(Base Spell)

The door on the north side of the hallway is just less than two paces tall, leaving room for the rings that are inscribed above it to be reached by a person of normal height. Providing that the structure has not been moved, this door leads out to the sea floor. If this door is opened characters see that water forms a wall and does not pass into the room from the exterior. A similarly-sized door lies on the inside wall of the hallway at the hall's southernmost extent. The remaining two doors are located at the ends of the hallway. These two doors are flush with the exterior wall and extend from floor to ceiling in order to allow a magus to trace the inscribed circles when casting a spell. The doors connecting the hallway to the other rooms within the complex are locked. Hanging on the north door is a Locksmith's Will sentinel. Sitting atop a locked chest upon a table in front of the door to the exterior is the Statue of Conjured Assistants, and within this chest is a silver ring into which 2 pawns of Vim vis have been transferred. If one of the locked doors or the locked chest is unlocked by some manner other than by use of a key that fits the lock, the spirits Ferox and Fidelius will be summoned to see to the defense of the laboratory.

LOCKSMITH'S WILL

The Locksmith's Will is a lead horseshoe that has been opened with six pawns of vis. This item's capacity is filled with the two enchantments: *Lock Improperly Opened* and *Herald of Imperative*.

Herald of Imperative

See "The Laboratory of Hermanus and Surrounding Structures", earlier.

Lock Improperly Opened

InTe 29

Constant effect

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Room

This enchantment triggers the *Herald of Imperative* when a lock in the target room is opened without the use of a matching key, such as if a lock is picked, opened with magic, or is opened by being smashed to bits. The walls and

doors of the room itself are considered within the room for this effect.

(Effect: Base 4, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +2 Room; Modifications, +1 level 2 uses per day, +3 levels environmental trigger)

STATUE OF CONJURED ASSISTANTS

The Statue of Conjured Assistants is a small marble statue of a man. The statue is approximately the size of a person's hand. This statue closely re-

Ferox and Fidelius: Summoned Elemental Spirits

Ferox and Fidelius are spirits of the element of Terram (see *Realms of Power: Magic* page 104), the spirits of a matching pair of statues that stand within Hermanus' sanctum. They are immaterial spirits who will use their abilities to manipulate items in the laboratory complex to drive out intruders but they will not (and in fact can not) physically manifest themselves.

Magic Might: 6 (Terram)

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

Size: -1

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Educated, Arcane Lore

Personality Traits: Ferox: Stubborn +3, Surly +2; Fidelius: Loyal to House Tremere +3, Proud +2

Reputations: none

Combat:

Staff of the Wooden Soldier: Init +1, Attack +6, Defense +6, Damage +5

Abilities: Area Lore 3 (near Coeris), Awareness 3 (keeping watch), Brawl 2 (dodging), Code of Hermes 3 (Transylvanian Tribunal), Dead Language, Latin 5 (Hermetic use), Folk Ken 3 (magi), Great Weapon 3 (staff), Magic Lore 3 (near Coeris), Intrigue 3 (negotiation), Order of Hermes Lore 3 (House Tremere), Stealth 3 (shadowing)

Powers:

Ghostly Hands, 0 points, Init -1, Terram: This power moves objects that are not held by another per-

son or fastened down. Ferox and Fidelius can use this power to manipulate objects. Specifically, they use this to employ the Staves of Wooden Soldiers.

Ghostly Tongues, 0 points, Init -1, Imaginem: This power allows the spirits to create sound as if they had a body with a voice.

Vis: 2 pawns of Terram vis in the statue located in the sanctum (room 6).

Appearance: As insubstantial spirits, Ferox and Fidelius are not visible to most characters. Characters who can perceive them, such as characters with Second Sight or characters using appropriate Intellego Vim magics, see the spirits as statues of small sturdily built men dressed in wizard's garb.

Ferox and Fidelius are obliged, because of their previous agreements with Hermanus, to defend the laboratory complex. They both know the defenses of the structure very well, including all of the enchanted devices within the complex. The spirits are also familiar with the use of the Staves of Wooden Soldiers.

Ferox and Fidelius first move to the receiving room to retrieve the Staves of Wooden Soldiers. They use the wooden soldiers to pick up and move justiciars and sentinels in order to thwart the player characters. The two spirits try to stay as far away from any magi as practical, perhaps temporarily escaping outside of the complex and acting only through animat-

ed mannequins. As a last ditch effort they may attempt to utilize the Helm of Unraveling once the laboratory itself has been entered and the ward against magical creatures has been disabled, but they are much more likely to instruct a character compromised by *Beneficent Gift of Loyalty* in the use of the helmet.

Ferox and Fidelius will not sacrifice themselves for the protection of the laboratory. If they can avoid destruction only by fleeing or surrendering they will do so. If it becomes clear that there are magi who mean to destroy them they leave the structure and head to Coeris, traveling cross-country in order to alert House Tremere. This takes them a season, including finding the covenant, attracting attention from outside the Aegis of the Hearth, and spending time convincing the inhabitants of their good will.

ANIMATED MANNEQUIN

Here are the combat statistics for a mannequin animated by either Ferox or Fidelius

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

Size: 0

Combat:

Pole Arm: Init +2, Attack +6, Defense +3, Damage +11

Crossbow: Init +4, Attack +4, Defense -1, Damage +7

Soak: n/a

sembles one of the two statues in the Sanctum.

Summon the Stony Servants

ReTe 52

Penetration 8, 6/day

R: Arc, D: Mom, T: Group

This effect summons two specific spirits of the elements, Ferox and Fidelius (see *Realms of Power: Magic* page 104, and statistics provided later), to the location of the Statue of Conjured Assistants. Arcane connections to the spirits are incorporated into the item.

(Effect Base 15, +4 Arcane connection, +2 Group; Modifications, +4 levels 8 Penetration, +3 levels 6 uses per day)

Scriptorium

This room was used to create and copy documents for the vexillation and continued to be used for writing even after the vexillation was dissolved. There are writing desks, quills, parchment and other tools for scribes and illuminators along the inside wall of this room. The texts that the scribes were working on at the time of the lab's disappearance had all been removed for the evening at Hermanus' request, prior to his erecting of defenses and attempt to harvest vis from hundreds of miles away. On both ends of the scriptorium there are floor-to-ceiling doors. The metal rings which are embedded in the outer wall continue through this room as do the suspended pools of water along the ceiling and floor.

The handle on the door leading from the scriptorium to the store room is a Handle of Ill Will. Also, tied to the underside of one of the room's desks is the Net of Patient Thieves justiciar. If a character who wishes ill fortune to House Tremere touches the door handle, the device triggers the Net of Patient Thieves justiciar and all the people within the room are levitated just off the floor until the next dawn or dusk.

HANDLE OF ILL WILL

The Handle of Ill Will is a door handle opened with ten pawns of vis. It is enchanted with the two effects: *Test of Motive* and *Herald of Imperative*, filling nine pawns of the item's ten pawn capacity.

Test of Motive

InMe 60

Penetration +60

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind

This enchantment is triggered whenever the handle is touched. Test of motive triggers the Herald of Imperative if the person touching the handle wishes House Tremere ill fortune. Specifically the item determines the answer to the question "Do you wish ill fortune to House Tremere?". If the answer from the target is "yes," then the item triggers the *Herald of Imperative* enchantment (see "The Laboratory of Hermanus and Surrounding Structures" earlier)

(Effect: Base 15, +1 Touch; Modifications, +10 levels unlimited uses per day, +30 levels +60 Penetration)

NET OF PATIENT THIEVES

The Net of Patient Thieves is a tiny bronze net that has been enchanted as a charged device. This item has 11 charges in it. Within Coeris, these items are typically hidden within a room so those affected by the enchantment are, hopefully, unable to find it.

Elevation of the Interloper

ReCo 65

Penetration +60

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Room

All people in the target room are levitated a few inches away from all floors and walls and held aloft until the next dawn or dusk. This immobilizes any creature that has no means of forcefully moving itself without touching a surface.

(Effect: Base 4, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +2 Room; Modifications, + 30 levels Penetration 60)

Store Room

The first thing that characters will notice when looking at this room is that the room is filled with smoke. The main contents of the room are great amounts of laboratory equipment, packed into shelves that line the interior wall of the room. Along the outside wall of the room, the metal bands are inset into the wall and volumes of seawater adhere along the outer edge of the floor and ceiling. Mixed in with the laboratory equipment there are two human-sized wooden mannequins. The mannequins are dressed in chain hauberks and are carrying polearms, crossbows and bolts. The mannequins have several features on their faces (eyes, nose, lips, eyebrows) that are actually separate pieces of wood, stuck into the head of the mannequins by the use of small dowels. In the case that the mannequins from the spare laboratory have been destroyed by the players and Ferox and Fidelius are still in possession of the Staves of Wooden Soldiers, the spirits are likely to grab arcane connections from these two mannequins and use them to further hinder the player characters. The polearms bear the symbol of House Tremere on their headpieces. Also on the shelves in this room are two enchanted devices: the Censer of the Unseen sentinel, and the Pebble of the Stone Prison justiciar.

CENSER OF THE UNSEEN

The Censer of the Unseen is an incense censer crafted of rock crystal; this item was opened with eight pawns of vis. It is enchanted with *Room of Pleasant Incense*, *Ascertaining the Absence of Images* and *Herald of Imperative*. There is one pawn of free capacity in this item.

Room of Pleasant Incense

CrAu 9

Constant effect

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

A pleasant-smelling smoke constantly pours from the censer, filling the room. This smoke can be clearly seen but it can not be smelled by any creature with Magic Resistance. While clearly visible, the smoke does not significantly obscure vision. The smoke fills the target room but does not travel outside of it.

(Effect: Base 1, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +1 complexity; Modifications, +1 level 2 uses per day, +3 levels environmental trigger)

Ascertaining the Absence of Images

InIm 34

Constant effect

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Room

The enchantment determines if there is an area within the room that is not filled with either the image of smoke (presumably from the *Room of Pleasant Incense* effect) or the image of some other object. This effect triggers the *Herald of Imperative* (see "The Laboratory of Hermanus and Surrounding Structures" earlier) if there is a volume of space within the room where there is no image, such as the location of an invisible creature or object. This effect also triggers the *Herald of Imperative* if all of the smoke is removed from the room.

(Effect: Base 4 as InAu, InCo, and InHe, +1 Touch, +2 Room, +2 Sun, +1 complexity; Modifications +1 level 2 uses per day, +3 levels environmental trigger)

PEBBLE OF THE STONE PRISON

The Pebble of the Stone Prison is a highly polished river pebble created as a lesser enchanted device.

Box of Stone

CrTe 16

2/day

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

When this effect is triggered, the floor, walls, and ceiling of the room containing the enchanted device are covered by a foot of stone. This stone interposes itself between the contents of the room and the walls, floor, and ceiling. The Pebble of the Stone Prison is deployed resting against a wall or the floor of a room so the created stone walls interpose themselves between the device and the targets that the designers hoped to catch. Objects affixed to the outside of the rooms such as tapestries and rugs end up outside of the stone. Objects resting on the floor or walls, such as people, tables, or tapestries, are pushed a foot toward the center of the room by the stone. Creatures and objects with Magic Resistance are not pushed by the stone box; rather the box grows around them and is created with holes at the locations of the protected creatures or objects.

This stone box is self-supporting and will not collapse under its own staggering weight, but the environment must be able to support it. Therefore, this justiciar can only be safely employed in a few rooms on the foundation level of Coeris without triggering a collapse of the building. Hermanus's use of this device in his laboratory was unwise, but he was overwhelmed by paranoia by the time he set it up. Fortunately, it was not triggered before the laboratory was ripped into the Twilight Void, and the room is now resting on the seabed.

(Effect: Base 3, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +1 size; Modifications, +1 level 2 uses per day)

Receiving Room

This room contains chairs, tables, and cabinets. The door on the north side of the room is inscribed with the

sanctum symbol. This room was once a meeting room for the Adamant Rook Vexillation. After the dissolution of the vexillation, Hermanus used the room as a private place to meet with other magi without having to allow them into his sanctum or his laboratory. On the inner wall of the room, there is a door-sized area of stonework constructed differently from the rest of the laboratory complex where the original door to the laboratory was located. Sitting on the table in the center of this room are two enchanted devices: the Ear of Truth and The Box of Vines. Leaning against the inner wall of the room are two Staves of Wooden Soldiers, and these two staves have been fitted with arcane connections to the two mannequins located in the spare laboratory (see later). It is likely that Ferox and Fidelius will have procured these devices before the party arrives in the room. If someone within the room tells a lie, the *Chamber of Thorns* effect activates, filling the room with created plant matter. If either of the spirits happens to be in the room at the same time as the player characters, Ferox or Fidelius is likely to purposely tell a lie themselves in order to set off the trap.

EAR OF TRUTH

The Ear of Truth is a copper bowl opened with 10 pawns of vis as an invested device. The item's ten pawns of capacity have been filled with the two effects *Alarm of Dissemblance* and *Herald of Imperative*.

Alarm of Dissemblance

InMe 55

Penetration 34

R: Touch, D: Diam, T: Room

This effect triggers the *Herald of Imperative* enchantment (see "The Laboratory of Hermanus and Surrounding Structures" earlier) if any lies are told

A Note on Warping by Enchanted Devices

Modifications to the level of an effect—including Penetration, effect frequency, environmental trigger, linked trigger and effect use—are not used to determine whether or not an effect

causes warping to its targets through the power of the magical effect. Thus enchantments such as *Alarm of Dissemblance* do not warp their targets despite having a total level of at least thirty.

within the room. Naturally, the limit of the infernal prevents this from being effective against demons.

(Effect: Base 10, +1 Diameter, +2 Room; Modifications, +17 levels 34 Penetration, +10 levels unlimited uses per day, +3 environmental trigger)

BOX OF VINES

The Box of Vines is a carved wooden box the size of loaf of bread. It is a lesser enchanted device enchanted with the effect *Chamber of Thorns*.

Chamber of Thorns

CrHe 16

2/day

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Group

The room where this enchantment is triggered is filled with woody, thorny bushes that grow from the walls, floor, and ceiling to completely occupy all of the open space in the room within the flash of an eye. The vines grow around creatures and other objects that occupy the room, leaving only a fraction of an inch of free space between the thorns and any creatures and objects. These plants are unnaturally resilient, having +15 Soak. They can be cut by edged weapons only. Cutting through requires inflicting a Heavy wound for every pace of distance. Bodily forcing one's way through the plants requires a Strength stress roll against an Ease Factor of 9 for every pace moved and does +15 damage (soaked normally) whether the attempt succeeds or fails. If the roll

botches, an additional 5 points of damage are suffered.

(Effect: Base 1, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +2 Group, +1 unnatural; Modifications, +1 level 2 activations per day)

STAVES OF THE WOODEN SOLDIERS

Throughout Coeris there are many human-sized wooden mannequins. These mannequins are dressed in armor and carry weapons. Several of the wooden features on each mannequin, such as eyes and hair and fingernails, are detachable. At any given time, one detachable object from each mannequin is stored with the Staves of the Wooden Soldiers to function as an arcane connection to the mannequin. The particular feature of each mannequin held with the staves is switched regularly to keep the arcane connection from decaying. Note that, as the arcane connections loaded into the staves in this room have been in the Twilight Void, they have not decayed, as no time has passed for them.

The Staves of Wooden Soldiers are used to animate and control these mannequins to be used against threats to the covenant. Hermanus hoped that many of the weapons that the enemies of Coeris would employ would be ineffective when used against senseless wooden dolls that were immune to pain, rather than against human soldiers. It was also realized that chunks of human-shaped wood were far easier for the House to replace than trained soldiers. In fact, it

was assumed that, when used, the mannequins would be destroyed frequently; as a result, there are large supplies of the mannequins at Coeris.

Each Staff of the Wooden Soldiers is an invested device, created from a thick hazel wood staff with an eye of crafted silver mounted on the top. On each staff there is a small chamber near the top where an arcane connection to one of the wooden dolls can be inserted. The two staves located in the receiving room contain arcane connections to the mannequins located in the spare laboratory. The staff located in Hermanus' lab contains a connection to the remains of the mannequin that Hermanus used to explore the sea floor. The staves were opened with 14 pawns of vis. Each is enchanted with four powers. These powers fill up all of the staves' 14-pawn capacity.

Pretense of Humanity

Mulm 19

12/day, item maintains concentration

R: Arc, D: Conc, T: Ind

The target mannequin changes in appearance to resemble a human the same size as the mannequin.

(Effect: Base 1, +4 Arcane connection, +1 Concentration; Modifications, +5 levels item maintains concentration, +4 levels 12 uses per day)

Animate Mannequin

ReHe 34

12/day, item maintains concentration

R: Arc, D: Conc, T: Ind

The target mannequin moves under the command of the staff's holder. The mannequin moves as if it were the holder, it uses the holder's Dexterity, Quickness, and Abilities. Mannequins have a Strength score of +3 and do not suffer damage in the same manner as living beings. However, it is possible to remove a limb from a mannequin (at least the ones used in Coeris and the

laboratory complex) with any blow that has a damage value of 10 or more (19 or more on the armored mannequins in the complex). Weapons used in melee by the mannequins are resisted by Magic Resistance; mannequins are frequently armed with crossbows which are not hindered by Magic Resistance, because the bolts are not being driven by a magical force.

(Effect: Base 3, +4 Arcane connection, +1 Concentration, +1 complexity; Modifications, +5 levels item maintains concentration, +4 levels 12 uses per day)

View from the Mannequin

InIm 34

12/day, item maintains concentration

R: Arc, D: Conc, T: Special

Upon activation, the holder's sense of sight is transferred from his present location to the location of the object to which the staff carries an arcane connection. This effect allows the wearer to see his surroundings as though he were at the location of the targeted object (including being able to see creatures with Magic Resistance). The spell does not enhance the wielder's natural sight, it only transfers the location of it.

The target is based on Room but is more complex as it allows the staff's holder to see as if he were actually in the item's location (into adjacent rooms, out of windows and such).

(Effect: Base 1, +4 Arcane connection, +1 Concentration, +3 Special target based on Room, and one grade higher; Modifications, +5 levels item maintains concentration, +4 levels 12 uses per day)

Ears of the Mannequin

InIm 34

12/day, item maintains concentration

R: Arc, D: Conc, T: Special

Upon activation, the holder's sense of hearing is transferred from his pres-

ent location to the location of the object to which the staff carries an arcane connection. This effect allows the wearer to hear his surroundings as though he were at the location of the targeted object (including being able to hear creatures with Magic Resistance). The spell does not enhance the wielder's natural hearing, it only transfers the location of it.

The target is based on Room but is more complex as it allows the staff's holder to hear as if he were actually in the item's location, into adjacent rooms, out of windows and such.

(Effect: Base 1, +4 Arcane connection, +1 Concentration, +3 Special target based on Room +1; Modifications, +5 levels item maintains concentration, +4 levels 12 uses per day)

Spare Laboratory

While the Adamant Rook Vexillation existed, this laboratory was the personal laboratory of Hermanus. After the vexillation's dissolution Hermanus abandoned this room and claimed the former vexillation laboratory for his own. Sitting on the table in the center of this room is an Hourglass of Airy Trespass, and a Prison of Insubstantial Spirits. If a Creature or spirit with might associated with realm of magic enters this room, the *Insubstantial Prison* effect activates, trapping creatures with a Magic Might of 30 or less within the room. In addition, there are two human-sized wooden mannequins. The mannequins are dressed in full chain and carrying polearms (the headpieces of the polearms are stamped with the symbol of House Tremere), crossbows, and bolts. The mannequins have several carved features on their faces (eyes, nose, lips, eyebrows) that are actually separate pieces of wood with small dowels on them that have been inserted into matching holes on the head of the mannequin. Both of the mannequins in this room are missing their right ear. The ears of the manne-

quins are located in the staves of wooden soldiers in the receiving room. It should be noted that Ferox and Fidelius would be trapped if they were to enter this room without first removing either the Hourglass of Airy Trespass or the Prison of Audacious Spirits.

HOURLASS OF AIRY TRESPASS

The Hourglass of Airy Trespass is a carved rock crystal and limestone figure of an hourglass opened with eleven pawns of vis. This capacity is completely filled with the two enchantments: *Sense the Airy Trespass* and *Herald of Imperative*.

Sense the Airy Trespass

InVi 75

Penetration +32, constant effect

R: Touch D: Sun, T Room

This enchantment detects the presence of any entities that have a Magic Might of 30 or lower. *Herald of Imperative* (see "The Laboratory of Hermanus and Surrounding Structures" earlier) is triggered every round during which there is a magical being in the same room as the hourglass.

(Effect: Base 30 +1 Touch, +2 Room, +2 Sun; Modifications, +1 level 2 uses per day. +3 levels environmental trigger, +16 levels 32 Penetration)

PRISON OF AUDACIOUS SPIRITS

A silver candlestick holder enchanted as a charged device. The Prison of Audacious spirits in the spare laboratory has 7 charges in it.

Insubstantial Prison

ReVi 71

Penetration 30

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Room

Creatures with Magic Might of 30 or less are unable to move into out of the

target room until this effect expires or is dispelled. Powers used by the target creatures are likewise unable to effect targets that are on the other side of the boundary of the target room. Despite the name of the device, the effect is not limited to spirits.

(Effect: Base 30, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +2 Room; Modifications, +16 levels 32 Penetration)

Sanctum

The door to this room opens to reveal a wall of wood that was flush with the door; in fact, an indentation in the wall can be seen where the handle to the door was sitting. The sanctum is completely filled with a single chunk of wood as a result of the Charm of the Herbam Padlock located within it.

If the room is cleared of wood, characters are able to explore Hermanus's

sanctum. The rich furnishings of this room include skillfully crafted tapestries, a bed, a dresser, and a desk. There are also two granite statues of men, each approximately a foot and a half tall, the statues for which Ferox and Fidelius are the elemental spirits. The enchanted items in this room are the Carpet of Loyalty (sitting beneath the desk), a Ward Against Foreign Steel (behind a chest near the bed), a Turtle of Welcome Reflection (located in the northwest corner of the room), an Oracle-Countering Tapestry (hung on the wall to the right of the door to the receiving room), and the Charm of the Herbam Padlock (located on the floor immediately adjacent to the laboratory door, where it was left by Hermanus). In addition there are two human-sized wooden mannequins, for use with the Staves of the Wooden Soldiers. This third set of mannequins is only accessible to Ferox and Fidelius after the wooden block has

been removed from the room, and even then the spirits still need to find a way to get the arcane connections from the mannequins to the staves.

This room has two sentinels and a justiciar in it. If anyone in the room either draws a metal weapon that does not bear the symbol of House Tremere, or touches the carpet while believing that House Tremere would not approve of their plans, the Turtle of Welcome Reflection will activate, and change the room's human occupants into turtles.

WARD AGAINST FOREIGN STEEL

The Ward against Foreign Steel is a piece of black marble carved into the shape of an apple. This stone apple has been opened with eight pawns of vis. The entire eight pawns of the item's capacity have been filled by the two enchantments: *React to Naked Blades* and *Herald of Imperative*.

React to Naked Blades

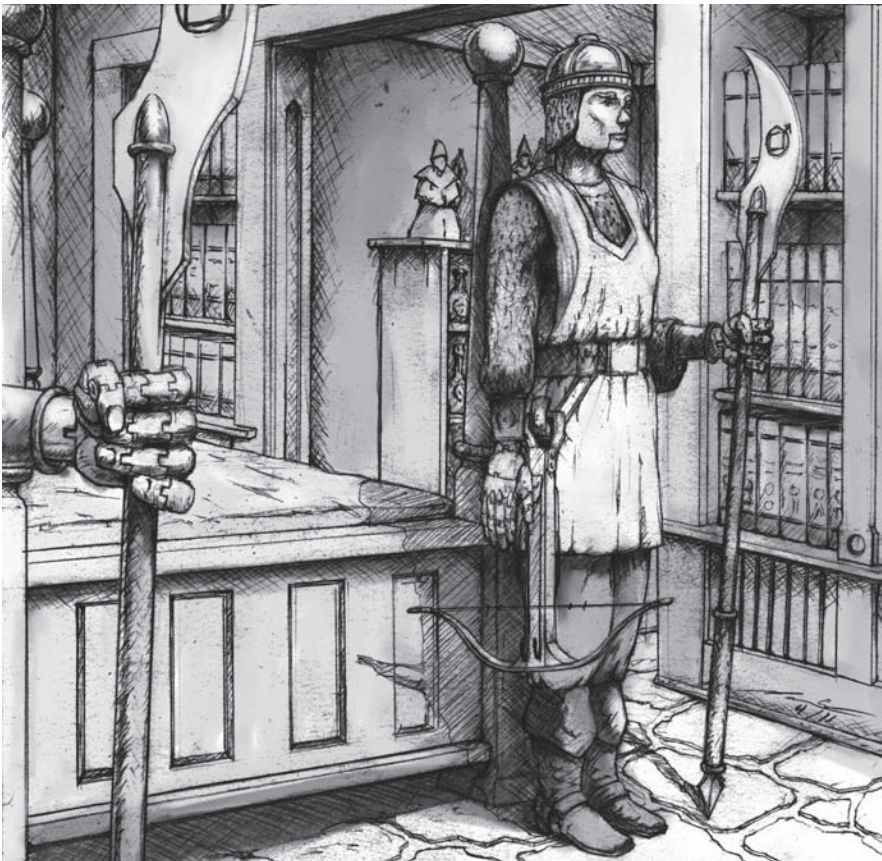
InTe(Im) 45

Penetration 42, constant effect

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Room

This effect triggers the *Herald of Imperative* enchantment (see "The Laboratory of Hermanus and Surrounding Structures" earlier) if any metal weapons that do not bear the symbol of House Tremere on them in some way are drawn within the target room. The grogs of Coeris are equipped with such weapons, but not all Tremere magi have been informed of the nature of this particular sentinel, and accidents have occurred when visiting Tremere magi have displayed their weapons in a protected room.

(Effect: Base 4, +2 Sun +2 Room, no adjustment for requisite, Modifications, +21 levels 42 Penetration, +1 level 2 uses per day, +3 levels environmental trigger)



CARPET OF LOYALTY

The Carpet of Loyalty is an embroidered square rug approximately 2 paces in length and width. The embroidery shows Tremere and Guernicus, and there are silver wires strung through the border of the rug. The carpet has been opened with nine pawns of vis, and its capacity has been filled with two effects: *Interrogation of Interlopers* (see later) and *Herald of Imperative* (see "The Laboratory of Hermanus and Surrounding Structures" earlier).

Interrogation of Interlopers

InMe 60

Penetration +60

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind

The *Interrogation of Interlopers* is triggered whenever the carpet is touched by a creature. This enchantment determines if the creature who touched it believes that the members of House Tremere would disapprove of his plans. Specifically, the item determines the answer to the question "Would the members of House Tremere disapprove of your plans?". If the answer from any creature is "yes", then the item triggers the *Herald of Imperative* enchantment. Naturally, characters who have no clue about how the Tremere would feel about their plans do not trigger the *Herald of Imperative* enchantment. This was less of a problem in the original setting; anyone in Coeris could be expected to have an opinion as to what House Tremere thought of their actions.

(Effect: Base 15, +1 Touch; Modifications, +10 levels unlimited uses per day, +30 levels +60 Penetration)

TURTLE OF WELCOME REFLECTION

The Turtle of Welcome Reflection is a jet figurine of a turtle that has been enchanted as a charged device. The Turtle of Welcome Reflection that is in the sanctum has 11 charges.

Armoring the Intruder

MuCo(An) 60

Penetration +50

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Room

Humans and other creatures that are subject to Corpus spells within the target room are changed into turtles until the next sunrise or set.

(Effect: Base 10, +1 Touch, +2 Sun +2 Room; Modifications, +25 levels 50 Penetration)

ORACLE-COUNTERING TAPESTRY

The Oracle-Countering Tapestry was created to protect the sentinels and justiciars of Coeris. Several replicas of the original were created from laboratory notes. These are often placed in the same room as justiciars that immobilize victims to hide the trapping enchanted devices and thereby prevent their dismantling or destruction. The Oracle-Countering Tapestry is a lesser enchanted device enchanted with the following power:

Masking the Magical Chamber

PeVi 45

constant effect

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Room

This effect prevents the detection of magic effects by Hermetic Intellego Vim magic unless the level of the Intellego Vim spell exceeds 52.

(Effect: Base 16 per *Masking the Odor of Magic*, ArM 5 page 160, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +2 Room; Modifications, +1 level 2 activations per day, +3 levels environmental trigger)

CHARM OF THE HERBAM PADLOCK

This is an item originally created to protect the vaults of Coeris by making the actual vis, items, and other valuables difficult to access by intruders. Hermanus used the item on his sanc-

tum prior to beginning his activities on the night of his final spell. The charm is a small silver ring opened with six pawns of vis and enchanted with the following two effects that completely fill the item's capacity.

Chamber of Heartwood

CrHe 29

Constant effect

R: Touch D: Sun T: Ind

The effect is triggered by touching the door of a room with the charm. A single block of wood completely fills the target room, fitting snugly around any objects that were in the room previously, but not moving them. This power is kept active upon all of the vaults in Coeris. Any person who opens a door to a vault will find a tremendous block of wood between himself and the rest of the room's contents.

(Effect: Base 3, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +2 size, +1 complexity; Modifications, +1 level 2 uses per day +3 levels environmental trigger)

Insubstantial Wooden Foundation

ReHe 24

Constant effect

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

This spell holds the block of wood created by *Chamber of Heartwood* in its location. *Insustantial Wooden Foundation* prevents the block of wood created by *Chamber of Heartwood* from exerting any weight on the floor of the target room. This power is always active upon the block of wood that is created by *Chamber of Heartwood*.

(Effect: Base 3, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +2 size; Modifications, +1 level 2 uses per day +3 levels environmental trigger)

Laboratory

The first thing that characters see as they open the door to the laboratory is a tapestry hanging a few inches beyond the doorframe. Once this tapestry is moved, the characters see that the interior of the laboratory is dominated by a large workbench several feet deep with shelves stretching to the ceiling of the room. This workbench takes up fully half of the perimeter of the room, on the opposite side of the laboratory from the door, and the shelves are stocked with tools and supplies for carpentry and jewelry fabrication. There is a gap between the workbench and the wall, where the floor has eight rings of different composition (metal, stone and brick) laid into it that were used to hold protective wards.

Taking up the center of the room are several tables of more typical laboratory equipment, a desk, and a great number of tomes containing some of Hermanus' laboratory notes. The ceiling of the room is plaster and painted with a negative image of the night sky, with black dots representing stars against a white background. A number of brass wires stretch across the ceiling with small spheres, suspended upon them by hooks; each sphere bears its planetary symbol. Lying on a table in the center of the room is a Staff of the Wooden Soldiers and a small wooden doll. This doll is a fixed arcane connection to the sea floor mannequin.

The rings surrounding the laboratory have the following spells cast on them:

- Circular Ward Against Demons* (level 40 with 35 Penetration)
- Ring of Warding Against Spirits* (level 30 with 40 Penetration)
- Circular Ward Against Magical Spirits* (level 40 with 36 Penetration (described later))
- Circular Ward Against Faerie Spirits* (level 40 with 37 Penetration (see earlier))
- Ward Against Faeries of the Water* (level 25 with 30 Penetration)

Ward Against the Beasts of Legend (level 30 with 30 Penetration)

Circle of Beast Warding
Ward Against Water

With reference to the rules in *Covenants* Chapter Nine, the laboratory has +1 size, +6 refinement and the Virtues Greater Feature (workbench) Lesser Feature (Ceiling), Greater Expansion, Highly Organized and Superior Lighting (Orb of Obedient Sunlight). When the laboratory was functioning it had the following characteristics +3 general quality, +4 upkeep, +5 aesthetics, and the following four specializations: +6 item creation, +1 texts, +1 Intellego, and +1 Imaginem.

STAFF OF THE WOODEN SOLDIERS

See the entry for this item in the Receiving Room section, earlier.

TAPESTRY OF CONFIDENT POSSESSION

The Tapestry of Confident Possession is a sentinel item. It is a large tapestry bedecked with small silver ornaments that covers approximately one third of the laboratory's circular walls. The tapestry is hung in such a manner that anyone passing through the door into the room, or accessing many of the cabinets and books in the room will have to move it in order to do so. This item has been enchanted as an invested device, and opened with 16 pawns of vis. It has two effects invested in it: *Assurance of Ownership* and *Herald of Imperative*. These two effects fill 10 of the Tapestry's 16 pawns of capacity.

Assurance of Ownership

InMe 65
Penetration 50
R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Room

Assurance of Ownership is triggered whenever the tapestry is moved. The effect determines if there are any minds in the room that do not contain the belief that the laboratory belongs to them. If there are any such minds, the *Herald of Imperative* enchantment is triggered. This item was specifically enchanted so as not to warp Hermanus.

(Effect: Base 15, +1 Touch, +2 Room, Modifications, +10 levels unlimited uses per day, +25 levels Penetration 50)

CROSS OF THE PREEMPTED CONFLICT

The Cross of the Preempted Conflict is a small metal cross which has been enchanted as a charged magical device. It is enchanted with 13 charges of the following effect:

Beneficent Gift of Loyalty

ReMe 65
Penetration +40
R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Room

People within the room are compelled to do their utmost to protect and care for the laboratory, the items within it, and, most importantly, the room's rightful owners. It was the hope of the Vexillation that intruders, realizing that this effect was only temporary, would turn themselves in to prevent their future selves stealing from the covenant. While this was originally intended to change thieves of Coeris into defenders, the present circumstances make the identity of the rightful owners of the laboratory somewhat questionable. Ferox and Fidelius will certainly inform any who care to hear that the laboratory complex belongs to House Tremere. But it is entirely possible that the player characters may disagree with one another regarding who the proper owners of the laboratory are. In any case, no character under the effects of this device will stand for any

material to be removed from the laboratory complex.

(Effect: Base 20, +1 Touch, +2 Room, +2 Sun; Modifications, +20 levels 40 Penetration)

BUTTERFLY'S GAZE

The Butterfly's Gaze is a silver butterfly with ivory inlays. The figure is approximately six inches long and hangs upon a wall of the laboratory. The Butterfly's Gaze has been opened with 15 pawns of vis and is invested with the following two enchantments:

Gaze of Maker's Mark

InVi 49

Constant effect

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Room

This enchantment detects if any magic in the room bears the sigil of Hermanus, the embattled lines. If it finds any magic that does not have Hermanus' sigil upon it, the item triggers *Counter Intruding Magics* upon the spell, power or effect.

(Effect: Base 5, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +2 Room +3 magnitudes determine sigil; Modifications, +1 level 2x day, +3 levels environmental trigger)

Counter Intruding Magics

PeVi 63

Unlimited uses

R: Special D: Momentary T: Ind

Dispels a magical spell/power/effect if the level of the effect can be doubled on roll of stress die +55. This effect is triggered by the *Gaze of Maker's Mark* effect and activates whenever a targeted spell enters the room or is cast within the room. A Duration Momentary spell may take effect before the *Counter Intruding Magics* spell activates. *Counter Intruding Magics* only triggers one time per round; if there is more than one possible target, the storyguide should randomly determine which source is targeted.

Breaking into the Laboratory

The laboratory should be challenging for characters to break into but not impossible. The storyguide should pay some attention to what would be exceedingly simple or annoyingly frustrating for the players and try to steer a course between them.

If the players have little patience or less powerful characters, then Ferox and Fidelius may be less active or there may be clues to the nature of the defenses in Amarantha's notes. If the party is especially powerful then the storyguide may choose to include more than two elemental spirits and the spirits may have significantly greater Might.

Water is held outside of the laboratory complex by the circular ward on the outside ring of the complex.

It should be apparent to most players, and characters, that disturbing the rings on the walls in the outer rooms could well flood the complex (at least the outer rooms).

If Ferox and Fidelius are able to enter the laboratory of Hermanus proper (room 7), they realize that both the Butterfly's Gaze and the Tapestry of Confident Possession can be triggered by them at will. The spirits make use of these devices to trigger any justiciar that they think will help in their defense of the laboratory complex. The spirits are also aware of how to use the Helm of Unraveling and will impart this information to any non-magus who they believe has come under the influence of the Cross of Preempted Conflict.

(Effect: Base 35, +3 special range based on Voice +1 magnitude; Modifications, +10 levels unlimited uses day, +3 levels linked trigger)

WOLF'S GAZE

The Wolf's Gaze is a silver wolf's head pendant approximately six inches long, which hangs upon a wall of the laboratory. It is an invested device opened with six pawns of vis, and five of these six pawns have been filled with the following two enchantments:

Awareness of Fire

Inlg 14

Constant effect

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Room

This power detects any fires in the room. When a fire is detected, *Protection of Cool and Dark* is triggered.

(Effect: Base 1, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +2 Room; Modifications, +1 level 2 activations per day, +3 levels environmental trigger)

Protection of Cool and Dark

Pelg 28

Unlimited uses

R: Touch D: Momentary T: Room

Extinguishes all fires in the room that do +5 damage per exposure or less (see *ArM5* page 181).

(Effect: Base 4, +1 Touch, +2 Room; Modifications, +10 levels unlimited uses, +3 linked trigger)

ORB OF OBEDIENT SUNLIGHT

The Orb of Obedient Sunlight is a gold-colored wooden sphere hung from a hook on the brass wires that crisscross the ceiling. The orb is a lesser enchanted device with the following power:

Obedient Sunlight

Crlg 20

Unlimited uses, item maintains concentration

R: Per, D: Conc, T: Ind

When commanded, the orb glows with bright light. This light is more than



sufficient to illuminate the laboratory. Hermanus used this item as the source of illumination for his laboratory in order to eliminate the risk of fire, and the defensive risk that he saw in unprotected, open windows.

(Effect: Base 4, +1 Concentration; Modifications, +10 levels unlimited uses per day, +5 levels item maintains concentration)

HELM OF UNRAVELLING

The Helm of Unravelling is a steel helmet opened with 12 pawns of vis. The Helms, like other examples of the device at Coeris, were created in an attempt to provide tools that would allow Coeris' grogs to disrupt the magical abilities of opponents. Their existence causes some unease among magi who have not yet learned to trust House Tremere's auxiliaries.

These helms are not frequently worn by grogs because the enchantment *Sight of Forming Spells* is powerful enough to cause warping on the wearer. While seldom used, the helms are almost always carried by the grogs who are most trusted for their judgement; these are not necessarily the best leaders or most skilled warriors. The

helms are enchanted with the following two powers:

Sight of Forming Spells

InVi 60

Penetration +32, constant effect

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Vision

The wearer of the helm sees spells, powers, and effects that are with his or her field of vision as a violet glow. Spells powers and effects that are being cast show up very strongly to the wearer, while active magics are harder to notice, and residues of old spells, powers, and effects cannot be detected at all. If this effect does not penetrate the resistance of a target, the wearer can not see any magic active upon that target, nor can the wearer determine if the target is casting a spell.

(Effect: Base 5, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +4 Vision; Modifications, +1 level 2 uses per day, +3 levels environmental trigger, +16 levels +32 Penetration)

Shout of Unravelling

PeVi 60

+32 Penetration, 12/day

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Ind

The targeted spell, power or effect is dispelled if its level can be doubled on a

roll of stress die + 50. If the wearer of the helm has a higher Initiative than some of their opponents and they choose to wait to act, they can use *Shout of Unravelling* to counter spells cast by characters acting later in the round. *Shout of Unravelling* is triggered by the wearer shouting while staring at a magical power or effect; the specific words shouted are of no importance in regards to their effectiveness as a trigger. If this effect does not penetrate the resistance of a target, the wearer can not counter any magic active upon that target, nor can the wearer counter a spell that the target is casting.

(Effect: Base 30, +2 Voice; Modifications, +4 levels twelve uses per day, +16 levels 32 Penetration)

ENCHANTMENTS ON THE LABORATORY ITSELF

Hermanus opened and enchanted the laboratory after the Vexillation of the Adamant Rook had been disbanded and he took the laboratory over for himself. The walls of the room, its highest capacity component, were opened by Hermanus using 20 pawns of vis. The laboratory's enchantments fill 15 pawns of the laboratory's 20-pawn capacity.

Foreboding of Stones

InTe 19

Constant use

R: Pers, D: Sun, T: Hearing

The laboratory room detects the approach of any solid object that is likely to hit the room with enough force to damage it. The laboratory then triggers *Skin of the Sapphire Tortoise*.

(Effect: Base 2, +2 Sun, +3 Hearing; Modifications, +1 level 2 uses per day +3 levels environmental trigger)

Skin of the Sapphire Tortoise

MuTe(He) 35

Unlimited uses

R: Pers, D: Diam, T: Room

The walls, floor, or ceiling of the laboratory room become as hard as the hardest gemstone and as resilient as iron.

(Effect: Base 5, +1 Diameter, +2 Room, +1 requisite; Modifications, +10 levels unlimited uses)

Protection of the Mason's Vision

ReTe(He) 28

Unlimited uses

R: Pers, D: Mom, T: Special

Any portion of the laboratory room's structure that is removed or misplaced is moved back into position. Bricks are replaced, broken pieces of the ceiling return to their original positions, and so on. Note that if the room is destroyed this enchantment ceases to function. The room can not reassemble itself from a pile of rubble. The special target covers just the structure of the room, not its contents, and allows the magic to affect parts of the structure that fall outside of the room but remain within 5 paces.

(Effect: Base 3, +3 special based on room +1, +1 Herbam requisite; Modifications, +10 levels unlimited uses, +3 levels environmental trigger)

Invisible Eye Uncovered

InVi(Im) 45

Constant effect

R: Pers, D: Sun, T: Room

Any magical means used to spy into this room is revealed as a flickering image within the room. For instance, if the room is looked upon with *Enchantment of the Scrying Pool*, the image of an eye that shimmers as if distorted by water might appear within the room. This enchantment detects Intellego spells of up to level 52.

(Effect: Base 16 per *The Invisible Eye Revealed*, ArM5 page 157, +2 Sun +2 Room, +1 requisite; Modifications, +1 level 2 activations per day, +3 levels environmental trigger)

RICHES CONTAINED IN THE LABORATORY OF HERMANUS

In addition to the enchanted devices in the laboratory and the laboratory itself, there are 6 pawns of Rego vis, 18 pawns of Mentem vis, and 8 pawns of Vim vis. There is also a large collection of laboratory texts. The laboratory contains detailed texts for all of the enchantments on the laboratory itself, as well as all of the enchanted devices within it. There are also laboratory texts describing the creation of all of the sentinels and justiciars detailed in this chapter. Finally, there are laboratory texts for the Ring Duration Circle Target wards active in the laboratory. The spell *Circular Ward Against Magical Spirits* is included in this collection and is described here.

Circular Ward Against Magical Spirits

ReVi Gen

R: Touch, D: Ring, T: Circle

All creatures with Magical Might equal to or less than the level of the spell are unable to enter the circle or harm those within it.

(Base Spell)

There is also a casting tablet (see *Covenants* page 89-90) for the spell *Cargo of Angel's Wings*.

Cargo of Angel's Wings

ReTe(He) 45

R: Arc, D: Mom, T: Ind

The caster transports the target object to the location of an arcane connection. Hermanus used this spell to obtain vis and arcane connections from the location of the Wooden Mannequin that he used to explore the world without leaving his laboratory. In order to use this spell from a distance, Hermanus employed a spell similar to *Opening the Intangible Tunnel* (ArM5 page 162) in conjunction with the casting tablet.

(Base 35, +1 requisite, +1 Touch)

Aftermath

If the laboratory complex is recovered by magi outside of House Tremere, the House has several ways of learning of it. They might be informed by Ferox or Fidelius. One of the Tremere magi knowledgeable about the Coeris defenses may spot or hear about a laboratory text, an enchanted item or other piece from the laboratory. The characters themselves may let it slip. In any of these cases, the House will do whatever is in its power to recover the resources from the player characters.

House Tremere sees the laboratory, laboratory texts and enchanted devices as possessions of the House because they were created by the House and for the House using the House's resources, rather than by Hermanus for his own purposes using his own resources. Only the vis in the laboratory is exempt from the House's claim. Recovery of the items, however, is not nearly as important to the House as maintaining the

Scraping Razor of Memory

PeMe 4

R: Pers, D: Mom, T: Ind

The caster removes a single important detail from his or her own memory.

(Base 4)

secrecy of their magic item designs and triggering actions.

It is clear to the House that information is much easier to distribute than to destroy. The House will open up negotiations with legal arguments regarding their rights to their materials, coupled with tempting offers of access to books and vis. They will not make threats of immediate Wizard's War, for fear that frightened magi might make the Tremere's secrets public.

House Tremere is willing to pay any reasonable price for the recovery of their secrets, and the assurance that the information will not be leaked in the future. Since the alternative is to significantly overhaul the defenses of Coeris, a "reasonable" price can be quite high. On the other hand, such an overhaul is necessary in any case; House Tremere is not

so naive as to trust an agreement completely. Thus, they are willing to pay enough to buy time. Should the player characters not be willing to deal, House Tremere is willing to make life extremely hard for them until they do deal. If pressed, the Tremere should leave the nature of this difficulty vague, with the threat of Wizard's Wars implied only in the event that the characters do spread the secrets.

In the case of House Tremere, assurance that their secrets are safe includes assurance that specifics of the triggering action have been removed from the minds of people who, in the opinion of the Tremere, should not have the information. The Tremere suggest that the spell *Scraping Razor of Memory* can be cast by nearly any magus spontaneously and very possibly can be cast as a non-fatiguing spell, perhaps using Ceremonial Casting and props while in a powerful aura (see *Houses of Hermes: Societates* page 59), thereby avoiding the possibility of botching.

Before delivering payment the Tremere will wish for the involved parties to provide testimony to a Tremere Mentem expert or a neutral Quaesitor skilled in magical investigation. Prior to releasing any payment to the player characters, the Tremere will insist that the testifying character submit him-

self to spells such as *Frosty Breath of the Spoken Lie* or *Ear of Truth* (see *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages* page 73) in addition to spells to detect any magical tampering to the mind of the testifying character, such as *Sight of the Active Magics*. The Tremere realize that, legally, this must be done voluntarily by the testifying character and will make any reasonable arrangements to prove the purity of their intent, such as using a properly vetted Quaesitor of the testifying character's choosing or submitting to a similar interrogation by a neutral Quaesitor regarding their intent in this particular matter.

The Tremere insist that the investigator ask the testifying characters not only if they know the information, but also questions such as, "Do you have any reason to believe that you've made plans that will allow you to recover the information?", "Do you know of anyone else who has the information?", and "If you had wished to fool the Tremere by secreting away the information somehow then erasing memory of the event from your mind, how do you think that you would have done it?" If all of these tests are passed, the Tremere believe that they have enough time to overhaul the defenses in a considered manner, and honor any agreement.

Chapter Six

The Flying Castle of Thomae

Lifetime: c. 1122 AD – 1198 AD

Overview: The flamboyant creator of the most audacious enchantment the Order has yet seen — a flying castle — and a host of lesser magic items. Both the adventurous Thomae and his castle went missing only a few decades ago.

This story is suitable for a wide variety of sagas. The wreck of Thomae's castle, with some minor modifications, can act as the raw material for a new Spring covenant, so this story is suitable as the first adventure in a saga. In established sagas, the legendary castle contains many desirable enchanted items and magical resources. Characters may also seek the castle to enhance their Reputation, or to assist their House or mystery cult.

Legend

Thomae of Tytalus was famous in the closing years of the 12th century. Eschewing the political confrontations popular with the other members of his House, Thomae challenged himself to fulfill his boyhood dream of living in a floating castle. To fund his studies, Thomae became a slayer of monsters,

and a hired killer for covenants engaged in Wizard's War. In 1191 he disappeared for a time, only to return with a castle that could float through the air.

This caused great alarm in the Order. After a tense tribunal meeting, Thomae agreed to fly his castle, high and at night, to a mountainous area and remain there. Away from the prying eyes of

mundanes, he could not provoke them, and break the Code.

Thomae was content for a time but, in 1195, a tribunal met again to consider his actions. It had become obvious that Thomae was sneaking his castle out to sea in the dead of night, and traveling to desolate places in other Tribunals. Thomae's political skills proved suffi-



cient defense against any crime, since none of his accusers could demonstrate that he had harmed the Order.

In 1198, 22 years ago, Thomae and his floating castle vanished. There are many stories of his fate. Some say that he left for Transylvania to work secretly on weapons platforms for the Tremere. Some claim he has gone exploring. Some say that the Devil claimed him and that his castle fell away as dust and ash, leaving Thomae to plummet to his death.

In reality, his end was less legendary than the stories of his life.

Thomae was navigating through the Alps when his castle overflowed the nesting site of a flock of griffons. Unlike most covenants, his castle has no Aegis, so the

griffons were able to attack it directly. A griffon damaged the flight control mechanism of the castle, and it crashed. Thomae was wearing a magic item that protected him from falling, so when the castle fell around him he was smashed into the ceiling of the navigation room.

Efforts to find Thomae have failed, but most magi assume that some hint of him will emerge eventually.

Legacy

Characters completing this scenario may be rewarded with any of the follow-

ing treasures, as suits the saga that the troupe is telling.

The Flying Castle of Thomae

Thomae gave the impression that his castle was created by a team of skilled assistants, using strange rituals and obscure material components, to provide powerful wards and offensive capabilities. This was a lie. Thomae's flying castle is a far simpler item than the legend he created implies. It is a magical flying disk, upon which he built a castle. The depth of his deception is left for Storyguides to

What the Order Remembers of Thomae

Thomae was active in the Order relatively recently, so many of the details about him are more easily recalled than those of the other magi in this book. Players whose characters have some reason to be particularly interested in his works or legal case may be granted a +3 bonus on Intelligence + Order of Hermes Lore rolls, when seeking the following recollections about him.

KNOWN TO ALL

- Thomae was a magus of House Tylalus, active late last century.
- He built a flying castle.
- He suffered legal trouble.
- He vanished about 20 years ago.

WIDELY KNOWN

- Thomae was young, for a magus, when he disappeared, and many suspect he is still alive, abusing the natives in some distant part of Africa or Asia.
- Thomae was disinterested in poli-

tics—his obsession was flight.

- His castle was made of bronze.
- He was renowned as a slayer of magical beasts, and a magical mercenary.
- He was accused of provoking the mundanes by displaying his flying castle.
- Thomae traveled widely in his quest to find vis to pay for his castle, spending much time in the Holy Land and Africa.
- Thomae settled his tribunal case by agreeing not to fly his castle in civilized areas, but there was some question regarding his later compliance.

UNCOMMON KNOWLEDGE

- During his Tribunal case, Thomae noted that he did not build all of his magical items himself; many were purchased.
- Thomae's castle included safety equipment for his servants, at remarkable personal expense, which made them loyal to him.

- Thomae claimed to be a Hermetic Architect, one of the Order's least secret mystagogic societies.
- The castle was examined by the Quaesitores during his legal troubles, but because it was considered his sanctum, even his fellow Architects did not visit it.

LOST SECRETS

- There's something wrong with the timeline of Thomae's life: he seems to fit more in than is possible. This probably means he lied about what he was doing, and when.
- Thomae was probably not a Hermetic Architect, but he claimed to be one.

HERMETIC ARCHITECTS ONLY (EASE FACTOR 12)

- Many of the effects he claimed as integral to the castle could not have been possible, unless he made a breakthrough in Hermetic Architecture.

decide: story suggestions relating to the true source of the disk are given at the end of the chapter.

The disk is made of a single, flat circle of stone (hard stone, 4). It is 300 paces across, and slightly less than a pace thick (size 7). It lies beneath and supports the bronze sheet that forms the courtyard of the castle. Thomae's great and simple ploy was to not design this as masterpiece of Hermetic Architecture, or even as an invested device. The disk is simply one of the largest lesser enchanted devices in the history of the Order. The strange absences in his biography can be explained as the time taken to set up a laboratory of sufficient size and secrecy to satisfy the Verditius he hired. He also needed to find the resources to pay for one season of that magus's time and discretion. The disk, like all lesser enchanted devices, took only one season to produce.

THE FLIGHT DISK

ReTe Level 33

Pen +0, Constant effect

R: Personal, D: Diameter, T: Individual

This item is controlled with colored lights displayed by the control chain, described later.

The spell causes the castle to fly at the running speed of a horse.

This effect is triggered whenever the spell is not active. This means that, every time the Duration expires, the effect is triggered again, and that the effect is also triggered if the magic is dispelled, so that the castle cannot be brought down with a single PeVi spell. Since the trigger is immediate, this does not make the flight jerky.

Effect: Base 3, +1 Diameter, +3 size, +1 affects stone; Modifications +10 unlimited use, environmental trigger (this spell not working) +3.

A Note on Boundary Effects

Boundary effects are not, by their nature, mobile. This means that, for example, if the castle had a Boundary ward against magical creatures, it would leave the effect behind as it flew. Similarly, an Aegis of the Hearth ritual cast around the edge of the

castle would also be left behind as the castle moved. This lack of effective wards for huge, moving objects was a known risk. Thomae believed few creatures would attack a magical flying castle filled with offensive magical items and well-trained soldiers.

THE CONTROL CHAIN

A steel chain, ending in a bulb of metal, is secured to the center of the flight disk. The length of this chain rises through the High Tower to the magus's laboratory. By touching this chain, and speaking an appropriate Latin command, the bulb on the chain's end glows with various colors and intensities of light. These lights control the disc. This allowed Thomae to steer the disc from many of the rooms in the High Tower, as doors in the tube allow access to the chain.

The use of a control mechanism based on light caused the destruction of the castle. During the attack, a griffon clawed a hole in the base of the High Tower to reach Thomae's treasury. This cracked the metal jacket of the disk, allowing sunlight to fall on it, which caused the castle to list. Thomae did not have time to puzzle out the failure of his control mechanism before it caused his death.

Crlg Level 9

Pen +0, Constant effect

R: Personal, D: Sun, T: Individual

This item is controlled by Latin commands given by a person touching the chain.

This effect causes the glowing ball at the end of the control chain to change to one of a variety of colors when a person touching any part of the chain uses one of the command words. The control chain is a separate

magic item from the flying disk, but it is used to communicate the wishes of the controller in the main keep to the device. The different colors emitted by the chain control the castle's flight. The chain was designed to also trigger later additions to the disk's enchantments. It has many spare light patterns, triggered by speaking numbers, which have no current purpose.

Effect: Base 1; Modifications +2 Sun, +2 complexity (caster control of color), +4 constant use.

Thomae and His Equipment

Thomae's corpse is scattered about the wreckage of the castle. He died violently, and was not buried with religious rites. This means his ghost is contactable and likely deranged.

LABORATORY NOTES

Thomae's lab was destroyed in the crash, but his most prized books were preserved in their magical storage chests. These codices contain lab notes for making:

- The flying disk.
- The large laboratory where the flying disk was created.
- The control chain, which is a useful mechanism for activating other

magical items that are to be remotely triggered because of the dangerous environment in which they work. Mining or undersea equipment, for example, might be controlled with a similar mechanism.

- **The castle's siege finials**, which are basic mystical artillery and are useful in the defense of most covenants. These items look identical to the many other finials which top the castle's walls.
- **Thomae's anchor**. This whimsical magical item looks like a ship's anchor, and was trailed through the air behind and below the castle. It makes the castle invisible from the ground. Thomae purchased or created it after his legal troubles. Strangely, it does not make itself invisible, a flaw of which Thomae was surely aware.
- **Thomae's whip**. Thomae's talisman was a lengthy bronze chain, which could move magically. Thomae used this to control things at a distance,

extend his Touch range, and wield as a whip in battle.

- **The falling bells**. The castle had several bells that, if they were free-falling, would chime. All who could hear the chime were able to fly for the rest of the day. The bells were placed in large public spaces, and some effort was made in the design of the covenant to channel the sound of the bells for the greatest distance. This was made easier by the excellent acoustic properties of bronze. The bells were held by chains with special winches that would let loose a loop of chain at a time, so that the bells would free-fall for a second before taking up the slack. This allowed the bells to be used for emergencies.
- **Medallions** allowing flight, invisibility, safe falling, magical attack or espionage effects. These items are of great use to magi interested in flight, but are also useful for mundane agents involved in sabotage, assassi-

nation or burglary. These medallions are currently held by the leaders of the Santa Lucians, and the thief Andros, whose crimes draw the characters to the story.

TRAINING BELL

These smaller bells, with less powerful effects than the falling bells described in the previous section, were used for training, festivities, and missions. Most servants in the castle were taught simple tricks on training days, like leaping from the courtyard to the top of a tower then down again, so that if they were required to leap from the castle to the ground below they would have confidence in the spell. Some others were trained in flight, which has many advantages during sieges.

ReCo Level 35

Pen +0

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

This bell is activated by holding its handle and ringing it.

The spell allows the user to fly, at a brisk walking pace, for the rest of the day. The bell may be tapped on a child as it rings, to allow guided flight. Theoretically it may also be used as a club, to cause a victim to fly.

Effect: Base 10, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, Modifications +10 constant use.

THOMAE'S TENDER

The tender is a floating metal platform that can be used to lift supplies up to the castle. A tender, in this sense, is a smaller vessel used to supply or shuttle crew to a larger one. The tender moves faster than the castle does, so it is possible for it to scout ahead of the castle, or catch up if delayed while loading supplies.

The tender is powered by a large moonstone. Moonstones are semipre-



cious stones with an affinity for air magic. If the tender is destroyed, a similar metal plate can be powered by attaching the moonstone to it. The command words for the stone are simple Latin instructions, which any speaker may learn with a little patience and experimentation. They may also be found in the ruins of Thomaë's castle, or determined in the laboratory.

The tender is also meant to act as an expeditionary vehicle and a lifeboat. It was never actually employed for either task. The tender lacks obvious modifications that would make it more suited to these roles, like environmental control magic, artillery, and the ability to store food incorrupt.

ReTe Level 34

Pen +0, Constant effect

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

The tender is controlled by touching the moonstone that powers it, while speaking simple Latin commands.

This effect allows the tender to fly and carry as much cargo as can be piled upon its surface.

Effect: Base 3, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +2 size, +2 affects metal; Modifications +4 constant use.

COVENANT GOODS

The castle contained a magician's laboratory, private library, and sufficient supplies for his servants to live luxuriously. Many of Thomaë's possessions were destroyed in the crash or by the elements afterward. His materials will not equip the multiple laboratories of most covenants, but may provide useful pieces of enchanted laboratory equipment, a collection of valuable books, or sufficient mundane wealth to purchase useful supplies for the covenant. Storyguides might use magical items from other scenarios in this book as treasures belonging to Thomaë.

Story Seed: Incubation Methods

An incubation method for griffons' eggs is not immediately apparent to Hermetic magi, and they may be forced to complete a story to discover a successful one. This may be as simple as consulting a great library and doing a favor for the covenant that controls it. Some of the most powerful of Bjornaer magi are able, if rumor is to be believed, to take the shape of griffons, and if one of them might be consulted, perhaps she would be able to suggest an answer.

Some Jerbiton covenants train magical animals, and one of the magi at Valnastium is said to have potent magic items which aid in the training of griffons. It is unknown, though, whether she has any experience in hatching their eggs, and it may be untenable for player characters to reach so remote a covenant quickly. It is not even known whether the eggs die if not kept in the right environment, or simply refuse to develop until their mystical climate is satisfactory.

HOW MUCH IS BRONZE WORTH?

The wrecked castle is made of enormous amounts of bronze. Thomaë chose bronze because a superficial layer of corrosion stops bronze deteriorating further, unlike iron or steel. Bronze can be sold for between 200 and 300 Mythic pounds per ton, but if reworked into high-class brassware (a term which includes bronze, in Mythic Europe) it can sell for as much as 1,500 Mythic pounds per ton. Characters wanting to sell the bronze will encounter problems of weight, remoteness and market flooding, rather than scarcity.

focus for enchantment, the nest—contains pounds of gold, griffon feathers, and the woods of exotic trees—must be moved into a laboratory without damaging its basic structure. Careful manual handling, skilled goldsmithing to solder the pieces together, or magic is required to keep the nest intact until it can be stabilized and enchanted. An intact nest may also be required for incubated griffon eggs to hatch.

EGGS OF AGATE

Griffons' eggs are perfect agates the size of ostrich eggs. Agates are semiprecious stones that may be used for a variety of purposes. Ancient writers note that an agate placed in the mouth prevents thirst. Sorcerers have, since Roman times, used agates in the control of rivers and storms. Agate is linked to Auram magic (+3), protection from storms (+5), and protection from venom (+7).

Griffon Treasures

The griffons whose range overlaps the crash site could provide many treasures to creative players.

THE NEST OF GOLD

The nest of gold is worth a fortune, but to a skilled enchanter, it is even more valuable as a focus for enchantment. It adds +7 to enchantments which favor the defense of home, or the protection of treasures. To be used as a

BABY GRIFFONS

The eggs may be permitted to hatch, providing baby griffons for the covenant to train, leaving eggshells to be

enchanted as described earlier. Griffons grow slowly, so for the first few decades of their lives the covenant's griffons are little larger than dogs. Provided they accept one or more of the local people as the senior member of their pride, the young griffons are entirely biddable. They have many of the behavioral problems of kittens, coupled with the ability to fly, the capacity to spot prey at extreme distances, and the strength to tear holes in their surroundings. They may be suitable as familiars.

With magic that causes rapidly maturity, the griffons may be increased to adolescent or adult size. Mature beasts are more useful in combat, but are much more difficult to train—indeed their inability to be coerced is considered one of the defining attributes of griffons. Rules for training magical animals are found in *Realms of Power: Magic* pages 81-81.

The Townsfolk and Site of Santa Lucia

The villagers of Santa Lucia are the covenfolk who survived the castle's destruction and their children. Many members of the older generation have unusual skills useful to magi, learned during their stay in the castle. All speak a debased, colloquial Latin. They can be recruited by a covenant lacking skilled residents.

The new valley of Santa Lucia is an allod: a piece of land not claimed by a nobleman. Allods make excellent sites for locating Spring covenants. The discovery of the castle, and the people of Santa Lucia, could provide the initial story for a saga. In this case, the griffons are likely too formidable an opponent for newly Gauntleted magi, and one of the alternatives mentioned in the Alternative Enemies section should be used instead.

Adventure: Flights of Fancy

The search for Thomae's flying castle takes the player characters to dangerous new heights.

Précis

The adventure presented here has the following structure:

- The storyguide foreshadows elements of the story in previous stories, including the main magus and monster.
- Crimes are committed using a magical device.
- The player characters investigate, from their own interest or because they are pressed to by other magi.
- The thief's magic item was made or commissioned by Thomae. It was stolen from a village in the mountains.
- As the characters travel to the village, they have combat encounters and face environmental puzzles.
- The villagers are the covenfolk of Thomae, and know where his castle crashed. They are being harassed by faeries that have attached themselves to the idea of the castle. The player characters can solve this problem simply by removing the items that tie this community to its past. They may not realize this, though, and may choose to fight the faeries instead. Characters may track a faerie back to the castle.
- The flying disk's metal jacket has been damaged. The damage was obviously done with large claws.
- The characters must either fight the griffons or find ways to avoid their notice, while either repairing the castle or salvaging its valuables.

Foreshadowing

For the adventure in this chapter to be slotted seamlessly into a saga, the storyguide should prepare the players by foreshadowing two elements in earlier stories. Thomae himself might be mentioned, in passing. Characters might find art depicting his castle, or he may be referenced in a legal case. The players should also know a little about griffons. They may, for example, visit an ancient covenant that possesses the talisman of an archmage, a staff that ends in an agate the size of an ostrich egg, and learn that this was laid by a griffon. Griffons also appear in artwork and so may be slipped into other stories as decorative elements.

The Hidden Thief

In a large town near the covenant, a thief is committing crimes while invisible. The player characters are likely to want to intervene. Potential hooks include:

- The Order dislikes magically-assisted crimes, because magi tend to be blamed for them, so it is practical as well as civically-minded to investigate.
- A magus might be the criminal and, since this has led to public concern, it may be a Hermetic crime.
- If the person is using an invisibility charm, it likely was made by a magus. Any Hermetic activity in a town so close to the covenant is worrying enough to investigate.
- Minor items like these usually become available to criminals after they murder redcaps. Defense of redcaps is one of the duties of all members of the Order.
- The victim of a robbery or his servants may contact the magi, seeking the recovery of a lost item, or the capture of the criminal if someone died during the burglary.

- The commercial interests of the covenant may have been targeted.

To Catch the Thief

The method used to catch the thief must vary based on individual troupes. Access to one of the burglary sites is possible through bribery of household servants or warehouse guards, Social skill rolls, magic or simply breaking in. Simple observation (Awareness rolls against an Ease Factor of 6) tells the characters that the thief was able to fly. His point of presumed access, from the roof, doesn't show any tool or foot marks. A second roll also shows that the thief was searching for things to steal; he did not target a particular object.

Characters may find and catch the thief through a variety of means:

- The burglary site may contain Arcane Connections, allowing spells to detect the thief's identity and location.
- Characters with criminal contacts may obtain a description of the stolen goods, and find people to whom they have been offered. These potential purchasers can be persuaded to identify the culprit.
- The characters find a pattern in the robberies (against a particular family that recurs in the saga, or of a particular type of item) and use that pattern to set a trap at the next likely site, or to investigate enemies of the family.

The Thief and His Medallion

The invisible thief is a man in his mid-twenties named Andros. He has some mercenary experience, but is not sufficiently formidable to trouble a band of experienced grogs. The storyguide should determine if and how they wish

to use Andros in future stories, and select a set of statistics from the generics in *Ars Magica* supplements that suit his after-story role.

Andros believes his medallion is a holy relic. He gained it from Roberto, another soldier with whom he served. Roberto always carried his medal and kissed it before battle. He used it once, when combat became desperate, to vanish. Andros was able to avoid dying in that battle through luck, and eventually he and Roberto were in the same mercenary company again. When Roberto was killed in a shower of arrows, Andros made sure he was the one to collect the miraculous medal. He did consider sending it to Roberto's family, but Roberto claimed to be from a tiny village called Santa Lucia in the Alps, so it didn't seem worth the effort. (The Storyguide should change the location and name of the town to suit her saga.)

The medal is small and bronze, attached to a chain of the same metal. On one face, it shows a portrait of a man, and on the reverse, a stylized castle. It looks like a medal sold to pilgrims, although the iconography for Saint Thomas is wrong (Intelligence + Church Lore against an Ease factor of 3—the saint's halo is actually a spiral, and the portrait lacks any other iconic identifiers. Thomas is the Patron Saint of Architects, so the castle on the reverse side might be taken as an indication of his identity.

Andros activates the medal with an incorrectly-memorized Latin prayer to Saint Thomas. This works because the triggers for two of the powers are "Thomae" and the Latin word for "help". The magus was named for Saint Thomas by his master, the name being popular with Hermetic Architects.

Andros takes two rounds to activate the device, because his prayer contains many unnecessary words between the two vital ones. He always uses both powers together, as he does not un-

derstand that they are separable. He is also aware that the medal provides a controlled descent at the end of his flights. He is not aware that this is a power triggered by the medal freefalling. Blowing on the medallion activates another power, used for espionage, but Andros does not know this. This is why the original owner kissed the medal before battle—it allowed him to spy on his commanders while they made their plans, and find his way into forces held in reserve whenever possible.

Thomae's three shield grogs had medallions with slightly different effects. This one was designed to allow covenant folk to be trained in emergency descent. It has a flight power with unlimited uses and long duration. The flight is slower, but far longer than the other medallions. It has been coupled with an invisibility effect to allow spying, and which can be used by groups if they pass the medallion among themselves. It also has a safety effect, which allows controlled falling. This was also used for training covenant folk in flight.

AERIAL DANCER

ReCo 35

Pen +0, unlimited/day

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Individual.

This power is activated by the medallion's wearer speaking the word "Thomae".

This effect allows the user to move at running pace through the air in any direction he wishes. It can be reactivated an unlimited number of times per day. Thomae's bodyguards developed a strange, three-dimensional martial art based on the use of this power. The scent of frying onions—sigil of the Verditius who created the medallion—accompanies the character for the duration of the effect.

(Effect: Base 10, +1 Touch, +2 Sun; Modifications +10 unlimited uses per day.)



The other medallions provide flight for two minutes, but at the speed of a running horse.

(Base 15, +1 Touch, +1 Diameter; Modifications +10 unlimited uses per day.)

FAILURE TO FALL

ReCo 25

Pen 0, unlimited/day

R: Touch, D: Diameter, T: Individual
This power is activated by free fall.

This power gently lowers a falling person toward the ground for two minutes. The character falls at a steady rate of about one foot per second, without accelerating. The effect lasts three minutes, so the character can fall safely for 120 feet. If, at the end of this distance the character begins to freefall again, the device reactivates. Each time the device activates, there is a momentary lull in the scent of frying onions, and some covenfolk, back when the castle was still inhabited, claimed they could determine their fall distance using this as a measure.

(Effect: Base 5, +1 Touch, +1 Diameter; Modifications +10 unlimited uses per day.)

VEIL OF INVISIBILITY

PelM 25

Pen +0, 24 uses/day

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Individual

This power is activated by the wearer saying the Latin word for word "help".

As the Hermetic spell of the same name (ArM5, page 146). This power makes the user invisible, despite motion. The scent of frying onions—sigil of the Verditius who created the medallion—accompanies the character for the duration of the effect.

(Effect: Base 4, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +1 moving; Modifications +5 24 uses/day)

WHISPERING WINDS

ReAu 15

Pen +0, 1 use/day

R: Sight, D: Concontration, T: Individual

This power is activated by the wearer blowing on the medallion.

As the Hermetic spell of the same name (ArM5 page 127). This power allows the user to eavesdrop on the conversations of a group of people that are visible.

(Effect: Unique)

Recognizing the Link

Characters may recognize the link between Thomae of Tylalus and the medal in the following ways:

- Players who spot the link themselves need make no roll.
- Characters who roll Intelligence + Order of Hermes Lore against 3 know that the spiral on the medal is the symbol of House Tylalus.
- Characters may roll Intelligence + Order of Hermes Lore against 9 to connect this medal with the legend of Thomae of Tylalus, who was famous for his flying castle. They are also aware that he is missing. Knowing that this medal is triggered by a prayer to Saint Thomas adds 3 to the roll. Hermetic Architects +3 to this roll.
- Characters who make an Intelligence + Magic Theory roll of 3 or more note that the maker's marks on the edge of the medallion, at the bottom, are Verditius runes, and a personal sigil.
- Characters who make an Intelligence + Order of Hermes Lore against 15 can recognize the maker's mark. If they note the sigil (the smell of frying onions) it lowers this to 12.

Characters making a House Verditius Lore roll instead have an Ease Factor of 6, 3 if they notice the sigil. Redcaps and hoplites are able to point the characters to the right magus if they fail in this roll, although they may want a substantial favor in exchange if they realize how significant the characters' business with the Verditius magus is.

Following the Lead to Santa Lucia

Different troupes will prefer alternative leads to the location of San Lucia. Possible methods of finding it include:

- Andros has some of Roberto's other possessions, and they provide clues to the location of his home town.
- Andros knows where Roberto is buried. He died in battle, so his burial was irregular, meaning his ghost can be summoned.
- Player characters may search for other young men from Santa Lucia, working as mercenaries in a nearby warzone, and convince them to act as guides.
- A redcap may know where Santa Lucia is.
- The maker of the medal, Flavia of Verditius, is still alive. She received a fixed Arcane Connection for Thomae to ensure payment for her work, and was able to fool Thomae into

thinking she had destroyed it once payment was complete. Flavia never used the connection, because she believes Thomae flew his castle to Africa or Asia and has founded his own kingdom. She thinks that annoying a magician-king with a flying battle fortress would be stupid, so she will need skilled convincing to allow the player characters to use the Arcane Connection. Storyguides wishing to extend this story using the search for Thomae's laboratory, as described at the end of this chapter, should select a different link.

Travel to Santa Lucia is isolated; characters going there must carry many of the supplies which they would con-

Elemental Blizzard

This creature is designed as a water elemental using the rules found in *Realms of Power: Magic*.

Magic Might: 20 (Aquam)

Characteristics: Cun +2, Per +2, Pre 0, Com -6, Str +6, Sta +5, Dex -5, Qik +1

Size: +3

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Thing; Ways of the Mountains; Poor Memory, Short Attention Span, Simple Minded

Magical Qualities and Inferiorities: Greater Power (Drown), Greater Power (Chill Touch), Greater Power (Charge of the Angry Winds), Major Virtue (Greater Immunity to Fire), Improved Abilities x 4, Improved Powers (Chill Touch cost -2, Charge of the Angry Winds cost -1, Init +2, Drown Init +5), Minor Virtues (Lightning Reflexes, Tough)

Personality Traits: Storm +5

Soak: +11

Wound Penalties*: -1 (1-8), -3 (9-16), -5 (17-24), Incapacitated (25-32),

Dead (33+)

- * When injured elementals lose points from their Might pool equal to the Wound Penalty for their injury.

Abilities: Area Lore 4 (local), Athletics 4 (flight), Awareness 4 (animals), Brawl 4 (suffocate), Hunt 2 (animals), Penetration 6 (Chill Touch power).

Powers:

Chill Touch, 0 points, Init +5, Ignem: The freezing touch of the snow-storm elemental inflicts +10 damage, which is Soaked without benefit from metal armor.

Charge of the Angry Winds, 0 points, Init +7, Auram: As the spell of the same name, add the elemental's Strength to all Ease Factors for acting within the wind.

Drown, 0 points, Init +5, Auram: The elemental envelops a victim and attempts to fill her lungs with ice, necessitating a Deprivation roll (see *ArM5* pages 180-181). Characters may break free of the elemental using the Grappling rules (see *ArM5* page 174).

Vis: 4 pawns of Auram, in body. Large pieces of the elemental broken off during combat contain a portion of this vis. The elemental always knows where such pieces are, and attempts to reunite them.

Appearance: A grey and menacing fog that seems to contain human and animal shapes.

Elementals are made of chunks of rarefied matter. They have no real personality or sense of personal identity, so the fury of this elemental is due to the fundamental nature of the violent weather it embodies. It attacks humans not because they are trespassing in its domain or because it hates humans; it attacks simply because it is filled with the tempestuous rage of a blizzard.

The elemental blizzard is designed as a foe for parties of characters traveling to the crash site. It may attack up to its Size in enemies each round. Its immunity to fire and ability to ignore many kinds of armor make it a formidable foe for groups with weak combat magic.

ventionally purchase en route. This makes travel to Santa Lucia slow. Story-guides may complicate this journey to provide time in the spotlight for characters whose specializations have yet to be used in this story. She may, for example, provide combat opportunities or environmental puzzles.

COMBAT

There are many varieties of monster suited to this journey. Isolated mountain areas provide excellent opportunities to use monsters that cannot realistically

be placed in agricultural areas or cities. This scenario, for example, uses griffons, which are large and prey on livestock, and would so disrupt medieval agriculture as to damage the setting. In Mythic Europe, the Avar invasions in the sixth century are sometimes recorded as being caused by a plague of griffons that forced the Avars to flee their homeland, streaming west. The monsters suggested in the nearby inserts use the icy conditions of the mountains as a weapon. Storyguides should include these as suits the pace of the story and the interests of the player group.

ENVIRONMENTAL PUZZLES

Environmental puzzles are opportunities for players to use the powers of their magi to solve difficulties. These are particularly useful for characters designed as spontaneous spellcasters, or as non-combatants. Examples include:

- A rope bridge over a ravine has fallen away. How do the characters replace it?
- The characters must use a path under the shadow of a mountain that has a field of unstable snow upon it. Can they brace it so that accidental

Despair Demon

The statistics for this demon use the rules given in *Realms of Power: The Infernal*.

Order: Accusers (variant)

Infernal Might: 10 (Aquam)

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

Size: +1

Confidence: 1 (3 points)

Virtues and Flaws: Weak-willed

Personality Traits: Doubt +3

Combat:

Rolling Ball of Spikes (trample): Init +8, Attack +16*, Defense +14*, Damage +13

* Includes Ability specialization.

Soak: +7

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-6), -3 (7-12), -5 (13-18), Incapacitated (19-24), Dead (25+)

Abilities: Brawl 6 (trample).

Powers:

Coagulation, 1 point, Init -1, Aquam: Allows the demon to create a material form for itself. This form is a spiked ball of icicles a yard in

diameter. This takes one round, although the demon may disincorporate almost instantly.

Elemental Control of Air, variable points, Init +1, Auram: The demon may create any Creo, Muto or Rego Auram effect, at the cost of 1 Might per magnitude. The demon is limited to minor effects, with level equal to its Might Score or less. It uses this power to separate straying travelers from groups by hiding paths, erasing footprints, limiting visibility and stifling cries for help.

Envisioning, 1 point, Init +0, Mentem: The demon may make subtle changes to a victim's dreams, to make them more ominous and depressing.

Obsession, 3 points, Init -5, Vim: When a human performs a venial sin and the demon responds by spending Might, this demon gains an opportunity to force the human to feel spiritual doubt. When next faced with a crisis of worthiness, the storyguide makes a simple roll +3, to reflect the strength of the feelings of doubt, and the player responds with a simple die + a suitable Per-

sonality Trait as adjustments for exposure to a harsh environment. If the character's total is higher, the demon has not been able to break the character's sense of self-worth. If the demon's total is higher, then the character gains a Doubt score of +1. If the character ever acts on this score, then he is in a state of sin. The demon then coagulates and kills its victim.

Weakness: Protected Group (truly penitent people)

Vis: 2 pawns, body

Appearance: A ball of icicles a yard in diameter.

These demons dwell in the Alps and prey on travelers. They separate and confuse humans so that they become lost in the wilderness. The demons hope that, worn down with physical privation and the psychological strain of imminent death, their victims will lose faith in the Lord. They then kill the victim, so that penitence is impossible. These demons are suited for encounters with individual characters who separate themselves from the group, like scouts or foragers.

sounds do not cause avalanches? Can they instead mute the sound caused by the party's travel?

- Early melt has engorged a river. How do the characters get all of their baggage across?
- Part of the journey requires extended travel above the snowline. How do the characters defend themselves, their servants and animals from the effects of the cold?
- A terrible blizzard threatens the group. How do the magi construct shelter, or do they instead try to divert the storm?

The Santa Lucians

The Santa Lucians are relocating their village because their pasture is poor, and unable to support their expanding population. They are racing the coming winter to move their goods and herd their cattle to the new site. They face many logistical difficulties, and the magi can gain their assistance in finding the castle of Thomae by solving these problems.

Storyguides may use the environmental puzzles for difficulties involving cartage, or may use some of the following examples, drawn from the construction of the new village. The villagers need to perform various tasks to found their town, and most of these could be accomplished by magic. These include:

- Digging a well, three feet wide and 30 feet deep.
- Clearing and perhaps paving main roads.
- Replacing temporary bridges and fords with durable structures.
- Constructing communal buildings, like the chapel, mill, granary, calving sheds, bakery and smokehouse.
- Clearing land to plant orchards and fields.
- Fencing pasture land.

- Cutting and laying aside hay for the herds.
- Slaughtering and preserving beasts not suitable for feeding through the winter.

THE FOLK STORIES OF SANTA LUCIA

The older generation of Santa Lucia served a magus with a flying castle. They say the castle was destroyed by "bird-cats". Their leader, the wizard Thomae, ensured that if his castle was destroyed his servants would be able to fly, briefly. The older Santa Lucians used this ability to escape into the eye of the sun, so that the monsters could not follow them.

The symbols of office for the three councilors who lead this community are metal badges that were originally identified Thomae's bodyguards. Characters may notice this with an Intelligence + Order of Hermes Lore against an Ease Factor of 12. It would normally be 21, but is reduced by the fact that the characters are searching specifically for just this sort of sign, and have a duplicate medallion already. If it suits the story, these badges are magical items. They may also allow passage past some of Thomae's magical defenses.

One of the Councilors' badges is a replacement for the medallion the characters have. The councilor, Rogerio, would like the original back, and initially assumes the characters took the medallion from his son Roberto, who stole the medallion before seeking work as a mercenary. As a ranking servant of Thomae, perhaps one of his personal guards, and a community leader among the Santa Lucians, Rogerio's goodwill may be valuable to the characters. He is no longer as able, or likely, to use a combat item as when he was young, so other offers of position may sway him. Andros's testimony rings true to Rogerio's memory of his son's reckless character, and the return of his son's remains is

considered very favorably.

Using the clues given in the story, characters may discern that Thomae's castle lies about half a day to the west, on the side of a snowy peak beyond a range of mountains. This does not require a roll, but skilled questioning using Presence and Leadership or Charm may grant a more precise location or distance (Ease Factor 12). Characters may also be able to determine that the "bird-cats" are griffons. This requires an Intelligence + Magic Lore roll against an Ease Factor of 12.

The Dogs of the Castle

A group of faeries has been attacking groups of travelers hauling goods to the new village site. The magi may destroy them, or just interrogate them with Intellego Mentem spells.

The faeries have settled themselves into the castle's finials, decorative statues on the walls. The canine shape of the finials has influenced the material forms these faeries take and the behavior they exhibit. The faeries appear as clanking bronze dogs with mechanical howls. They hunt in groups because of their canine role, and because their three hunting powers, if used together, exceed the capacity of a single dog's Might pool. Packs of Dogs of the Castle are able to fight as trained groups.

Like most faeries, the dogs patrol a border. In this case, they are the guardians of the division between places which are considered home and places considered away from home. The Santa Lucian community, by relocating itself, is transgressing this border. The Dogs of the Castle are killing the peasants as they move their gear, because it allows their bodies and ghosts to be dragged back to the castle. The ghosts of the Santa Lucians are forced to return and remain "at home" in the castle courtyard where their bodies are piled. Player characters can only discern this if they



can read glamor, or by seeing the pile of bodies that the Dogs are guarding in the wrecked castle's courtyard, then making an Intelligence + Faerie Lore roll against an Ease Factor of 6. The characters can prevent further attacks simply by severing the last symbolic link between the Santa Lucians and the castle. The leaders of the Santa Lucians use badges that once designated Thoma's personal guard as their symbols of office. If they

discard these items and create new symbols for their community, then the tie to the castle is broken and the faeries lose interest in their game. Characters aware of the dogs' role may discern the importance of trinkets from the castle with a roll of Intelligence + Faerie Lore against an Ease Factor of 15.

Slaying the faeries is relatively easy, given their low Might. Storyguides may wish to raise this level of resistance to

encourage players to find alternatives, like capturing and interrogating the faeries, or redefining their role to be domesticated. To make the faeries more dangerous in combat, increase their numbers. Assume that some of the finials are magical items designed to defend the castle, and that each faerie can trigger the finial it inhabits. Destroying the bodies of these faeries destroys these magic items.

The Dogs of the Castle

Faerie Might: 5 (Animal)

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

Size: +1

Virtues and Flaws: Greater Faerie Power (Grasp Ghost), Faerie Beast, External Vis (finial), Faerie Sight, Improved Characteristics, Sharp Ears, Large; Incognizant, Reckless, Traditional Ward (cannot be inside)

Personality Traits: Loyal to the castle +5

Combat:

Bite (small teeth): Init +2, Attack +10, Defense +9, Damage +1

Soak: +7 (naturally armored form)

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-6), -3 (7-12), -5 (13-18), Incapacitated (19-24), Dead (25+)

Pretenses: Athletics 5 (distance running), Awareness 6 (keeping watch), Brawl 5 (bite), Hunt 6 (track by scent)

Powers:

Fearful Flaming Eyes: 2 points, Init -2, Corpus: Completely paralyzes a human who makes eye contact with the faerie.

Costs 15 spell levels (Base 5, +1 Eye, +1 Conc)

Grasp ghosts: 2 points, Init 0, Mentem: Allows the dog to grasp a ghost and drag it back to the castle, where a ring of hounds prevent escape.

Costs 20 spell levels (Base 5 (control a disembodied spirit), +1 Touch, +2 Sun.)

Hands of the Animal: 2 points, constant, Animal: This allows the dog to manipulate and carry an item as if it had human hands and a Strength of +5. The dog must concentrate to do anything other than carry the object, and to drop it or take something else.

Costs 15 spell levels (ReTe Base 3, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +1 constant)

Vis: 1 pawn Terram, in finial

Appearance: The faerie dogs seem to be cunningly articulated, animated bronze statues.

The Crash Site

Storyguides should tailor the degree of damage that has been suffered by Thoma's castle in the crash, taking into account the resources and story opportunities that suit their own saga. Characters investigating the site can see that the base of the highest tower has large holes gouged into it by enormous claws. If the player characters are unable to fly, then a medallion, the tender or a training bell may be found at the crash site, to make the lair of the griffons accessible. Alternatively, the player characters may need to take Thoma's notes to their covenant and fabricate similar items.

It is useful at this point for the player characters to discover that the damage was done by griffons. This can occur because:

- A character examines the claw marks and determines that they are from a giant eagle (Intelligence + Magic Lore against an Ease Factor of 18, 12 if the characters have scoured the site and found a mixture of gigantic eagle feathers and hairs from a lion).
- The player characters are tipped off by the ghost of a Santa Lucian or of a castle staff member.
- The characters manage to attach one of the faeries playing a hound to their story, and it gives them guidance.
- The characters see a griffon in the distance (roll Perception + Awareness against an Ease Factor of 18.)
- A flock of juvenile female griffons attacks the party, because they are riding horses, have mules or donkeys as draft animals, or have unwarded members carrying gold. This isn't a fight to the death; the griffons snatch what they want and then flee.

Sneakery

The characters can work at the crash safely by avoiding the notice of

the griffons. The griffons will attack if the party has gold or draft animals, because they value these as nesting material and food. They particularly enjoy the taste of horses, and will take greater risks to acquire them than other types of meat. They also attack flying objects larger than a bird, to defend their territory.

This should be treated as an environmental puzzle. Characters may work around these limits through a variety of strategies that suit their Arts. For example, creating tunnels, neutralizing the scent of draft animals, and invisible flying are all possible methods the player characters could devise.

The Lair of the Griffons

The characters do not need to fight the griffons in their lair. More subtle strategies, as described previously, are less hazardous. Combat is, however, an obvious way of dealing with the threat the griffons pose. It is also unavoidable if the characters seek the griffons' golden nest.

Griffons lair in inaccessible places, so characters need guidance to find the nest of gold. Possible ways of finding the lair include:

- Griffons can be lured out with the right bait. Characters who make an Intelligence + Artes Liberales roll against an Ease Factor of 12 recall a story that suggests horsemeat may be used to lure griffons into a trap. Alexander the Great is said to have used horsemeat to trap four griffons, and after he harnessed them to a chariot, he forced them to pull him through the air with horse carcasses that dangled from a metal frame, before their eyes. A character who retains an Arcane Connection to the horsemeat may follow it until the griffon feeds it to her chicks.

- An Intellego Animal spell can indicate the direction of the griffon that left feathers and hairs at the castle site, but this requires the spell to overcome the griffon's Magic Resistance.
- A faerie might indicate the direction, so that he can bear witness to an epic battle.
- A flock of griffons may attack and, once driven off, they may flee toward the nest.

Griffons have dimorphic genders, at least in the region where the castle crashed. That is, male and female griffons are so different in their form that they require separate statistics.

FEMALE GRIFFONS

Female hatchlings may be found in the lair of the griffons, or hatched from intact eggs, at the discretion of the storyguide. Griffon hatchlings are the size of a human, but much of that mass is taken up by their wings, which are disproportionately large when compared to the wings of mundane birds.

Juvenile griffons may be added to those faced during the combat section of this scenario. Griffons may alloparent, like lions and some birds, with older siblings aiding in the protection, feeding and education of young animals. Female griffons might, in high fantasy campaigns, serve as flying mounts for magi. Faeries may also use juvenile female griffons as templates for their own mounts.

Adult female griffons are strongly territorial, so only one should appear in any scenario.

MALE GRIFFONS

Male griffons combine eagle and lion attributes in a way similar to the female, with the following exceptions. Male griffons lack wings. They also have more

Female Adult Griffon

Magic (Faerie?) Might: 30 (Animal)
Characteristics: Cun 0, Per +3, Pre +2,
 Com -, Str +7, Sta +1, Dex +1,
 Qik +2

Size: 3

Confidence: 2 (5 points)

Virtues and Flaws: Magical Monster;
 Ferocity (may use Confidence points
 only when home threatened), Hom-
 ing Instinct (always knows where
 home is in relation to self), Keen
 Vision

Qualities and Inferiorities: Focus Power
 (Nests of Gold), Improved Abilities,
 Improved Attack x 3 (beak, claws,
 grapple), Improved Confidence,
 Improved Damage x 4 (beak, 3 x
 claws), Improved Defense x 2 (beak
 and claws), Improved Fatigue x 2,
 Improved Initiative x 4 (beak, claws,
 2 grapple), Improved Soak x 4, Mi-
 nor Virtue (Improved Characteristics
 x 2), Minor Virtue (Long Winded),
 Minor Virtue (Puissant Athletics),

Minor Virtue (Second Sight), Minor
 Virtue (Strong Willed).

Personality Traits: Defends home +5,
 Brave +3

Combat:

Beak: Init +5, Attack +15, Defense +14,
 Damage +11

Grapple: Init: +8, Attack +12, Defense
 +11, Damage: special (On sub-
 sequent rounds may add Grapple
 Strength to Attack Roll for beak
 attacks.)

Large Claws: Init +5, Attack +17, Defense
 +16, Damage +20

Soak: +11

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-8), -3 (9-16),
 -4 (17-24), Incapacitated (25-32),
 Dead (33+)

Abilities: Animal Handling 5 (griffons),
 Area Lore 5 (home territory), Area
 Lore 3 (gold rich territory), Athlet-
 ics 7+2 (flight), Awareness 5 (prey),

Brawl 8 (claws), Hunt 4 (horses),
 Second Sight 5 (Illusions), Survival 5
 (home terrain).

Powers:

Nests of Gold, 5 points, Init -2, Terram: A
 catch-all power that allows griffons
 to detect, excavate, and craft gold.
 This is also the power that allowed
 the griffons to puncture the side of
 the tower.

Vis: 6 of Animal, heart

Appearance: A female griffon is the
 size of a small horse, and its features
 combine those of a lion and an eagle.
 The head, forequarters and forelimbs
 of the griffon are aquiline, while the
 hind legs, torso and tail are leonine.
 Female griffons have feathery wings,
 and fly with a swiftness and dexterity
 that is surprising in so large a beast.
 The female griffon is surprisingly
 strong, given that its foreparts have
 the comparatively delicate structure
 of a bird's skeleton.

Female Juvenile Griffon

Magic (Faerie?) Might: 15 (Animal)
Characteristics: Cun 0, Per +3, Pre +2,
 Com -, Str +4, Sta +1, Dex +1,
 Qik +3

Size: 2

Confidence: 1 (3 points)

Virtues and Flaws: Magical Monster;
 Ferocity (may use Confidence points
 only when home threatened), Hom-
 ing Instinct (always knows where
 home is in relation to self), Keen
 Vision

Qualities and Inferiorities: Focus Power
 (Nests of Gold), Improved Abili-
 ties, Improved Attack x 2 (beak and
 claws), Improved Damage x 2 (beak
 and claws), Improved Soak x 2, Mi-
 nor Virtue (Improved Characteris-
 tics), Minor Virtue (Long Winded),
 Minor Virtue (Puissant Athletics),
 Minor Virtue (Second Sight), Minor
 Virtue (Strong Willed).

Personality Traits: Defends home +5,

Brave +3

Combat:

Beak: Init +3, Attack +12, Defense +10,
 Damage +8

Grapple: Init: +3, Attack +7, Defense +9,
 Damage: special (On subsequent
 rounds may add Grapple Strength to
 Attack Roll for beak attacks.)

Large Claws: Init +3, Attack +14, Defense
 +12, Damage +8

Soak: +7

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-7), -3 (8-14),
 -5 (15-21), Incapacitated (22-28),
 Dead (29+)

Abilities: Animal Handling 1 (griffons),
 Area Lore 4 (home territory), Area
 Lore 1 (gold rich territory), Athlet-
 ics 5+2* (flight), Awareness 5 (prey),
 Brawl 5 (claws), Hunt 4 (horses),
 Second Sight 3 (Illusions), Survival 4
 (home terrain).

* +2 Athletics (female) included.

Powers:

Nests of Gold, 5 points, Init -2, Terram: A
 catch-all power that allows griffons
 to detect, excavate, and craft gold.
 This is also the power that allowed
 the griffons to puncture the side of
 the tower.

Vis: 3 of Animal, heart

Appearance: A female griffon is the
 size of a small horse, and its fea-
 tures combine those of a lion and
 an eagle. The head, forequarters
 and forelimbs of the griffon are
 aquiline, while the hind legs, torso
 and tail are leonine. Female griffons
 have feathery wings, and fly with a
 swiftness and dexterity that is sur-
 prising in so large a beast. The fe-
 male griffon is surprisingly strong,
 given that its foreparts have the
 comparatively delicate structure of
 a bird's skeleton.

Male Adult Griffon

Magic (Faerie?) Might: 30 (Animal)
Characteristics: Cun 0, Per +3, Pre +2,
 Com -, Str +7, Sta +1, Dex +1,
 Qik +2

Size: 3

Confidence: 2 (5 points)

Virtues and Flaws: Magical Monster;
 Ferocity (may use Confidence points
 only when home threatened), Homing
 Instinct (always knows where home is
 in relation to self), Keen Vision

Qualities and Inferiorities: Focus Power
 (Nests of Gold), Improved Abili-
 ties, Improved Attack x 3 (horns, 2
 grapple), Improved Confidence, Im-
 proved Damage x 3 (2 horns, spikes),
 Improved Defense x 2 (horns and
 grapple), Improved Fatigue x 2,
 Improved Initiative x 5 (2 horns, 3
 grapple), Improved Soak x 4, Minor
 Virtue (Improved Characteristics x
 2), Minor Virtue (Long Winded),
 Minor Virtue (Puissant Brawl), Minor
 Virtue (Second Sight), Minor Virtue
 (Strong Willed).

Personality Traits: Defends home +5,
 Brave +3

Combat:

Beak: Init +2, Attack +14, Defense +13,
 Damage +8

Grapple: Init: +11, Attack +15, Defense
 +15, Damage: special (On subsequent
 rounds may add Grapple Strength to
 Attack Roll for beak attacks.)

Large Claws: Init +2, Attack +16, Defense
 +15, Damage +11

Large Horns: Init +10, Attack +17, De-
 fense +18, Damage +16

Spikes: The spikes which grow from the
 joints of the male griffon do +8 dam-
 age to any attacker making a success-
 ful mêlée attack, including grappling
 attacks.

Soak: +15

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-8), -3 (9-16),
 -4 (17-24), Incapacitated (25-32),
 Dead (33+)

Abilities: Animal Handling 5 (griffons),

Area Lore 5 (home territory), Area
 Lore 3 (gold rich territory), Athlet-
 ics 7 (running), Awareness 5 (prey),
 Brawl 8+2* (horns), Hunt 4 (horses),
 Second Sight 5 (Illusions), Survival 5
 (home terrain).

Powers:

Nests of Gold, 5 points, Init -2, Terram: A
 catch-all power that allows griffons to
 detect, excavate, and craft gold. This
 is also the power that allowed the grif-
 fons to puncture the side of the tower.

Vis: 6 of Animal, heart

Appearance: A male griffon is the size of
 a small horse, and its features combine
 those of a lion and an eagle. The head,
 forequarters and forelimbs of the grif-
 fon are aquiline, while the hind legs,
 torso and tail are leonine. Males
 have more muscular bodies than
 female griffons, particularly in their
 forequarters. Male griffons are wing-
 less, but have defensive horns and
 spines that protrude from the body,
 and especially around the neck.

Male Juvenile Griffon

Magic (Faerie?) Might: 15 (Animal)
Characteristics: Cun 0, Per +3, Pre +2,
 Com -, Str +4, Sta +1, Dex +1,
 Qik +3

Size: 2

Confidence: 1 (3 points)

Virtues and Flaws: Magical Monster;
 Ferocity (may use Confidence points
 only when home threatened), Homing
 Instinct (always knows where home is
 in relation to self), Keen Vision

Qualities and Inferiorities: Focus Power
 (Nests of Gold), Improved Abili-
 ties, Improved Attack x 2 (beak and
 claws), Improved Damage x 2 (beak
 and claws), Improved Soak x 2, Mi-
 nor Virtue (Improved Characteris-
 tics), Minor Virtue (Long Winded),
 Minor Virtue (Puissant Brawl), Minor
 Virtue (Second Sight), Minor Virtue
 (Strong Willed).

Personality Traits: Defends home +5,
 Brave +3

Combat:

Beak: Init +3, Attack +12, Defense +10,
 Damage +8

Grapple: Init: +3, Attack +9, Defense +11,
 Damage: special (On subsequent
 rounds may add Grapple Strength to
 Attack Roll for beak attacks.)

Large Claws: Init +3, Attack +16, Defense
 +14, Damage +8

Spikes: The spikes which grow from the
 joints of the male griffon do +5 dam-
 age to any attacker making a success-
 ful mêlée attack, including grappling
 attacks.

Soak: +9

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-7), -3 (8-14),
 -5 (15-21), Incapacitated (22-28),
 Dead (29+)

Abilities: Animal Handling 1 (griffons),
 Area Lore 4 (home territory), Area
 Lore 1 (gold rich territory), Athlet-

ics 5 (running), Awareness 5 (prey),
 Brawl 5+2 (claws), Hunt 4 (horses),
 Second Sight 3 (Illusions), Survival 4
 (home terrain).

Powers:

Nests of Gold, 5 points, Init -2, Terram: A
 catch-all power that allows griffons to
 detect, excavate, and craft gold. This
 is also the power that allowed the grif-
 fons to puncture the side of the tower.

Vis: 3 of Animal, heart

Appearance: A male griffon is the size of
 a small horse, and its features combine
 those of a lion and an eagle. The head,
 forequarters and forelimbs of the grif-
 fon are aquiline, while the hind legs,
 torso and tail are leonine. Males
 have more muscular bodies than
 female griffons, particularly in their
 forequarters. Male griffons are wing-
 less, but have defensive horns and
 spines that protrude from the body,
 and especially around the neck.



muscular bodies than female griffons, particularly in their forequarters. This makes them stronger, although less agile, than the females. Most have a pair

of straight horns that emerge from the forehead. The horns develop during adolescence, when spikes also emerge from many of the joints.

These spikes are most extremely, perhaps ridiculously, prominent on the ruff. This is formed of a circle of spikes that protects the throat. This band is wider on the breast and between the shoulders. The spikes are primarily defensive, preventing enemies from attacking the throat of the male griffon. The male griffon sometimes grapples prey, and the spikes are particularly deadly to prey attempting to struggle free.

There is some question in the Order about the nature of male griffons. They do not appear in ancient texts, but occur occasionally in heraldry. There is some possibility that they are a faerie species that has attached itself symbiotically to the magical griffon. These magi note, particularly, that male griffons are often found near the nests, but that griffons nest in inaccessible places, and the males cannot fly, so it is difficult to explain their presence if they are purely magical animals.

Juvenile male griffons may be added to those faced during the combat section of this scenario. Alternatively, the storyguide might judge that young male griffons are rejected from their pride, much as lions are, and wander the

Female Hatchling Griffon

Magic (Faerie?) Might: 5 (Animal)

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

Size: 1

Confidence: 1 (3 points)

Virtues and Flaws: Magical Monster; Ferocity (may use Confidence points only when home threatened), Homing Instinct (always knows where home is in relation to self), Keen Vision

Qualities and Inferiorities: Improved Abilities, Minor Virtue (Long Winded), Minor Virtue (Puissant Athletics), Minor Virtue (Second Sight), Minor Virtue (Strong Willed).

Personality Traits: Defends home +5,

Brave +3

Combat:

Beak: Init +4, Attack +3, Defense +6, Damage +3

Grapple: Init: 0, Attack +2, Defense +7, Damage: special (On subsequent rounds may add Grapple Strength to Attack Roll for beak attacks.)

Large Claws: Init +4, Attack +9, Defense +10, Damage +6

Soak: +1

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-6), -3 (7-2), -5 (13-18), Incapacitated (19-24), Dead (25+)

Abilities: Area Lore 3 (home territory), Athletics 3+2 (flight), Awareness

4 (prey), Brawl 2 (claws), Hunt 2 (horses), Second Sight 1 (Illusions), Survival 3 (home terrain).

Vis: 1 of Animal, heart

Appearance: Griffon hatchlings are about the size of a human. Its features combine those of a lion and an eagle. The head, forequarters and forelimbs of the griffon are aquiline, while the hind legs, torso and tail are leonine. Female griffons have feathery wings, and fly with a swiftness and dexterity that is surprising in so large a beast. The female griffon is surprisingly strong, given that its foreparts have the comparatively delicate structure of a bird's skeleton.

countryside seeking gold. Once they find an area with sufficient gold, they build crude piles of it, which attracts the female. The two then create a nest and found a territory. Wandering males might be drawn to the covenant, if it is particularly wealthy.

Adult male griffons are strongly territorial, so only one should appear in any scenario.

GRIFFON ALTERNATIVES

Griffons have been selected as opponents for this adventure because of their close tie to the concept of the defended home. Storyguides may, however, prefer an alternative antagonist. Some suggestions follow.

- The castle was struck down by a powerful demon of the Order that punishes human sin. This demon sees human flight as an aspiration beyond what is seemly for the mortal race, an expression of Pride. The players may mend the castle with little opposition, but will accidentally make themselves the targets for this de-

monic nobleman. Storyguides may mix this hook with that of the griffons, providing the covenant with a new Enemy.

- The castle attracted a flock of magical moths, which flew through the side of the disk so that they could cluster about the light inside. These ethereal moths may be tricked out of the workings of the castle by setting the control chain's orb to black, and then providing an alternative mystical light source. Simple Crlm or Crlg spells, with Ring durations, can be used to trick the creatures into abandoning the control mechanism.

TIES TO EARLIER BOOKS

Griffons can be used to enrich some of the story seeds presented in previous works. They may be used in many seeds that simply require a formidable monster, but they are particularly suited in three cases, where ancient Greek folklore nominates them as the correct creature to guard the items that player characters are seeking.

An early discussion of griffons oc-

curs in a lost poem, the *Arimaspea* by Aristeas, reported by Herodotus in his *History*. The griffons live close to the north wind, and it is their land that separates Hyperborea from the rest of the world. Magi seeking Hyperborean magic, as described in *Ancient Magic*, may find it useful to tame a griffon and use its migratory sense to seek the land of gold.

Aristeas was a Nightwalker, as described in *Hedge Magic*. In that book, a story is described where a fae version of Aristeas attempts to draw the nightwalker cult away from the Lady and to the god Apollo. Characters destroy Aristeas by seeking out a statue that was buried instead of his missing body. The faerie Aristeas is reported to have hidden the body in the land of the griffons.

In one of the possible outcomes of the quest to the Hesperides in *Ancient Magic*, the characters seek the weapons of the ancient gods, either to aid or fight the children of the Titans. The god Zeus is remembered, in one ancient Greek poem, as having griffons as his guard dogs. Griffons might therefore nest on the mountain where the weapons of the Titans are hidden.

Male Hatchling Griffon

Magic (Faerie?) Might: 5 (Animal)
Characteristics: Cun 0, Per +3, Pre +2, Com -, Str +2, Sta 0, Dex +1, Qik +4

Size: 1

Confidence: 1 (3 points)

Virtues and Flaws: Magical Monster; Ferocity (may use Confidence points only when home threatened), Homing Instinct (always knows where home is in relation to self), Keen Vision

Qualities and Inferiorities: Improved Abilities, Minor Virtue (Long Wind-ed), Minor Virtue (Puissant Brawl), Minor Virtue (Second Sight), Minor Virtue (Strong Willed).

Personality Traits: Defends home +5,

Brave +3

Combat:

Beak: Init +4, Attack +5, Defense +8, Damage +3

Grapple: Init: 0, Attack +4, Defense +9, Damage: special (On subsequent rounds may add Grapple Strength to Attack Roll for beak attacks.)

Large Claws: Init +4, Attack +11, Defense +12, Damage +6

Soak: +3

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-6), -3 (7-2), -5 (13-18), Incapacitated (19-24), Dead (25+)

Abilities: Area Lore 3 (home territory), Athletics 3 (running), Awareness 4

(prey), Brawl 2+2 (claws), Hunt 2 (horses), Second Sight 1 (Illusions), Survival 3 (home terrain).

Vis: 1 of Animal, heart

Appearance: Griffon hatchlings are about the size of a human. Its features combine those of a lion and an eagle. The head, forequarters and forelimbs of the griffon are aquiline, while the hind legs, torso and tail are leonine. Males have more muscular bodies than female griffons, particularly in their forequarters. Male griffons are wingless, and the horns and fans of spikes that protrude from the body of an adult male griffon are not found in hatchlings.

Aftermath

Thomae's castle is, fundamentally, a simple item. This disguises another problem in his biography. The many ancillary magic items which he owned seem excessive, once characters have time to assess his notes. There's no straightforward way in which Thomae could have made or afforded all of these items.

Thomae's Secret

What Thomae was hiding is best tailored to the interests of individual troupes, but whichever secret he was hiding, players can be pointed toward it with clues relating to the following story elements.

- Who or what was Thomae's "Verditius collaborator" and where can they or it be found?
- Where is Thomae's ghost?

VERDITIUS ASSISTANCE

Thomae built the castle with the assistance of a Verditius magus, who has not come forward for the credit. This surprising modesty is because the Verditius magus has kept the secret laboratory Thomae created to allow the construction of this device. He or s does not want the Order to know this for a reason. Suggested reasons include:

- The lab includes prohibited faerie or demonic elements.
- The lab is at the center of a small kingdom in Africa or Asia which Thomae conquered. This is likely a breach of the Code.

- The lab has steadily churned out flying squares for the last twenty years. The squares clip together into a vast platform that could be used for a flying city.

FAERIE DEALINGS

There are two great limitations in Thomae's biography: time and cost. He could have dealt with both of these by constructing the castle and his ancillary items in Arcadia. If Thomae died in Arcadia, but did not notice, the being that returned to the world could have been a powerful faerie. This would explain why he left no ghost, and why his castle was attacked by creatures that are the perfect folkloric destroyers for Thomae's story. Thomae's wanderings to the mountainous reaches of distant tribunals may have been his subconscious attempt to complete the script in his glamor.

It seems remarkable that Thomae was able to bring such a large object from Faerie to the real world. The faeries trade wishes for vitality, so Thomae must have poured enormous amounts of vitality into Faerie, or at least promised to. A creature arriving to collect the vitality, or remove the castle for non-payment, provides a story hook. It could be a dark and cruel faerie, asking for the blood of the dead from the war which Thomae promised he would ignite, or it may be a Queen of Sylphs, demanding the tears of ten thousand babies, that are this century's rent for her flying throne.

FOUND OBJECT

Thomae was a vain and obsessed man, so it is possible that he did not

create his castle, but merely found its key component and repurposed it. The control chain is clearly a Hermetic device, but the disk might have an ancient origin. In Herodotus, there is described an island, called Chemiss, which floats freely on the surface of the water while supporting a temple of Apollo, the god of light. When Thomae was looking for trouble and vis in Egypt, he investigated this island and discovered that it was held up by a stone disc.

He discovered no reason why it had been left in a lake, but for a myth. A goddess named Latona, or perhaps one of her priestesses, made the island float. She did this so that it could hide Apollo (Horus) from Typhon (Set) during their war. Latona was the city goddess of Buto, and according to Herodotus had an oracle there, so some trace of her might remain.

Thomae was able, perhaps with assistance, to work out that the control mechanism was based on colored lights. He spent the time he was missing commissioning the ancillary magic items. His Verditius ally has remained quiet about this to retain bragging rights over the castle, because this ally has allowed others to believe he himself built it, and it would wound his House standing were this chicanery to be discovered.

According to the myth, then, the disc was used to hide a faerie from a magical being during the Egyptian version of the Titanomachy. What else was hidden under it? Was it the capstone of a weapons cache? The doorway to a faerie road? What is happening at the original site, now that Thomae has recklessly removed this barrier?

Timeline of the Order

The time line that follows puts the lives of the legendary magi into context against the history of the Order.

767 – The Order of Hermes is founded at Durenmar.

c. 857 – Hérissou is born.

867 – Hérissou joins House Bjornaer at the Gathering of Twelve Years.

881 – Hérissou passes his apprentice's Gauntlet and becomes a magus of the Normandy Tribunal.

c. 885 – Conciatta is born.

895 – Baltasar hears of a Gifted child and buys the girl from her father. Conciatta's apprenticeship begins.

900–990 – Hérissou develops his research on the creation of vis.

910 – Conciatta passes her Gauntlet.

915 – Conciatta Found a covenant in Saraqusta with Currito.

923 – Conciatta publishes *The Application of Vim to the Supernatural Humors*, but her experiments leave her Gift damaged.

925 – Baltasar of Bonisagus is marched on charges of Infernal corruption.

933 – Conciatta studies the Dominion in Toledo.

937 – Conciatta submits her final papers and withdraws from the Order.

c. 940 – Hermanus is born.

952 – Hérissou moves his laboratory and sanctum to his garden.

961 – Evidence of infernal corruption in House Tytalus brought to light.

965 – Hermanus of Tremere completes his Gauntlet and joins the Order.

980 – Currito leaves both Saraqusta and Conciatta.

986 – Fortunata is born, daughter of Prince of Milan.

987 – Hérissou argues with the Primus of Bjornaer at the Gathering of Twelve Years, but the house is not interested in his talk of peace.

990 – Hérissou submits a thesis to the Library of Durenmar regarding his original research, detailing some of the advances he has made.

996 – Fortunata apprenticed to Apollo of Jerbiton.

999 – Conciatta makes her final breakthrough.

1000 – With her Gift overcoming her, Conciatta takes sanctuary in Toledo.

1001 – Hérissou meets with the primus of House Diedne in an attempt to reduce mounting hostilities.

1002 – Hérissou is killed in a Wizard's War by Gypaetus of Bjornaer.

1004 – Commencement of the Schism War.

1007 – Conciatta enters Final Twilight and her spirit fractures.

1011 – Fortunata passes her Gauntlet and adopts her Hermetic name.

1013 – Formation of the Vexillation of the Adamant Rook.

1015 – Fortunata liberates Lucida from the cleft tree.

1017 – Fortunata joins the summer covenant of Cupressa Nigra, and begins publishing text translations from ancient languages.

1019 – House Bjornaer emerges from

hiding with a new Harmonist agenda based on Hérissou's philosophy.

1048 – Fortunata acquitted of charges of diabolism.

1055 – Fortunata acquitted of charges of spying using spirit magic.

1061 – Fortunata, senior maga at Cupressa Nigra, abandons her covenant and moves to a remote island, but opens her house in Venice to the Redcaps.

1067–1123 – Cupressa Nigra is abandoned when the remaining junior magi join other covenants. Fortunata continues translating ancient texts, writes Hermetic texts on spirit lore, and circulates a few texts on Principles Lore. Fortunata acquires a reputation as a powerful eccentric.

1070 – Dissolution of the Vexillation of the Adamant Rook.

1098 – Hermanus and the wing of Coeris that contains his laboratory disappear in what is assumed to be a Twilight episode brought on by a magical botch. Vexillation of the Unbarred Gateway is formed.

1104 – Vexillation of the Unbarred Gateway dissolved.

1110 – Amarantha of Tremere disappears.

1115 – Velius sets his archmagus challenge.

1120 – Velius succumbs to Final Twilight.

c. 1122 – Thomae is born.

1123 – Last contact with Fortunata before she is lost to Twilight.

1198 – Thomae and his castle vanish.

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