

BAYONETS, BUTTONS & BLOOD!

By Joseph Unger



"Can you survive the French Terror?"

SAVAGE TALES
2



Bayonets, Buttons, and Blood

by Joseph A. Unger

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**Requires the Savage Worlds rules by Shane Lacy Hensley
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The king is dead! Long live the Republic! The times of wigged heads talking in salons and highbrow thinkers taking court oaths are over. The peasantry of France have had enough of the king, the aristocracy, the church, and their corruption. The people have seized control with gunpowder, sabers, and stones in the name of Liberty.

Led by Maximillian Robespierre, the Council of Public Safety in Paris is organizing the Republic and preserving what the revolution has built. Patriotic partisan soldiers don the red, white, and blue cockade to march into the streets and round up anyone who opposes the tricolor flag. Men of wealth, women of faith, and children caught in the crossfire are herded into town squares where mock trials condemn them to the guillotine in front of cheering crowds.

The streets are thick with the ichors of death. Fear is used as a weapon against the people by their own government and gloom skulks across the vineyards and vistas of the European countryside. But the threat isn't just from within; Austria and Prussia have amassed troops on the border. Spain, Italy, and England have begun to arm, fearing the spread of a revolt that beheaded a king.

Still, there is more to the world than what man can see. Robespierre's terrors have awakened something in another world, a thing that has leaked its darkened tendrils into the blood-soaked realm of France. Paris is about to be the epicenter of a supernatural quake that will shake the foundations of the world.

Players' Section

In 1793, Robespierre's Paris is a double-edged sword. On the one edge, Paris is alive with opportunity. The king's taxation has been removed, and anyone can set up shop or seek a new life in the walls of the old city. On the other edge, the sons of Liberty have run mad: The new powers have taken an "order at any cost" stance. Anyone can be grabbed and sentenced to death at any moment for any reason; Executions happen every minute. But that same horror has created new needs and new markets.

Paris is just beginning to become the city we know today. Sections of the metropolis are being replanned, but the era of massive public works ushered in by Napoleon have yet to take root. There is no Eiffel Tower. There is no Arc de Triumph. There are no wide boulevards lined with trees.

There is a thriving theater scene, hundreds of shops, and dozens of coffee houses. There are also masses of the unemployed. Hundreds of men and women have taken up arms in the name of the revolution just to get a gun and a loaf of bread. Crime is rampant, and the first to be assaulted by the mobs are those with any sign of wealth. The clergy and businessmen are loathed, labeled as corrupt and embodying greed in the eyes of the general populace.

Special Setting Rules

Magic is very limited in this tale. The only Arcane Backgrounds available are Magic and Miracles, and the spell lists are extremely limited.

The terrors have just started to conjure the mystical powers of the other world, and very few have the knowledge to access it. In all cases, magic is feared by the general populace and viewed as witchcraft. Those displaying any sort of supernatural talent are greeted with muttered prayers and the sign of the cross. Guardsmen are practiced at rounding up the unruly, and magic and miracles alike may be a quick way to a speedy trial and execution.

Changed Edges

Arcane Background (Magic): Requires Smarts d8; Starting powers 2; Available powers: *blast, bolt, detect/conceal arcana, elemental manipulation, telekinesis*. Starting Power Points: 10.

Adventure at a Glance

- ♦ Characters attend a Parisian theater and are arrested and imprisoned.
- ♦ Arianna convinces the characters to escape; discovery of a twisted, supernatural creature.
- ♦ The escape from Paris while being hunted across the countryside by the natural and supernatural.
- ♦ Arrival in Le Havre; the bishop's scandal prevents them from leaving.
- ♦ The party finds themselves in the middle of a supernatural war.
- ♦ The villain is revealed, and heroes are made.
- ♦ The survivors escape from France and live to fight another day.



This symbol in a character's title marks it as a Wild Card.

Arcane Background (Miracles): Requires Spirit d8; Starting Powers 1; Available powers: *armor, barrier, boost/lower trait, healing, smite*. Starting Power Points: 10.

Money

The standard monetary unit for this adventure is the franc. For simplicity, utilize the decimal system and equate 1 franc to 1 dollar when determining the cost of supplies.

Adventure Summary

Welcome to *Bayonets, Buttons, and Blood*, an adventure that chronicles a more fantastic side of the French Revolution. The tale takes place in 1793, during the era known as "The Terror." This is before Napoleon but after the beheading of King Louis. A brief review of the period, even from a quick and dirty online source, will prove greatly helpful.

This adventure is for Novice characters. There is no need to introduce the players to the setting prior to this tale. The characters are taken from first meeting to the final battle, though the end is open and provides Game Masters and players with motivation to continue on should they wish.

In our story, the Terror has finally come knocking on the characters' doors. Accused of playing parts in a coup against the Republic, the party must escape Paris and the country. The way out is a brutal fight for their lives in the bowels of a Parisian prison. The party then moves across the countryside, facing bounty hunters and military police. All the while, a supernatural noose twists around them until they are at last thrown into a battle for the soul of France against a demon master.

The characters start off imprisoned. Threatened with executions night and day outside their cell, the convicts must use their wits and connections to track down a sympathetic voice and make it out of the prisons alive. Finding a friend in a female Spanish diplomat, the group takes an opportunity to escape their cell. First, they must fight against a warped, supernatural horror that attacks them in the night. With a victory behind them, the senorita leads them to a night of safety inside her uncle's home and, later, into the arms of the bishop of Paris.

As the party waits for instructions, they begin to notice strange behavior in their guide. She seems to have powerful connections beyond her station and is obsessed with a doll she reclaimed from a fallen prisoner. Nevertheless, the woman provides them a sure way out of Paris to the port city of Le Havre (which literally means "the harbor").

Things begin to take a turn for the worse once the party gets beyond the city walls. It appears that news has spread of the bodies left behind in the prison cell they fled. Now they stand responsible for multiple murders. The escapees have been declared the leading public enemies, a fact that comes to bear when the group is forced to face off against a bounty hunter on the road.

Sample Character Types

Partisan: Partisans are citizen soldiers. These men and women come from the lower classes and have only just dedicated their lives to the preservation of liberty. They are typically simply dressed and have little means outside of a loaf of bread and a few francs they receive from the government of Paris each month.

Quebecer Veteran: Hundreds have come back to France from North America over the years, many more since the wars with England pushed French troops home from Acadia and New France. These battle-tested men know what it takes to survive in the wilds, and they have the stories and scars to prove it.

International Libertine: The opportunity and ideals of liberty have drawn in people from across Europe. Usually, these are individuals of some means. These men and women have come to Paris from places like Boston, Rome, and London to help build a new country, but they are often hindered by counterrevolutionary paranoia.

Bourgeoisie: Not all those who have wealth in Paris have been born into it. Many have turned to business to create their fortune. The bourgeoisies are often well-connected with the aristocratic elite and have retained their property, homes, and wealth in the face of the Revolution.

Peasant: In recent times, farmers from across France have flocked to the city to seek a new life inside the famed Parisian walls. With few skills and not much more than a strong back, they roam the streets from flophouse to flophouse in search of their next meal and job.

Clergy: Catholicism has dominated France for hundreds of years. Paris had at one time even been home to the Pope. The city is filled with priests, nuns, and monks, both regular and ordered, despite public opinion turning against them.

Pressed for time but weary, the travelers stay in safe houses provided to them by the bishop, but the safe houses fail to protect them. At their first stop, they find that a young captain named Bonaparte has been dispatched to hunt them down. Narrowly escaping the captain's troops, they come to their second destination where the bounty hunter they thought was dead has slaughtered the innkeepers and is bent on killing them as well.

All the while, the Spanish beauty, Arianna, weaves a confusing tale. Her precious doll vanishes and reappears with disturbing results. The woman seems to only provide half answers to questions. Matters only get worse as the group moves from danger to grave peril rather than to the safety the bishop promised.

The company finally reaches Le Havre, though the situation at their destination isn't working out as planned. The bishop here was to be their ticket out of the country, but he is being held by the military and is unreachable. They are forced to bide their time in a tailor's home and to endure the snare they have found themselves in.

In Le Havre, the party discovers the true villain and interrupts the grotesque process he uses to create his assassins. The truth of Arianna's doll is also revealed when it comes to life and washes itself in blood.

Arianna's battle has come to a head. As an agent in a secret society, she has tried to protect the party and the country from a creeping, supernatural evil, but someone in Le Havre has unleashed it on a scale she could never imagine. Arianna gives chase to the villain in a suicide attempt to save the bishop, dragging the party into a strange siege of living dolls in the religious leader's residence.

The master of the puppets changes his tactics midstream after discovering Arianna's role. The dolls capture Arianna and the bishop dies. With captain Bonaparte and his troops arriving any moment, the fighters are forced to rescue Arianna and secure their only way out of the country. The battle comes to a head when the heroes face off against the Puppet Master alongside the harbor.

Instructions for Setup

First, read through the whole adventure. There are plenty of secrets nestled in the text that are key to the adventure which have not been included in the summary. You, as the Game Master, will want to be intimately familiar with these secrets to keep the action rolling and the players motivated.

If you are short on time, use the natural breaks in the game. The story has been constructed in three primary sections: first, the capture and escape from the prison; second, being hunted across the countryside; and last, the climax and reveal in Le Havre.

Most of the maps you need are included in this adventure, but you should also have a mat or several sheets of paper ready with details of some of the key locations. The theater, prison cell, orchard farm, tailor's house, and bishop's home are all locations where larger-scale maps will help direct the action.

Remember the details. Many of the battles are against foes that are not that frightening in broad daylight. If the players' characters have had no sleep for two days and are forced to

fight on a dark and foggy riverbank, however, the situation becomes much more difficult.

Keep the players guessing. The characters in this adventure are unwilling participants in the story, not treasure hunters looking for adventure. The characters' motivation is to get the heck out of France, nothing more. It is the role of the Game Master to deter them from seeking an easier route. Utilize sightings of French troops on their trail. Take advantage of the Terror and its ensuing paranoia to create an insurmountable obstacles in their path.

A disk of French anthems and music will do wonders for setting the proper tone. There are plenty of cheap places to pick up a CD or to download a few songs. The tune *Le Marseilles* is particularly appropriate early on. Combined with a few movie soundtracks, this can go a long way in helping set the mood. Props like a rag doll are easy to find or make as well, and will help your players visualize what they're up against. Plus, dolls are creepy! Having a real one sitting on the table—occasionally waving at the heroes—is sure to freak at least a few of your players out.

Ultimately, the story is written to be open-ended. The characters have come to a definite end to this tale, but now they know of the evil that exists in the world. They also know how that evil will continue on, despite their attempts to destroy it.

Whatever you do, Napoleon should live on to conquer Europe and overthrow Robespierre. If they get too close to killing him, don't be afraid to cheat. After all, not all stories have happy endings.

Act 1: Summer in Paris

It is late summer in Paris and the city is full of bustle. Robespierre and the Council of Public Safety have taken drastic measures to maintain order so there are hundreds of beheadings each day at several guillotines. Although the politically active worry, the average citizen simply goes about his daily existence. In the face of *La Terreur*, life continues.

As your heroes wander the streets, they bear witness to the machinations of Robespierre's terror at work. In several of the public squares, poverty-stricken street vendors hawk their wares alongside government wagons handing out bread. Crowds gather in the squares and cheer as wagons full of "traitors to liberty" are brought to the guillotine and executed, their severed heads raised high in the air—sometimes with eyes wide open...

Talk on the streets among the people is constantly about the war with Austria and Prussia. The occasional priest or nun can be seen in the shadows of the streets, face strained with worry. In other sections, groups of bullying libertines in red, white, and blue listen to speech-givers standing on lampposts, extolling the virtues of the Republic.

A Night at the Theater

The group starts off at the *Théâtre de Liberté*. The *Liberté* is a small building that holds about 400 people. The façade is marked by four wooden pillars, painted to look like sculpted



marble, that span the whole of the two stories the theater occupies. The door itself is inset and houses a small box office. The windows and gaps between the tops of the pillars are strewn with red, white, and blue bunting.

Before the show, the actors proudly and loudly stroll outside in heavy makeup and mock partisan-soldier costumes. Some sing patriotic libertine songs, while others greet passersby with heavy flirtation and compliments. All are attempting to lure in customers.

At the moment, the characters are simply out for a nice evening enjoying Paris' well-established theater scene at the *Théâtre de Liberté*. While the usual libertine propaganda and tales of royal corruption fill the stage, the party has a good chance to get to know one another as their wine flows freely and good cheer fills the air. Should those who are in the mood choose to indulge, there is more than enough frivolity to go around at little cost other than to their own heads the next morning.

Whether they expected to or not, the adventurers have wound up in the center of the theater floor. Everyone is caught up in the moment. All seems right with Paris this night, but what the characters do not know is that they are about to be swept up in Robespierre's terrors.

As the players enjoy the revelry, read the following:

The cramped Liberté was the perfect choice for the evening. The scent of spilled sweet wine mixes with tobacco and sweat as the crowd grows. You find yourself becoming fast friends with your neighbors in the excitement. It seems that with the death of the king, anything is possible. Liberty is truly in the hands of the people. Despite the horrors it took to get here, moments of merriment like this have made it all worth while.

The crowd crescendos in a cheer as a bare-chested woman clutching the Tricolor enters the stage as Lady Liberty herself and leads you all in singing a rowdy version of Le Marseilles.

In mid-chorus, a shot rings out. The woman on stage stops and grabs at her chest. Her eyes go wide as blood begins to bubble from her mouth. Bringing her hand to her lips, she appears utterly confused as she looks at the stains on her fingers. The flag falls to the crowd, which begins to erupt in panic.

Le Mob

The theater is overfilled and the entire building has exploded into a riot in an attempt to flee the scene. People are being brutally crushed against the stage. Others are literally being ground underfoot. Cries of the helpless fill the air. A few fight against the crowd, looking for friends and loved ones.

The characters have three primary choices: Stand their ground, go with the crowd, or attempt to calm the crowd. Each option is discussed below.

The crowd takes six rounds to disperse.

Characters who decide to stay in place must make a Vigor roll each round. Going with the crowd is an Agility roll.

Those who fail their roll suffer Fatigue, which can lead to death from trampling (or the odd villain who's willing to knife those who stand in their way). A critical failure causes two levels of Fatigue.

Clever characters might try to calm (or threaten) the group around them. If a successful Persuasion or Intimidation roll is made by a character, any adjacent and obvious "friends" may add +1 to their Agility or Vigor roll, or +2 with a raise. The influence roll is opposed as if the crowd was a Wild Card with a d6 in Spirit, adding +2 as they are quite panicked.

When the heroes manage to make it back onto the street, they are greeted by partisan soldiers. Read the following:

The crowd smashes against the doorframe and squeezes through windows like sheep to the slaughterhouse. Tears stream down the face of a man nursing his broken arm, a bone clearly visible. A young boy dangles unconscious in his mother's arms.

But there is worse news. An entire battalion of partisan soldiers has placed manned-barricades before the theatre. The only way out is directly into waiting prison wagons.

The characters can try and fight their way out, but the numbers are quite overwhelming. There are nearly 500 troops manning wooden barrels all along the path. Heroes may have brought small arms into the theatre, but they were not admitted with longarms, swords, or other obvious weapons. Should melee ensue anyway, the soldiers don't hesitate to shoot, stab, or beat the resister into submission. Assume d6+4 guards are available per hero. Reinforcements are steps away should the partisans lose, and mobs of citizens fill the streets to point out, trip, or otherwise hinder those who flee in hopes of reward from the Council of Public Safety.

It's absolutely possible characters will be killed in this way. That's fine and shouldn't be sugar-coated or fudged. If it should happen, simply allow the player to make a new hero who is elsewhere in the crowd at the beginning of the next scene. Those who are Incapacitated are saved from death by someone in the crowd (or a doctor at the prison), but are otherwise left with their wounds.

The captured characters find themselves in an iron-barred wagon with 2d6+4 demoralized citizens.

Partisan Soldier

Partisan soldiers are both men and women, though they are primarily Parisians. They are recruited out of the ranks of the political zealots found in the salons. Individual soldiers are usually simply dressed, wearing blue pants and a white shirt, decorated with a red, white, and blue cockade pinned to their chest or a sack hat.

They are average to poor fighters, but always travel in groups (make sure you don't forget the gang-up bonus!)

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d4, Notice d4, Shooting d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Greedy

Edges: None.

Gear: Saber (Str +d6), flintlock rifle (Range 10/20/40, Damage 2d8, 2 actions to reload).

French Officer

These men have been trained by the royal academy but are loyal to and retained by the Republican government. The officers in Paris have been taken from the ranks of the wounded and battle-hardened soldiers at the front lines of the war with Austria. They wear the blue woolen French military uniform.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Loyalty to the Republic.

Gear: Saber (Str +d6), two flintlock pistols (Range 5/10/20, Damage 2d6+1, 2 actions to reload).

Edges: Command, Hold the Line



Behind Closed Doors

The characters are transported through the streets of Paris to a prison a few blocks from the Seine River. From the outside, the building is a simple, old, three-story military structure. It takes up about half a city block and is made of white limestone. There are no windows on the street level, just a black double door large enough for the wagons to fit through. The second- and third-story windows are barred, and a patrol of partisan soldiers wander the flat roof.

Inside, the double doors open to a large marching area of about 100 square yards. The back 50 yards have been broken into four holding pens, which are filled with people. There is a makeshift scaffold that goes around the whole of the second story that is manned by soldiers, but the rest of the walls are blank, with the exception of evenly spaced barred windows and several doors on the ground floor.

The characters are dumped into the holding pens. Everyone around them is trying to make sense of the situation. A few Streetwise rolls reveal the following information:

- ♦ Robespierre has issued an order to round up several political parties whose leaders were attempting a coup.
- ♦ The theater was run by "The People's Good," the party who was planning the coup.
- ♦ Most of the people in the cage are common criminals and have no useful information. These individuals attempt to pickpocket the characters if they reveal they are upper class.
- ♦ There are a few aristocrats, as well as Spanish, Prussian, and Austrians, among the jailed. They have been brought here on charges of spying for the Austrian army.

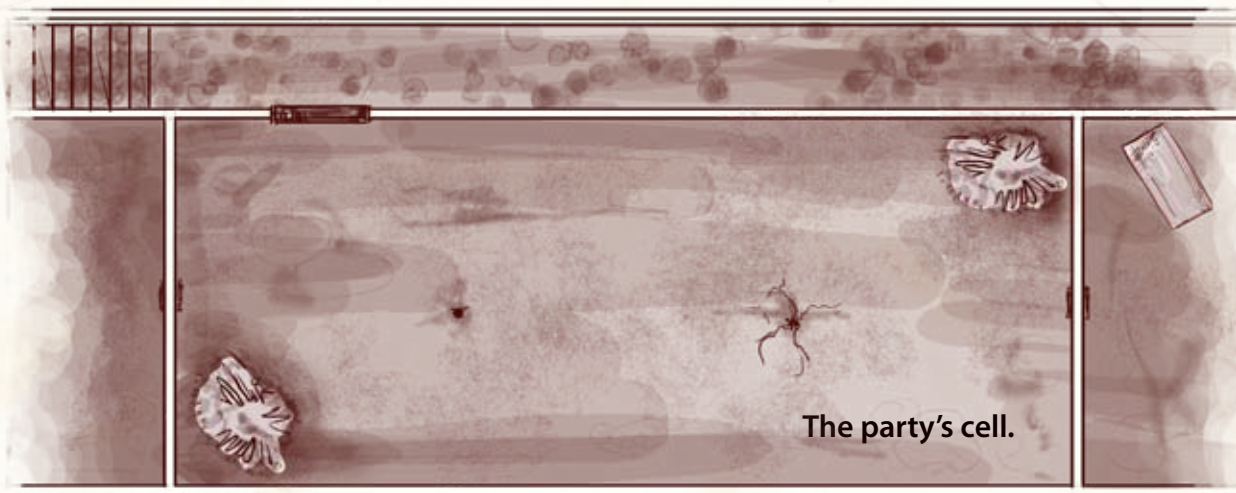
Judgment

Until the next day, the characters bide their time in the pens. During this time, a judge from the Council of Public Safety, Jean Val Achille, hears cases. A portly, pig-faced man, Achille is a swift judge who is irritated by the workload that has been created by the roundup. He is quick to hand out stiff penalties, including death, on little to no evidence. While he is hearing cases, those sentenced to death are lined up in a pen near a guillotine, and several will be executed that day.

When the cases against the characters are heard, they are tried on the spot for treason against the Republic. If they ask for a reason, attendance at the theater provides enough evidence to convict them. Additionally, they could be held responsible for organizing a riot or for the deaths of individuals from the theater. If any characters have any connection to the Catholic Church, foreign government, or aristocratic background, this too can be used as evidence against them. Feel free to create a few nonplayer characters who "know" them to add fuel to the fire.

Initially, the sentence is be death by beheading. An attempt can be made to plead this down with a Persuasion

The Prison



test. If they decide to start naming other dissidents or can provide a witness (other than others in their party) that they did some good deed at the riot, they receive a +2 bonus to their roll. Those who are successful receive only 20 years in prison, -5 years for each additional raise, with a minimum of one year.

Locked Down

Whatever the sentence, the pens of those condemned to death have filled up and, with soldiers bringing in more prisoners by the hour, the holding pens are filled as well. At this point, the group is moved to a 60 x 60-foot room in the basement of the prison for "processing." (In truth, the Council wants to make sure they can string out the popular beheadings for a good long while.)

The cell contains 22 other prisoners and has a single small window up on one wall that overlooks the guillotines.

Bodies are stacked next to the window and blood occasionally trickles down into the cell, making the room smell of rotten meat and the copper tinge of blood.

Characters in the pens likely have only the clothes on their backs, and those will be worse for wear. It's nearly impossible to keep any equipment or money through the searches they will be subjected to.

As the characters mingle with the group and find out what is going on, successful role-playing or Streetwise rolls lead them to discover the following:

- ♦ Most of the cell is made up of criminal elements: thieves and murderers who have taken advantage of the chaos in Paris to steal what they want. At some point, they attempt to steal what little the characters have.
- ♦ Many of prisoners here are desperate and treacherous. As a rule, they can't be trusted, and are likely to turn in anyone planning to escape in hopes that they'll be released for their loyalty.

- ♦ No one knows how long anyone will be here. Some of the others have been in the cell for weeks. One man has been there for several months, but he appears insane (see *L'Idiot*, below).
- ♦ Once a day, food is served. There is only enough for half the room, and it is a fight for those who want it.
- ♦ There is a pair of drain holes in the floor of the cell. Each is about half the size of a fist. They are mostly clogged with human waste, blood, and dirt, but, if they are investigated, cold air can be felt coming from them. The holes are channels that lead to the sewer system. One hole is nearly completely packed and is surrounded by cemented stone. The other is surrounded by cobblestone, but prying them up would certainly cause a commotion likely to get everyone caught.

Arianna

One of the prisoners sits in the corner wrapped in a once-luxurious but now tattered cloak. This is Arianna de Luca. Exactly how the characters meet her is up to you, but it's crucial that they do so. Perhaps one of the champions fights off a bully, protects a weaker prisoner, or is simply handsome and charming and Arianna approaches them. She will definitely appeal to the honor of anyone who is Spanish, or a noble, as well.

Once you decide on the method, one of the characters is approached by the beautiful senorita. Arianna pulls the hero into a corner and attempts to discern if he or she is trustworthy. If so, she says she has been jailed for connections to elements within the Catholic Church who are working against the Republican government. The bishop of Le Havre, her close friend, is helping refugees flee the Terror via passage to England and Spain and she can get the party on a ship out of the country if they help her escape the prison.

Arianna De Luca

Arianna is a Spanish national living in Paris. The story she tells is that she was sent here from Italy to live with her mother's brother. He became emissary for Milan shortly after the revolutionary government took power. With her knowledge of Spain, Italy, and French borders, she was to help her uncle dissuade the aggressive Republicans from taking action against the Latin states. She does not state exactly what she did but, if pressed for information, will say she did what she had to in order to protect her homeland. Recently she has been assisting priests, nuns, and faithful Catholics out of the country.

Arianna is exceptionally well-connected in Paris. If the characters offer their help, she offers them passage to Spain, where she is returning anyway. She has an excellent knowledge of the Parisian street and sewer system, as well as a number of safe houses and weapon stashes across the countryside.

If pressed into a fight, Arianna plays down her strengths, preferring to not expose her excellent physical capabilities. She only turns to her blade as a last resort at this point. Later in the adventure, she will not be so coy about her skills.

Arianna carries a small doll with her, though it is kept hidden in the folds of her dress most of the time. A character may notice it later on—particularly after they've escaped the prison and managed to get into daylight or other illumination.

The body and head of the doll are a simple two-part gingerbread design. The whole of the doll is almost entirely made of leather and is very loosely stitched down the side. There is hair sewn onto the head, and two shiny button eyes that gleam like new. The doll is full of cotton, yet somehow always feels wet and squishy.

A Common Knowledge roll indicates the doll is very low-quality, something from a very poor family—not the privileged background that Arianna states that she comes from. If she is asked, Arianna says it was given to her by her father years ago, and she has managed to hang onto it throughout her ordeal.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Streetwise d10, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Knowledge (Occult) d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Stealth d8, Swimming d6, Throwing d6

Edges: Arcane Background (Magic), Attractive

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Powers: *Boost / lower Trait, deflection, smite.* (10 Power Points)

Gear: Black and green lace dress, reinforced with a toughened leather corset (+1 Toughness); thigh sheath with 3-inch dagger (Str+d4+1); blessed medal of St. Solomon (+1 Parry against supernatural sources).

Powers: *Boost / lower trait, deflection, smite.* (10 Power Points.)

The Big Escape

How long the prison scene lasts is up to you. A single night may be fine, or you may want to drag it out for days, allowing your players to time the guards' movements, attempt bribes, or otherwise concoct a daring plan. The length of their stay really depends on whether the players like to plan and carry out detailed ruses and schemes; or whether they're more interested in getting to the action and high adventure (in which case, go straight to L'Idiot, below).

Here are the facts for those who wish to find their own way out of this predicament:

- The prisoners are in an underground jail cell. The walls of the cell are solid brick in front of solid limestone up to about 6' up. From there the wall extends above the ground and nothing but daylight is beyond. This part of the wall can be chiseled away with a metal tool at the rate of 5 x 5 x 5 inches a day. The gated door of the cell opens to a hallway. There are no windows in the hallway. The windowed portion of the cell opens to the marching grounds, and the other walls open to other cells.
- There are two guards that make rounds at half-hour intervals. They know the cells are full of desperate characters and won't get close enough to be grabbed.
- There are 2d10 guards in the vicinity of the cell at any one point. This includes the streets outside the prison.



- ♦ The gates are constructed of iron bars spaced about six inches apart. The ends of the bars are set into the stone. There is a single door with three hinges and an iron padlock on the hallway side.
- ♦ The floor around the idiot's drain hole is the weak point in the cell. If they can manage to get close to it, the characters can pry up the cobblestones around the hole. This opens a 2 x 2-foot-wide irregular hole about 10 feet deep. The bottom of the hole opens to the top ceiling of the Paris sewer system, about 40 feet above five feet of water. An average-sized, fully clothed person will have a very difficult time making it down the hole, having a 75% chance of getting stuck. Removal of clothing reduces the chance by 25%. Lubrication of some sort provides an additional 25% reduction, but only if it is placed on tight-fitting leather or a naked body. The escapees must somehow deal with the other inmates as well—some of whom may lie even if "convinced," then yell for the guards at an opportune moment.

The goal at this point should be to get out of the prison and out of the country. All of the characters should have been convicted and imprisoned. If any somehow made it away from the initial theater roundup, resources can be in place for them to leave the city, and stashes should be made available to them when they break out.

The group will not be able to make it out of the city alone, however. Robespierre has blocked all the city gates with large groups of partisans and average citizens are only too happy to report fugitives in exchange for extra bread or other rewards from the Council.

In their attempts to break out, the characters have to discover the following opportunities and overcome the following obstacles:

L'Idiot

If your party isn't interested in figuring out their own escape plan, the idiot—who is actually a horrible creature wearing human skin—inadvertently provides them with a way out. (If your party has their own escape plan, just don't let the creature reveal the hole in the floor).

Late one night, as most of the prisoners are sleeping, have everyone in the party make Notice rolls. The highest-rolling player awakens to see L'Idiot sitting atop a bedraggled prisoner and drawing blood from his neck (much like a vampire—though he isn't one).

A Guts check is in order here. The character has the jump on the idiot, who is busy feasting on his victim. Of course, waking others may sacrifice this advantage if the madman notices (Stealth vs Notice).

If you want L'Idiot to show your party the way out, it begins ripping up the cobblestones as it dies (or perhaps just beforehand if you can manage it). Opening the hole to the pipe and dropping in takes but a single action for this horror.

L'Idiot

For the most part, the idiot looks and smells like a dirty street vagrant. He has long hair that is matted with dirt and filth, and a long, soiled beard. The idiot's clothes are a simple muddied shirt and pair of tattered knee pants. He never speaks in much more than sick giggles or random humming to himself.

In truth, the idiot is a host for a leech-like creature mutated by the horrific energies the Revolution unleashed on Paris. The creature is now fused with every part of what was once a human, but it is driven by two things alone: hunger and survival. It could easily slip out of the prison, leaving its host in search of another, but it feels protected and well-fed here among the damned and dying.

The idiot is the first supernatural creature the party has likely seen, but it's somewhat subtle. Even its proboscis is well-hidden inside its mouth, and likely unseen in the darkness until it bites someone. The monster is the first sign that everything is not as it seems, however, which paves the way for the more bizarre challenges which lie ahead on the road to Le Havre.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Special Abilities:

♦ **Claws:** Str+d4.

♦ **Fearless:** The idiot has no real concept of fear and so never makes Guts checks and cannot be intimidated.

♦ **Improved Frenzy:** The idiot can make two Fighting attacks per round at no penalty.

♦ **Wall Walker:** The mutated hands of the idiot allow it to walk on vertical surfaces, or even upside down, at normal pace (though he does not reveal this unless cornered).

♦ **Low-Light Vision:** The idiot can smell his surroundings. As long as its smell isn't obscured by some overpowering odor, it ignores dim- and dark-lighting penalties.

♦ **Poison Proboscis:** In place of a tongue, the idiot has a proboscis that can extend out a few inches from its mouth. At the end of the appendage are needle-sharp teeth that the creature uses to feed. If the idiot hits with a raise, it manages to leap forward and bite. The target must make a Vigor check or be paralyzed for 2d4 rounds.



After the Escape...

After the escape, Arianna does as much as she can to convince the characters that the key to them getting out of the country is with her. If the characters are uncooperative, she tells them:

"It is obvious you do not realize the gravity of the situation we're all in. You need my help, and I need yours. I am due in Le Havre four nights from now. The bishop there expects me, but the police here already have my description. I need cover, and since it's apparent you can fight, I need someone who can swing a sword. Come with me and I will see that you make it out of the country safely."

If the heroes escaped through the sewers, they have the choice of what direction to head:

- ♦ **Toward the Seine River:** This is the easiest route out, as they can identify the flow of the water downhill and follow the current. The exits to the river are small channels, about 5 x 5-feet wide, that expel the sewers' overflow in storms, ending in an iron door to the cobbled river walk.

- ♦ **Toward the city center:** This path is uphill and puts them into the busy commercial and governmental districts, as well as near the cathedral. Travel is easier, as the newer sections of the system are under the larger boulevard, but there is a 10% chance of running into 2d4 guards patrolling the walkways. The only exits here are through the manholes.

- ♦ **Toward the residential sections of the city:** The older sections of the system lead to several of the residential sections of the city. As with the city center, the only exits here are through the manholes. Additionally, there is a 25% chance of running into a hostile criminal element in the area.

Sewer Scum

The sewers of Paris are a mixture of filthy storm runoff from the street and direct waste channels from more recent construction. Much of the city still disposes of its waste from buckets into channels along the street that are washed clean when rains come. This, mixed with ever-present horse manure, makes the muck in the sewers difficult to withstand.

Most of the system runs with three to five feet of water, the lower portions of which are a thick sludge that reduces movement by half. This can be avoided by swimming. A nonswimmer who attempts to swim in the system has a 10% chance of swallowing a mouthful of the water. Swallowing any of the water results in a difficult Spirit check, failure of which causes vomiting and a fatigue level for 12 hours. Additionally, a Vigor check should be made. If the check is failed, the character has picked up a disease and, in 12 hours' time, will be ill with severe stomach issues, gaining a fatigue level that lasts for 1d4 days.

The construction of the system is a mix of ancient Roman architecture and 20-year-old brick. The sections intermingle with each other, with the highest cluster of Roman-built system in the oldest parts of the city.

The older Roman sections span about 20 feet across and are interspersed with iron drains about a foot across coming down from the streets. The walls are mostly carved directly out of the sandstone that lies under the city, but brick has been used to reinforce several sections. Every 1,000 feet, a

brick tunnel four feet across leading to the surface can be found. These are capped in heavy iron manhole covers and have iron-bar ladders to the top. Of the ladders present, 10% are too rusted to use. The water here also tends to run about a foot deeper than in newer sections.

New sections of the sewers are 40 to 60 feet across and have the same iron drain-and-manhole system as the older sections. The main difference is the brick construction of a wide, arched ceiling that ends in two walkways about four feet wide on either side of the tunnel. The walkways are well-maintained and rise about a foot above the water. Because the system periodically floods from storms, the walkways are slippery, and pace is reduced by 1 on them.

The only natural light comes from the occasional storm drain. In older sections, the halls are nearly pitch black. Torches, as well as implements to light them, can be found in newer sections.

Hazards Under the City

In addition to being a cesspool and breeding ground for all sorts of nasty creatures, the sewers are well-known to the criminal and counterrevolutionary kind. The roundups have driven many to use the system to get in and out of heavily guarded sections of the town, as well as to avoid soldiers and police. The longer the characters stay in the sewers, the more likely they are to run into trouble.

- ♦ **Criminals and Counterrevolutionaries:** The city is in utter chaos above and below. Just as on the streets above, criminals and armed groups of counterrevolutionaries have holed up below, waiting to make their move (use the stats for partisan soldiers). There is a 10% chance every four hours in the residential section of running into a group of 2d6 counterrevolutionaries who have just escaped a street battle. There is a 20% chance every four hours anywhere in the system that the party finds a group of 1d4 common street criminals who are temporarily living beneath the city.
- ♦ **Guards:** Near the administrative quarter of the city, the military keeps a close eye on the sewers. There is a 10% chance every eight hours that the characters run into 2d4 partisan soldiers making a patrol in this area.
- ♦ **L'Idiot:** If the idiot escaped before the characters could kill him (or the parasite slipped out of its corpse!), it may hunt the party down to seek its revenge.
- ♦ **Rat Swarms:** The sewers offer shelter and food for millions of rodents. The smell of fresh meat and blood can easily draw a ravenous swarm of rats to attack the characters. (See Swarms in *Savage Worlds*.)
- ♦ **Storm Surge:** Summer in Paris can see strong storms with heavy downpours. The sewers offer drainage for the whole city, and water levels often triple, even flooding entire sections of the system. Walls of water flush downhill in these instances, forcing through the small overflow channels that lead to the river.

Act 2: The Way To Le Havre

Even though the fugitives have escaped the prison, their problems are only beginning. The cell they left behind is likely full of slaughtered bodies. The dead are only prisoners, but the police and government are appalled by what appears to them to be a horrific mass murder.

Within the day, the papers distributed across Paris have the story in gory detail. Four-inch headlines proclaim the incident as the "Slaughterhouse Massacre." To make matters worse, facial sketches and the names of all the player characters are listed in articles as the dangerous escapees responsible for the event.

As the public relations disaster starts to unfold, the Council of Public Safety and Robespierre himself get involved in the case. Police are charged with hunting down the "villains" at all costs as the government attempts to save face.

Residential Paris

The characters have time to gather their things before leaving the city. Arianna suggests the company stick together for protection and go to her uncle's home near the Latin District. There they can get a good meal, avoid the conflict on the streets, and get equipped for their journey. She does not fight anyone who wishes to leave to gather their own goods from houses and apartments in the area.

As the characters make their way through the residential districts, they are able to hide amidst the chaos in the streets. Robespierre's crackdown has sparked a counterrevolution, and several thousand citizens have taken up arms. The rebels have barricaded several blocks with overturned wagons and carts. Partisans, loyal to the Republican government, and the rebels have set up picket lines on either side of the barricades, and both have a "shoot first" mentality.

The characters have to find a way to cross the picket lines to get to their apartments. The first night, neither side thinks much of them other than as possible spies for the other side. Once the afternoon papers hit, the day after the escape, the partisans are well-informed and on the lookout for the perpetrators of the "Slaughterhouse Massacre." Additionally, the military shows up to give support to the city troops with cannon and veteran soldiers.

The Administrative Quarter

There is no reason to be in this section of the city. If the characters manage to get here anyway, they find it overrun with the military gathering their forces to deal with the counterrevolutionary insurrection in the residential districts. Crawling out of the manholes in this area sparks an instant inquisition from the 1d6 uniformed soldiers in the immediate vicinity. The assumption by the soldiers is that the characters are counterrevolutionary terrorists trying to sabotage or spy on the administrative offices and courts.

The Latin District

This portion of the city holds a thick population of clergy and foreign diplomats from Catholic countries, as well as universities and students. Patrols here are lighter than in other sections of the city. Most of the military and city guards are preoccupied with the chaos in the residential districts or with guarding the administrative buildings from saboteurs and an encroachment by German troops from the border.

Arianna's first goal is to get the party to the town home of her uncle, Don Emilio. Emilio is an emissary from Milan. To cover his true agenda, he uses the story of being a secular representative protecting Italian trade interests. In reality, the don is a Vatican political strongman who has been sent by the Pope himself to protect Vatican interests and property against the French Republicans. Although he plays the old businessman, he is a savvy and ruthless politician who knows when to use the tools of assassination and brute force as well as his silver tongue.

The initial trip through the district should be an easy one, and with Arianna's guidance the group is able to make it to the town home with ease. The party finds little resistance or concern from the citizens here, assuming they try their best to fit in and don't draw attention to themselves.

Once at the town home, Arianna takes over:

You approach a long row of homes, one built into the next. The street lamps give off a dim light, making the ochre paint of the walls seem that much darker. Arianna cautiously leads you to a set of large, black carriage doors studded with brass tacks.

"Maria, Maria!" the Spanish woman whispers into the door as she raps the knocker. "Maria, eio mae, Arianna."

A few moments later, an older woman in a nightgown can be seen lit up by a haze of lamplight in a second-story window. Her eyes look surprised, and she rushes away. Within moments, the carriage doors creak open, and all are ushered in.

The carriageway opens up to a small cobbled courtyard just large enough for a wagon to turn around. A small carriage house and stable stand on one side of the courtyard near the entrance. On the far side of the carriageway, an immense four-story home dominates the grounds. Through the multi-paned windows on the ground floor, the soft glow of candlelight from several large parlors and dining rooms lights the ground before the building. In one of the more opulent rooms, a grumpy-looking young man is setting a table.

As the troupe enters, Arianna is off to the left of the courtyard having a hushed conversation with a silver-haired, handsome gentleman. A successful Notice reveals that Arianna is frantically shaking the doll and pointing at it. If any of the characters know Spanish, they overhear Arianna saying, "We must act before it is too late. Who knows how far this has gone? We must get to the bishop."

Arianna's uncle is a gracious host. *"I am Don Emilio. Arianna says you are fellow travelers and friends of hers. In that case, you are welcome to my home. Please, you look hungry and tired. My servants have already set the table."*

Over the next 24 hours, the don and his servants tend to the wounds and needs of the group, preparing them for the journey. No one makes any secret of the fact that they are trying to smuggle the group out of the country. They go through the motions like a well-oiled machine.

Each character receives the following:

- ♦ Five days' food provisions.
- ♦ Small dagger.
- ♦ Fresh clothes.
- ♦ One healing roll made by the servant (Healing 1d8).

Where to Go?

Having found temporary solace in the house of Don Emilio, the characters have to decide where to go and how to get there. Arianna leads the discussion on what should be done next.

"My usual route has been south, through Marseilles. From there, it has been easy to get to Italy or Spain. But that is the route I was captured on before we met. Cardinal Theophile at Notre Dame has many contacts in the north. So, I will be going north to Le Havre. It is the closest port, and the bishop there has helped me in the past."

Emilio supports her, saying, "Si, bueno. We will go to the cardinal in the morning. With the trouble you have stirred up, you will need his help to leave the city."

Notre Dame

Arianna and Emilio depart midmorning to visit with Cardinal Theophile at Notre Dame. The Spaniard and the Italian are reluctant to have any of the other characters along for this meeting. The two can be persuaded to allow others to come along, but only to sit in the cathedral and wait.

Notre Dame is the largest of the churches in all of Paris. The church is well-protected, being centered on the edge of the Seine, though the encroaching development of new homes and businesses creates a stark contrast with its Gothic architecture. Even in the turmoil, the area around the immense building is always busy with street vendors, passing sightseers, and clergy.

As the troupe approaches the cathedral, a sense of foreboding fills the air.

As you approach the cathedral, the dark lines and stained stones appear to drain away the daylight. Medieval gargoyles, sculptures of past kings, and flying buttresses jut out from the structure and are outlined against the watery, gray haze that obscures the sun. The whole scene is simultaneously beautiful and unnerving.

The Red Bird

The cardinal is a man in his early 50's. He has jet-black hair and dark-brown eyes. Contrary to his station, he has taken to dressing in well-made but common-style clothes. This makes him difficult to pick out of the crowd when the party first enters the church. He is cordial but expects visitors to hold to the usual recognition of his station, including bowing to him and kissing his rings.

Arianna and Emilio request an audience with him, and all three tell the party to stay behind in the church. The three proceed to the sacristy in the back where they tersely discuss the arrangements for escaping the city.

While the meeting is taking place, those staying behind may choose to investigate their surroundings. A successful Notice or Streetwise roll reveals the following:

- ♦ The newspapers have hit the streets and the story of the "Slaughterhouse Massacre" is starting to spread.
- ♦ Rumors are being spread that Robespierre has offered a bounty to the police for bringing in the Slaughterhouse Massacre murderers.
- ♦ The city gates have been locked down and are under heavy guard. No one is being allowed in or out of the city except for the military.
- ♦ The Germans have broken through the lines on the front and may be on the march to Paris. A young captain named Napoleon has angered Robespierre by pulling troops out of the city when he wants to use them to hunt down the murderers.
- ♦ A student from a nearby university is on the street giving a speech in support of Robespierre. He is handing out red, white, and blue cockades.

Regardless of rolls, a vagrant approaches a member of the party. He does nothing but solicit them. This is the bounty hunter that appears later.

The stench of festering meat and a hundred days without bathing chokes the air as a man in a mud-stained hood approaches you. He extends a dark, muddy hand covered in bits of straw to you and mutters, "A coin, a coin for the suffering?"

The Doll

When Arianna is preparing to see the cardinal, a successful Notice reveals the following:

- ♦ Arianna is taking special care of her doll and has requested a box to carry it in.
- ♦ Emilio asks her to take the doll with her when she goes to speak to the cardinal.
- ♦ A raise reveals that she is arming herself with a set of throwing knives in a garter.

If any of the characters get a chance to investigate the doll, they find the following:

- ♦ The doll is still wet with blood, and it still smells of rotting meat.

- ♦ If the doll is squeezed, it doesn't ooze, but reacts like a sack of wet hay.
- ♦ If a character pokes a finger into the stitching, he feels a slimy straw, and the finger is covered in partially coagulated blood when removed.

Following Arianna and Emilio to their meeting with the cardinal allows a character to gather the following information:

- ♦ The doll is not hers. It is evidence that was found at the murder site of a young girl in Le Havre.
- ♦ The Church suspects that there is a Republican group attempting to frame the bishop of Le Havre for the murder of the girl.
- ♦ Rome wishes to find the truth of the murder, and Arianna has been ordered to investigate further.
- ♦ Arianna is convinced that there is something supernatural about the ordeal and that the Republicans are using witchcraft.
- ♦ Arianna makes references to the doll as a "tool of the devil to inflict pain on the living like that of the Haitians."

The Hunter

The following should *not* be revealed to the characters at this point:

- ♦ Arianna is an agent trained to seek out supernatural enemies. She was hired by the Vatican, and Emilio is her handler, but he regards her tendency to jump to the supernatural as a crock. Hints to the relationship can be given through interaction between the two.
- ♦ A week ago, Arianna was arrested with two other Vatican agents on a road to the south while on a mission to get to the bishop of Le Havre. They were being sent back to Paris to stand trial when she managed to make her way to a separate cart than her counterparts. This is how she wound up in the cell with the party.

Getting Out of Town

The cardinal is willing to come to the party's aid once Arianna has met with him. When the meeting with Emilio is over, Theophile departs briefly and then returns with two aides. They are both men in friars' habits, and they carry a box.

The cardinal pulls the characters into a side chapel:

"Here, my friends, are provisions for your trip."

The dark-haired man reaches into the box and unfurls a map of Normandy. "Now that your story has hit the papers, you would do best to avoid being too close to the river. The police and military will center their search there in the coming days."

With a piece of red wax, he makes an X on two locations on the map. "Here and here. These are farmers friendly to our cause. You will know the first by the ruins outside his stable, the second by an apple orchard on a brook."

"Godspeed. I will send a rider out with word to the safe house at this address." He hands Arianna a small roll of parchment. "Show them the seal on the letter. They will welcome you. Christ be with you, my friends."

After his speech, the cardinal bows and leaves. Emilio also departs from the company at this point. He has been carrying the doll box but gives it to Arianna. He does not say goodbye but looks at Arianna sternly and says, "Be careful with this, piccolo volpe. I fear you may be right this time."

The cardinal's box contains the following items:

- ♦ A road map of Normandy and Paris.
- ♦ Six flintlock pistols (Range 5/10/20; Damage 2d6+1, 2 actions to reload).
- ♦ Powder and shot for 40 rounds.
- ♦ 300 francs.
- ♦ A letter of passage from the cardinal.

Arianna explains to the team that the group has a decision to make on how to get out of town: through the tunnels, over the walls, or along the river.

The Tunnels

The cardinal has a secret way out of town through a tunnel system. The head of the tunnel is in the dormitory of the monastery a few blocks away. The risk of being recognized as the murderers while travelling to the tunnels is high thanks to the relentless papers. There's a 50% chance of being recognized unless disguises or cloaks are worn, in which case the chances are reduced to 20%. Reduce this another 5% if it's dark or night.

Once the crossing has been made, the next obstacle is to convince the groundskeeper to open the door to the monastery. This should not be difficult; a simple Persuasion roll does the trick, or a bribe of 10 francs. This can also be accomplished by showing the keeper the cardinal's letter and seal.

The tunnel entrance is located on the basement level of the monastery dormitory. A secret door exists in a fireplace in the kitchen. The fireplace is filled with a roasting pig and fire, but Arianna extinguishes the flames and pushes open the door.

The tunnels themselves look as though they have not been used in years; they are thick with cobwebs and the walls are slick with moisture and moss. The whole of the structure is only about four feet high and three feet wide, making travel uncomfortable. To get out of the city, the group has to travel about two hours in these conditions, causing cramping and pain. A Vigor check should be made. Those that fail receive a Fatigue level.

The Walls

Scaling the city walls and leaping over into the countryside is also an option; the walls are accessible in the residential areas of the city, and they are less for protection and more to control the entrances to the city for tax collection. For this reason, the majority of the guards are stationed near the city gates, and patrols monitor the rest of the wall in groups of 1d6+1 every 20 minutes.

In most places, the walls run 40 feet high and are bordered with a narrow street that separates them from the city buildings. The wall is made of stacked stone and is climbable without a rope. This is very difficult to do (-4).

The easiest way up the wall is to find a home or business that is built up against the wall. These buildings are two to three stories tall and come to within 10 to 20 feet of the wall top. From here, characters could position a ladder or heave one another to the top of the barrier.

The outside wall is 40 to 50 feet above grass and rocks. A rope offers the best way down, but the wall can be free-climbed. Again, it would be very difficult to do (-4). The outside wall is patrolled by 1d6+1 mounted soldiers every hour.

Mounted Soldier

The soldiers of the Republican army are dressed in the white-trimmed blue wool and black fur hats left over from the king's army. They are well-trained for their duties and loyal to the cause of the Republic. The recent war with Austria and Prussia has left them on edge, making them exceptionally paranoid. They will kill anyone climbing the walls or sneaking around the base of the wall.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Riding d6, Shooting d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Edges: None.

Hindrances: None.

Gear: Saber (Str +d6), flintlock rifle (Range 10/20/40, Damage 2d8, 2 actions to reload), uniform, powder and shot (30 rounds).

Cavalry Horse

In the chaos after the king's death, the military has plundered the nobles' horse stock. Most of the mounts used by the cavalry are strong running and jumping stock. The soldiers have taken a great deal of pride in their horses, and they keep them well-fed and groomed.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d12, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Notice d6

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities:

♦ **Fleet-Footed:** Cavalry horses roll a d8 rather than a d6 when running.

♦ **Iron-Shod Kick:** Str+d6.

♦ **Size +2:** The typical cavalry horse weighs about 1,000 pounds.

The River

The cathedral and the sewer system both provide easy access to the Seine River, which runs through the heart of the city. It is especially inviting, since the river runs swiftly north toward Le Havre.

There are two ways to use the river to exit the city. The first is in the river itself. The main hazard here is the water; characters need to be able to swim to survive. Additionally, the water soaks supplies, rendering provisions inedible and firearms unable to fire.

For most of its length, the banks of the river can be walked. This route allows safety from the elements but exposes the characters to wary civilians. The party members have to disguise themselves to avoid detection (as above).

Robespierre and the police are convinced the "murderers" are going to use the river to exit the city. In preparation for this, he has stationed teams of two guards every few hundred yards along the banks to watch the water and patrol the banks.

Additionally, there is a boat with four rowers and two armed soldiers patrolling the river, looking for disturbances in the water. The boat is equipped with lanterns to scan the water at night and six additional loaded and ready rifles for the gunmen.

Caught in the Door

Whichever way out the characters choose, what appears to them to be a bounty hunter catches up early in the morning of the first day, just before dawn. The air is exceptionally humid, and it hangs damply on the characters, creating a thick blanket of fog for miles on either side of the river valley.

Give the party a few hours to make their getaway from the city and move down the roads out of town toward their first safe house. Make them feel safe and home free before springing the hunter's trap.

You pass along the roads and trails with ease, making better time than expected. Even the weather has been cooperative. Other days, you would have dreaded the heavy humidity, but the rising fog has given you extra cover from roaming patrols.

"What is that, a dead horse?" Arianna asks, bringing your attention to an abysmal, fetid odor.

You hear the shushing of something rolling through the grass. Arianna looks down and manages to stifle a scream.



At her feet, the wide eyes of the severed head of Don Emilio stare up at her.

"You have stolen something, piccolo volpe," a mocking voice says in a thick Creole accent. "My employers wish it to be returned."

Only feet away, a hooded figure is faintly outlined atop a set of ruins. He looks to be fused with the guns he holds, ready to pounce.



The Straw Man

The Straw Man is the body of a black Haitian sailor. A ritual was performed on him that removed his organs, stuffed him with straw, and made him into the puppet of his creator. The man has retained all his earthly knowledge and knows how to track down his prey, as well as how to blend in and hide his true nature.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Taunt d10, Tracking d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Gear: Hunting knife (Str+d4), two flintlock rifles (Range 10/20/40, Damage 2d8, 2 actions to reload), two flintlock pistols (Range 5/10/20; Damage 2d6+1, 2 actions to reload).

Special Abilities:

- ♦ **Construct:** +2 to recover from being shaken; no additional damage from called shots; immune to disease and poison; Wild Cards do not suffer wound penalties.

- ♦ **Fearless:** The Straw Man is a creation and is driven by his demon master. He has no real emotions, only those he fakes to further his mission.

- ♦ **Foul:** The Straw Man's carcass is rotting meat and gives off an intolerable odor. Everyone in a Medium Burst Template of the Straw Man must make a fear check to avoid being Shaken.

- ♦ **Straw Ticking:** The body of the Straw Man is filled with blood and straw. He has no internal organs and shows no signs of life, like breathing or a pulse. Wounds to his body still count toward incapacitating him and result in a mock death, but they do not kill him outright. 1d4 hours after the incapacitating blow, the body has enough energy to revive with full wounds. Only destroying the head completely will eliminate the straw man.

The Straw Man has been sent to track down Arianna and stop her from reaching Le Havre. He does not know why, other than that this mission is "his employers' desire." He frequently references that he "must bring the trophies back." He is referring to Arianna's head and the rag doll. He may also say that he wants his rightful bounty. He is actually referring to the release of his soul from Hell, not the bounty to be collected on the characters.

For this first encounter, the hunter is just testing his prey's strengths and weaknesses of the characters. If he can take

them easily, he certainly will, but otherwise the monster fights hard at first then feigns death if it looks like he will lose.

The One Road to the Two Farms

Following the Seine Valley leads the characters past the cities of Vernon, Les Andelys, Rouen, and Caudebec-en-Caux. As the main route from Paris to the English Channel, there are several roads and trails to follow through the countryside that allow the party to make good time. Provisions, water, and wine are easy to find at the hundreds of farms along the way.

The total trip is about 180 miles, a trek the group can make in about three days using a mix of walking, barges, and hitching in the back of carriages. The trip is uneventful as long as the company steers clear of the main roads to the cities. If they do try to venture into any of the cities, they find that news of the prison murders and of their escape has spread quickly. Military guards prowl the inns, and their story is being told over and over in pubs and homes.

The situation in the countryside is quite different. Most of the peasantry are desperately trying to avoid both officials and contact with the terrors in Paris. They chalk the tales up to Republican paranoia and discount the horror stories as rumors Robespierre has spread to destroy a political enemy. The fact that the group is passing with the blessings of the Church helps them gain supplies or a quick ride, but no one is willing to hide them except the safe houses they were informed about.

The Ruins

Situated below the bluffs south of Les Andelys, Francis de Cesar's farm is built out of the ruins of an ancient Roman outpost. The farmhouse and barns sit atop a low cliff, about 30 feet above the floodplain and roughly two miles from the river.

Francis' home is a simple, two-story square. The lower level has a small parlor, a kitchen, and servants' quarters. The upstairs has three bedrooms. The surrounding farm is filled with an odd collection of lean-to shelters built into the old ruins, and a new barn. Francis is mostly a barley farmer, but he also has a small vineyard and a herd of 30 sheep.

Once the characters arrive and tell Francis that the cardinal sent them, he welcomes them, feeds them, and offers them shelter. The evening proceeds without incident until the morning, when the group is awakened by the sound of horses galloping and men shouting outside the window. This is a detachment of eight soldiers sent to search the valley for the fugitives.

The soldiers have already begun to search the farm grounds, trapping the party in the home. Francis acts quickly to usher the characters into a hidden compartment in the

floor of the servants' quarters. While their host distracts the soldiers, his servant shows the party the cramped, secret hatch. This incident should not come to a fight.

After the troops ransack the house, they give up and leave. Francis has found out that a captain named Bonaparte is being held responsible by the Council for the fugitives' escape from Paris because of his order to pull troops from the city. Bonaparte appears to have taken on the responsibility of their recapture personally and was outside the house, giving the orders for the search.

Francis warns the troupe that the roads are too risky to travel this close to Paris, and he offers them the use of a boat he has on the river. He also gives them instructions on how to reach the next safe house, including a location to dump the boat and how to avoid the bridges around Rouen, where capture would be likely.

In the chaos, Arianna's doll and the cardinal's map are lost. She does not notice it until the party is about to leave, but the doll is missing from the box. She is very upset about this and accuses members of the party, even Francis, of stealing it. Francis has no idea what she's talking about, but he blames the theft on the troops, saying, "Maybe Bonaparte told them to look for it. Maybe he took it as evidence you had been here but moved on." Regardless, Arianna is in a panic to keep moving. She becomes increasingly restless and irritable, insisting that they must press on, even forgoing sleep.

The Straw Man Returns

Having left their boat at Rouen, the party should once more be on foot. This disadvantage, combined with being forced to thicker terrain because of their fear of the military presence, slows them down. It should be well into the night before they arrive at the orchard described by Francis and the cardinal.

Read the following as they arrive:

The orchard is there, just as Francis had described. The neatly trimmed apple trees line up in perfect rows, all pointing to an odd round house a few hundred feet away. The shimmer of lantern light from the lower story makes the structure seem like a lighthouse to your weary eyes. Around you, the world is quiet except for the swishing of the trees. You are startled by a thud, but you realize it is only an apple that has fallen close to you.

This is the spot the Straw Man has chosen to make his final ambush. The doll that Arianna is missing had come to life in the chaos at the ruins, and it used the opportunity to escape with the map. With the doll's help, the Straw Man was able to pinpoint when and where to make his strike. He rode on horseback to the farm and killed the orchard-keeper and the family. They lie dead in their beds on the second floor, their heads severed.

The Straw Man now waits in the house to make his move. The doll is propped in the window, keeping a lookout for him. It appears lifeless at first, but it disappears from the

sill when the party gets close. Once the fighting starts, it sneaks out an open window or door to watch from outside, playing dead. If anyone attempts to get it, the doll makes a dash for the brook. It lets itself be carried with the current all the way to Le Havre.

Being closer to his master's power and having gathered information on how the characters fight, the Straw Man is more powerful and gets a +1 bonus to all his rolls. He makes his move on the first hero who comes through the door and wastes no time in dispatching his prey.

As before, the monster references "his reward," but this time he is not so concerned with hiding his nature. His clothing is now tattered, his exposed flesh rotted. A large suture that runs the length of his belly and chest is beginning to pull apart. A mix of bloody hay and ruddy brown slime is pushing out, making him look like a grotesque scarecrow. Bits of flesh are also missing from his elbows, fingers, and feet, exposing meat and bone.

Aftermath

With the nature of the Straw Man revealed, the party will likely have questions for Arianna. She dismisses the construct and the deaths of the farmers, being far more concerned with the mysterious doll's disappearance. She insists that they keep moving through the night to the safe house in Le Havre. If pressed, Arianna will:

- ♦ Argue that dark forces are more than just folktales.
- ♦ Explain that she had been working with Emilio to uncover that the Republicans are using dark magic to further their goals. She provides the experience with the idiot as evidence.
- ♦ Tell them that voodoo is responsible for the doll and the Straw Man and that she believes it is devil worship brought from the New World. She believes the revolutionaries are using it to kill off political opponents in Le Havre.
- ♦ Explain that the doll is her evidence. She needs it to present to the bishop to gain support for her investigation.
- ♦ Say the party must help her now, because the Straw Man wasn't just after her. It was after them. Whoever is behind the Straw Man views them as a risk too.
- ♦ Remind them that the bishop's aides are the foremost forgers in the area and the party still needs to visit the bishop to get safe passage and leave France since the Paris government has required that papers be checked for all individuals leaving the country.

If the home is searched, the following items are found:

- ♦ Flintlock rifle (Range 10/20/40, Damage 2d8, 2 actions to reload).
- ♦ 30 rounds of powder and shot.
- ♦ St. Christopher Medal (gives +1 Parry against supernatural attacks).
- ♦ 20 francs.

Act 3: Hell in the Harbor

The city of Le Havre is France's busiest port. Since ancient times, seafaring peoples have taken advantage of the natural deepwater estuary and connection to the continental river system at this site. Trade with the New World and the kingdom of Morocco caused the city's growth to explode in the 1500s. Since then, the city has been where all colonial goods come into and leave France.

The bulk of the city in 1793 lies tightly packed on the northern shore of the Seine River, following the floodplain up into the surrounding bluffs. Specks of the city cross over to the southern shore as well, but this is a marshy area that is prone to flooding, so few have chosen to build there. Outside the city walls, the members of the lower-class workers and seamen huddle in shack housing. Most of these small homes have been constructed in the past few years as business boomed, but the government has taken a back seat in enforcing building codes or preventing vagrancy.

The key of the city is its shore and shipyard. Most of the construction here is less than 50 years old. A combination of decades of rebuilding from the wars with England and a flush of wealth from the shipping trade has made the harbor yards one of the most modern in the world.

The shipping companies have made sure to keep up the bright yellow and white washes on the harbor buildings to maintain a good business atmosphere. In the absence of power that Robespierre's terrors created, the business leaders have also become the keepers of the law, and they employ their own company guards around the ships and stockyards. The harbor guards' talents are no more or less than that of the partisans' in Paris. Their loyalty lies with the francs in their paycheck rather than the French and their government.

On the shores, steep stone walls rise several feet above the water, protecting the warehouses and stockyards from tidal flooding. High-built three-, four-, and five-story buildings line streets that bustle with activity. Dozens of tall ships are anchored in the harbor, surrounded by walkways of smaller fishing vessels and rowboats tied port-to-starboard in long lines.

Le Petite Entree

As the troupe makes their way into the city, their travel-worn clothes and exhaustion allows them to fit in with the hundreds of other refugees and fortune-seekers on the edge of town. There is enough traffic going in and out of the walls and the river that they can easily pass and get to their safe house with a minimum of effort. Since the shipping companies are currently handling the majority of security around the city, there is little regard for escaped convicts from Paris.

While the characters move through the city, it buzzes with scandal. The bishop of Le Havre is being held under military guard and is awaiting the arrival of a judge from

Paris. Leaflets are being passed around at the coffee houses that say the bishop has been accused of the murder of several young women who were well-known supporters of Robespierre. Public opinion is torn, but it is apparent that many have judged him guilty of the crimes already and are looking forward to his beheading in the public square.

The development of the bishop's problem has made it impossible for the party to go directly to him with Arianna's tale. She directs the group to a safe house—Jean Maxim's tailor shop—from which they can send word to the bishop and arrange a meeting.

If there is time to look around the city, the party notices the following:

- ◆ There are several vessels in port from the Caribbean.
- ◆ There is a man at the docks who carries a number of dolls and a collection of odd objects tied to his waist who is seen frequently talking to a well-dressed man.
- ◆ As the day goes on, the military presence increases, and a regiment of Republican troops can be seen moving in through the city gates.
- ◆ Captain Bonaparte has arrived in town and is asking questions about criminals matching the characters' descriptions.

577 Rue Le Grange

Jean Maxim's tailor shop is located deep in the trade district of Le Havre, a few blocks from the Bassin de Commerce. In this section of the city, the streets are a maze of narrow alleys and cobbled roads. The buildings are brick and stone, built three to five stories high, and stacked flush against each other. There is rarely a way between buildings, and when there is, it is often only wide enough for one person to walk through. The shop is not hard to find once the characters are on the correct road.

When the group arrives, they see a painted sign hanging over the street, pointing out the tailor shop as a three-story brownstone building with white trim. The bottom floor is the shop, where Jean is working away at a project amidst stacks of cloth. The upper two floors are living quarters. Jean's wife, Esme, and four year-old daughter, Rosette, can be seen playing just inside an open window near the third-story balcony.

At first, Jean attempts to kick the party out of his shop, mistaking them for vagrants. The members have to tell their story and show proof of their connection to the cardinal for him to warm up. Once the proof is provided, Jean instructs the group to come back at night, to the back door in the alley. Jean sends his wife to get word from the bishop about when it will be safe to meet.

When the store is closed, Jean escorts the group to the basement. The area under the shop is a roomy 60 x 80 feet and is filled with leather, bolts of cloth, and several boxes of tailoring supplies. The hiding room is behind a floor-to-ceiling stack of wool, accessible only by squeezing past a narrow gap between a faux wall and the cloth. The hiding

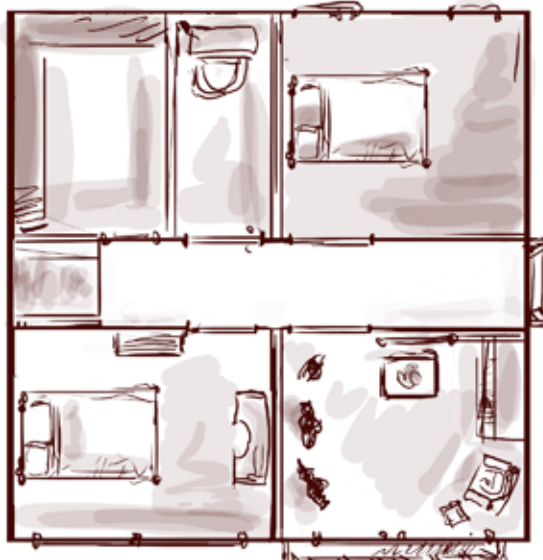
The Maxim Home

Second



Jeanette's
Bedroom

Third



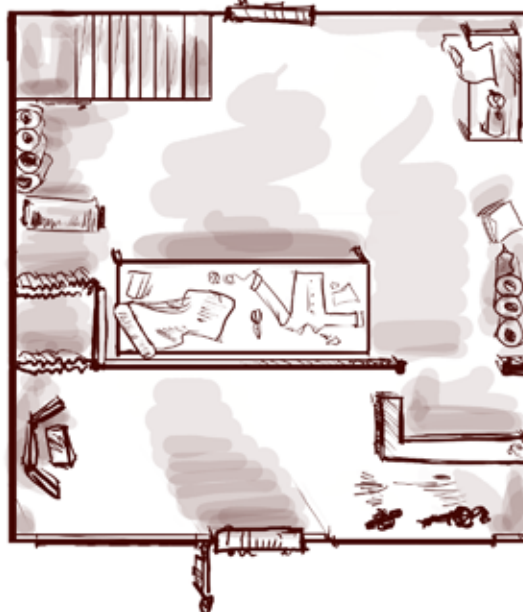
Maxim's
Bedroom

Basement



Guest Quarters

Ground



room is a cramped 10 x 10 feet with no windows and only one door.

Jean is nervous and excited to be hiding the characters. He drones on with questions about Paris and the stories of how the party got to Le Havre. Later, Esme brings the party a couple of bottles of wine, some links of sausage, and a wheel of cheese. After her delivery, she looks at her husband and holds out a letter, saying, "I do not know who to give this to."

The letter is the reply from the bishop. It was hastily written and is difficult to read. The letter says:

Judge arriving in fortnight. Guards won't let leave. Just Mass. Must help clear me. Innocent. Tomorrow. After morning Mass. The cathedral.

Jean's daughter also comes into the room. Rosette hides behind her father most of the time but listens intently. Rosette is holding a rag doll. If anyone takes time to look at her, they notice that the toy looks very similar to Arianna's doll. The hair, eyes, and material are the same, but it has a new dress on and looks much cleaner.

If questioned about the construct, Esme says that Rosette found it in the shop about a day ago and that Jean made the dress for it. Rosette does not give up the doll. "Lunette" has become her favorite, despite her father saying he will make her a better one. The girl goes everywhere with the toy, including to bed.

After the letter and meal have been delivered, the Maxims retire to bed. Arianna is restless about seeing the doll again and unhappy that she was not able to coax it from the girl. Even though the doll's presence jars her, Arianna errs on the side of caution and attempts to convince the group to stay put until they can meet with the bishop.

If Arianna is pressed to explain herself, she:

- Is convinced that the bishop's connections will provide them with the information they need to uncover the culprit.
- Knows that several of the shipping company heads are loyal to the bishop and have detailed knowledge of the comings and goings at the port.
- Knows the bishop keeps a private guard outside the city at a private residence and that he may be willing to assign the soldiers to her.

A Scream in the Night

Late in the night, the characters are awakened by Rosette's screams. Since they are coming from two stories above, the words are unintelligible, and within a minute, the screams die down to total silence.

The heroes find no disturbances as they move out into the basement or the shop floor. Everything appears to be in place. The doors are locked. There is no broken glass or sign of a fight. From here, they can move onto the street through the front door, out the back door to the alley, or up the staircase to the locked door that leads to the residential floors.

The staircase is narrow and has walls on two sides. The construction makes it impossible for two adults to walk up the case side by side, so the characters are forced to enter the residence levels in a straight line. The steps are very narrow, making it tricky to maneuver.

The door opens with a delicate squeak. Ahead of you are three doors. One is shut, but the other two are open. From the left you hear the screams of a little girl—almost certainly Rosette. From the right you hear a horrible cutting sound interrupted by an occasional screech.

The closed door is merely a linen closet. The room to the left is Rosette's bedroom. She's pulled her mattress off her bed on top of her to protect her from what first look like rats. If the heroes shine a light on the scene, they must make immediate Guts checks—Rosette is being attacked by horrible rag dolls with knives, knitting needles, and other sharp implements.

The scene to the right is far worse. Jean Maxim is slumped against the bed, surrounded by the tattered remains of several dolls. One of the torn constructs is trying to re-collect its lower half while others lie lifeless in wet puddles. Four of the dolls are at Jean's neck with a large pair of tailoring shears. They are attempting to cut the man's head off by repeatedly forcing the sheers together. They have made it about two-thirds of the way through his neck. Two others are gutting him as the blood continues to soak through the bed and spread across the floor.

Esme's body is on the street, where a man is lifting it into a cart and stuffing it with straw. The man cannot be clearly made out. He just looks like a human figure in a dark cloak and hood. On his shoulder rides a rag doll, while four others rest on the wagon's side, watching their master work and waiting for the next body to drop.

There are six dolls in each room. As soon as they are disturbed, they attack.

The Puppet Master

Once the Puppet Master realizes he has been discovered, he assumes he is too late to finish his project. His plan was to make straw men out of the Maxims and use them to eliminate Arianna and her new friends. The Puppet Master flees in the first round of fighting, running down the street toward the cathedral and toward the bishop's residence to set his backup plan into action. The dolls on the wagon stay behind to buy him time.

If the party doesn't spot him, Arianna catches up and sees him through the window. Knowing that the dolls and the Puppet Master are headed toward the cathedral, she says "The Bishop," and jumps from the window to give chase.

The dolls continue to sacrifice themselves and go first for anyone who attempts to follow Arianna. Strangely, they let Arianna pass and ignore her entirely.



Button-Eyed Doll

The doll-like constructs of the Puppet Master have been sewn together from the flesh of the dead and brought to life by the master's own blood and dark magic. They operate independently but are still linked to their master. The dolls' simple thoughts focus on using trickery and creativity to climb their victims or knock them over to attack their eyes and necks.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d4, Taunt d4

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 3

Gear: Scissors, small knives, and hat pins (Str+d4).

Special Abilities:

- ♦ **Construct:** +2 to recover from being shaken; no additional damage from called shots; immune to disease and poison.
- ♦ **Overwhelm:** The doll's group attack bonus is capped at +6 rather than the normal +4 as they can climb all over their prey. Their bonus also applies to attempts to trip or disarm an opponent.
- ♦ **Size:** -2. The dolls are about 18" high.
- ♦ **Small:** -2 to be hit.
- ♦ **Weakness (Fire):** Dolls take double damage from fire.

The Sheep to the Shepherd

The delay created by the dolls should give Arianna and the Puppet Master a significant head start, but it is obvious the two headed toward the bishop's residence. The remains of Esme still lie in the street, and some of the sections of the torn-apart dolls are attempting to crawl toward the cathedral.

The following revelations may hit the characters and motivate them to action:

- ♦ The dolls ignored Arianna, and she always carried one. Could it be that she was in control of them all along?
- ♦ Arianna said something about the bishop and ran off. Is she off to warn the bishop or to kill him?
- ♦ The party has once again found itself surrounded by a brutal murder. If Rosette's screaming alerted someone, it will only make their case worse if they are caught in the home.

While the characters are deciding what to do, Arianna reaches the home of the bishop and bursts in through the unguarded back door. She did not see the Puppet Master enter the house, but she did see him turn a corner just before it. She is in a heated argument with the bishop, trying to convince him that he is in mortal danger and that the assassin is in his house. In spite of her



pleas, the bishop is more worried about the military guards in front than some unknown, supernatural threat.

The Puppet Master has used the situation to his advantage. He knows of Arianna's true nature as a special agent dispatched by the Vatican to hunt down unnatural forces. With the characters delayed, the villain uses the time to go back to his warehouse on the harbor a few blocks away from the bishop's manor to muster an army of his living dolls. The Puppet Master plans to dispose of the bishop before his condition becomes obvious and capture Arianna's body to make into a straw man. With her as a tool, he can infiltrate the highest echelons of the church and further his objectives.

By the time the characters get to the bishop's residence, the back door is swung wide open. The dolls distracted them long enough that Arianna is deep in the throes of an argument with the bishop:

Arianna lets forth a forceful yell, "Why aren't you doing anything? I told you exactly what happened! I told you I saw him come here. He's here to kill you. He framed you for the murders. I've figured it out."

"Now, now," the bishop says soothingly, "you seem to be overreacting here, my dear. There is no conspiracy. The people are just mistaken. You seem to—"

"No, they are not mistaken, and yes, it did actually happen," Arianna snaps.

"If you don't keep your voice down, the guards will be alerted. We should—"

"Guards? You're worried about guards?" The dark haired woman pulls a black medallion from her cleavage. "Do you see this crest? Do you know what this means? You don't even know who your guards are anymore!"

The old man stares in shock. "Oh my. I thought you were a myth. The Vatican's fabled hunters here in my diocese. But why has the Pope—"

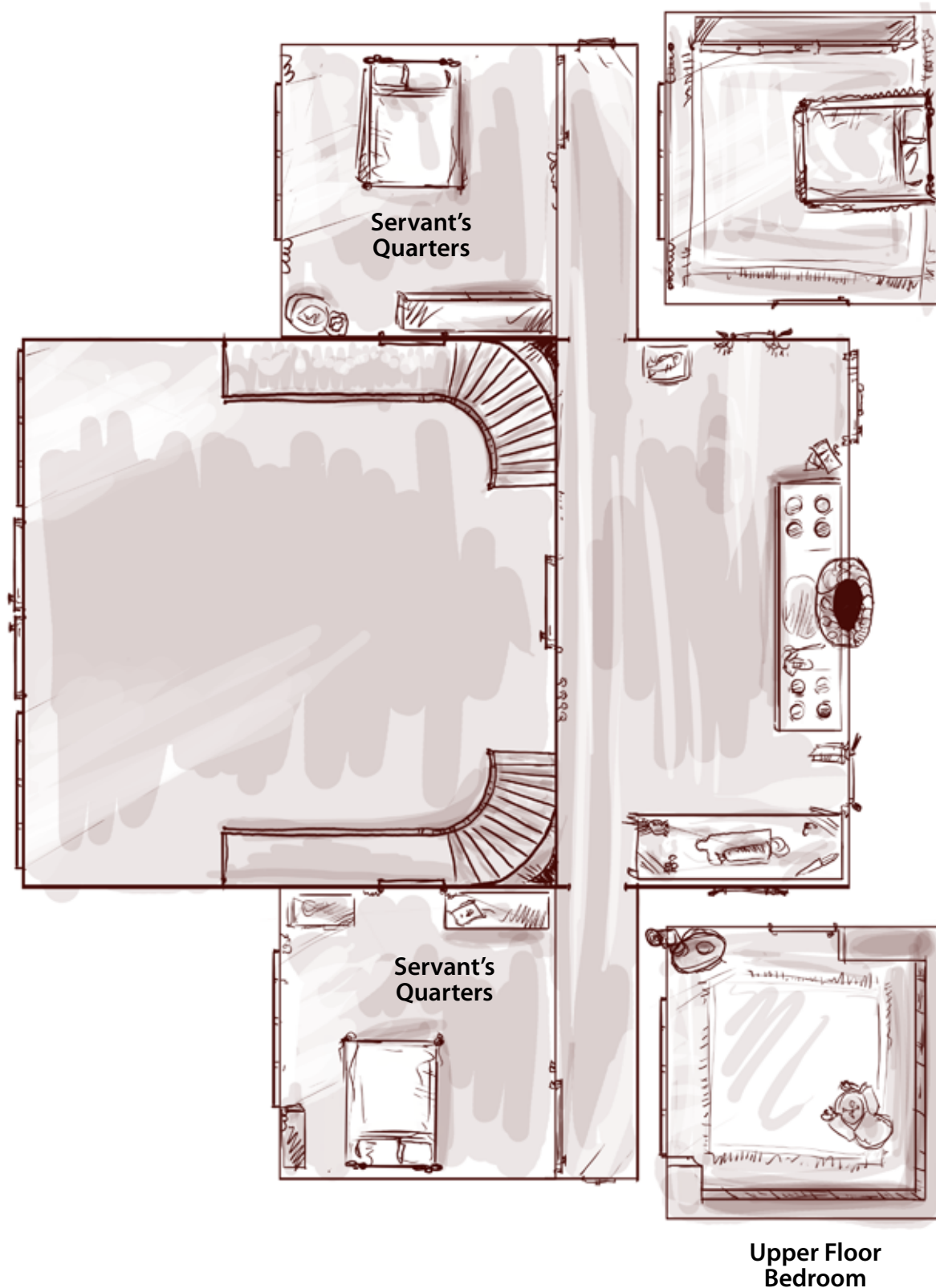
"I've told you!" she bursts out with frustration, then gathers herself. "The doll appeared at each of the sites of the first murders you stand accused of, and I have found the culprit."

As the two bicker on, a shot rings out in time with a flash by the front window. On the other side of the front door, a man's voice calls out, "Garrard, is that you. No?" Then, a scream like a rabbit caught in a trap.

The shriek rings out as a uniformed soldier stumbles past the window. You see that the sound is coming from him. Attached to his face, a doll stabs at his eyes again and again and again, like an angry butcher working on a tough piece of meat. Its stitched mouth is curled into a sickening grin as blood flies from the soldier's face onto the windowpanes.

The front of the residence is under siege by an army of the same kind of button-eyed rag dolls that the group encountered in the safe house. Out of the four guards on the house, only one has managed to not be overwhelmed by the mass, fending them off with the butt of his rifle. He is working his way through the mob to go get Captain Bonaparte.

The Bishop's Manor



Hundreds of the dolls are now closing in on the house. During the argument between the bishop and Arianna, they began surrounding the manor from the street, focusing their effort on the front windows and doors. The dolls climb on top of each other like ants, trying to get inside to collect Arianna.

The party has four rounds to get their bearings before the dolls begin their all-out assault on the door. They are in the main parlor in the entry with the front door. Another doorway leads to the kitchen and the back servant's door. Around them are various tapestries and paintings, as well as a large grandfather clock, several chairs, a chest, and a bookshelf. All of these can be moved to block the doors and windows.

If the front door is opened at any time, the dolls flood into the house, 2d10 per round. If the creatures are kept outside the home, their small leather hands paw at the door and try to lift open the windows, but it is difficult. At the fourth round, the Puppet Master begins taking desperate measures, sacrificing his creations to get at Arianna. The dolls use the lamps outside to light themselves on fire, and then other dolls use all their strength to throw them through the window. The lit dolls then attempt to light the house on fire and force the group to open the door.

As the battle rages, Arianna joins in and the bishop looks to the walls for weapons. Since Arianna is the focus of the dolls, they should eventually get their hands on her. The round this happens, the bishop turns on the woman. She shouts, "It's you. Kill him! The bishop, kill him!" and attacks the bishop.

The bishop is actually a straw man himself (and uses the same statistics as the previous straw man). The Puppet Master planted him there weeks ago to turn the tide in his efforts against the revolutionaries. If at any point Arianna is incapacitated, the dolls make a mad dash to carry her out of the home and down the street to their master's dwelling in the warehouses. If the bishop is still alive, he turns against the party and, with an evil, mocking chant, sings parts of the Mass as he sets the home ablaze with the party in it.

The party members find themselves delayed again by the dolls. This time, most of the creations perish in the fire. The beasts that made off with Arianna left an obvious trail that can be clearly seen in the light of the streetlamps and the burning residence.

By a String

A trail of soot and blood lead the band to a boarded-up, wooden warehouse only a few feet from the water at the harbor. The building stands four stories high and leans against a stone house to the right. The wood is blackened and worn. It is like a beacon of decay left over from a bygone era.

As the group closes on the building, the sound of chains being run can be heard. It rings out like the zip of a ship's anchor when it is dropped, but it comes from inside the

building, not from the harbor. The sound ends with a loud clang.

The windows and doors to the structure are boarded and nailed shut with layers of wood. Removing any of it would take a significant amount of effort. Drains and ironworks have long since rusted and now hang loosely from their brackets, incapable of holding weight. The only way in is an obvious, half-open set of dock doors. There, the blood and tiny footprints continue.

Inside, on the ground level, the warehouse is barren and pitch-black, and the buzz of flies can be heard over the light rattle of chains. Nothing can be seen but a few faint slivers of light more than 40 feet above. The whole place is permeated with the stench of months-old rotten meat. The smell of the place is overwhelming and forces a Guts check. Failure results in the character gaining a Fatigue level for 1d4 rounds while his senses adjust.

The floor is covered in an inches-thick coating of blood and muck, making it difficult to maneuver. Any attempt to run or move any faster than half-pace forces an Agility roll. Failure causes a fall and ends the move. Other than that, the floor is barren, save for a set of rickety wooden stairs.

Unseen by the party is the Puppet Master's stockpile of materials, hanging three stories above them; the bodies of dozens of victims are suspended by chains and meat hooks. Each body is headless, its brains removed to mix with the hay that makes up the button-eyed dolls. Large patches of skin have been ripped from the cadavers to make up the bodies of the smaller fiends. Now the morbid marionettes wait lifelessly to defend their master's home, a hook through each shoulder and in each arm.

Once the first few members of the group are inside the door, the Puppet Master begins his attack. Unleashing the chains that hold them to the ceiling, the Puppet Master sends four of the morbid marionettes down each round. Bodies soar down, still attached to their chains and anchors up above like puppets, and swing their hooks wildly. As the bodies drop, sections of light from torches above are opened up and the Puppet Master can be seen leaping from beam to beam, letting loose the chains.

The marionette attacks center on blocking the door then dropping the bodies directly on anyone trying to walk across the floor to the stairs. Anyone hit by one of the bodies takes 3d6 points of damage. The morbid marionettes themselves have no wounds and no life. They are just bodies hanging from chain, but they are a nasty obstacle. Each round, they swing wildly in a random direction with deadly force. Those crossing the path of a marionette must make an Agility roll. Failure means they have been hit for 2d8 points of slashing damage. Additionally, there is a 50% chance they have been caught by one of the meat hooks and become entangled with the body (requiring a successful Agility check to escape).



Thread of Evil

As the characters climb the three flights of stairs to the top, read the following text:

You hear a wet stabbing sound as Arianna lets out a wheeze. "Why?" she asks weakly. "You're a priest." She gasps for air.

"What?" A strong, male voice with disturbing calm takes over the conversation. "Why, my dear, it's because I am a priest! Did you know what that sick bishop was doing? He was turning over good Catholics to Robespierre's madmen to be beheaded. Good men and women dying so that he could live. I couldn't have him be a hero of the Republic. I had to make them see his true evil. I had to make them see that the Republic couldn't keep them safe."

"So you killed more?" she asks.

"No, no," the man laughs. "Their own victims killed them. These little fellows are the skin and blood from the graves of the massacres. I only killed those who were truly evil."

"You are evil. You sold your soul to take revenge!" Arianna replies in a stronger tone.

"I did what I needed to do to protect the Church! You would do well to learn by my example!" the man screams, then regains his calm. "Ah, but once you are one of my straw men, you will serve my will, daughter of the Vatican. You will get me to the Pope himself, and he will no longer be

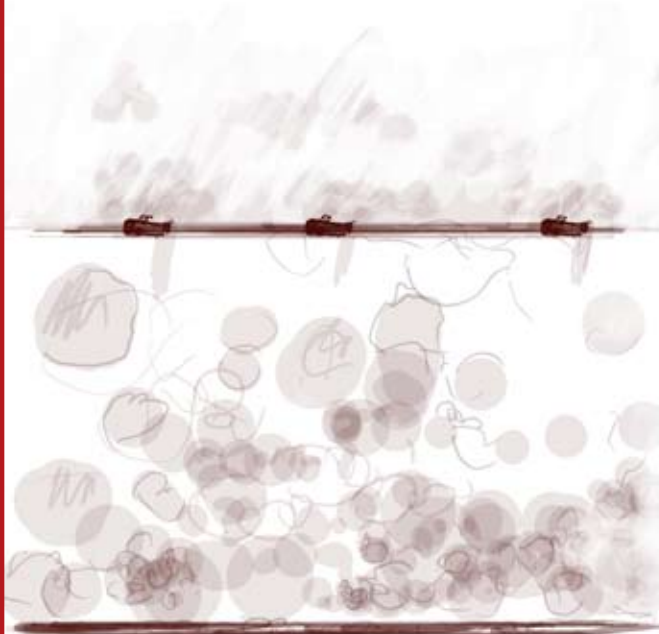
able to stand behind his lackeys. We will crusade against these liberal aberrations and restore order to France. Restore the Church! Restore the traditions of God and the king!"

The top of the stairs opens to row upon row of two-foot planks. Between each plank, a space about a foot wide opens to an iron bar. There, the levers for the reels of chains and morbid marionettes rest. Arianna is tied about 40 feet off to the right, along a sidewall. Six dolls surround her. They are sharpening knives and getting sewing equipment together. One is working at her abdomen.

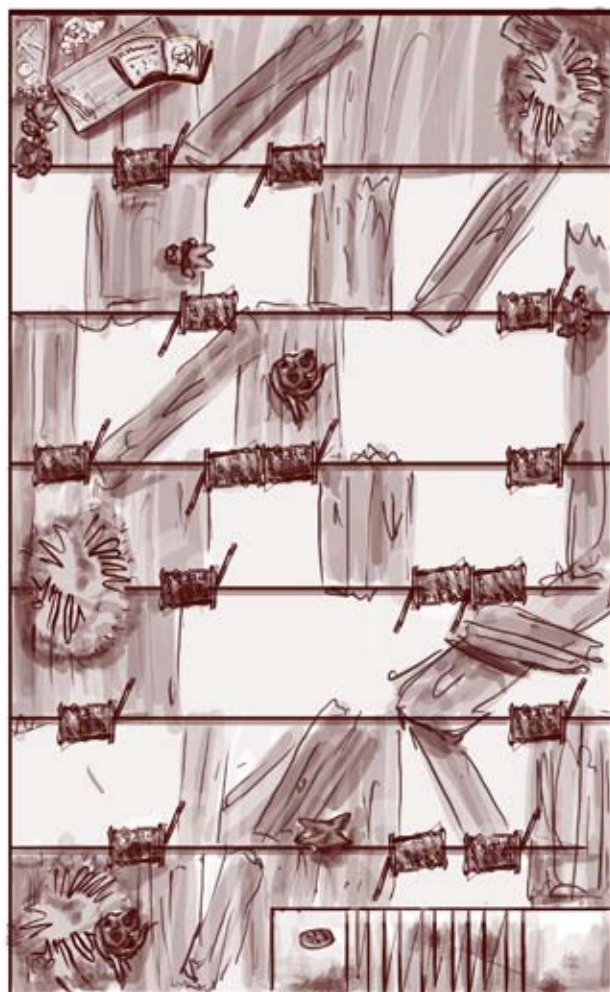
Off to the far end of the room, there is a makeshift altar. Around it stand stacks of skin and hay. Atop it sits a large chalice, filled with blood, and dozens of candles. Dangling above is a crucifix, the body of Christ replaced with what looks like a skeletal, demonic marionette; its head has devil horns, and wings sprout from its back. The Puppet Master stands in front of the altar, raising the chalice to the sky while reading words in a lost tongue.

Perceval Gwenaél, the Puppet Master

Father Gwenaél has been a local parish priest in Le Havre for more than 30 years. Since he was a seminarian, his interests had always centered on researching obscure texts



The Warehouse



and the meanings of grimoiric magic in liturgical rites. When the Revolution hit, Father Gwenael was caught off-guard. His best friends and fellow scholars were dragged off in the night, accused of being enemies of the people. He traced the deaths back to the bishop of Le Havre and swore he would do whatever it took to put an end to the Revolution, even turning himself into a monster.

Using his dark knowledge, Father Gwenael used his own skin and blood to create the first of his dolls to help carry out his plan. As the dead mounted, he turned to the mass graves for new sources of flesh. The knowledge gained from these early dark rituals gave him the power and experience in blood magic to create the straw men.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d12, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Spellcasting d10, Taunt d10

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Arrogant, Vow (end the Revolution)

Edges: Arcane Background (Magic).

Gear: Red Catholic priest's ceremonial garb, staff (Str+d4, Parry +1, two-handed).

Spells: *Deflection, fear, puppet, zombie (summons Button eyed dolls).* Power Points 20.

Denouement

After the last rounds are fired in their battle with the Puppet Master, the new heroes face one more challenge. The fire and warning from the escaped guard at the bishop's residence forced Captain Bonaparte's hand. Now, 50 French soldiers surround the warehouse. Captain Bonaparte himself, along with eight armed and ready guards, enters the doors below.

Wounded and in a panic, Arianna grabs the grimoire on the altar to try to hide it. Napoleon instantly recognizes the characters as the escapees he has been following. He calls them out and has the soldiers force them downstairs at gunpoint. Anyone attempting to leave is shot.

Captain Bonaparte allows the group to explain themselves, all the while surveying the area. He leaves them to the guards for a moment as he makes his way around the warehouse, looking at the dead priest, the bodies, and the horror. During this time, the soldiers strip the characters of everything but their clothes, doing a very thorough search.

Once the captain gets back, he surveys the pile and picks out the grimoire. He asks, "Is this what the man used?" Arianna loses control at this point and lashes out. She grabs at the book and begins trying to rip out pages. Captain Bonaparte gives the order, and several soldiers shoot her. The captain picks up the book and continues, "I will take that as a yes. The rest of you have done the Republic a great service and will be free to go in the morning. I will have my men escort you to the barracks tonight. There you will be given rest and papers to leave the country. If you return, ever, you will be shot." With that, Captain Bonaparte snaps

the book closed, handing it to one of his aides, and walks from the warehouse.

Finally, the characters face their last choice: take Napoleon up on his offer and leave, knowing he has the key to unimaginable power at his fingertips, or attempt to kill the future dictator against overwhelming odds.

Adaptations

Like this adventure but would like to adapt it to the setting you're already running? Try these adaptation suggestions for the other Savage Lines:

Tour of Darkness: The party is caught up in Ho Chi Min city at the time of the Communist takeover. The church helps them escape and move through the jungles to a place where they can get to a U.S. airlift.

Rippers: The party finds itself on the edges of the Ottoman Empire. The Turks are fearful of ethnic uprisings and have begun imprisoning en masse. The orthodox bishops are secretly ferrying those who are at risk out of the area.

Necessary Evil: The V'sori have captured a city and begun a campaign of extermination. Finding no way to exploit the occurrence to their advantage, the characters are forced get help from a hero organization to survive.

Deadlands: The City of Lost Angels is not a good place to be right now. A case of mistaken identity has the characters on the run, helped by a woman who offers assistance in Shan Fan.

50 Fathoms: Upheaval has hit New Madrid, and local leaders have shut down the ports. The party is forced to make their escape by land to Cuna, but they get caught up in local political rivalries.

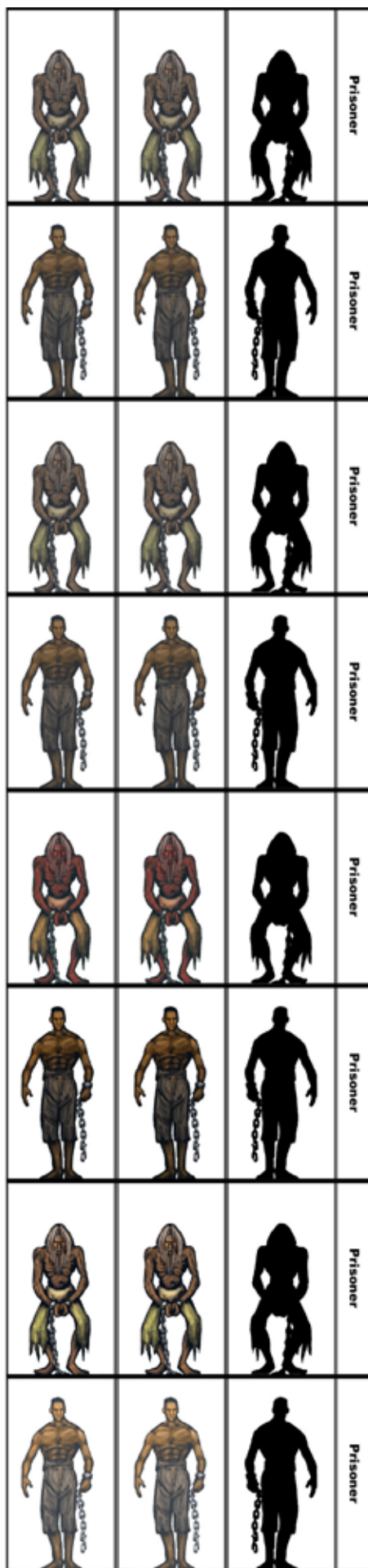
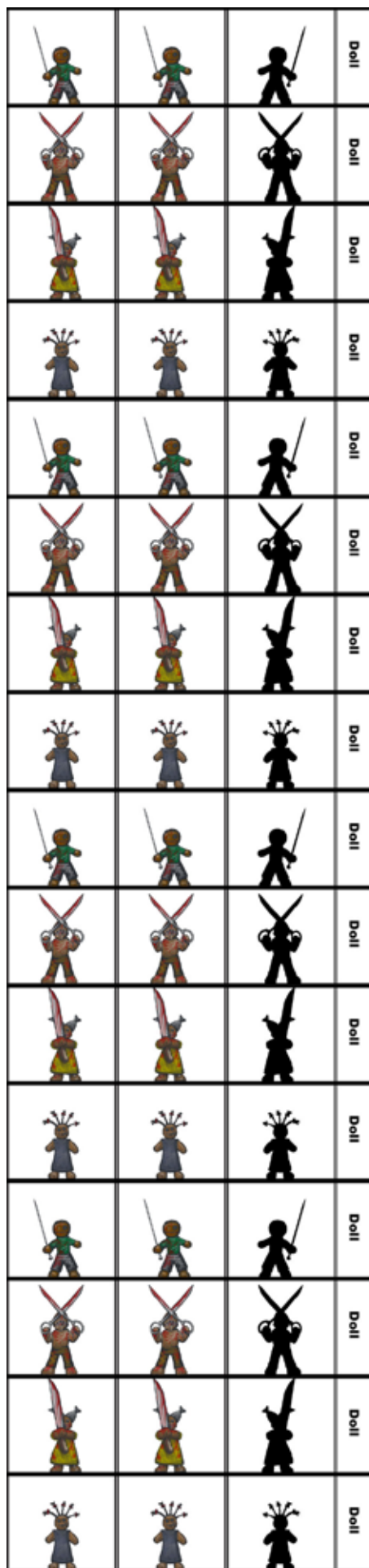


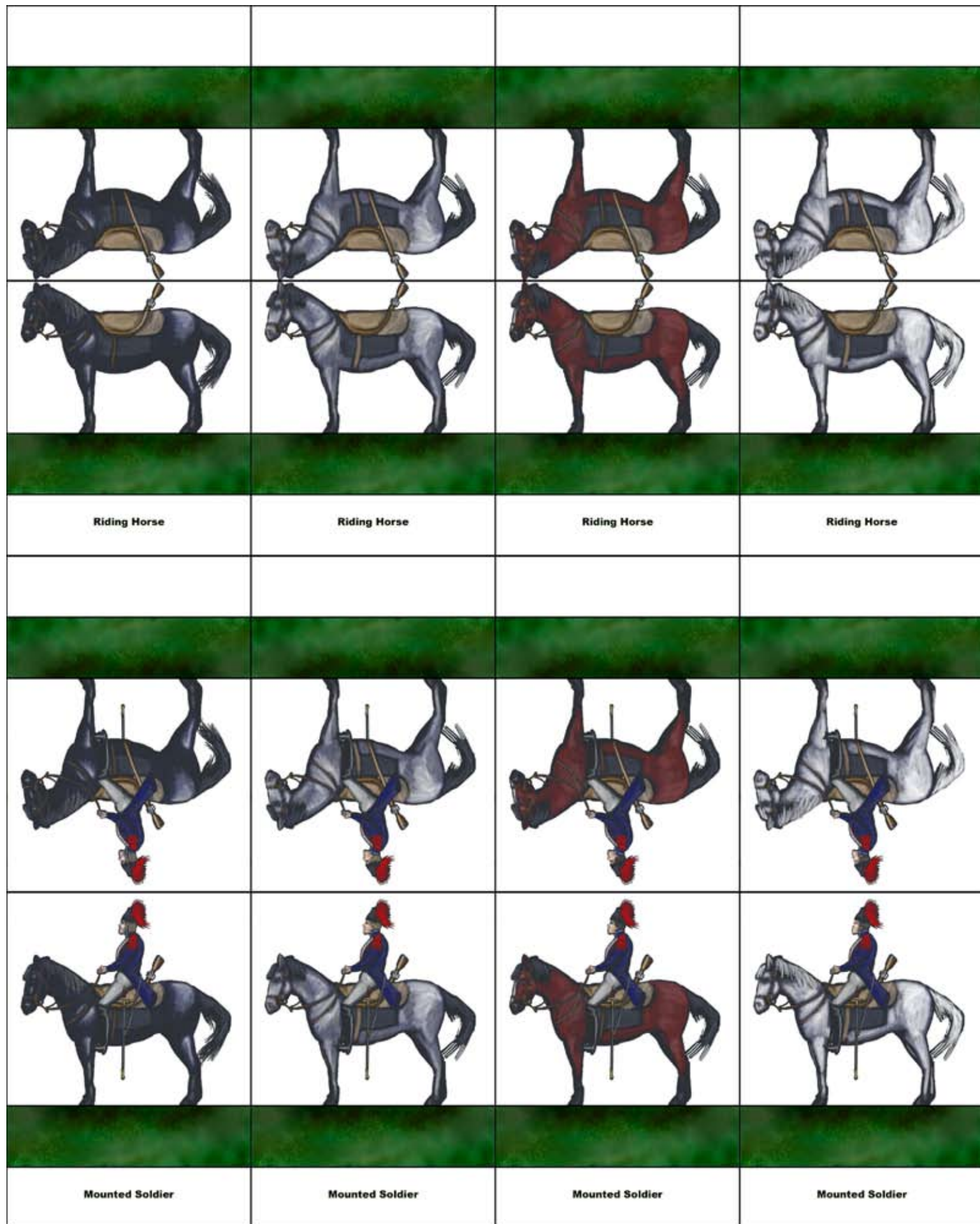
Handout 1

Judge arriving in
fortnight. Guards
won't let leave. Just
Mass. Must help
clear me. Innocent.
Tomorrow. After
morning Mass.
The cathedral.









Rat Swarm Template



Large Burst Template

Small Burst Templates



Medium Burst Template